



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

# Parent/Guardian Feedback on Digital Learning

## Survey Feedback from Fall 2020

### Key Findings:

- White parents/guardians were overrepresented in the sample of those who responded to the survey and Black/African American, and Hispanic/Latinx parents/guardians were underrepresented.
- When asked how they felt overall about their child's digital learning experience, about one-third of respondents reported feeling satisfied, another third reported feeling somewhat satisfied, and the last third reported they were not satisfied.
- A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time online for school, compared to respondents with children in other grades.
- A larger percentage of respondents with students in K-2 reported receiving enough communication from their child's teachers, compared to respondents with students in other grades.
- A larger percentage of respondents from the lower income brackets report that they are not satisfied with their child's digital learning experience, compared to respondents from higher income brackets.

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Contents

Background and Context ..... 5

Survey Administration and Respondents..... 5

Findings ..... 8

    Overall Findings ..... 9

    Parents/guardians’ feelings about their child’s digital learning experience varied..... 9

        One-third of survey respondents reported that they are satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience so far..... 9

        There were more negative open-ended comments than positive ones..... 10

        About three-quarters of respondents felt that the amount of communication they received from their child’s school, the District, and their child’s teachers is “about right.”..... 10

        Open-ended comments included feedback on communication and highlighted the hard work and dedication of teachers..... 11

        About half of respondents felt their child is getting too much “screen time” because of digital learning..... 11

        Many negatively coded open-ended comments spoke about the amount of screen time and homework..... 12

        About 40% of respondents reported that their child is not learning as much as they were before school was online, and that their child is not as engaged with school as they were before school was online..... 12

        Feedback to the open-ended question expresses that students are having trouble focusing at home..... 13

        About half of respondents reported that their child is receiving enough academic and emotional support..... 14

        In response to the open-ended question, parents/guardians expressed a desire for more school-based support for their students..... 14

Survey findings for student and parent/guardian sub-groups ..... 15

    There were differences in parent/guardian responses by grade level to questions about overall satisfaction, communication, and screen time. .... 15

        Respondents with students in K-2 reported feeling less satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience than respondents with students in other grades..... 15

        A larger percentage of respondents with students in K-2 reported receiving enough communication from their child’s teachers, compared to respondents with students in other grades. .... 16

A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time interacting with teachers and/or classmates on the computer, compared to respondents with students in other grades.....	17
A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time online for school, compared to respondents with children in other grades.....	18
Some parents/guardians of Kindergartners used the open-ended comment to emphasize that they think their child is spending too much time on the computer. ....	19
A smaller percentage of respondents with students in grades K-2 reported that their child is learning as much as they did before school was online, compared to respondents with students in other grades.....	19
Between 10% and 16% of respondents across all grade levels reported that there is not someone available in the home to help their child with online school when needed.....	20
There were some differences in parent/guardian responses by race/ethnicity to questions about overall satisfaction, learning, engagement, and screen time.....	21
Asian respondents reported feeling more satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience than respondents of other races/ethnicities.....	21
A smaller percentage of White and Multi-racial respondents reported that their child is learning as much online as they did before school was online (20% and 26%, respectively), compared to respondents of other races/ethnicities. ....	22
A larger percentage of White respondents said their child spends too much time online for school than respondents in other racial/ethnic categories. ....	22
There were differences in parent/guardian responses by self-reported family income to questions about overall satisfaction, learning, engagement, communication, and screen time.....	23
A larger percentage of respondents from the lower income brackets report that they are not satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience, compared to respondents from higher income brackets. ....	23
A larger percentage of respondents in lower income brackets said their child is as engaged and learning as much as they were before school was online, compared to respondents in higher income brackets. ....	24
A larger percentage of respondents in higher income brackets reported that their child spends too much time online for school than respondents in lower income brackets.....	25
A larger percentage of respondents from higher income brackets reported that there is someone available at home to help their child with online school when needed, compared to respondents from lower income brackets. ....	26
There were differences in parent/guardian responses by self-reported student Individualized Education Program (IEP) status to questions about overall satisfaction, engagement, academic and social support, and communication. ....	27

A smaller percentage of respondents with students with IEPs reported feeling satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience than respondents of students without an IEP. ....	27
A smaller percentage of respondents with children with IEPs reported that their child was learning as much as they were before school was online, compared to respondents whose child does not have an IEP.....	28
A smaller percentage of respondents of students with IEPs reported that their child receives enough academic and emotional support, compared to respondents of children without an IEP. ....	29
A larger percentage of respondents with students with an IEP reported that they did not receive enough communication from their child’s school or the District, compared to respondents of students who do not have an IEP. ....	30
Open-ended comments that mentioned having a student with special needs were mostly negative.....	31
Conclusions .....	32
Key takeaways about the survey respondents:.....	32
The key takeaways from the survey responses: .....	32
Appendix .....	35

## Background and Context

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) began the 2020-21 school year with a 100% digital learning model for all District students in grades K-12. The Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) created and administered a survey for parents and guardians of SDP students to gather feedback about their experiences with digital learning during the first months of the 2020-21 school year.

## Survey Administration and Respondents

The District's Office of Translation translated the survey into eight languages and links to complete the survey were posted on the District's main website. The survey opened on September 24 and closed on October 15. Respondents were asked to select their child's school from a list of schools or could select "Other" and write in the name of their child's school. In 10 instances, the name of the school provided in "Other" was not an SDP public or charter school; these responses are not included in this report. After removing the responses from the 10 non-SDP parents/guardians, there were a total of 8,972 respondents.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their child's grade, their own race/ethnicity, and the range that best describes their annual household income. These questions were all optional.

The 8,972 responses represented 307 District and Charter schools. One school (Masterman) had 325 parents/guardians respond, more than any other school. There were 10 schools that had 150 or more parent/guardian respondents (Table 1). There were 30 schools with only one parent/guardian respondent.

**Table 1. Schools with 150 or more parent/guardian respondents**

School Name	Number of Parent/Guardian Respondents
Masterman, Julia R. High School	325
Central High School	277
Penn Alexander School	216
Greenfield, Albert M. School	180
Meredith, William M. School	172
Greenberg, Joseph School	159
McCall, Gen. George A. School	154
Frank, Anne School	152
Mayfair School	150

About a third (34%) of respondents were parents/guardians of students in grades K-2. About a quarter (24%) of respondents were parents/guardians of students in grades 3-5, 20% of respondents were parent/guardians of students in grades 6-8, and 22% of respondents were parent/guardians of students in grades 9-12 (Table 2).

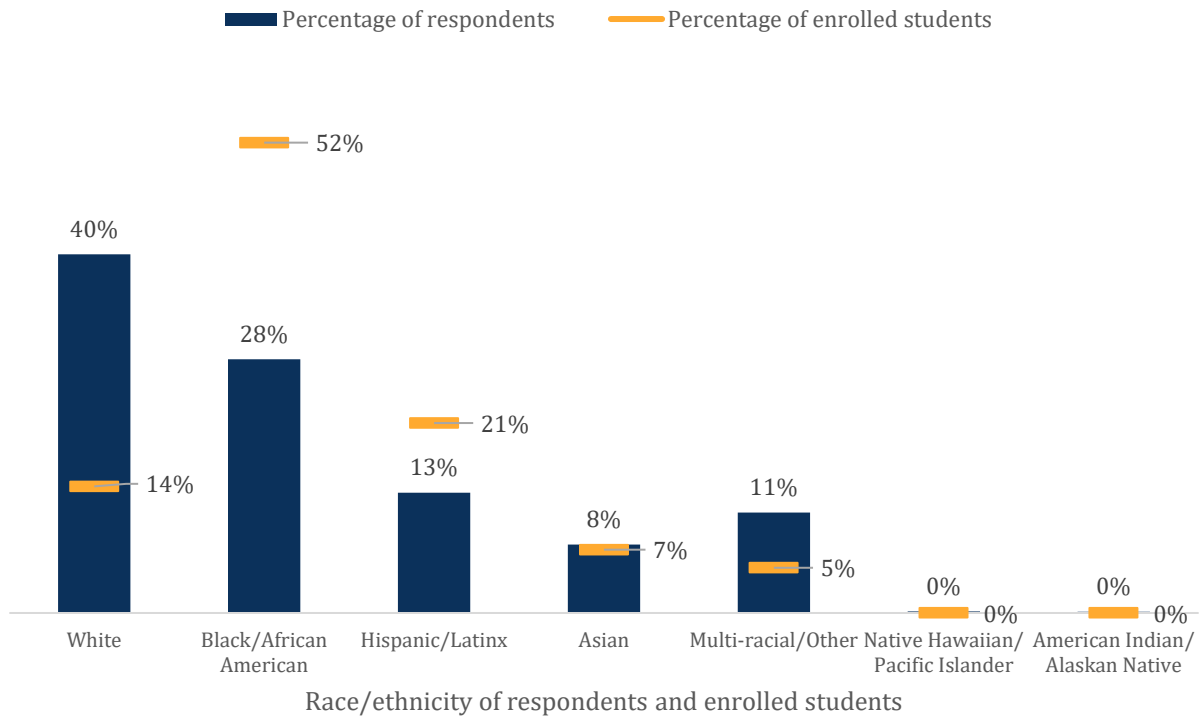
**Table 2. The number and percentage of parent/guardian respondents by grade band (n= 8,972)**

Grade Band	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
K-2	3,060	34%
3-5	2,111	24%
6-8	1,783	20%
9-12	1,966	22%

Forty percent of respondents who identified their race/ethnicity (n=7,661) indicated their race as White. This was the largest percentage of respondents. The next largest group indicated they are Black/African American (28%), followed by Hispanic/Latinx (13%), Asian (8%), and Multi-racial (7%). When we compare this distribution to the racial/ethnic characteristics of students in SDP, we find that White parents/guardians were overrepresented in the sample of parent/guardians who responded to the survey and Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx parents/guardians were underrepresented (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Based on the October 1, 2020 enrollment snapshot, 52% of students were Black/African American, 21% were Hispanic/Latinx, 14% were White, 7% were Asian, 5% were Multi-racial, and less than 1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

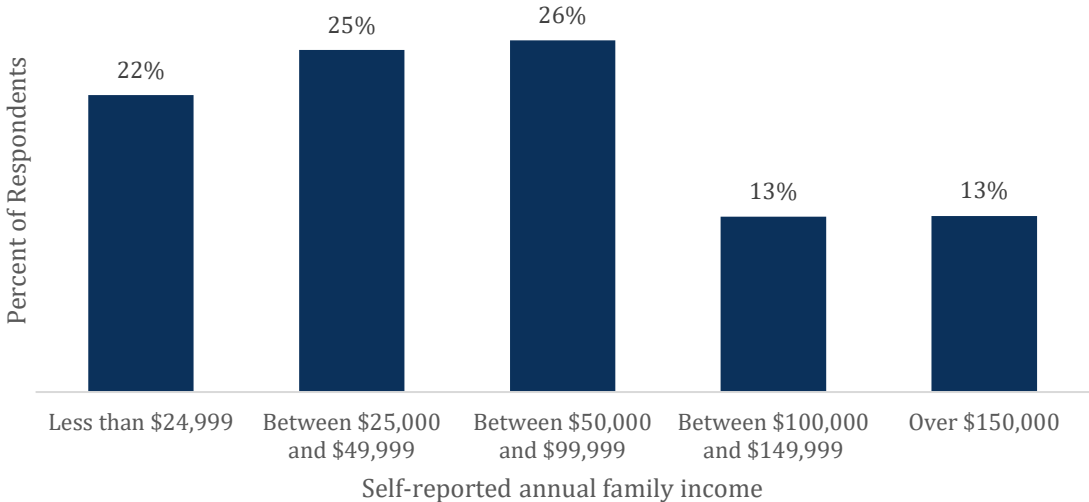
**Figure 1. The percentage of respondents by race/ethnicity (self-reported optional question, n=7,661) and the percentage of students enrolled in SDP by race/ethnicity (n=202,944)**



**How to read this figure:** This figure shows the percentage of survey respondents from each racial/ethnic group (blue bars) in relation to the percentage of students enrolled in SDP from each racial/ethnic group (yellow lines). When the bar is higher than the line, it means that that race/ethnicity is overrepresented among survey respondents. When the bar is below the line, it means that that race/ethnicity is underrepresented among survey respondents.

