THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

Results from the Parent & Family University Survey and Listening Sessions

Results from survey questions included in the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Survey and from seven listening sessions held in spring 2025

Office of Research and Evaluation

July 2025

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Part I: Survey Results

Survey Context and Administrative Procedures

- The School District of Philadelphia (SDP) administered a three-part survey to inform District priorities.
- The survey was distributed via a public survey link from February 18 to March 10, 2025.
- The survey was available in twelve languages in addition to English: Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Uzbek, and Vietnamese.
- The survey link was posted to the banner of the SDP main website and distributed by email to school leaders, staff, and parent/guardian email lists. The link was also shared on SDP social media accounts.

Survey Sample and Section Overview

Several key stakeholder groups were represented in the survey, including students, parents/guardians, school and non-school based staff, and community partners.

The FY 2026 Budget Priorities Survey included three main sections:

- Priorities for overall SDP budget and title grants
- **Priorities for Parent and Family University (for parents and guardians only)**
- Priorities for Facilities Planning

Priorities for Parent and Family University

The Parent and Family University program provides educational opportunities and resources for parents and families. It also aims to connect District families with services that support student and family wellness and success.

Respondents who selected “parent/guardian” as their role were asked a series of questions to help inform planning for the relaunch of Parent and Family University.

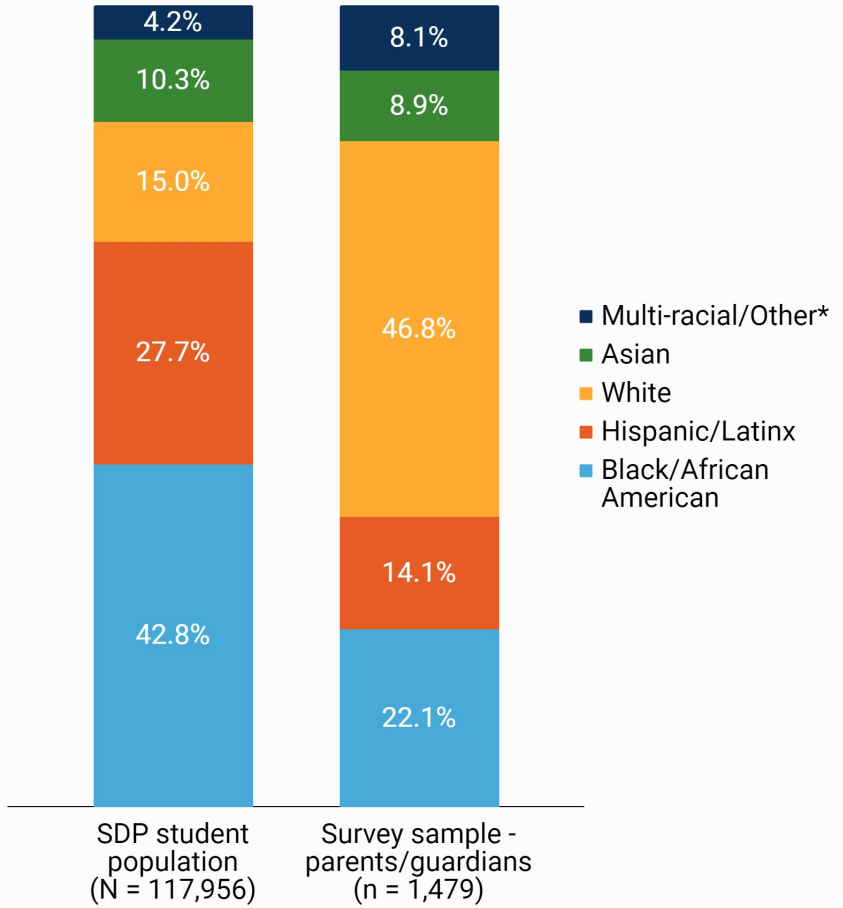
Parents and guardians answered questions about:

- Their likelihood of attending sessions on school-specific and related topics.
- Services that they would be interested in accessing.
- Their interest in various session formats.
- Supports and accommodations needed to participate in sessions.

Parent/guardian survey respondents were generally not representative of the District student population.

- 1,750 parents/guardians responded to the Parent and Family University section of the budget survey.
- Among parents/guardians who responded to the Parent and Family University questions, about 85% reported their race/ethnicity in the survey.
- While respondents represented a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, the sample was not representative of the District student population.
    - Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx respondents were underrepresented: 42.8% of District students identify as Black/African American, compared to 22.1% of parent/guardian respondents, and 27.7% of students identify as Hispanic/Latinx, compared to 14.1% of parent/guardian respondents.
    - White respondents had the most overrepresentation: 15% of District students identity as White, compared to 46.8% of parent/guardian respondents.

Parent/guardian race/ethnicity compared to 2024-25 SDP student population



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. SDP student population statistics are from the QlikBAM Enrollment - Oct 1 Snapshot app, 2024-25, for District and alternative schools.
**Native Hawaiian/Pac. Islander*, *Am. Indian/Alaskan Native,* and *Not listed* combined into *Multi-racial/Other* due to small sample size.

The reported household income of survey respondents did not fully reflect the Philadelphia population.

