

AASA COVID-19 School Response Study

Executive Summary:

In response to the unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's public schools, AASA, The School Superintendents Association, which represents more than 13,000 school system leaders across the country, released a nationwide survey to detail and capture what this evolving public health crisis means for schools and communities.

Specifically, this survey was launched on March 20 through March 25, 2020, on K-12 insights survey platform, to detail the fiscal impact of COVID-19 on our nation's public school system and answer how ed-technology is supporting or impeding districts' abilities to deliver curriculum and instruction.

While the study was not experimental and did not employ random sampling, the survey garnered a total of 1,608 responses from a sample of AASA members from 48 states, which consisted of superintendents, associate superintendents, aspiring superintendents and other school system leaders. This report represents the first of a series of studies that AASA will release about the impact of COVID-19 on school districts and only speaks to the preliminary effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on district operations.

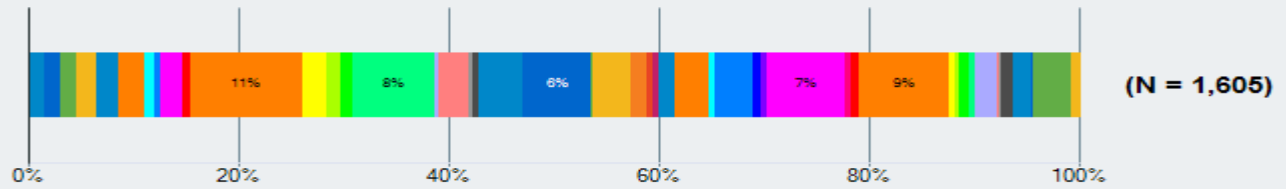
The text, figures and data below show preliminary findings from the 32-question survey instrument and categorizes responses by (1) district and respondent characteristics (i.e. state, size, geographic location, etc.), (2) school districts' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and (3) the fiscal impact of COVID-19. We hope this resource will serve as a data source that informs our members, state and federal policymakers, and others looking to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the nation's schools and communities.

SECTION #1: DISTRICT AND RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Question 1: Name of the state where your school district is located

Responses	Count	%
Alabama	24	1%
Alaska	24	1%
Arizona	25	2%
Arkansas	31	2%
Armed Forces Asia	0	0%
Armed Forces Europe	0	0%
Armed Forces Pacific	0	0%
California	33	2%
Colorado	42	3%
Connecticut	15	1%
Delaware	8	0%
District of Columbia	0	0%
Florida	0	0%
Georgia	33	2%
Hawaii	0	0%
Idaho	14	1%
Illinois	170	11%
Indiana	36	2%
Iowa	21	1%
Kansas	20	1%
Kentucky	125	8%
Louisiana	5	0%
Maine	45	3%
Maryland	6	0%
Massachusetts	12	1%
Michigan	67	4%
Minnesota	103	6%
Mississippi	3	0%
Missouri	59	4%
Montana	22	1%
Nebraska	11	1%
Nevada	7	0%
New Hampshire	26	2%
New Jersey	52	3%
New Mexico	8	0%
New York	58	4%
North Carolina	13	1%
North Dakota	9	1%
Ohio	118	7%
Oklahoma	12	1%
Oregon	10	1%
Pennsylvania	138	9%
Rhode Island	10	1%

South Carolina	4	0%
South Dakota	16	1%
Tennessee	11	1%
Texas	32	2%
Utah	2	0%
Vermont	4	0%
Virginia	20	1%
Washington	26	2%
West Virginia	2	0%
Wisconsin	58	4%
Wyoming	15	1%
Total Responses	1,605	100%



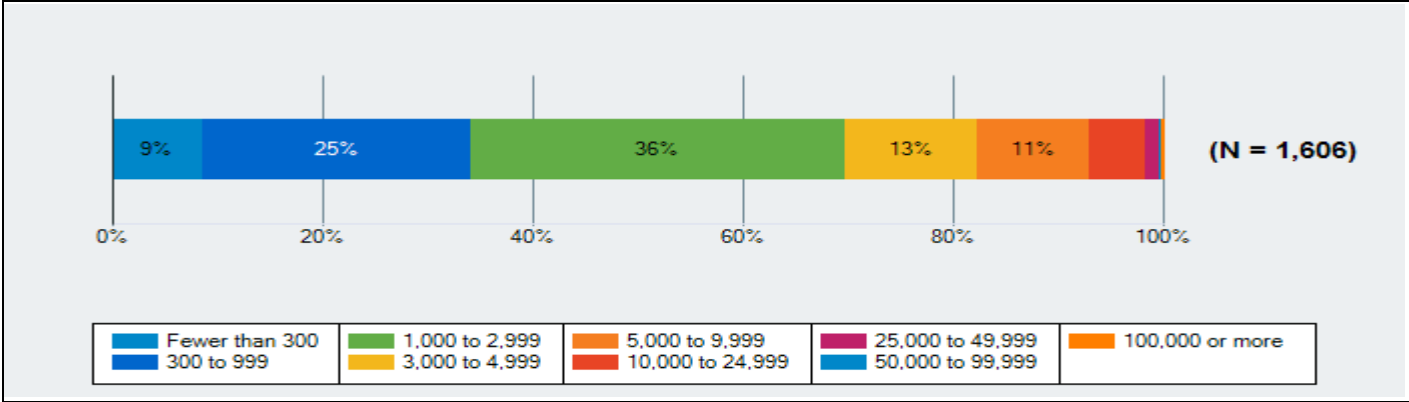
Alabama	District of Columbia	Maine	New Jersey	South Dakota
Alaska	Florida	Maryland	New Mexico	Tennessee
Arizona	Georgia	Massachusetts	New York	Texas
Arkansas	Hawaii	Michigan	North Carolina	Utah
Armed Forces Asia	Idaho	Minnesota	North Dakota	Vermont
Armed Forces Europe	Illinois	Mississippi	Ohio	Virginia
Armed Forces Pacific	Indiana	Missouri	Oklahoma	Washington
California	Iowa	Montana	Oregon	West Virginia
Colorado	Kansas	Nebraska	Pennsylvania	Wisconsin
Connecticut	Kentucky	Nevada	Rhode Island	Wyoming
Delaware	Louisiana	New Hampshire	South Carolina	