About a quarter of parent/guardians (25%) reported their annual household income as between \$25,000 and \$49,999, and another quarter (26%) as between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Twenty-two percent of respondents reported their annual household income as less than \$24,999, which places them below the poverty line if their household is four or more persons. This reflects data from a 2019 report that found that about 25% of Philadelphia households are below the poverty line ([https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2019/05/state\\_of\\_poverty.pdf](https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2019/05/state_of_poverty.pdf)).

**Figure 2. The number and percentage of respondents by annual household income (self-reported optional question, n=7,239)**



**Note:** According to census data, the median household income in 2018 in Philadelphia was \$43,744 (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/philadelphiacountypennsylvania/PST040219>).

## Findings

This section presents responses to the survey questions as well as findings from the responses to the open-ended item: “In one or two words, how would you describe your experience with digital learning this fall.” Over 7,000 (N=7,468) respondents left a comment in response to this open-ended question, and over two-thirds (65%, N=4,833) of those responded in one to three words. The remaining comments ranged from four to 553 words. To analyze the responses, we coded them as positive, negative, neutral, or a combination of the three. In addition to coding responses with positive, negative, and neutral codes, we used codes to identify comments that specifically mentioned a particular student characteristic, namely “Kindergarten,” “Special Education (SPED),” and “English learner (EL).” For more details about how we coded responses to the final open-ended question, see Appendix A.

In the section below, we first review overall responses, and then present responses broken down by the following variables, all of which were self-reported on the survey: **student grade band, respondent race/ethnicity, family income, and student special education (IEP) and English learner (EL) status.** Throughout the report, the reader should keep in mind that, while almost 9,000 parents/guardians responded to the survey, there were over 200,000 SDP students enrolled at the time of administration. As a result, the vast majority of parent and guardian perspectives are not included in this report. Findings from the open-ended responses, which are presented in grey boxes throughout, reflect particular perspectives from an even smaller number of respondents; while we have included examples, they do not necessarily represent District-wide views.



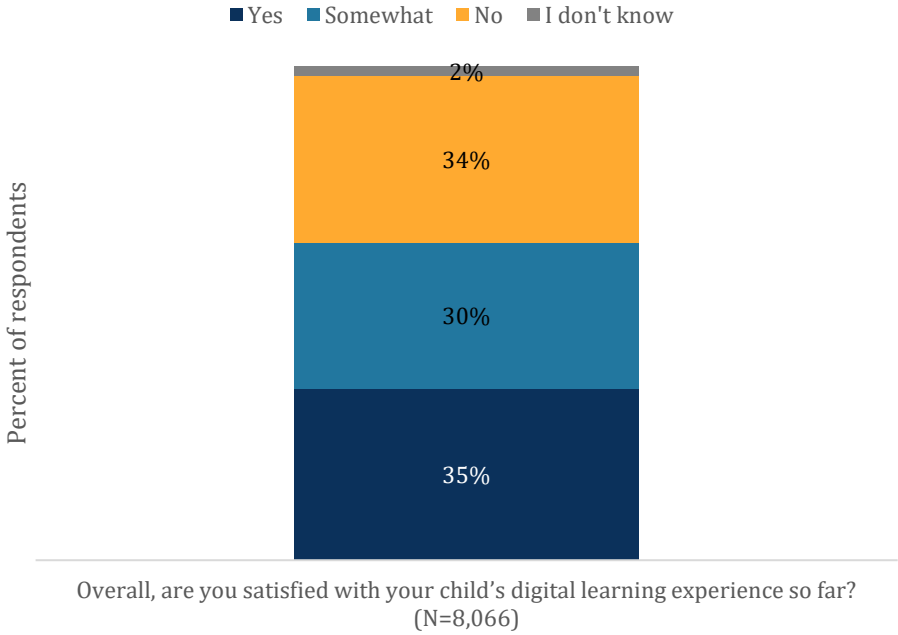
# Overall Findings

## Parents/guardians' feelings about their child's digital learning experience varied.

**One-third of survey respondents reported that they are satisfied with their child's digital learning experience so far.**

Parents/guardians were evenly split across all response categories: about one-third each reported feeling satisfied, feeling somewhat satisfied, or not feeling satisfied with their child's digital learning experience (35%, 30%, and 43%, respectively; Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Respondents' overall satisfaction with their child's digital learning experience**



### **There were more negative open-ended comments than positive ones.**

Analysis of the open-ended responses showed that there were more responses that included only negative feedback (N=4,103) than included only positive (N=2,178) or only neutral feedback (N=648). The most frequently positively coded responses were those that used the word “good” to describe their overall experience so far (N=96). Another theme in the positive responses was that their child’s experience this fall was “better than in the spring” (N=114), there were also comments that just included the word “better” or the words “much better” (N=34), but it is unclear if they were referring to digital learning in the spring specifically.

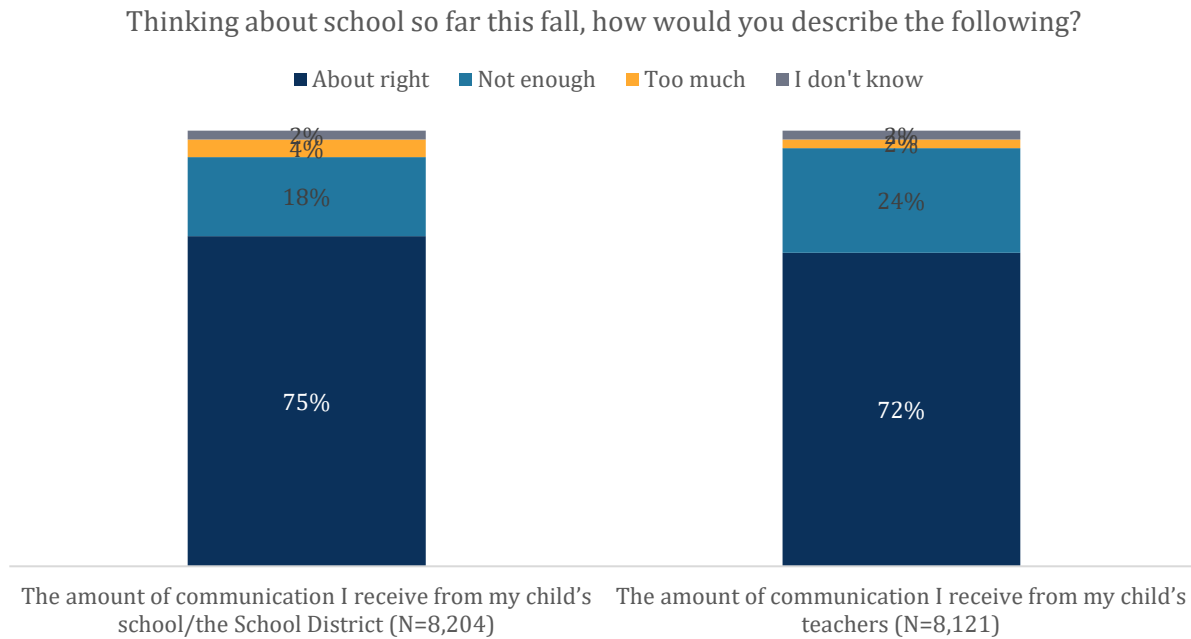
The words that was most frequently associated with negatively coded responses were “stressful” (N=285), followed by “frustrating” (N=270). For the neutral responses, the most common word used to describe their overall experience was “ok” (N=301). Another common word that was coded as neutral was “different” (N=62). See Appendix A for more about the coding process.

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

### **About three-quarters of respondents felt that the amount of communication they received from their child’s school, the District, and their child’s teachers is “about right.”**

About one-quarter of parents/guardians reported that they do not receive enough communication from the child’s school or District or from their child’s teachers (18% and 24%, respectively; Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Feedback on the amount of communication from child’s teachers, school, and the District**



**Open-ended comments included feedback on communication and highlighted the hard work and dedication of teachers.**

There were open-ended comments that addressed communication between home and school and comments that were more generally about parents/guardians’ experiences with their child’s teachers. There were 39 comments that noted there was a lack of communication or expressed a desire for more communication from the school. There were also comments that praised teachers, describing them as “great,” “amazing,” “awesome,” and “wonderful” (N=149). Another teacher-related theme that emerged was appreciation for teachers “working hard” and “doing or trying their best” (N=69).

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

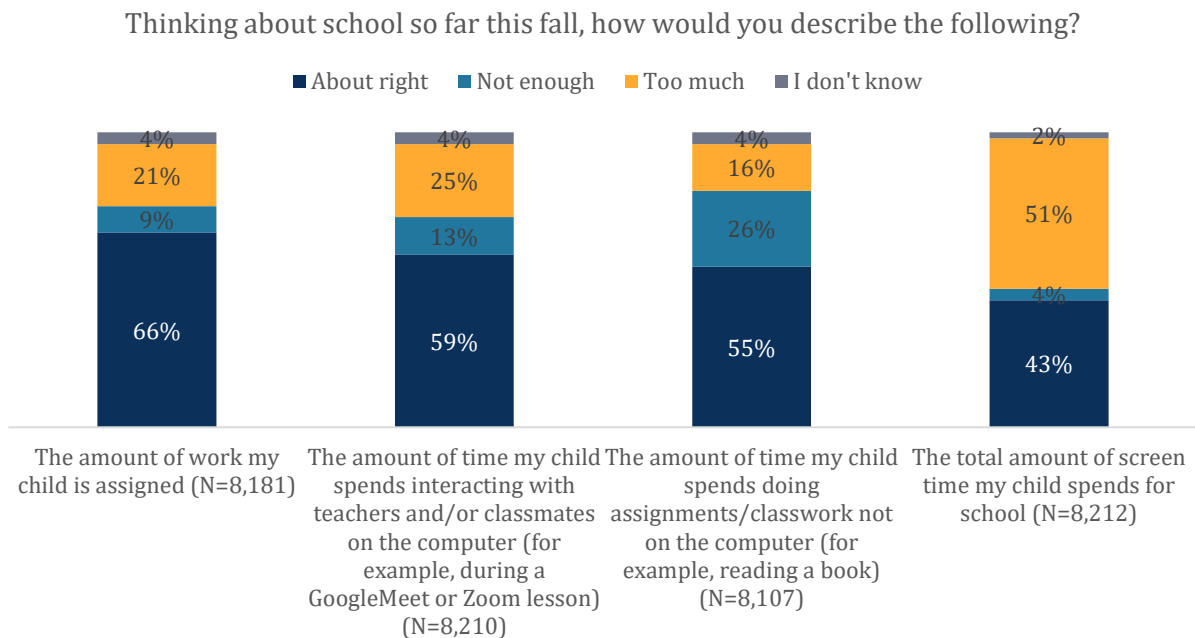
**About half of respondents felt their child is getting too much “screen time” because of digital learning.**

About one-quarter of respondents reported that their child does not spend enough time doing schoolwork that is NOT on the computer (for example, reading a hardcopy book or working on a printed worksheet) (26%, Figure 5).