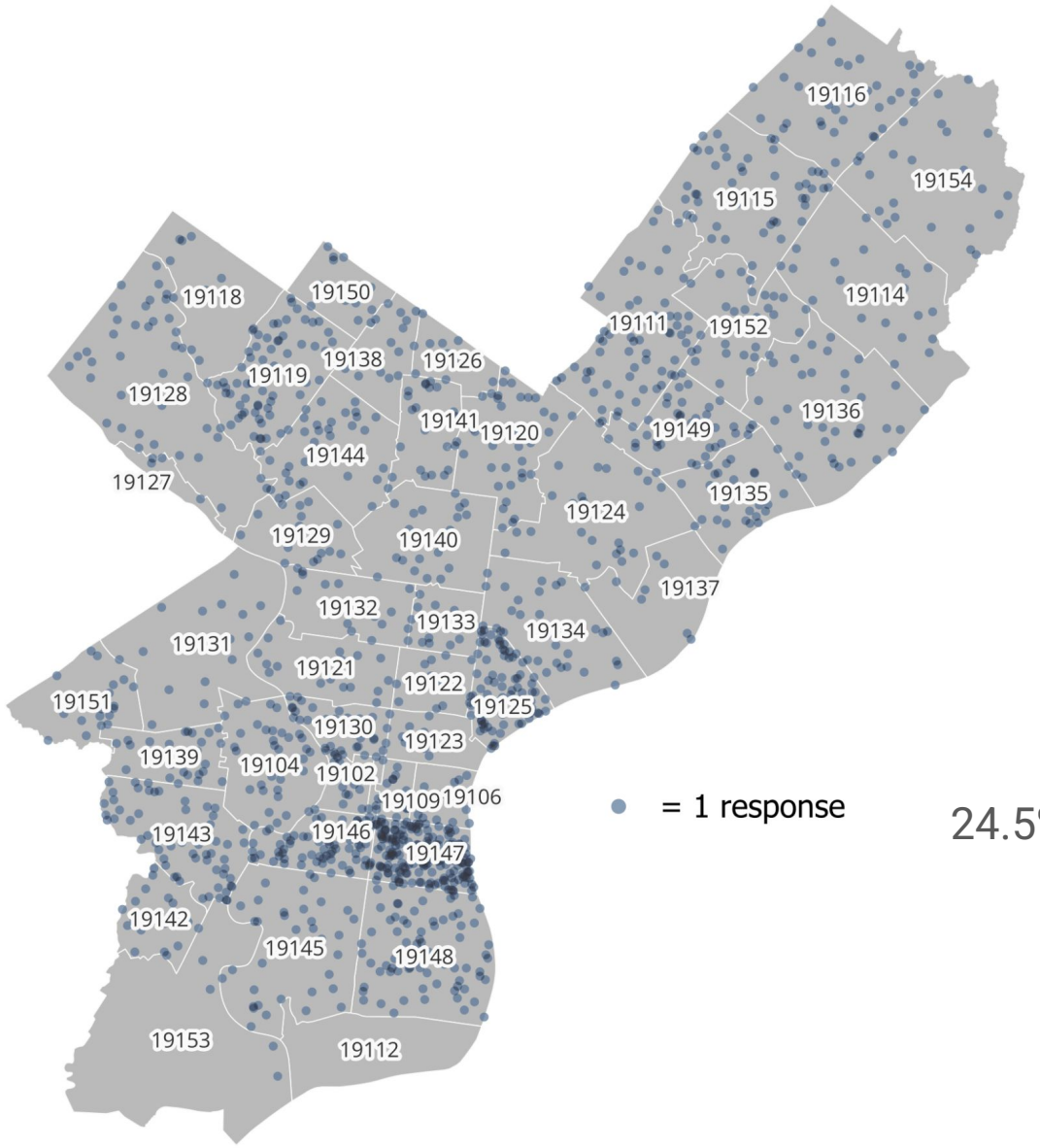
- Among the 1,750 parent/guardian who responded to the Parent and Family University section of the survey, roughly 82% reported their household income.
- While respondents reported a wide range of household income levels, lower-income households were underrepresented in the survey sample. Nearly 24% of Philadelphia households earn less than $24,999 per year, while only about 17% of respondents who reported their household income fell into this income bracket.
- Higher-income households were overrepresented: Roughly 28% of Philadelphia households earn more than $100,000 per year, while about 45% of survey respondents reported a household income in this bracket.

Percentage of respondents by household income (n = 1,427)

Household income	# of Respondents	% of Respondents	% of Philadelphia Households*
Less than $24,999	246	17.2%	23.9%
Between $25,000 and $49,999	250	17.5%	18.7%
Between $50,000 and $99,999	290	20.3%	29.1%
Between $100,000 and $149,999	230	16.1%	13.7%
Over $150,000	411	28.8%	14.6%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2023 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)." American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1901, 2023, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S1901?q=income%20philadelphia. Accessed on March 17, 2025.

The largest percentage of respondents were from zip codes in South Philadelphia.