Findings:

- A total of 1,605 usable responses were received, representing an approximately 12% return rate. Additionally, responses came from 48 states excluding Hawaii and Florida.
- The highest percentage of respondents came from IL (11%), PA (9%), KY (8%), OH (7%) and MN (6%).

Question 2: District Enrollment 2020-21

Responses	Count	%
Fewer than 300	138	9%
300 to 999	408	25%
1,000 to 2,999	573	36%
3,000 to 4,999	202	13%
5,000 to 9,999	169	11%
10,000 to 24,999	86	5%
25,000 to 49,999	22	1%
50,000 to 99,999	5	0%
100,000 or more	3	0%
Total Responses	1,606	100%

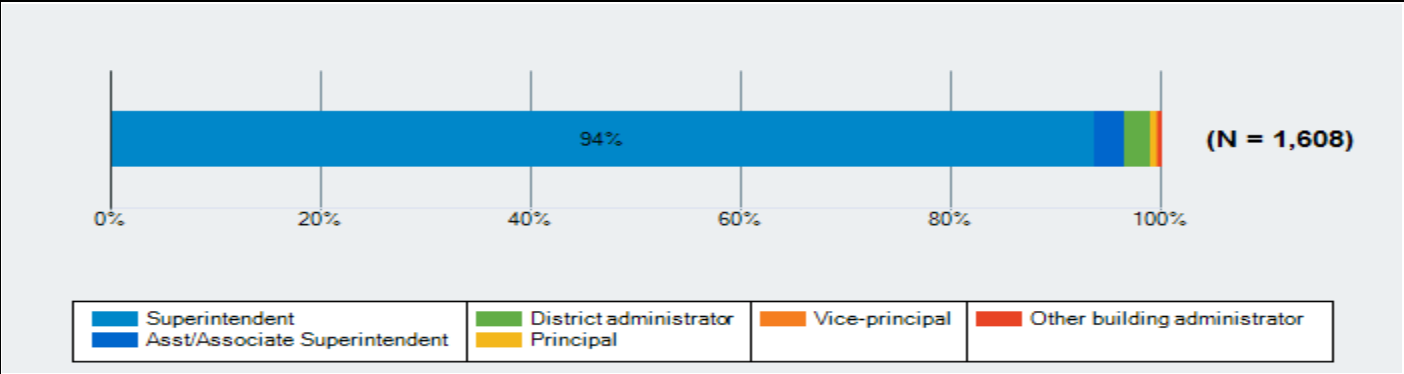


Findings

- The top 5 responses to this question came from districts with student enrollment sizes of 1,000 to 2,999 (36%), 300 to 999 (25%), 3,000 to 4,999 (13%), 5,000 to 9,999 (11%) and fewer than 300 (9%).
- This finding shows that the majority of superintendents responding to the survey are from small and intermediate size districts

Question 3: Professional Title

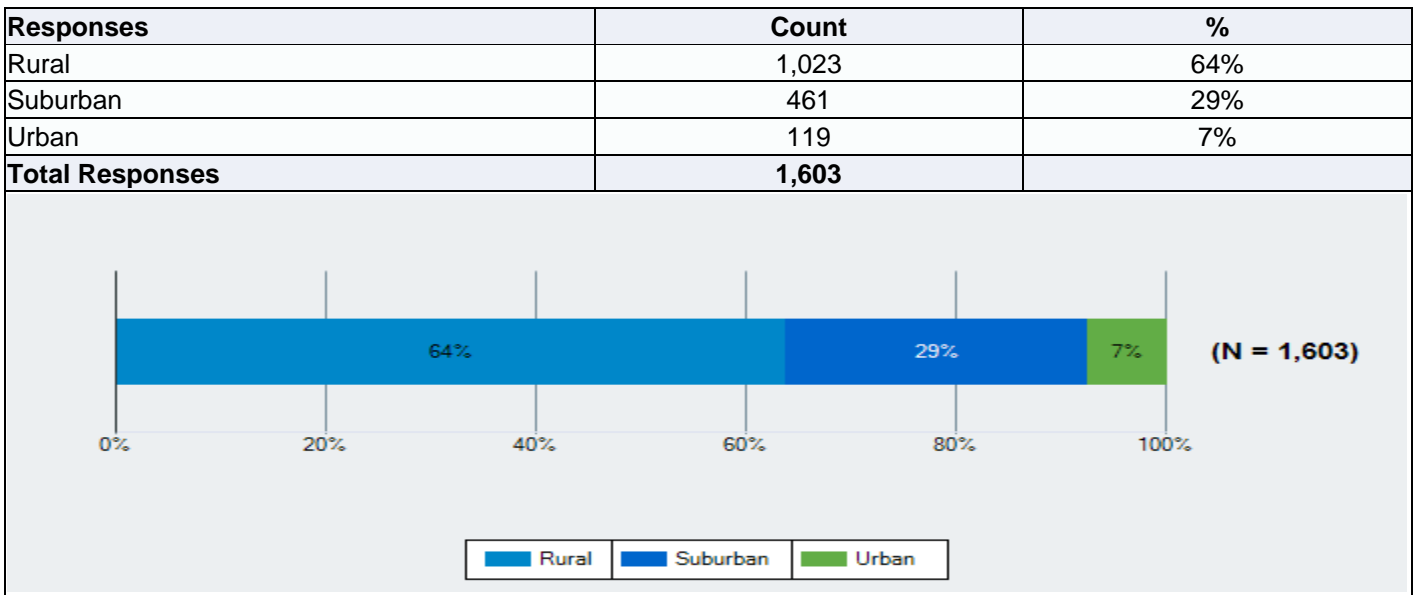
Responses	Count	%
Superintendent	1,505	94%
Asst/Associate Superintendent	46	3%
District administrator	41	3%
Principal	7	0%
Vice-principal	4	0%
Other building administrator	5	0%
Total Responses	1,608	