About two-thirds of respondents felt that their child is assigned the right amount of work and spends enough time interacting with their teachers and classmates virtually (66% and 59%,

respectively). However, about one-quarter of respondents feel that their child is assigned too much work and spends too much time with teachers and classmates online (21% and 25%, respectively).

**Figure 5. Feedback from respondents about the amount of time their child spends on digital learning**



**Many negatively coded open-ended comments spoke about the amount of screen time and homework.**

For responses that had negative codes, the most frequent theme was that the day was too long and that students had “too much screen time” (N=482). Some of the negative feedback also expressed that there was too much homework and classwork (N=181). Another common word used to describe their experience with digital learning this fall was “overwhelmed” or “overwhelming” (N=220), which speaks to the feedback from parents/guardians about there being too much work.

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

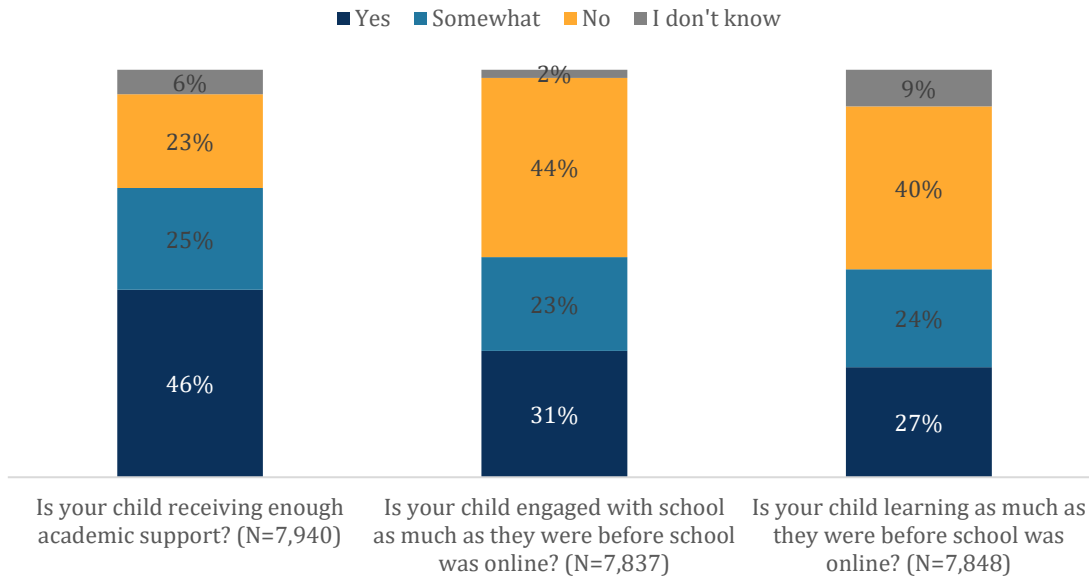
**About 40% of respondents reported that their child is not learning as much as they were before school was online, and that their child is not as engaged with school as they were before school was online.**

About one-third of parents/guardians reported that their child is learning as much as they were before school was online; about one-third also reported that their child is as engaged with school as much as they were before school was online (27% and 31%, respectively; Figure 6). About half

(53%) of parents/guardians reported that their child is keeping up with their schoolwork as much as they were before school was online.

**Figure 6. Feedback from respondents about their child’s engagement with digital learning**

Thinking about school so far this fall, please answer the following:



**Feedback to the open-ended question expresses that students are having trouble focusing at home.**

While there were some comments where parents/guardians said their child was able to focus better at home without the distractions of a physical classroom (N=23), many more comments expressed that students were having a hard time focusing at home (N=286). Feedback often compared their child’s experience with digital learning to their experiences with in person school. These were generally negatively coded, including those that highlighted that students were not getting the interaction and socialization they needed (N=41).

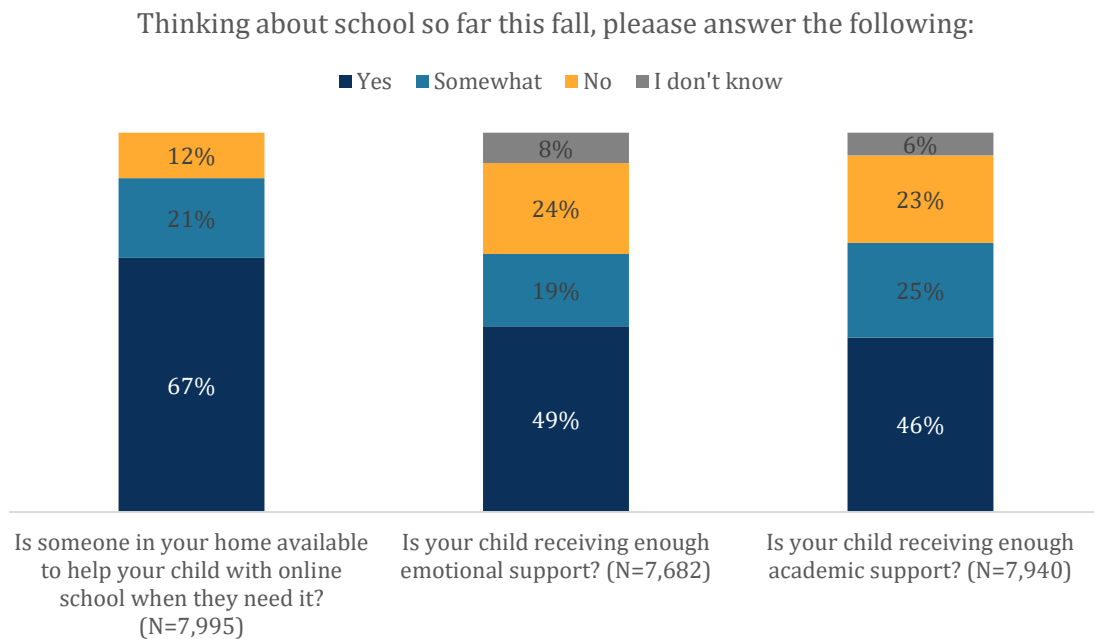
Respondents also compared their actual experiences with what they thought it would be like in comments that were coded positively, such as “Better than expected,” “Exceeded expectations,” and “Surprisingly good” (N=167).

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

## About half of respondents reported that their child is receiving enough academic and emotional support.

However, about one-quarter of respondents reported that their child is not receiving enough academic or emotional support (23% and 24%, respectively; Figure 7). Two-thirds (67%) of respondents reported that there is someone at home available to help their child with online school when they need it.

**Figure 7. Feedback from respondents about the support their child received during digital learning**



### In response to the open-ended question, parents/guardians expressed a desire for more school-based support for their students.

There were comments that provided feedback on the levels of support for students. There were 24 negatively coded responses that specifically used the word “support” or “supportive” and communicated that it was not enough. In contrast, there were six cases where the word “support” or “supportive” was used in a positive sense.

Other responses communicated that digital learning requires too much work for parents/guardians, who, although they may be able to be at home during the day, are not able to provide the amount of support their child needs to stay on task. There were 52 comments coded “Too much work for parents.”

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

## Survey findings for student and parent/guardian sub-groups

In addition to analyzing the survey data in aggregate, we also broke down survey responses by the following variables, all of which were self-reported on the survey:

- student grade band,
- respondent race/ethnicity,
- family income, and
- student special education (IEP) and English learner (EL) status.

In many cases, there were not notable differences in responses across these categories. For questions in which there were larger differences (+/- 10 percentage points), a more detailed breakdown is provided in the sections below.

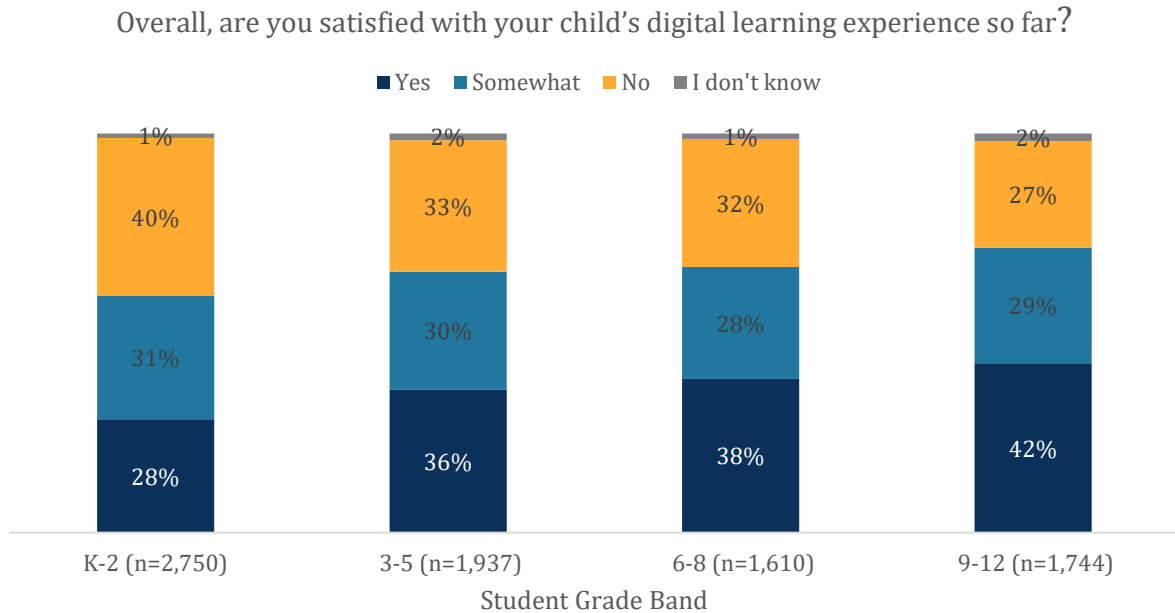
### **There were differences in parent/guardian responses by grade level to questions about overall satisfaction, communication, and screen time.**

Overall, parents/guardians of K-2 students reported lower levels of satisfaction with their child's digital learning experience and were more likely to report that their child was getting too much "screen time" and spending too much time interacting with teachers and classmates online than parents/guardians of students in grades 3-12. Parents/guardians of middle (grades 5-8) and high school (grades 9-12) students expressed higher levels of satisfaction with digital learning and were less likely to be concerned about the amount of screen time their child was getting.