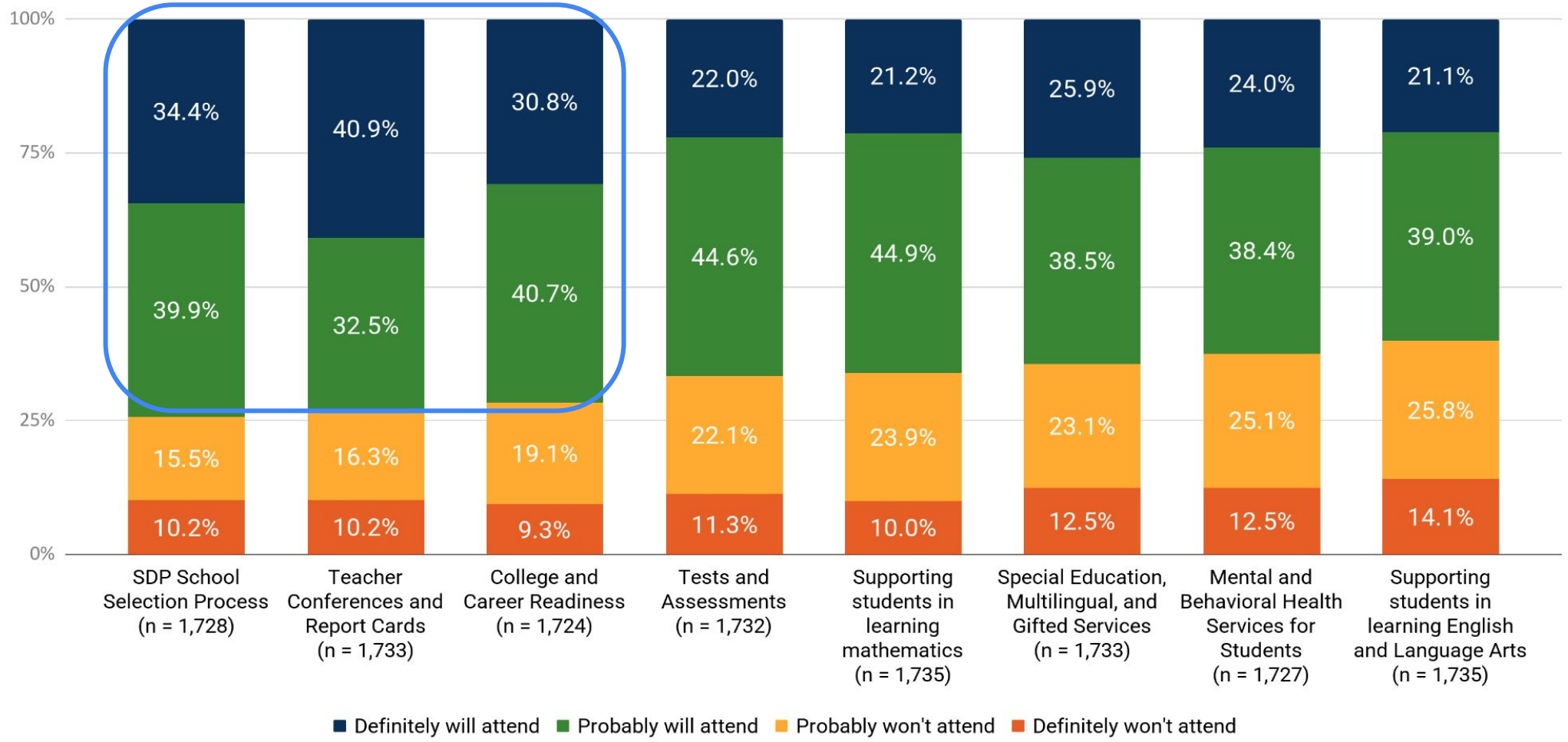


Nearly 1 in 4 parents/guardians (24.5%) who responded to the Parent and Family University section of the survey indicated that they live in South Philadelphia zip codes:

24.5%

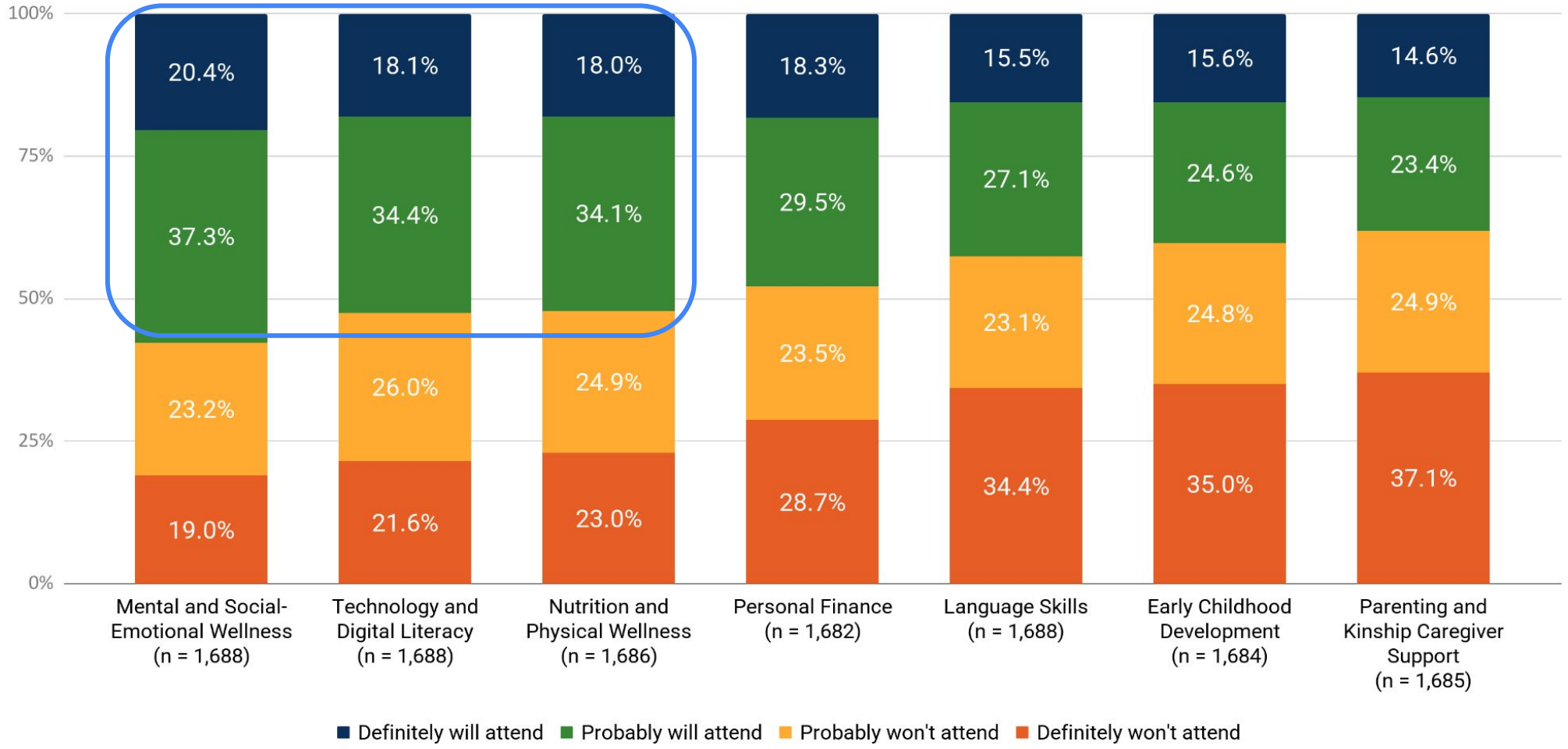
- 12% of respondents live in 19147
- 5% of respondents live in 19148
- 5% of respondents live in 19146
- 2.5% of respondents live in 19145

About 3 in 4 parents/guardians who responded to the Parent and Family University section of the survey expressed an interest in attending sessions focused on school-specific topics including: the school selection process, teacher conferences and report cards, and college and career readiness.



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. From left to right, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total "definitely will attend" and "probably will attend" responses.