Findings

- Survey results were primarily generated by superintendents (94%), and assistant/associate superintendents that represented a small minority of the distribution at 3% respectively.

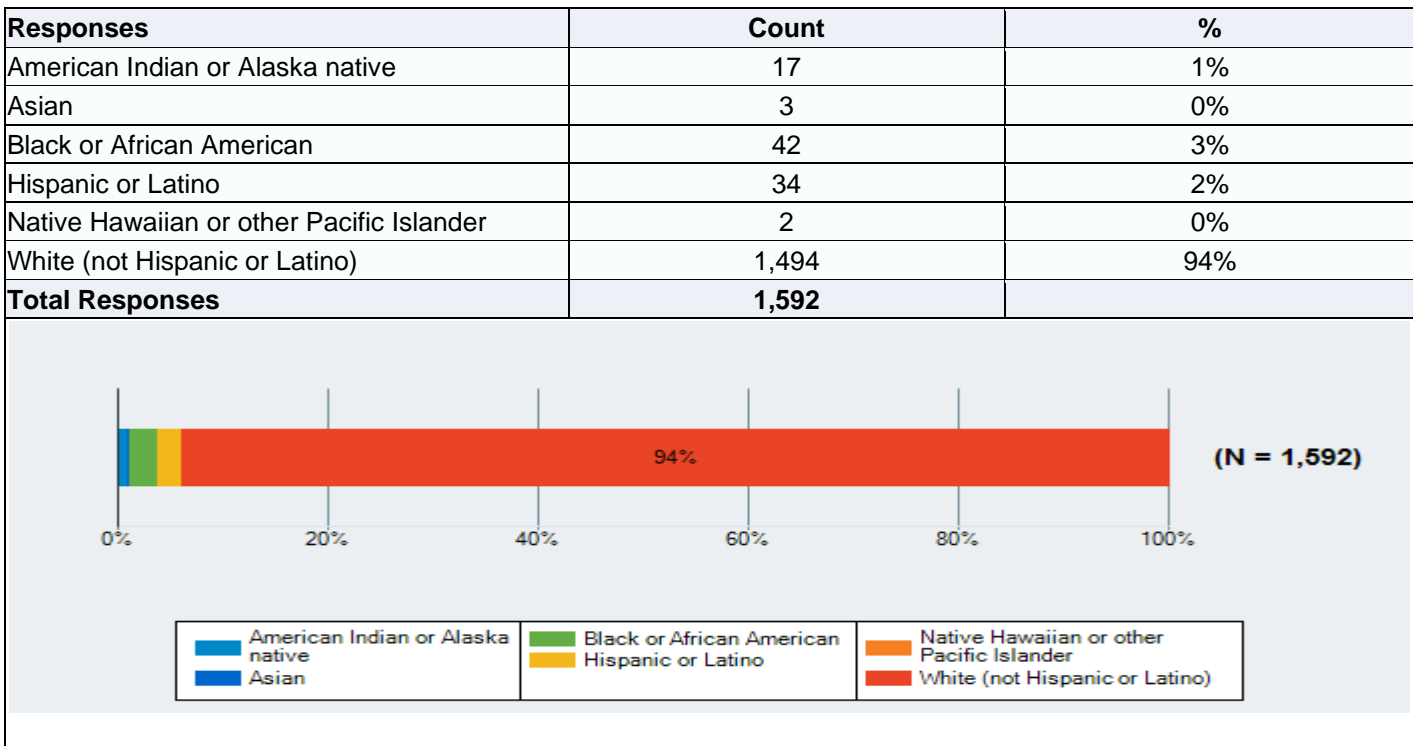
Question 4: My school district is best described as



Findings:

- The sample of respondents was made up of rural (64%), suburban (29%) and urban (7%) superintendents.