### **Respondents with students in K-2 reported feeling less satisfied with their child's digital learning experience than respondents with students in other grades.**

More parents/guardians of high school students (grades 9-12) reported feeling satisfied with their child's digital learning experience than parents/guardians of students in other grades (42%, versus 28%, 36%, and 38%, respectively; Figure 8). Between 27% and 40% of parents/guardians across all grade levels reported that they were not satisfied with their child's digital learning experience.

**Figure 8. Overall satisfaction with their child’s digital learning experience, by grade band**

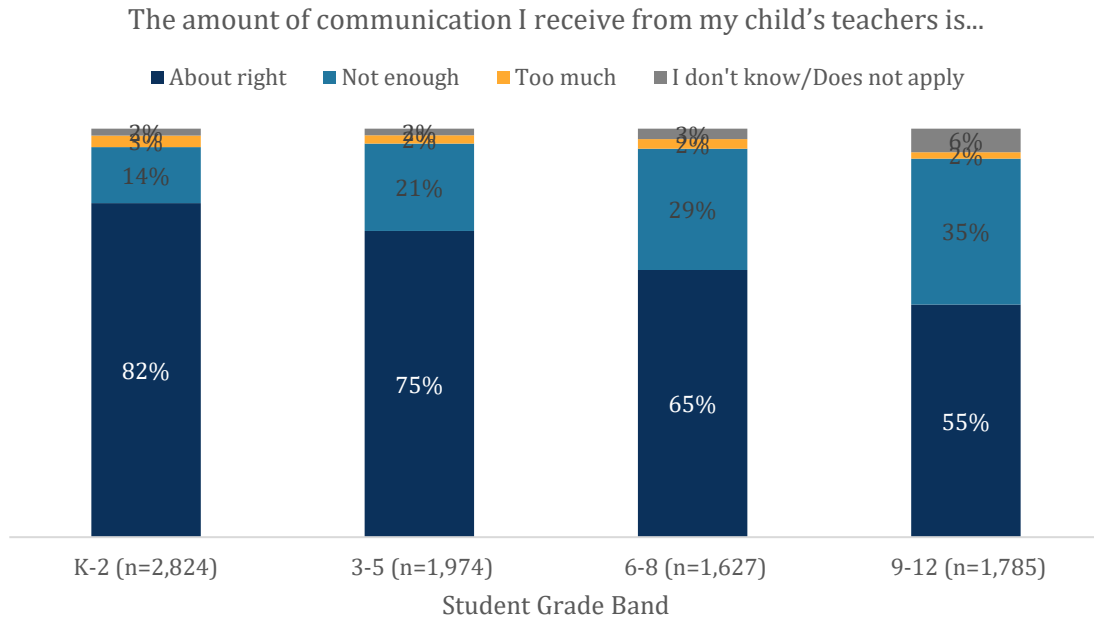


**A larger percentage of respondents with students in K-2 reported receiving enough communication from their child’s teachers, compared to respondents with students in other grades.**

Only about half (55%) of parents/guardians of high school students (grades 9-12) reported receiving enough communication from their child’s teachers, compared to 82% of parents/guardians of K-2 students (Figure 9). Generally, as the grade band increases, parent/guardian satisfaction with the frequency of communication decreases.



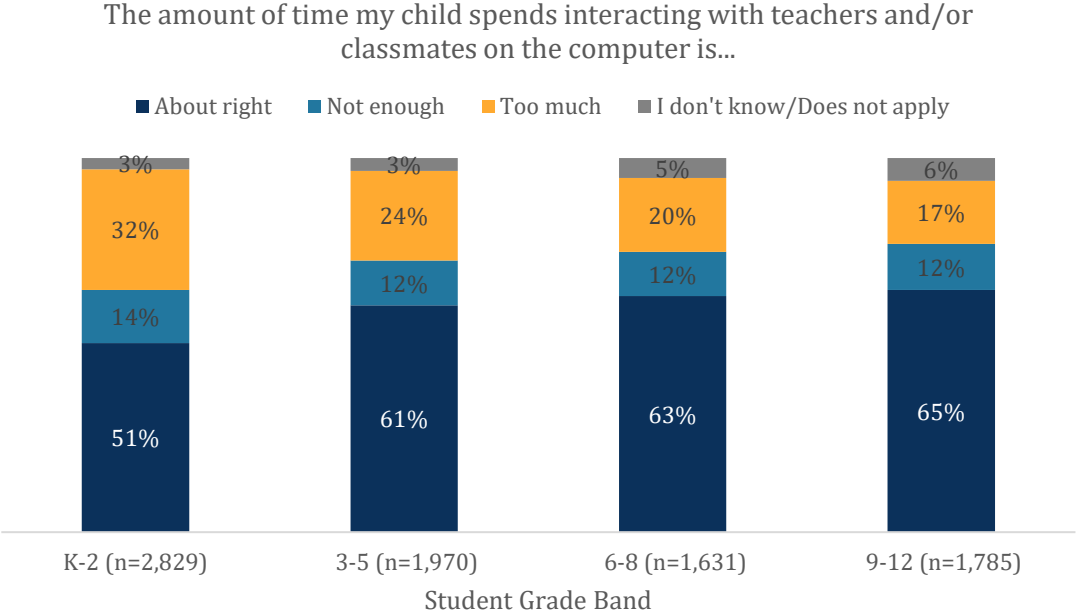
**Figure 9. Feedback from respondents about the amount of communication they receive from their child’s teachers, by grade band**



**A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time interacting with teachers and/or classmates on the computer, compared to respondents with students in other grades.**

About two-thirds of parents/guardians of students in middle and high school (grades 6-12) reported that their child spends about the right amount of time interacting with teachers and/or classmates online (63% and 65%, respectively; Figure 10). About 10% of parents/guardians across all grade levels felt that their child is not spending enough time interacting with teachers or classmates online.

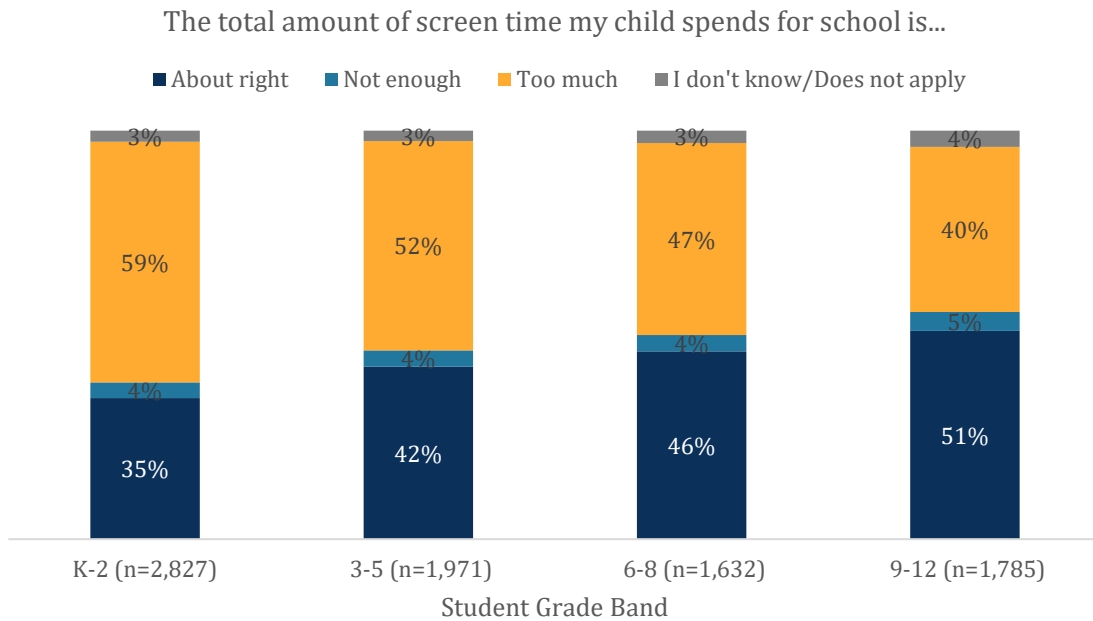
**Figure 10. Feedback on the amount of time their child spends interacting with teachers and classmates on the computer, by grade band**



**A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time online for school, compared to respondents with children in other grades.**

More than half of parents/guardians with children in grades K-5 feel that their child is getting too much “screen time” for school (59% and 52%, respectively; Figure 11). However, about half of parents/guardians with children in grades 6-12 feel that their child is getting about the right amount of screen time for school (46% and 51%, respectively).

**Figure 11. Feedback on the total amount of time their student spends online for school, by grade band**



**Some parents/guardians of Kindergartners used the open-ended comment to emphasize that they think their child is spending too much time on the computer.**

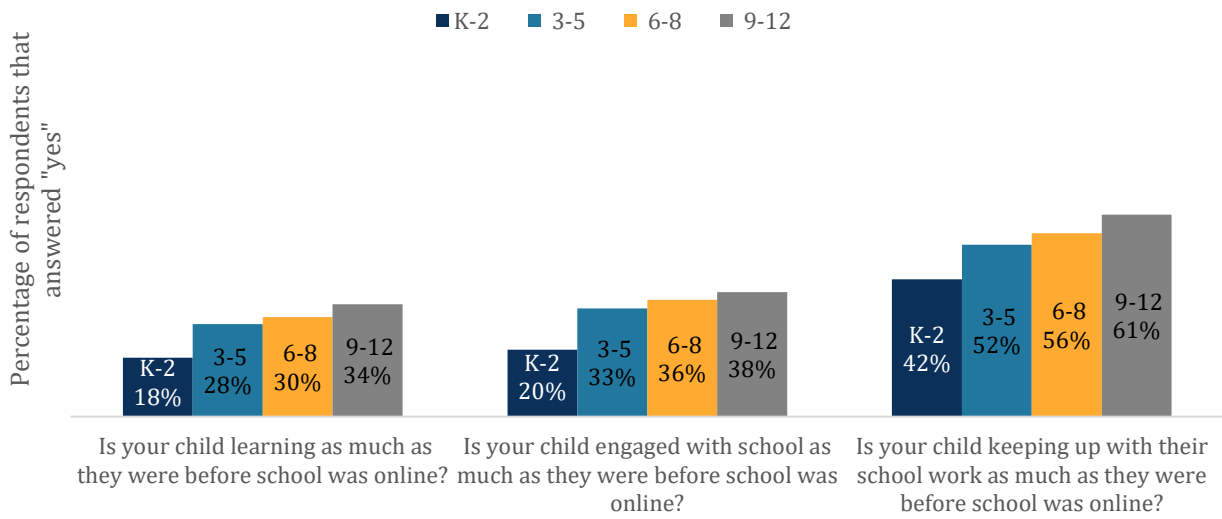
Seventy-five respondents specified that their child was 5-years-old or in Kindergarten in the open-ended comments. All of these were negatively coded (some were both positive and negative, see Appendix A). In about a third of these cases (N=25), parents/guardians expressed that they believe their child is being asked to spend too much time on the computer.