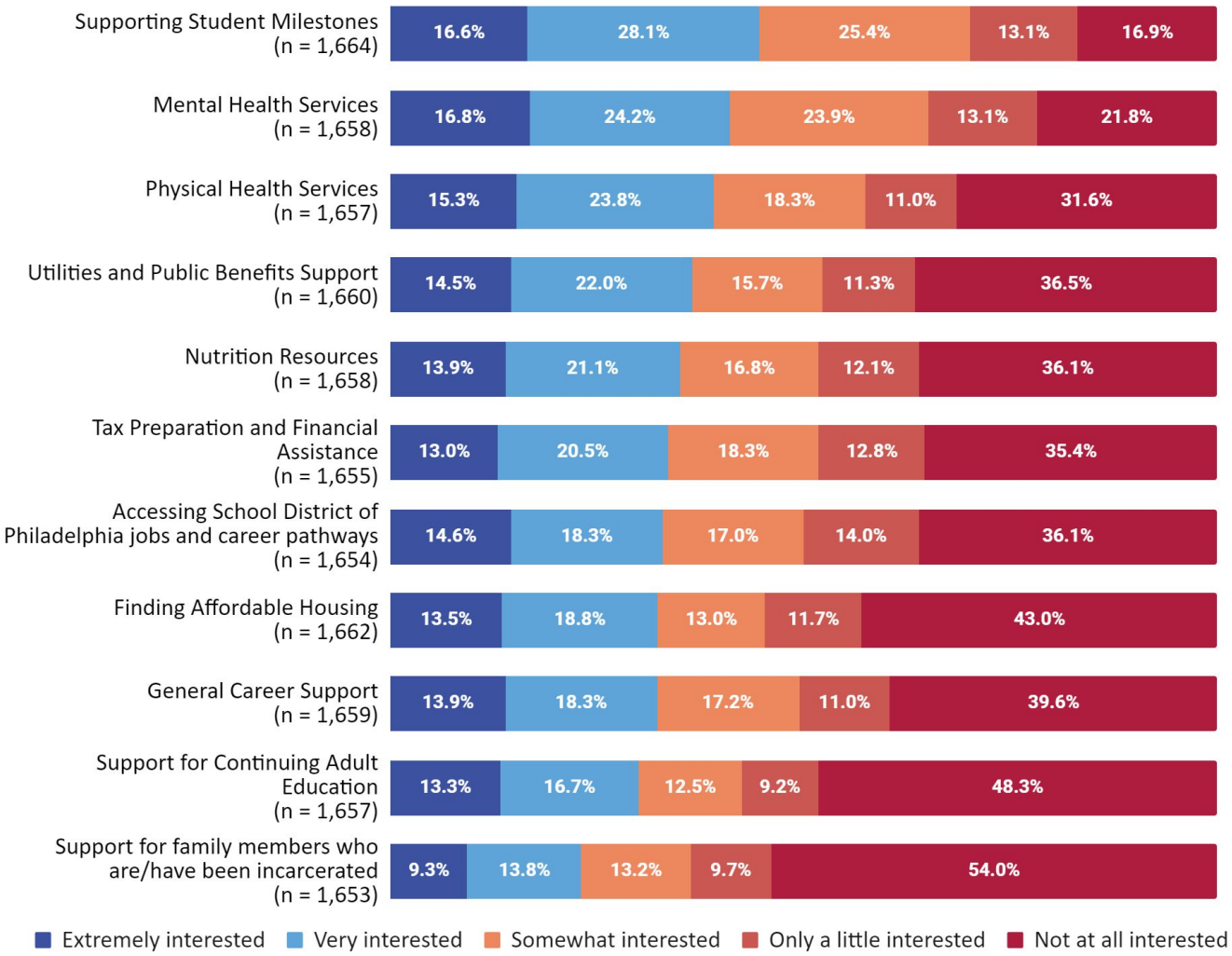
Over 50% of parents/guardians expressed an interest in attending sessions focused on broader topics including: mental and social-emotional wellness, technology and digital literacy, and nutrition and physical wellness.



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. From left to right, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total "definitely will attend" and "probably will attend" responses.

Parents/guardians had mixed interest in using various Parent and Family University services.

- Nearly 45% of respondents were “very” or “extremely” interested in services related to supporting student milestones.
- Similarly, mental health services received the highest percentage of “extremely” interested ratings.
- Over half of respondents (54%) were not interested in services that would support family members who are/were incarcerated.



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. From top to bottom, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total “extremely interested” and “very interested” responses.

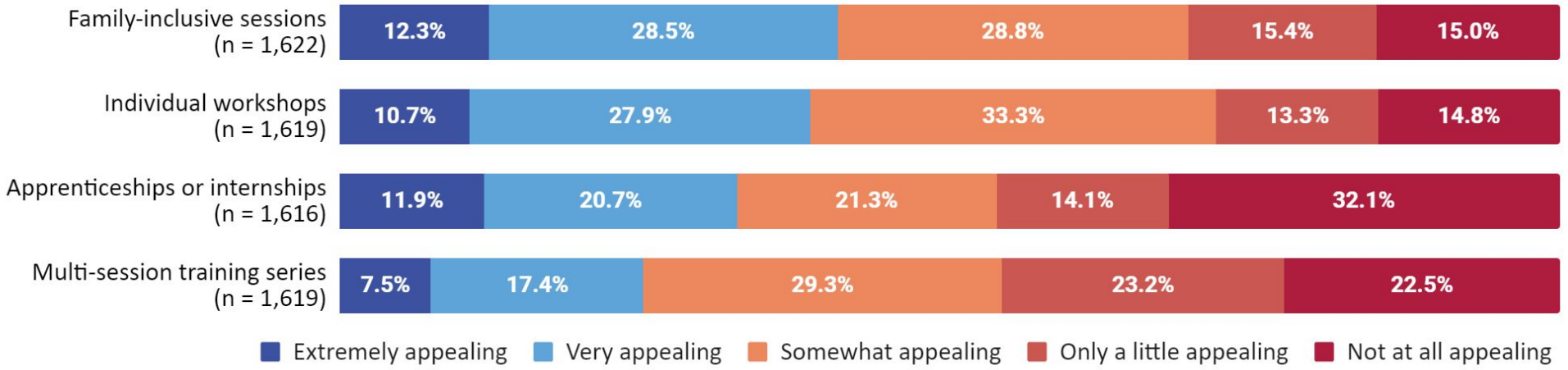
Interest in potential Parent and Family University services varied across racial/ethnic groups. For example, the majority of Hispanic/Latinx (61%) and Black/African American (72%) respondents were extremely or very interested in "supporting student milestones," compared to less than half of respondents who identified as Multi-racial, Asian, or White.

Parent and Family University Services	Multi-racial/Other* (n = 120)	Asian (n = 130)	White (n = 685)	Hispanic/Latinx (n = 208)	Black/African American (n = 326)	Overall (N = 1,469)
Supporting Student Milestones	47%	43%	25%	61%	72%	45%
Mental Health Services	37%	30%	25%	62%	64%	41%
Physical Health Services	42%	38%	18%	68%	62%	39%
Utilities and Public Benefits Support	37%	34%	15%	66%	60%	37%
Nutrition Resources	37%	28%	13%	63%	61%	35%
Tax Preparation and Financial Assistance	32%	33%	13%	61%	56%	34%
Accessing School District of Philadelphia jobs and career pathways	29%	32%	15%	57%	54%	33%
Finding Affordable Housing	33%	26%	13%	56%	57%	32%
General Career Support	30%	33%	14%	57%	52%	32%
Support for Continuing Adult Education	27%	29%	12%	56%	49%	30%
Support for family members who are/have been incarcerated	24%	18%	9%	40%	41%	23%

Note: From top to bottom, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total "extremely interested" and "very interested" responses.
**Native Hawaiian/Pac. Islander*, *Am. Indian/Alaskan Native,* and *Not listed* combined into *Multi-racial/Other* due to small sample size.