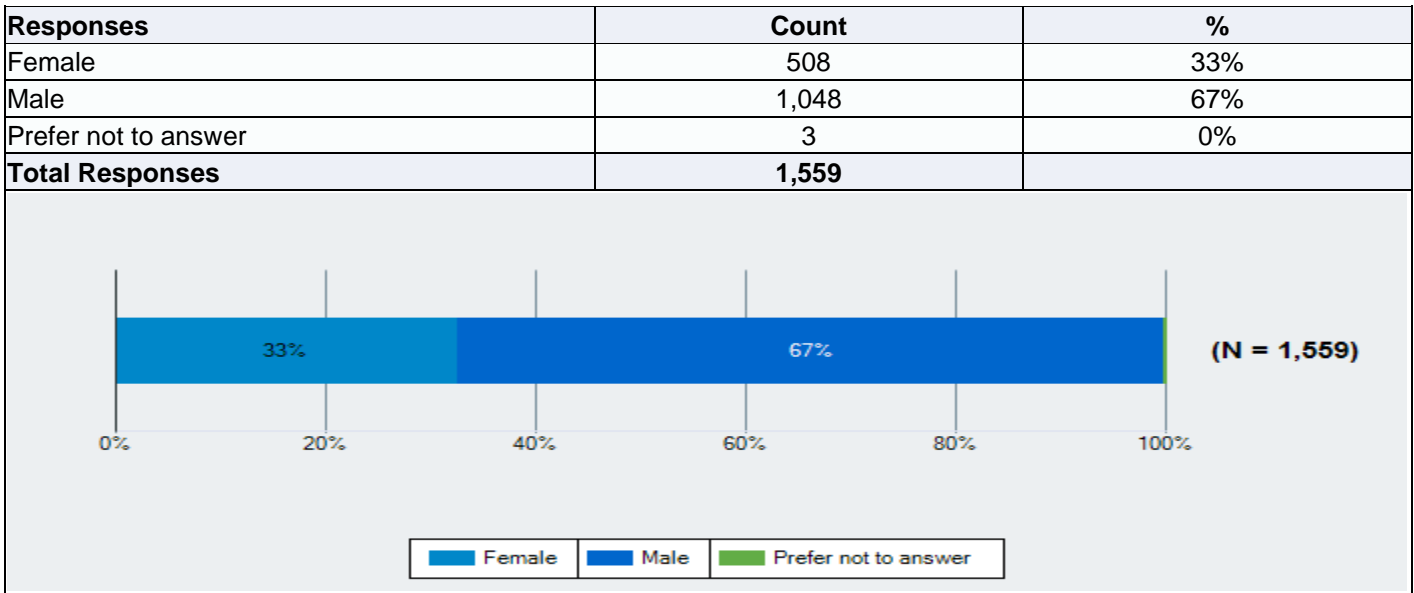
Question 5: Your race/cultural group



Findings:

- Most superintendents (94%) indicated that they identified themselves as White (not Hispanic or Latino). Black (3%), Hispanic (2%), and American Indian or Alaska native (1%) constituted the rest of the sample.
- This finding is consistent with other national findings that show school system leaders are a racially monolithic group.

Question 6: Your Gender



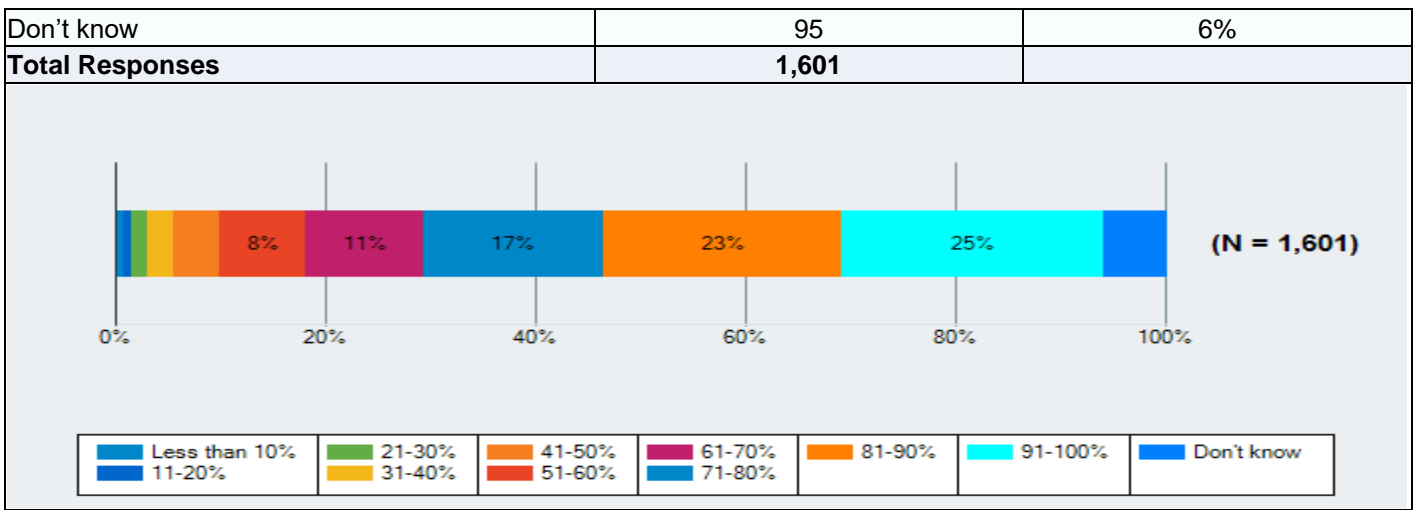
Findings:

- 67% of males and 33% of females made up the sample of respondents.

SECTION #2: DISTRICT RESPONSE AND ED-TECH

Question 7: What percentage of students in your district have access to the internet at home?