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

**A smaller percentage of respondents with students in grades K-2 reported that their child is learning as much as they did before school was online, compared to respondents with students in other grades.**

Overall, less than one-third of parents/guardians across all grade levels reported that their child was learning as much as they were before school was online (Figure 12). Similarly, less than 40% of parents/guardians across all grade levels reported that their child is as engaged as they were before school was online. A slightly larger percentage of parents/guardians across grade levels reported that their child is keeping up with schoolwork as much as they were before school was online; however, this percentage is still lower for parents/guardians of K-2 students than it is for those of children in other grades (42%, versus 52%, 56%, and 61%, respectively.)

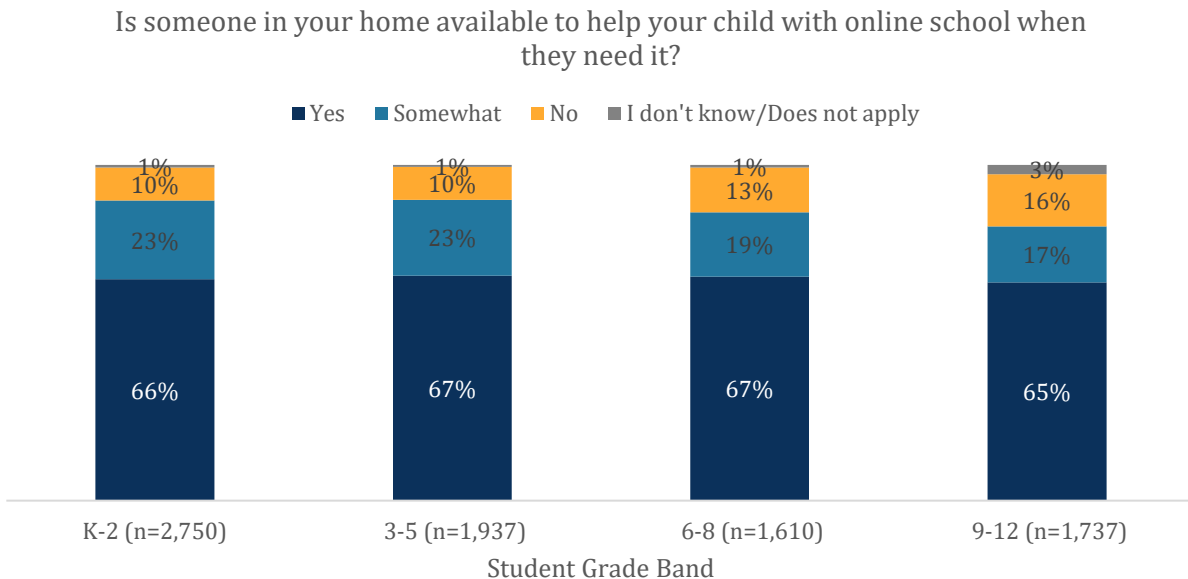
**Figure 12. Percentage of respondents who agreed that their child is learning as much and is as engaged with school as they were before school was online, by grade band**



**Between 10% and 16% of respondents across all grade levels reported that there is not someone available in the home to help their child with online school when needed.**

The number of respondents that reported that there is someone available at home to help their child is slightly higher for parents/guardians with students in grades K-5 than it is for those with students in grades 6-12 (Figure 13).

**Figure 13. The percentage of respondents who reported that someone was available at home to help their child with online school, by grade band**

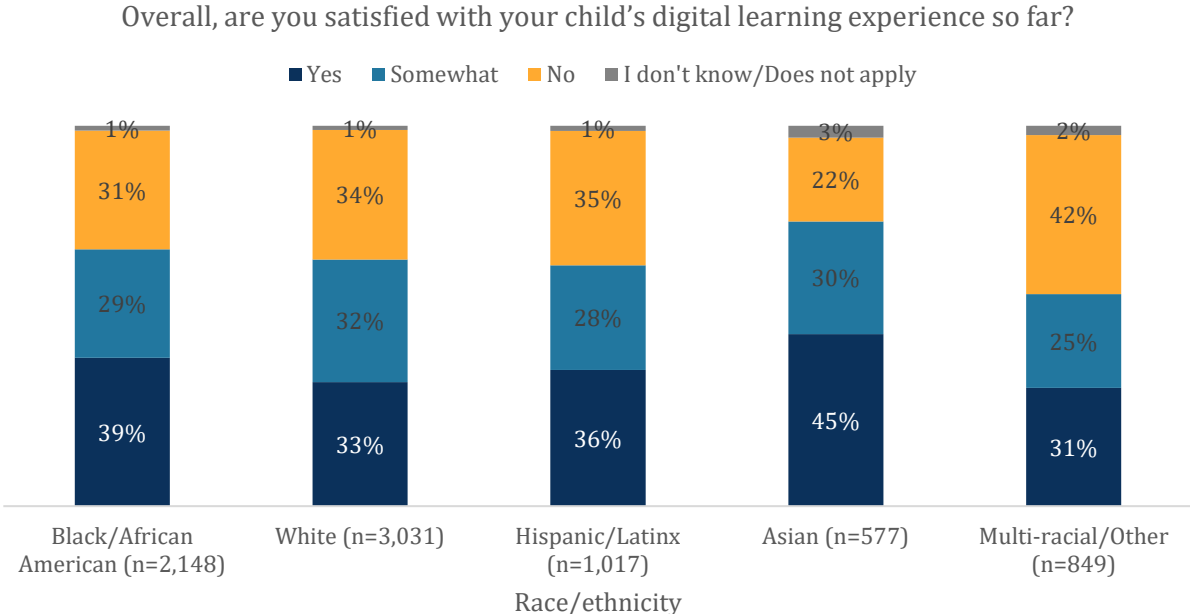


**There were some differences in parent/guardian responses by race/ethnicity to questions about overall satisfaction, learning, engagement, and screen time.**

**Asian respondents reported feeling more satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience than respondents of other races/ethnicities.**

About 45% of parent/guardian respondents who identified as Asian said they were satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience compared to about a third of Black/ African American, White, Hispanic/Latinx, and Multi-racial/Other<sup>2</sup> parents/guardians (39%, 33%, 36% and 31%, respectively, Figure 14). Compared to respondents in all other race/ethnicity groups, Multi-racial/Other<sup>3</sup> parents/guardians had the largest percentage that reported they were not satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience (42% compared to 31%, 34%, 35%, and 22%).

**Figure 14. Overall satisfaction with their child’s digital learning experience, by race/ethnicity**



**Note:** Multi-racial/Other includes Multi-racial, “Other,” Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native. These categories were combined for analysis due to low N counts.

<sup>2</sup> Includes Multi-racial, “Other,” Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native. These categories were combined for analysis due to low N counts.

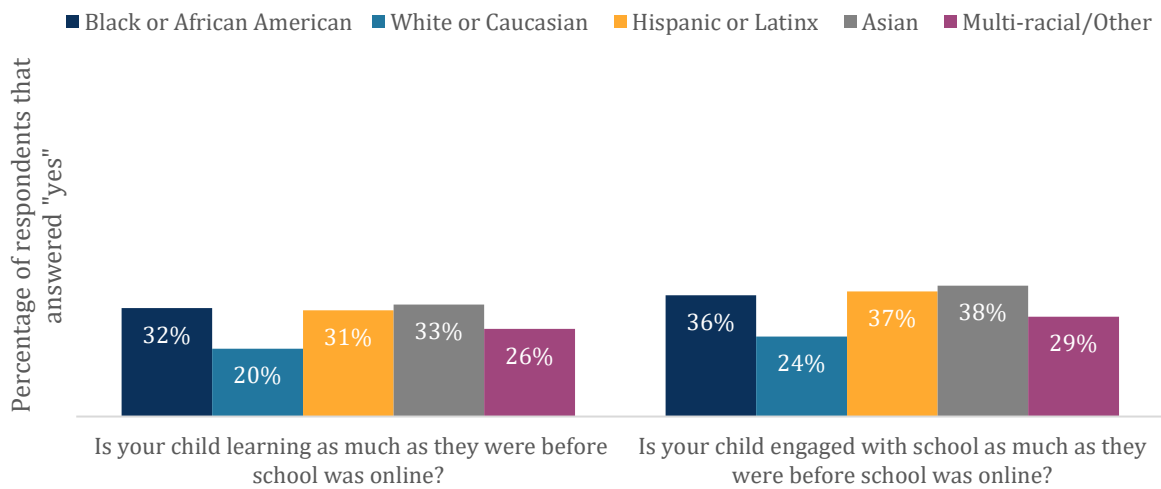
<sup>3</sup> Includes Multi-racial, “Other,” Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native. These categories were combined for analysis due to low N counts.

**A smaller percentage of White and Multi-racial respondents reported that their child is learning as much online as they did before school was online (20% and 26%, respectively), compared to respondents of other races/ethnicities.**

About one-third of parents/guardians in other racial/ethnic categories (Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Asian) reported that their child is learning as much as they were before school was online (32%, 31%, and 33%, respectively; Figure 15).

A smaller percentage of White and Multi-racial parents/guardians reported that their child is engaged with school as much as they were before school was online, compared to parents/guardians in other racial/ethnic categories (24% and 29%, respectively). A larger percentage of Asian parents/guardians reported that their child is engaged as much as they were before school was online than parents/guardians in other racial/ethnic categories (38%).

**Figure 15. Percentage of respondents who agreed that their child is learning as much and it as engaged with school as they were before school was online, by race/ethnicity**

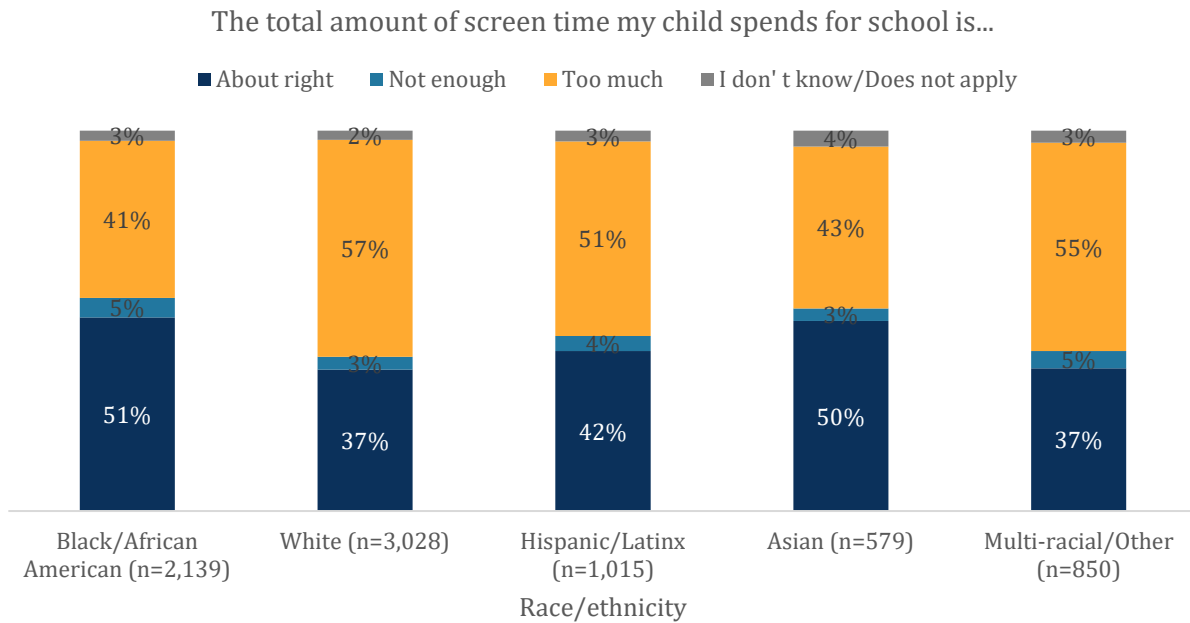


**Note:** Multi-racial/Other includes Multi-racial, "Other," Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native. These categories were combined for analysis due to low N counts.