Parents/guardians had varying opinions on the format of in-person sessions.

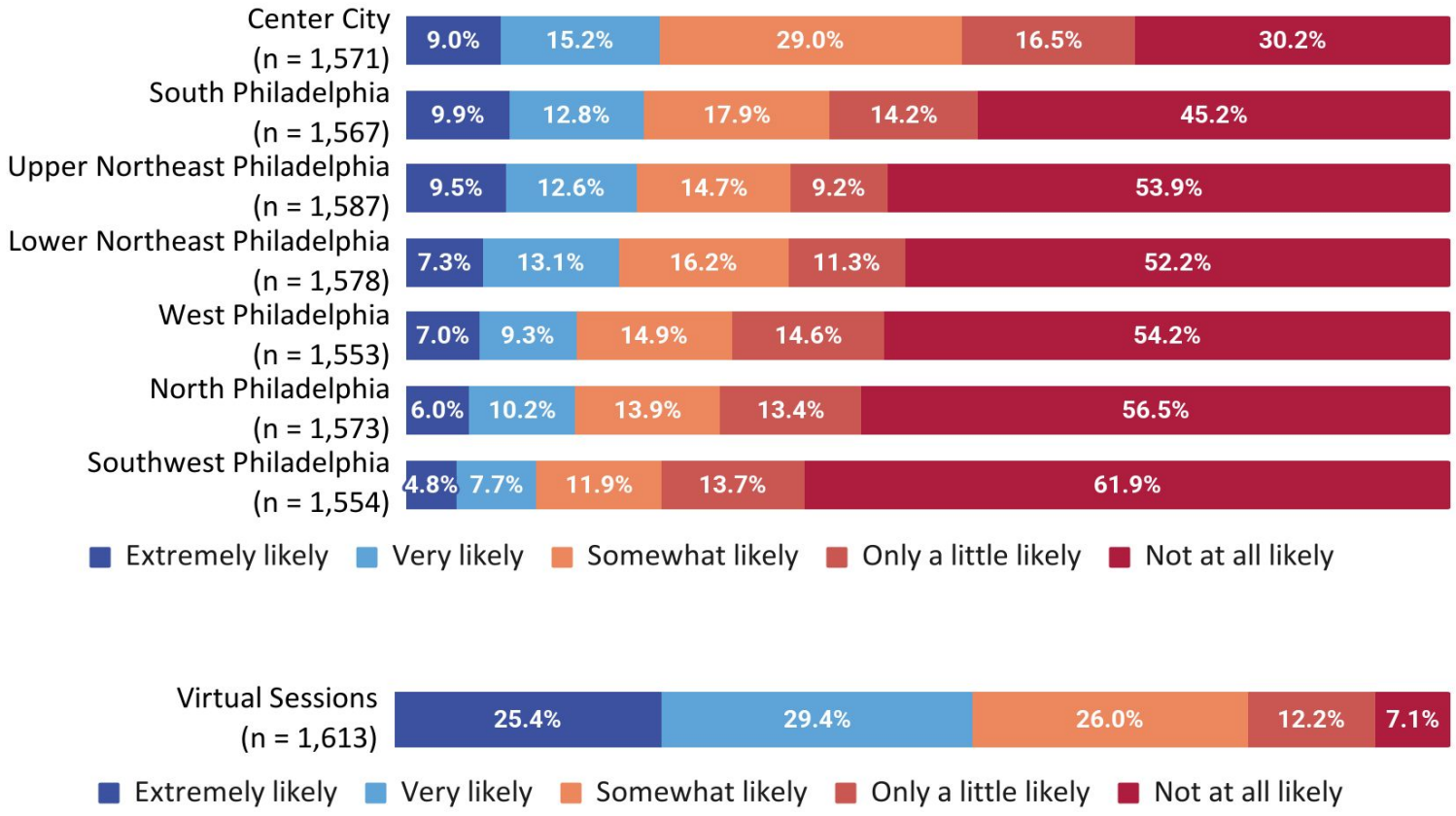
- Roughly 41% of respondents considered family-inclusive sessions “extremely” or “very” appealing.
- Although 25% of respondents indicated that multi-session training series were “extremely” or very” appealing, multi-session trainings had more “somewhat” appealing ratings.
- Apprenticeships/internships had the highest “not at all appealing” rating across the four session types.



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. From top to bottom, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total “extremely appealing” and “very appealing” responses.