Responses	Count	%
Less than 10%	12	1%
11-20%	13	1%
21-30%	25	2%
31-40%	38	2%
41-50%	72	4%
51-60%	129	8%
61-70%	182	11%
71-80%	273	17%
81-90%	362	23%
91-100%	400	25%

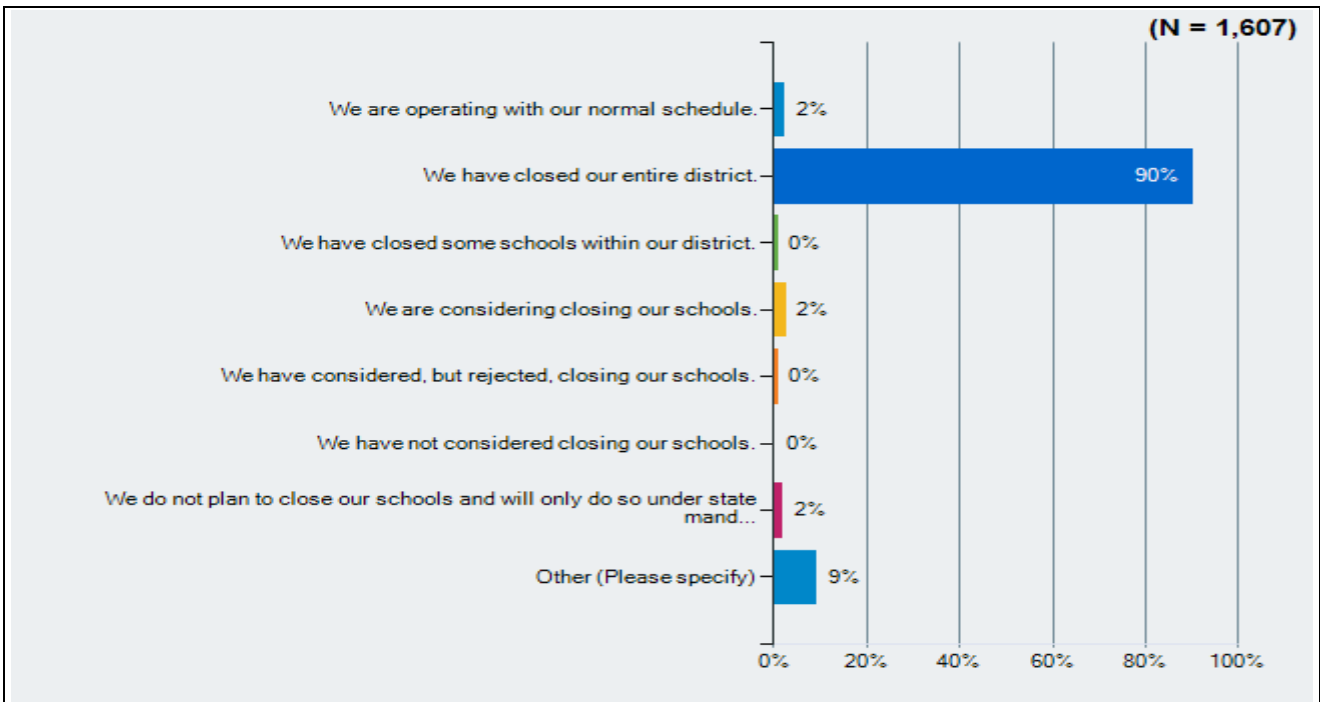


Findings:

- 25% of respondents indicated that 91-100% of students had internet access at home, 23% reported that 81-90% of students have internet access at home, 17% indicated that 71-80% of students had internet access at home, 11% of respondents indicated that 61-70% had internet access at home, and 8% of respondents indicated that 51-60% of students had internet access at home.
- 10% of respondents indicated that at least half of their students had no access to internet at home

Question 8: How would you describe your district’s decision status as it relates to COVID 19? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
We are operating with our normal schedule.	31	2%
We have closed our entire district.	1,444	90%
We have closed some schools within our district.	6	0%
We are considering closing our schools.	35	2%
We have considered, but rejected, closing our schools.	7	0%
We have not considered closing our schools.	0	0%
We do not plan to close our schools and will only do so under state mandate.	26	2%
Other (Please specify)	142	9%
Total Unique Responses	1,607	N/A



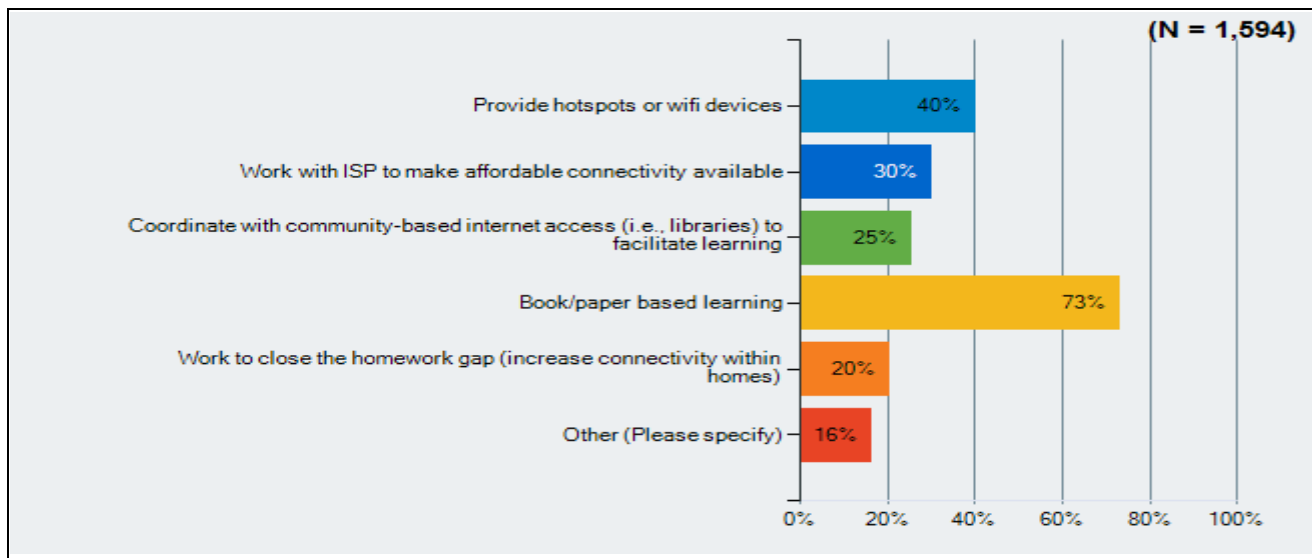
Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Findings:

- An overwhelming majority of respondents (90%) indicated that they had closed their schools in response to COVID-19, 2% indicated that they were considering closing schools, and another 2% indicated that they did not plan to close unless state mandated.
- Note: this question was created before states began mandating school closures for the latter half of the 2019-2020 school year.