**A larger percentage of White respondents said their child spends too much time online for school than respondents in other racial/ethnic categories.**

More than half of White, Hispanic/Latinx, and Multi-racial parents/guardians indicated that their child is spending too much time online for school (57%, 51%, and 55%, respectively; Figure 16). About 40% of Black/African American and Asian parents/guardians reported their child is spending too much time online for school (41% and 43%, respectively).

**Figure 16. Feedback on the total amount of time their student spends online for school, by race/ethnicity**



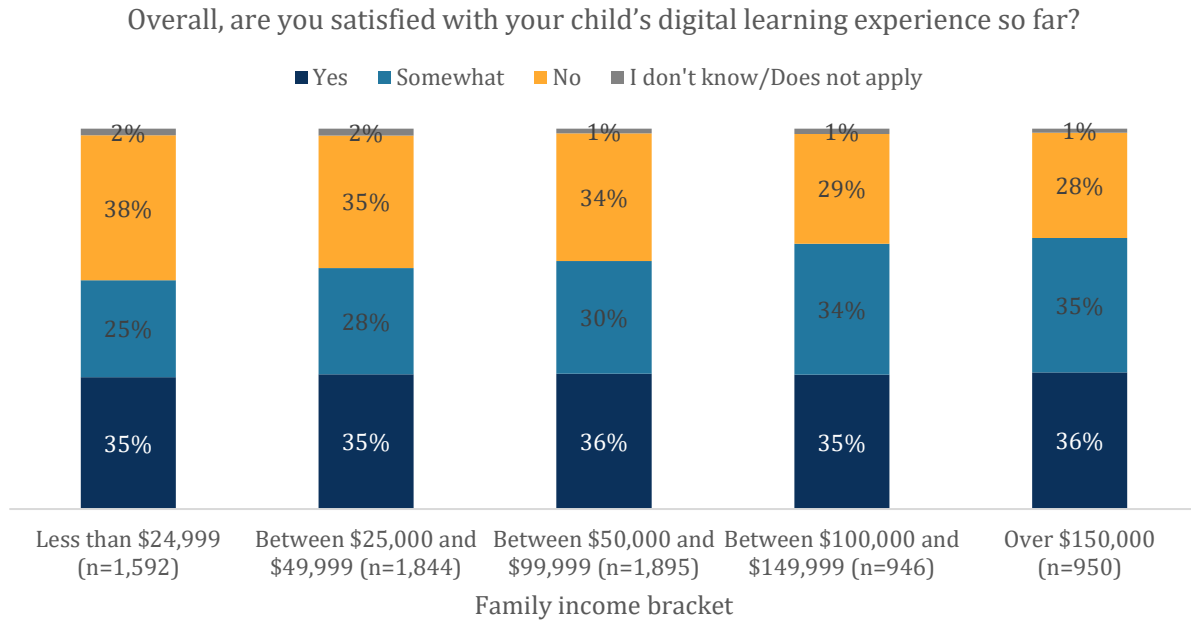
**Note:** Multi-racial/Other includes Multi-racial, “Other,” Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan Native. These categories were combined for analysis due to low N counts.

**There were differences in parent/guardian responses by self-reported family income to questions about overall satisfaction, learning, engagement, communication, and screen time.**

**A larger percentage of respondents from the lower income brackets report that they are not satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience, compared to respondents from higher income brackets.**

About 38% of parents/guardians who reported that they make less than \$24,999 said they feel unsatisfied with their child’s digital learning experience, compared to 28% of parents/guardians who make over \$150,000 (Figure 17).

**Figure 17. Overall satisfaction with their child’s digital learning experience, by self-reported family income**

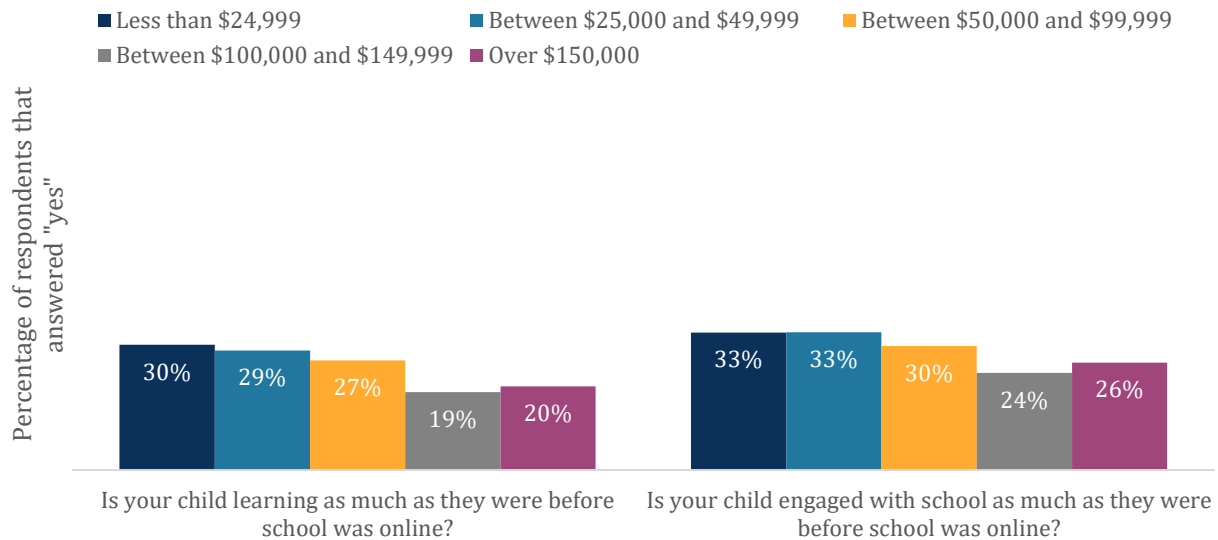


**A larger percentage of respondents in lower income brackets said their child is as engaged and learning as much as they were before school was online, compared to respondents in higher income brackets.**

Around one-quarter (26%) of parents/guardians in the highest income bracket reported that their child was learning as much as they were before it was online, compared to one-third of parents/guardians in the lowest income bracket (Figure 18). Similarly, there was a 10-percentage point difference in the percent of parents/guardians from the highest income bracket and the percent of parents/guardians from the lowest income bracket that reported their child was learning as much as before school was online (20% and 30%, respectively).



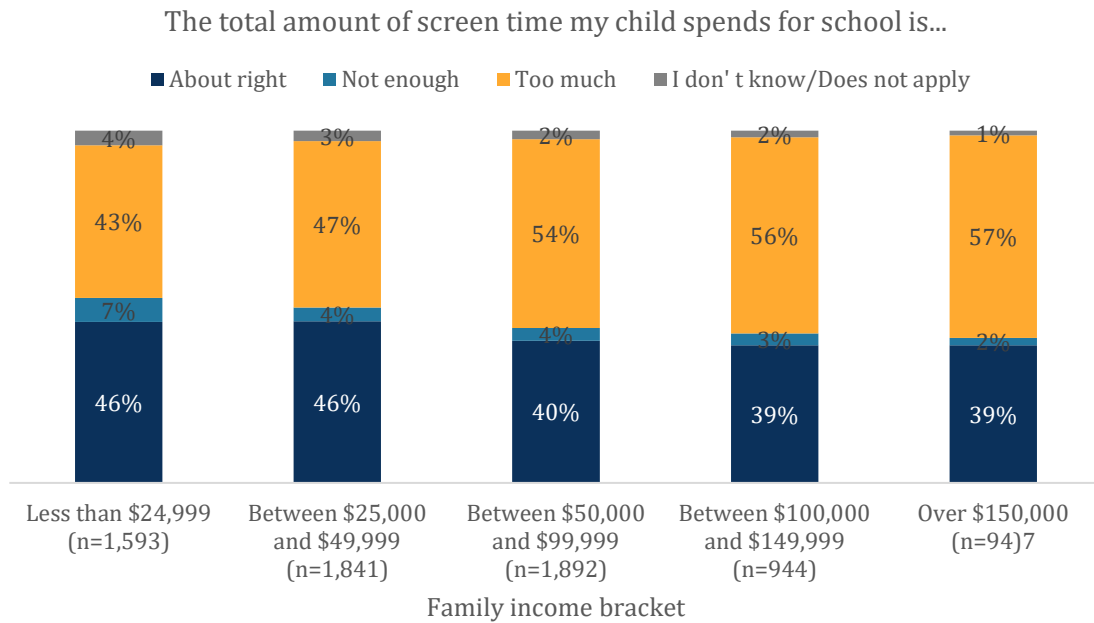
**Figure 18. Percentage of respondents who agreed that their child is learning as much and is as engaged with school as they were before school was online, by self-reported family income**



**A larger percentage of respondents in higher income brackets reported that their child spends too much time online for school than respondents in lower income brackets.**

Forty-three percent and 47% of parents/guardians in the two lowest income brackets reported that their child spends too much time online for school, while 55% and 57% of parents/guardians in the two highest income brackets felt their child gets too much “screen time” for school. Compared to the respondents from the highest income bracket, there was a five-percentage point difference in the percent of respondents from the lowest income bracket that felt their child was not getting enough screen time (2% and 7%, respectively) (Figure 19).