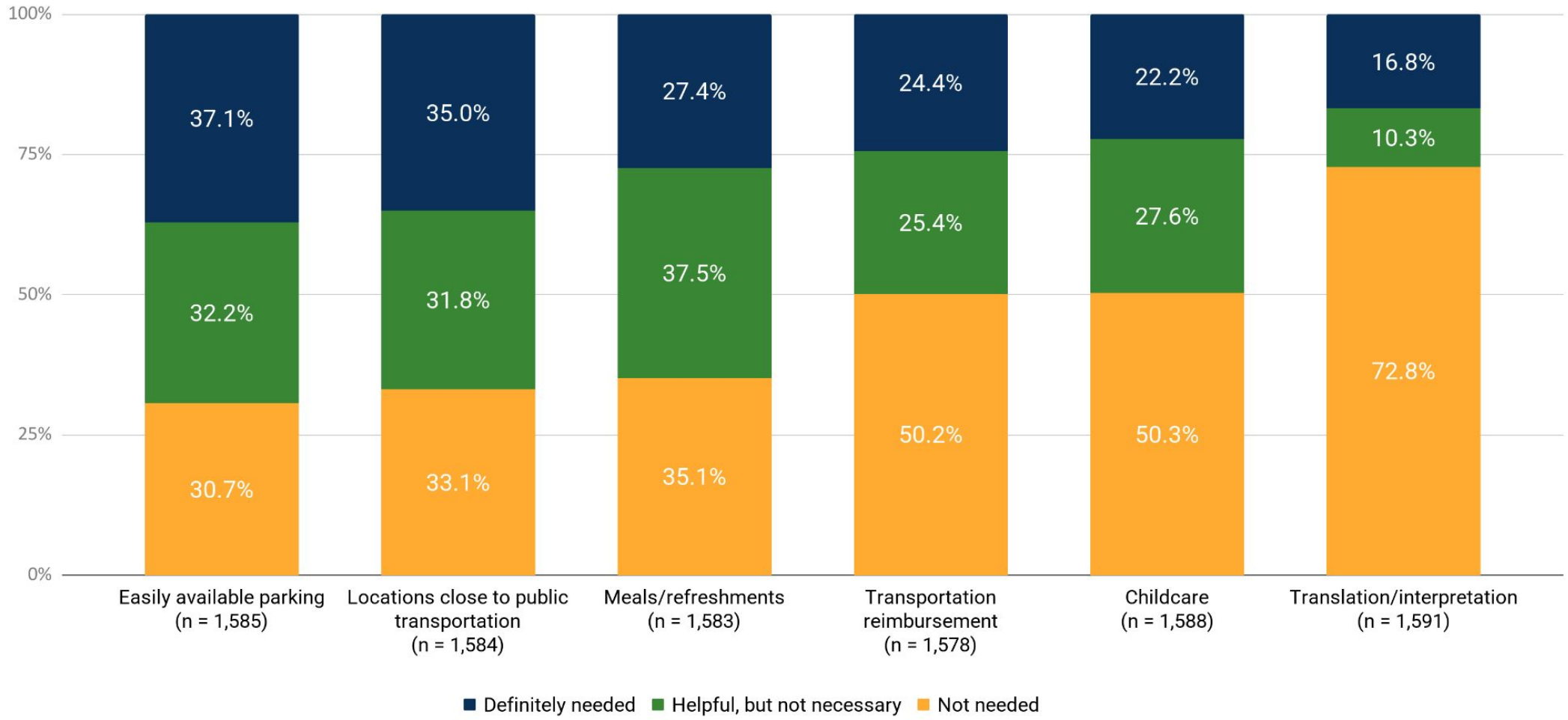
Parents/guardians indicated they were less likely to attend in-person sessions and more likely to attend virtual sessions.

- Fewer than 25% of respondents expressed that they were “extremely” or “very” likely to attend any in-person sessions hosted across the city. The top geographic regions that parents/guardians were likely to visit were Center City, South Philadelphia, Upper Northeast, and Lower Northeast Philadelphia, with over a 20% likelihood of attendance.
- Out of the parents/guardians who provided an opinion, the most common response was that they were “not at all likely” to attend an in-person session.
- Over half of respondents (54.8%) were “extremely” or “very” likely to attend virtual sessions.



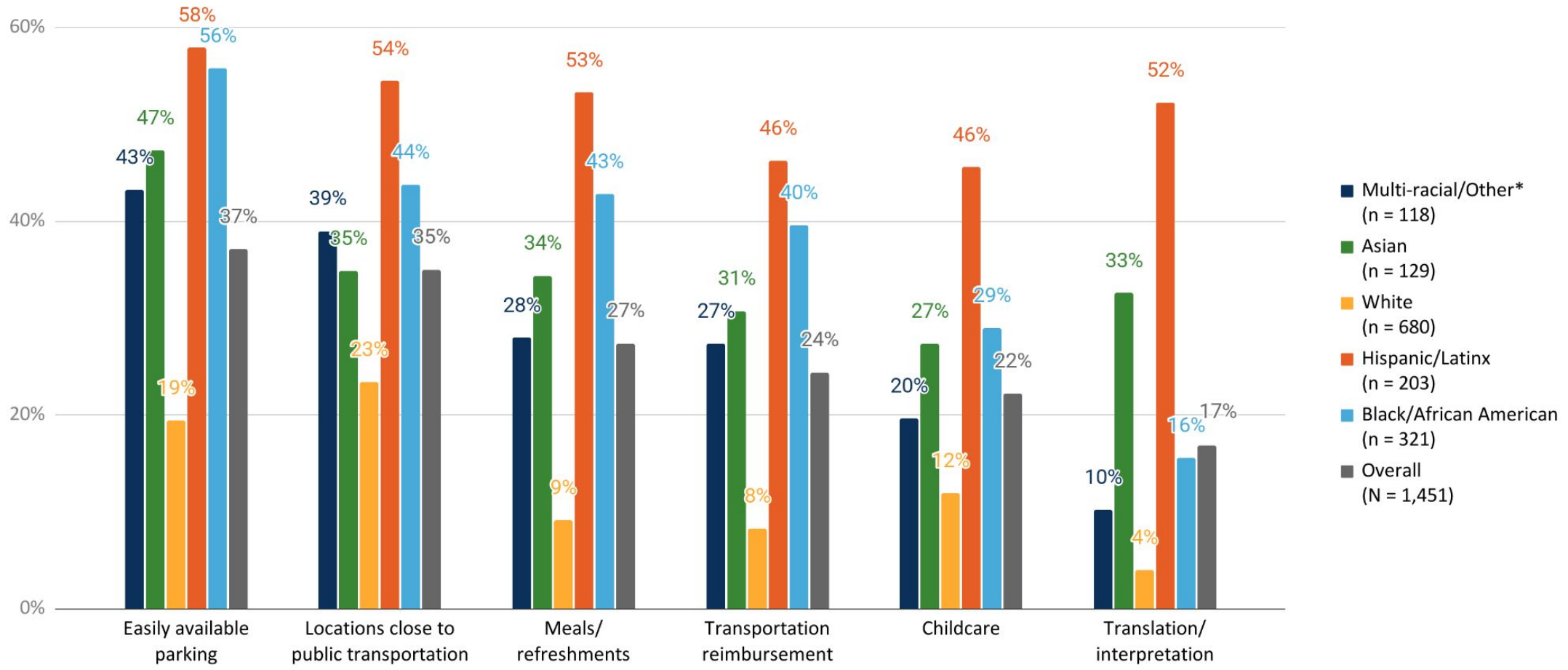
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. From top to bottom, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total “extremely likely” and “very likely” responses.

Over a third of respondents indicated that they needed easily available parking and access to the location by public transportation in order to participate in Parent and Family University sessions.