Question 9: How will you provide learning opportunities to students in homes without internet access or a device that can connect to the internet? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Provide hotspots or Wi-Fi__33 devices	632	40%
Work with ISP to make affordable connectivity available	475	30%
Coordinate with community-based internet access (i.e., libraries) to facilitate learning	404	25%
Book/paper based learning	1,160	73%
Work to close the homework gap (increase connectivity within homes)	322	20%
Other (Please specify)	254	16%
Total Responses	3,247	N/A

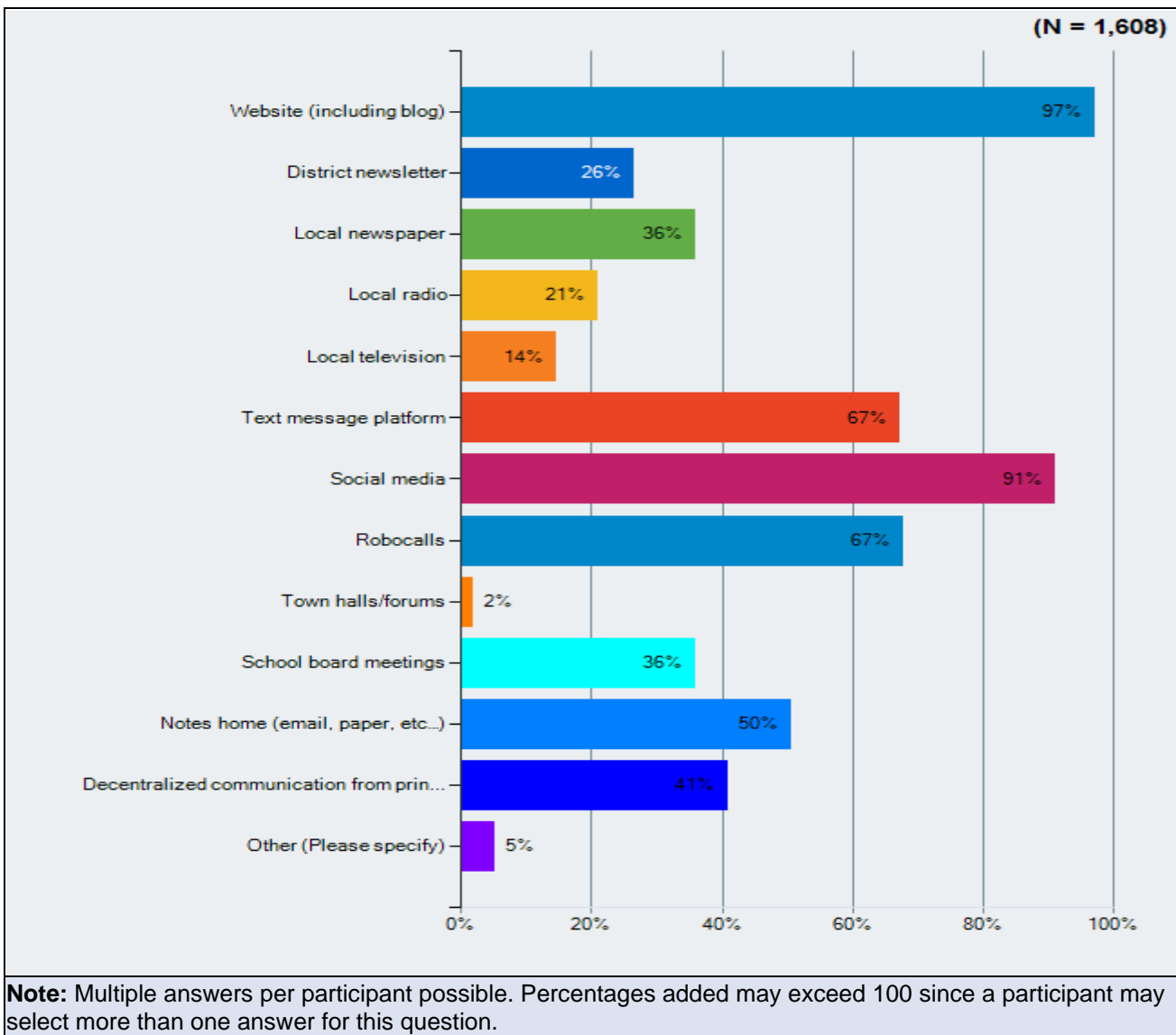


Findings:

- Respondents indicated they planned to use book/paper based learning (75%), provide hotspots or Wi-Fi devices (40%), work with ISP to make affordable connectivity available (35%), coordinate with community-based internet access (i.e., libraries) to facilitate learning, and work to close the homework gap (20%) in order to provide learning opportunities to students in homes without internet access.
- Book/paper learning was the most reported strategy for delivering curriculum and instruction in homes without internet access. This may speak to the fact that many communities still heavily rely on traditional methods to deliver instruction to all students.