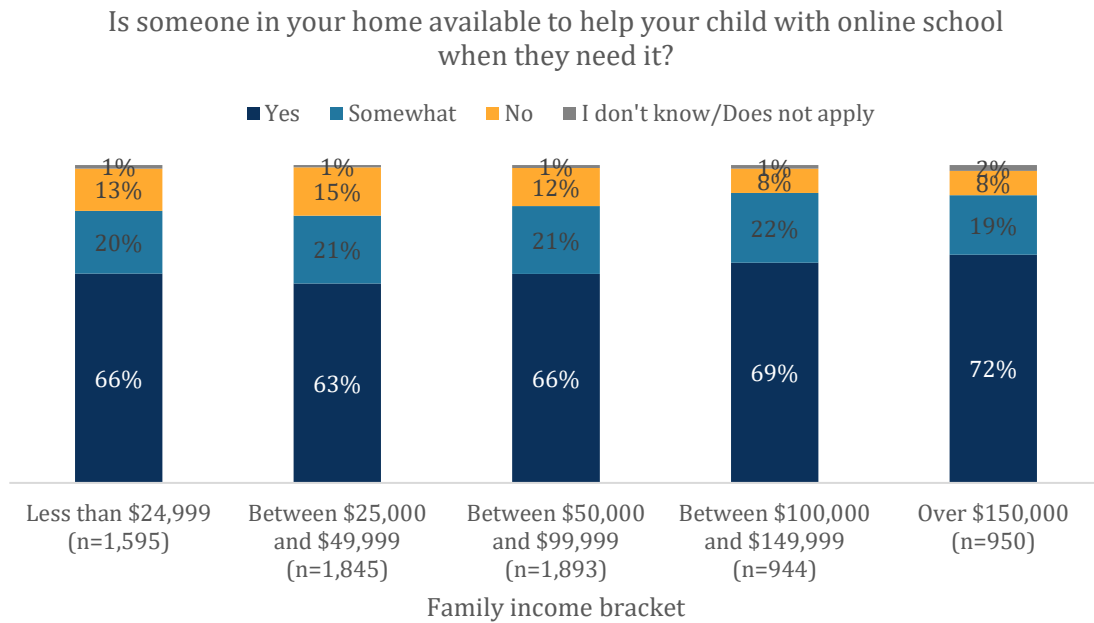
**Figure 19. Feedback on the total amount of time their student spends online for school, by self-reported family income bracket**



**A larger percentage of respondents from higher income brackets reported that there is someone available at home to help their child with online school when needed, compared to respondents from lower income brackets.**

Two-thirds (66%) of parents/guardian respondents from the lowest income bracket reported that there is someone available at home to assist their child with online school, compared to 72% of parents/guardian respondents in the highest income bracket (Figure 20).

**Figure 20. The percentage of respondents who reported if someone was available at home to help their child with online school, by self-reported family income**



**There were differences in parent/guardian responses by self-reported student Individualized Education Program (IEP) status to questions about overall satisfaction, engagement, academic and social support, and communication.<sup>4</sup>**

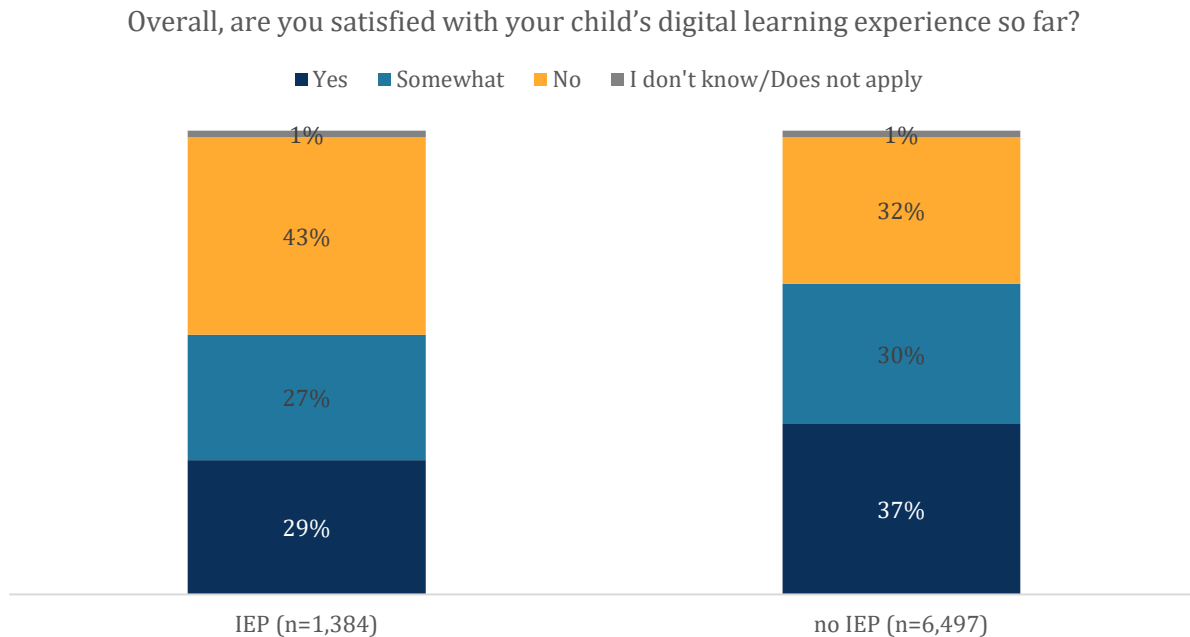
**A smaller percentage of respondents with students with IEPs reported feeling satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience than respondents of students without an IEP.**

One on the initial questions on the survey asked parents/guardians if their child receives special education services (has an IEP). Of those that said yes, 43% reported that they were not satisfied with their child’s digital learning experience, compared to 32% of parents/guardians that said their child does not have special education services or have an IEP (Figure 21).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> However, there were no notable differences in responses by English Learner (EL) status.

<sup>5</sup> Excludes those who left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**Figure 21. Respondents’ overall satisfaction with their child’s digital learning experience, by students’ IEP status**



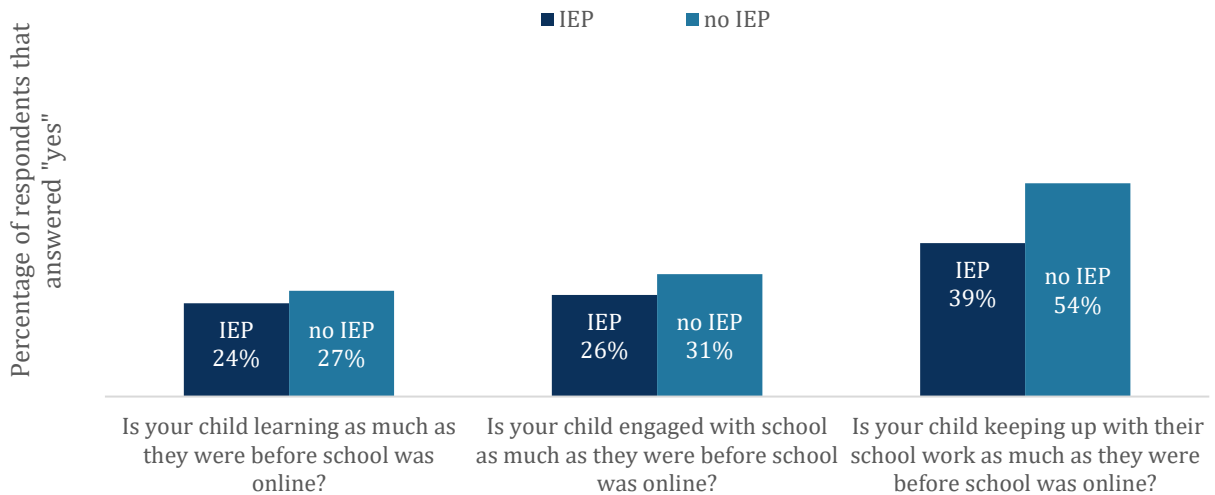
**Note:** Excludes those that left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**A smaller percentage of respondents with children with IEPs reported that their child was learning as much as they were before school was online, compared to respondents whose child does not have an IEP.**

A smaller percentage of parents/guardians of children with an IEP also reported that their child was engaged with school as much as they were before school was online, compared to parents/guardians of children without an IEP (26% and 31%, respectively; Figure 22). About 40% of parents/guardians of children with an IEP reported that their child was keeping up with their schoolwork as much as they were when school was online, compared to 54% of parents/guardians whose child does not have an IEP.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Excludes those who left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**Figure 22. Percentage of respondents who agreed that their child is learning as much and is as engaged with school as they were before school was online, by students' IEP status**



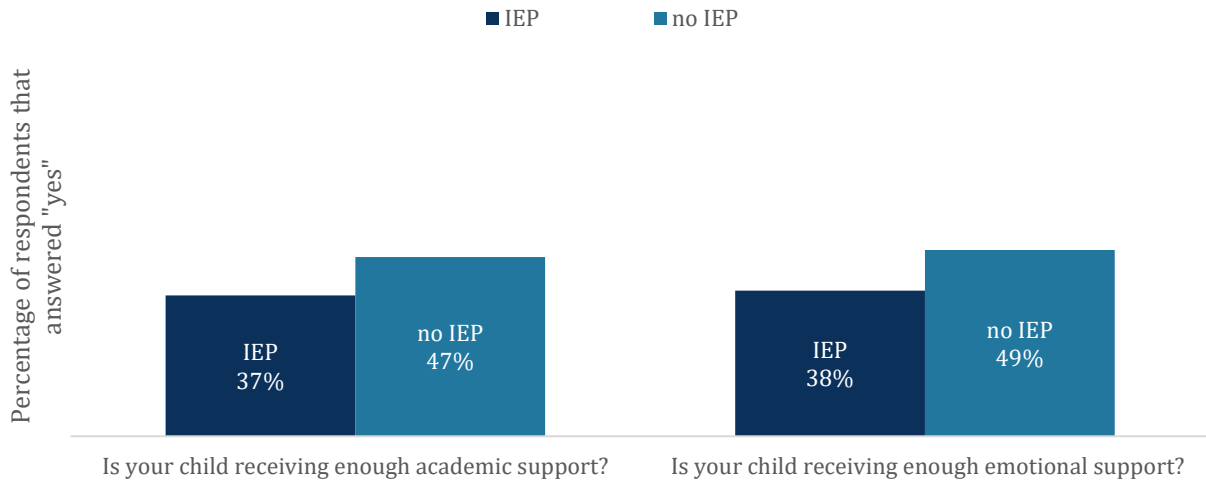
**Note:** Excludes those that left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**A smaller percentage of respondents of students with IEPs reported that their child receives enough academic and emotional support, compared to respondents of children without an IEP.**

About 37% of parents/guardians of children with an IEP reported that their child receives sufficient academic and emotional support, compared to about 48% of parents/guardians of children without an IEP (Figure 23).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Excludes those who left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**Figure 23. Percentage of respondents who agreed that their child is receiving enough academic and emotional support, by students' IEP status**