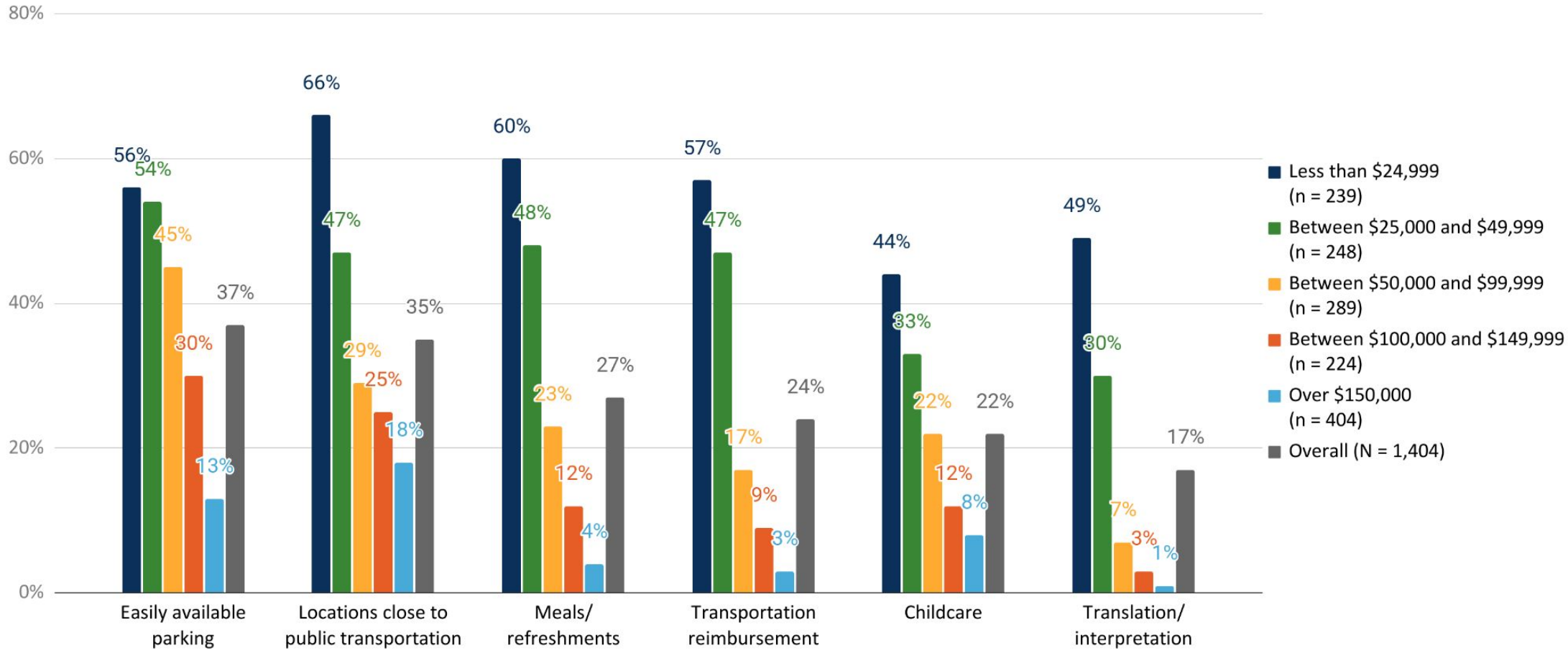
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The extent to which parents/guardians needed each support differed across racial/ethnic groups. While translation/interpretation support had the lowest total percentage of "definitely needed" responses, over 50% of all Hispanic/Latinx respondents expressed a need for this support.



Note: From left to right, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total "definitely needed" responses.
**Native Hawaiian/Pac. Islander*, *Am. Indian/Alaskan Native,* and *Not listed* combined into *Multi-racial/Other* due to small sample size.

Lower-income households (under $50,000) reported a greater need for all Parent and Family University resources than higher-income households.



Note: From left to right, session topics are ordered from the largest to smallest percentage of total "definitely needed" responses.

Additional Requested Accommodations for Parent and Family University

Many parents/guardians expressed a desire for Parent and Family University to offer free transportation options and accessible parking.

"Free transportation"

"Free parking if in person"

"Bicycle/walking directions and access"

"Money to pay your transportation"

A few parents/guardians cited the lack of disability accommodations as a barrier to participating in Parent and Family University.

"ADA compliant locations"

"Vision & hearing accessibility for grandparents 65+. For example, printed materials to take home and written notes for any materials projected via slides"

"Disabled parking, limited steps, elevator"

"Handicapped — that's why I probably won't be attending"

N = 116; this selection of comments reflects general themes stated by respondents.
Quotes revised for grammar, spelling, and capitalization.

Additional Requested Accommodations for Parent and Family University

Many parents/guardians identified childcare or flexible scheduling as a necessary aspect of the program to accommodate their parenting and work responsibilities.

"Childcare — we are lucky to have multiple options but this is the primary obstacle that comes up when families can't attend events."

"After school because I work so I can't do early days"

"After work hours, late afternoon/evening or weekend workshop options"

A few parents/guardians mentioned the location of sessions as a barrier to participation and expressed a preference for sessions at their child's school or a central location close to home.

"It would be even better to have the sessions at my child's school or another nearby school or community center."

"I would attend if it was at my neighborhood school. I will not attend otherwise."

"Virtual options are very appealing."

N = 116; this selection of comments reflects general themes stated by respondents.
Quotes revised for grammar, spelling, and capitalization.

Requested Workshops, Courses, and Supports

Open-ended responses to the question: "What other workshops, courses, or supports would you like to receive via Parent and Family University?"

- *Adult learning and life skills courses*
- *Banking and financial literacy*
- *Behavioral management*
- *Bilingual courses*
- *Certification workshops*
- *College career readiness classes*
- *Comprehensive sex education*
- *Computer and technological skills*
- *Cooking classes*
- *Equity/social justice topics*
- *First time homeowner workshop*
- *Free after school programs*
- *Trades courses (woodshop, cooking, welding, carpentry, cosmetology, etc.)*
- *Understanding the SDP budget*
- *Workshops on caring for children with disabilities*

N = 165; this selection of comments reflects general themes stated by respondents.
Quotes revised for grammar, spelling, and capitalization.