Question 10: What types of communication are you using to relay information to your district employees, students, parents and community? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Website (including blog)	1,557	97%
District newsletter	424	26%
Local newspaper	576	36%
Local radio	333	21%
Local television	230	14%
Text message platform	1,077	67%
Social media	1,458	91%
Robocalls	1,084	67%
Town halls/forums	28	2%
School board meetings	572	36%
Notes home (email, paper, etc....)	810	50%
Decentralized communication from principals/building leaders	653	41%
Other (Please specify)	80	5%
Total Responses	8,882	N/A



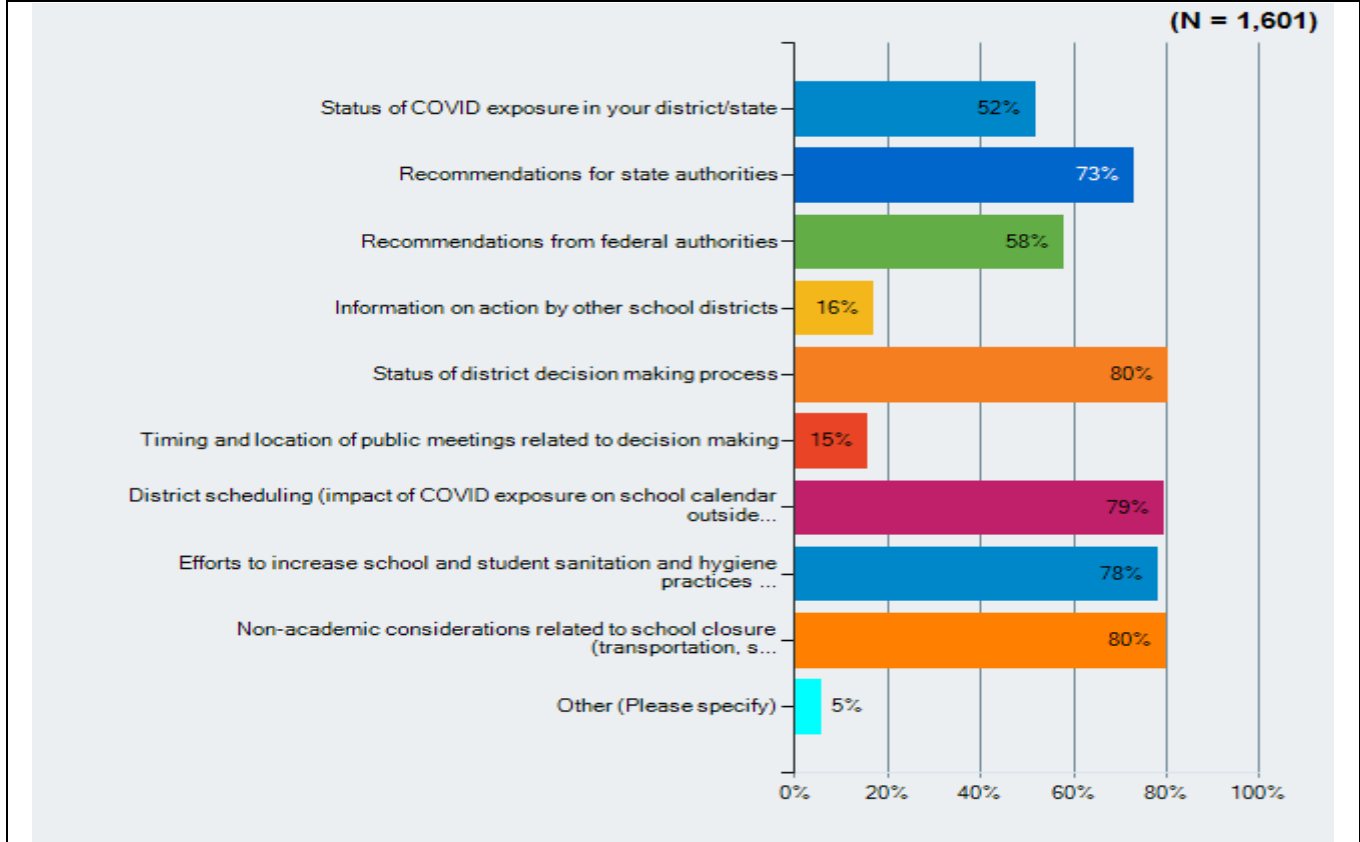
Findings:

- Respondents indicated they are using websites/blogs (97%), social media (91%), text message platforms (67%), robocalls (67%) and notes home to relay information to their district employees, students, parents and community.
- This finding shows that districts are using a variety of methods to communicate relevant COVID-19 information to community stakeholders.

Question 11: What types of information are you including in your communications to staff, students, parents and the community? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Status of COVID exposure in your district/state	826	52%
Recommendations for state authorities	1,163	73%
Recommendations from federal authorities	923	58%
Information on action by other school districts	263	16%
Status of district decision making process	1,283	80%
Timing and location of public meetings related to decision making	245	15%

District scheduling (impact of COVID exposure on school calendar outside of closure, i.e., athletics, school-sponsored trips and activities, etc....)	1,269	79%
Efforts to increase school and student sanitation and hygiene practices while in school	1,248	78%
Non-academic considerations related to school closure (transportation, student safety, access to food, etc....)	1,275	80%
Other (Please specify)	84	5%
Total Responses	8,579	N/A