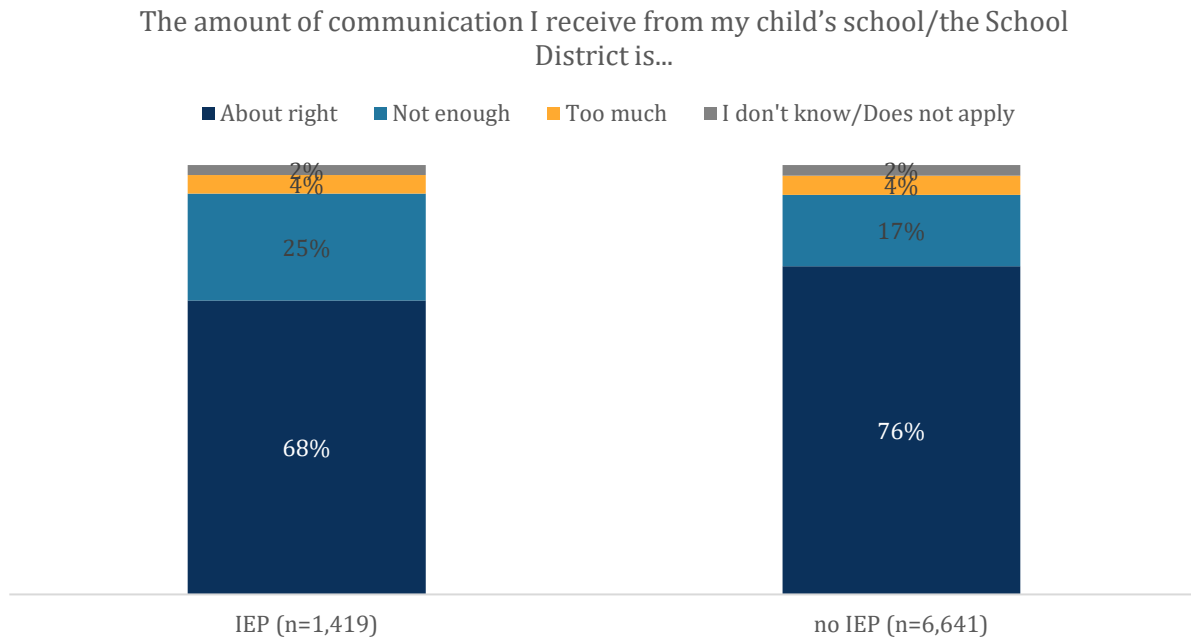
**Note:** Excludes those that left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**A larger percentage of respondents with students with an IEP reported that they did not receive enough communication from their child’s school or the District, compared to respondents of students who do not have an IEP.**

About a quarter of parents/guardians of students with an IEP said they did not get enough communication from their child’s school/the School District, which is about eight percentage points higher than parents/guardians of students without IEPs. For both student groups, few (4%) parents/guardians reported getting too much communication (Figure 24).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> **Note:** Excludes those who left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**Figure 24. Feedback on the amount of communication they receive from their child’s school/ the School District, by students’ IEP status**



**Note:** Excludes those that left the question “Does your child receive special education services (have an IEP)?” blank or selected “I don’t know” (N=271).

**Open-ended comments that mentioned having a student with special needs were mostly negative.**

The experiences of parents/guardians of students with IEPs were also reflected in the open-ended comments, particularly those that were longer than 2 or 3 words. Responses that noted that the child had an IEP, received or was supposed to receive special education services, or mentioned that the student has a disability were mostly negative (80%), expressing that digital learning has been very hard, frustrating, and not suitable for their child given their needs.

**Note:** These findings are not generalizable and only reflect a subset of parents/guardians that completed the survey.

## Conclusions

### Key takeaways about the survey respondents

Parents/guardians were given the opportunity to provide feedback about their experiences with digital learning during the first few weeks of the 2020-21 school year. Of the parents/guardians that responded, 40% were White (compared to 14% of students enrolled in SDP), 28% were Black/African American (compared to 52% of students enrolled in SDP), 13% were Hispanic/Latinx (compared to 21% of students enrolled in SDP), 8% were Asian (compared to 7% of students enrolled in SDP), and 7% were Multi-racial (compared to 5% of students enrolled in SDP).<sup>9</sup> This means that White parents/guardians are overrepresented and Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx parents/guardians are underrepresented. Additionally, while about 21% of SDP students are enrolled in grades K-2, about a third (34%) of the respondents were parents/guardians of students in grades K-2, meaning that the experiences of parents/guardians of younger students are also overrepresented.

### Key takeaways from the survey responses

One-third of survey respondents reported that they are satisfied with their child's digital learning experience so far.

- Respondents with students in Kindergarten through second grade (K-2) reported feeling less satisfied with their child's digital learning experience than respondents with students in other grades.
- Asian respondents reported feeling more satisfied with their child's digital learning experience than respondents of other races/ethnicities.
- A larger percentage of respondents from the lower income brackets report that they are not satisfied with their child's digital learning experience, compared to respondents from higher income brackets.
- A smaller percentage of respondents with students with IEPs reported feeling satisfied with their child's digital learning experience than respondents of students without an IEP.
- Open-ended comments included feedback on communication and highlighted the hard work and dedication of teachers.

About three-quarters of respondents felt that the amount of communication they received from their child's school, the District, and their child's teachers is "about right."

- A larger percentage of respondents with students in K-2 reported receiving enough communication from their child's teachers, compared to respondents with students in other grades.

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<sup>9</sup> Enrollment is based on the October 1, 2020 snapshot.



- A smaller percentage of respondents with students with an IEP reported that they received enough communication from their child’s school or the District, compared to respondents of students who do not have an IEP.

About half of respondents reported their child is getting too much “screen time” because of digital learning.

- A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time interacting with teachers and/or classmates on the computer, compared to respondents with students in other grades.
- A larger percentage of respondents with K-2 students reported that their child spends too much time online for school, compared to respondents with children in other grades.
- A larger percentage of White respondents said their child spends too much time online for school than respondents in other racial/ethnic categories.
- A larger percentage of respondents in higher income brackets reported that their child spends too much time online for school than respondents in lower income brackets.

About 40% of respondents reported that their child is not learning as much as they were before school was online, and that their child is not as engaged with school as they were before school was online.

- A smaller percentage of respondents with students in grades K-2 reported that their child is learning as much as they did before school was online, compared to respondents with students in other grades.
- A smaller percentage of White and Multi-racial respondents reported that their child is learning as much online as they did before school was online, compared to respondents of other races/ethnicities.
- A larger percentage of respondents in lower income brackets said their child is learning as much as they were before school was online, compared to respondents in higher income brackets.
- A smaller percentage of respondents with children with IEPs reported that their child was learning as much as they were before school was online, compared to respondents whose child does not have an IEP.
- Feedback to the open-ended question expresses that students are having trouble focusing at home.

About half of respondents reported that their child is receiving enough academic and emotional support, though in the open-ended responses, some parents/guardians expressed a desire for more school-based support for their students.

- A smaller percentage of respondents of students with IEPs reported that their child receives enough academic and emotional support, compared to respondents of children without an IEP.

Between 10% and 16% of respondents across all grade levels reported that there is not someone available in the home to help their child with online school when needed.

- A larger percentage of respondents from higher income brackets reported that there is someone available at home to help their child with online school when needed, compared to respondents from lower income brackets.

## Appendix

A final question on the survey asked: “In one or two words, how would you describe your experience with digital learning this fall.” Over 7,000 (n=7,468) respondents left a comment in response to this question, and over two-thirds (65%, N=4,833) of those responded in one to three words. Responses were coded as positive, negative, neutral, or a combination of the three. In some cases, comments were a series of two distinct words (e.g., “challenging and different” or “disastrous and necessary”). In other cases, respondents used one word to modify the meaning of the second word (e.g., “not terrible” or “very confusing”). Responses were coded as neutral if they were not clearly positive or negative (e.g., “it’s ok,” “new,” or “different”). If a response was both negative and positive, both neutral and negative, or both neutral and positive it was double coded. This often occurred when comments were comprised of two words or phrases separated by “but,” for example “not ideal but necessary to keep everyone safe” or “going great but too much screen time.” In cases where the intended meaning of the response was unclear, the responses were coded as “unclear” (e.g., “not challenging” could be positive if it is referring to the situation overall, but could also be negative if it is referring to the rigor of the school work). Instances where respondents left comments such as “I don’t know,” “Not sure,” and “N/A” (N=17) were not coded (Tables A1 and A2).

**Table A1. Number of Open-ended Responses by Positive, Negative, and Neutral Codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Positive Only	2,178
Negative Only	4,103
Neutral Only	648
Positive and Negative	420
Positive and Neutral	9
Negative and Neutral	39
Unclear	54
I don’t know, N/A, Not sure	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,468</b>

**Table A2. Number of Open-ended Responses by Positive, Negative, and Neutral Code with Notes and Examples**

Code	Number of Responses	Most Common Word or Phrase	Notes about Coding	Example Responses and Variations
Positive	2,607 (includes positive and negative and positive and neutral)	"Good" (N=596)	The count includes responses such as "It's good," "It's going good," and "So far so good." It also includes responses that included an adjective before the word "good" or included "good" as an adjective or adverb, such as "Surprisingly good," "Very good," or "Good effort."	"Good;" "Good and safe;" "Good so far;" "Good, given the circumstances;" "Very good;" "Good effort"
Negative	4,562 (includes positive and negative and negative and neutral)	"Stressful" (N=285)	The count includes responses such as "It's stressful," "Stressed," and "Very stressful."	"It's stressful for my kid;" "Stressful;" "Stressful and overwhelming"
Neutral	696 (includes positive and neutral and negative and neutral)	"Ok" (N=301)	The count includes responses such as "It's ok," "It's going ok," and "Working ok."	"Going ok;" "Is okay;" "It has been okay."
Positive and Negative	420	"Too much screen time" and "Great teachers" (N=24)	Count includes responses that includes the opinion that students spend too much time on the computer and praise for or satisfaction with teachers.	"teachers are amazing, too much screen time;" "The teacher and the school are doing a great job, but it is too much time in front of the computer;" "the teacher is great, however I think for a 1st grader it is too many hours for them to be on virtual learning," "Too much computer time, but a great teacher nonetheless!"
Positive and Neutral	9	"Okay" and "Safe" (N=2)	Both responses included the words "Okay" and "Safe."	"Okay, Safe"

Negative and Neutral	39	“Okay” and “Too much screen time” (N=4)	All four responses included one of the variations of “Okay” and the opinion that students spend too much time on the computer.	“It’s ok but it’s too much screen time;” “It’s ok. It’s a lot of time spent on the Chromebook.”
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**Note:** Response counts in the table do NOT include responses that contained an adverb or adjective before the common word such that the meaning of the comment is the opposite of the meaning of the common word. For example, responses such as “Not good” are not included in the count of positively coded responses that contained the word “good.”

In addition to coding responses with positive, negative, and neutral codes, codes were used to identify comments that specifically mentioned a particular student characteristic, namely “Kindergarten,” “Special Education (SPED),” and “English learner (EL).” The “Kindergarten” code was used when the respondent noted their feedback was a Kindergarten or specifically a “5-year-old” (N=87). The “SPED” code was used for responses that mentioned IEPs, special education, or named a disability such as autism or ADHD (N=79). There were two cases where the response noted that the student was an English learner, both of these were given the “EL” code (Table A3).

**Table A3. Number of Open-ended Responses by Student Characteristic Codes by Positive, Negative, and Neutral Codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Number of Positive Responses</b>	<b>Number of Negative Responses</b>	<b>Number of Positive and Negative</b>	<b>Number of Neutral Responses</b>
Kindergarten	87	0	73*	12	1
SPED	79	4^	63	9	1
EL	2	0	2	0	0

\*Includes the two response that were coded both negative and neutral.

^Includes the one response that was coded both positive and neutral.