Part II: Summary of Topics Raised at Listening Sessions

Parent and Family Listening Session Dates and Locations

Date	Location	Area of City	Number of Participants
March 11, 2025	Carver High School of Engineering and Science	North Philadelphia	11
March 19, 2025	Martin Luther King High School	North Philadelphia	13
March 24, 2025	South Philadelphia High School	South Philadelphia	33
March 26, 2025	Abraham Lincoln High School	Northeast Philadelphia	3
April 2, 2025	S. Weir Mitchell School	Southwest Philadelphia	11
April 7, 2025	George Washington High School	Northeast Philadelphia	11
April 10, 2025	Lewis C. Cassidy Academics Plus School	West Philadelphia	45

About the Listening Sessions

During the listening sessions, participants were asked to share their thoughts about:

- What resources or support would help them support student learning at home
- Which types of programming from community partners would encourage them to attend family sessions or events
- What ongoing services would be helpful
- Preferred meeting locations and formats
- Any barriers that might prevent participation

Summarizing the Results

- Staff from the Office of Family and Community Engagement took notes during the sessions summarizing participant responses.
- Staff from the Office of Research and Evaluation reviewed the notes and organized the responses into topic areas.
- A summary of the most frequently discussed topics is provided on the next slides.

What information from the School District of Philadelphia would be helpful to parents and families to continue student learning at home?

Topics	Examples of session notes grouped in this topic	How often did this topic come up?
Need for knowledge of academic interventions	Resources for parents to bridge gap for under and at grade level; Tutoring for students and parents; Provide extra activity tools for reinforcement of skills at home	***Mentioned frequently***
Understanding the curriculum	Developing a better understanding of curriculum to support at home (Roadmap); Having a parent guideline, outline, or examples of what the kids are learning	
Understanding their child's academic progress	Being able to understand the PSSAs and where our children are on the track	
Communication from schools	More constant communication between parents and teachers	
How to develop certain life skills	Learning about time management	
Accessing community resources	Access to community resources	
Understanding Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	Social skills for students	***Mentioned less often***
Resources to know about college and career preparation	College ready tools	

What topics offered by community partners would attract you to a session or event for families?

Topics	Examples of session notes grouped in this topic	How often did this topic come up?
Career classes	Classes in different topics (e.g., CPR, auto industry, interview preparation)	***Mentioned frequently***
Life skills and finance	Learning how to save money and keep a budget	
Parenting	Learning how to understand teenagers for proper parenting/topics about adolescents	
Language	Opportunities to practice language skills	
Technology	AI - what it is and how to use it	
Resource overview	Resources for stable housing, resources and plans that allow families to remain in their school's area	
Students with disabilities	Understanding IEP process and evaluations for families who have students with disabilities	
Preparing for college	College preparedness, financial support for college (e.g., scholarships)	
Academic skills	Study skills; Math skills	***Mentioned less often***
Mental health	Therapy resources and emotional parent support groups	
Meals/food	Healthy meal options using fresh vegetables and fruit they can take home	

What kind of ongoing direct services for children and families would be helpful to you? These would be provided by a partner organization.

Topics	Examples of session notes grouped in this topic	How often did this topic come up?
IEP/504 services	IEP services available and information about IEP versus 504 plans	***Mentioned frequently*** ***Mentioned less often***
Mental health	Mental health supports; Support groups	
Basic supports	Landlord-tenant issues; Food pantry	
Classes for adults	Parent education around internet safety; Tax preparation; Driving classes; Basic computer skills	
Job skills	Public speaking; Computer certifications; How to start a business	
Health clinics	Hygiene kits/support - Info sessions; Sex education	
Community engagement	Civic engagement	
Language support	Services/classes in English and Spanish	
Childcare	Help getting after care after school	
Positive emotional supports	Have training for school staff to increase their compassion and receptiveness to parents	

What types of locations would be most convenient for families in this community? For example, would you or others in the community prefer in-person, virtual, or hybrid? How far would you be willing to travel?

Topics	Examples of session notes grouped in this topic	How often did this topic come up?
Convenient neighborhood location	Convenient locations (libraries, elementary schools, places with parking, public transportation accessible, child care)	***Mentioned frequently*** ***Mentioned less often***
Community centers	Community centers near homes	
Hybrid as a modality for meetings	Hybrid is inclusive for all	
Nearby school	In the local schools	
Constance E. Clayton Education Center	At the District Office	
Public transportation	Easy access - public transportation - train access; SEPTA passes	

How can we remove barriers to participation? What other accommodations are helpful for you and others in the community to attend PFU opportunities and get the most out of them?

Topics	Examples of session notes grouped in this topic	How often did this topic come up?
Welcoming environment	Diversity sensitivity so everyone feels welcome; Welcoming nature of location/staff	***Mentioned frequently***
Translation services	Sign language; Translation services	
Location	Satellite locations where same programs happen in different areas	
Childcare	Childcare	
Transportation	Parking; SEPTA access	
Parking	Free parking, especially at Constance E. Clayton Center; nearby garages	
Stipend or incentive	Raffle/incentive	***Mentioned less often***

Summary of Topics

What information would be helpful to support student learning at home?	What topics would attract you to a session?	What direct services from partner organizations would be helpful	Where/when should meetings be held?	How can we remove barriers?	How often did this topic come up?
Need for knowledge of academic interventions	Career classes	IEP/504 services	Convenient neighborhood location	Welcoming environment	*Mentioned frequently*
Understanding the curriculum	Life skills and finance	Mental health	Community centers	Translation services	
Understanding their child's academic progress	Parenting	Basic supports	Hybrid as a modality for meetings	Location	
Communication from schools	Language	Classes for adults	Nearby school	Childcare	
How to develop certain life skills	Technology	Job skills	Constance E. Clayton Education Center	Transportation	
Accessing community resources	Resource overview	Health clinics	Public transportation	Parking	
Understanding Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	Students with disabilities	Community engagement		Stipend or incentive	
Resources to know about college and career preparation	Preparing for college	Language support			
	Academic skills	Childcare			
	Mental health	Positive emotional supports			
	Meals/food				*Mentioned less often*

Themes across the Survey and Listening Sessions

Findings from Survey	Aligned with Listening Session topics discussed?
About 3 in 4 parents/guardians who responded to the Parent and Family University section of the survey expressed an interest in attending sessions focused on school-specific topics including: the school selection process, teacher conferences and report cards, and college and career readiness.	✔
Over 50% of parents/guardians expressed an interest in attending sessions focused on broader topics including: mental and social-emotional wellness, technology and digital literacy, and nutrition and physical wellness.	✔
Parents/guardians indicated they were less likely to attend in-person sessions, but likely to attend online sessions.	*See box for additional info →*
Over a third of respondents indicated that they needed easily available parking and access to the location by public transportation in order to participate in Parent and Family University sessions.	✔
Many workshop topics were suggested.	✔

Participating in person was not mentioned as a challenge by in-person listening session attendees (as long as the location was convenient). Hybrid and virtual options were also mentioned as convenient.