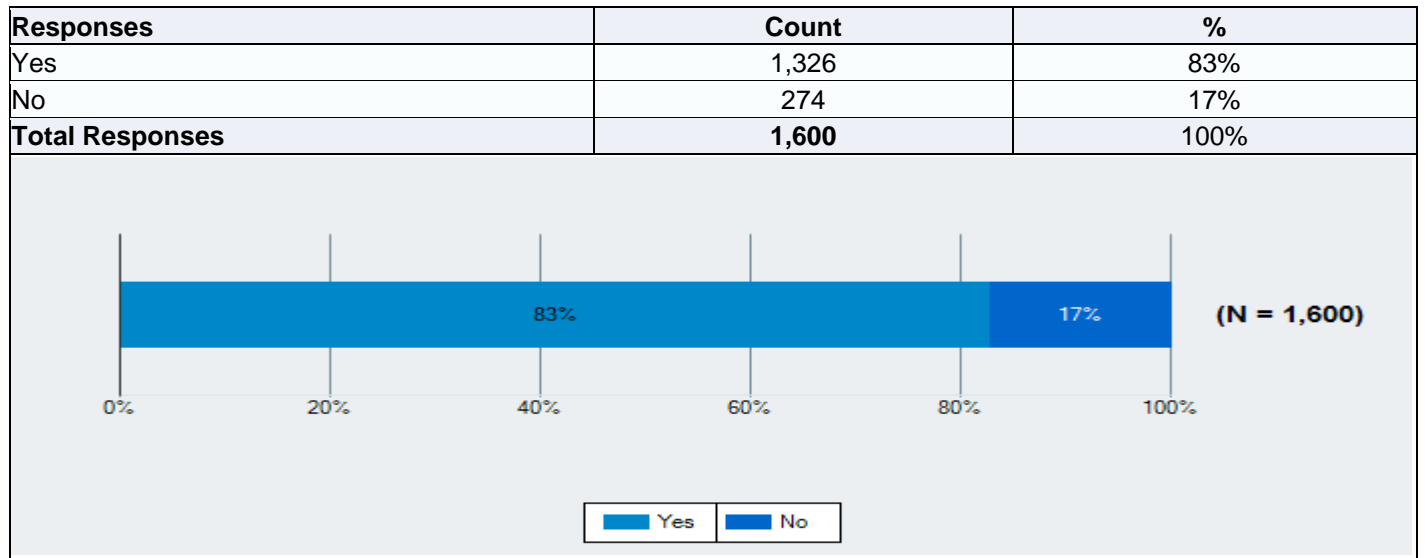


Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Findings:

- Respondents indicated they are including information regarding the status of district decision making process (80%), non-academic considerations related to school closure (80%), district scheduling (79%), efforts to increase school and student hygiene practices (78%), and recommendations for state authorities (73%) as their top 5 messages to staff, students, parents and the community.
- These statistics shows school system leaders are primarily focused on communicating the impact of COVID-19 on district operations and providing local stakeholders with strategies to ensure public health.

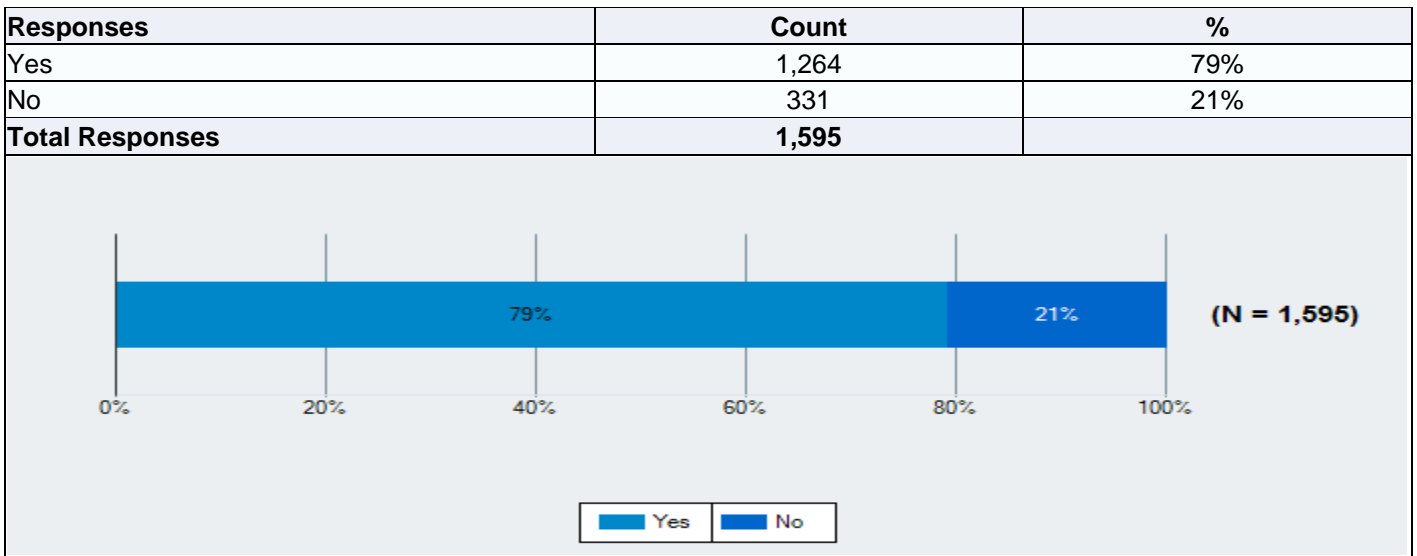
Question 12: Are you aware of any known corona cases in your state? In your community?



Findings:

- 83% of respondents indicated that they are aware of a known COVID-19 case in their states, while only 17% of respondents noted they were not aware of a case of COVID-19 in their states.
- This finding shows that the virus has greatly proliferated in the months since it was first reported in the U.S.

Question 13: Does your district have a plan in place to respond to pandemics (including COVID-19)?

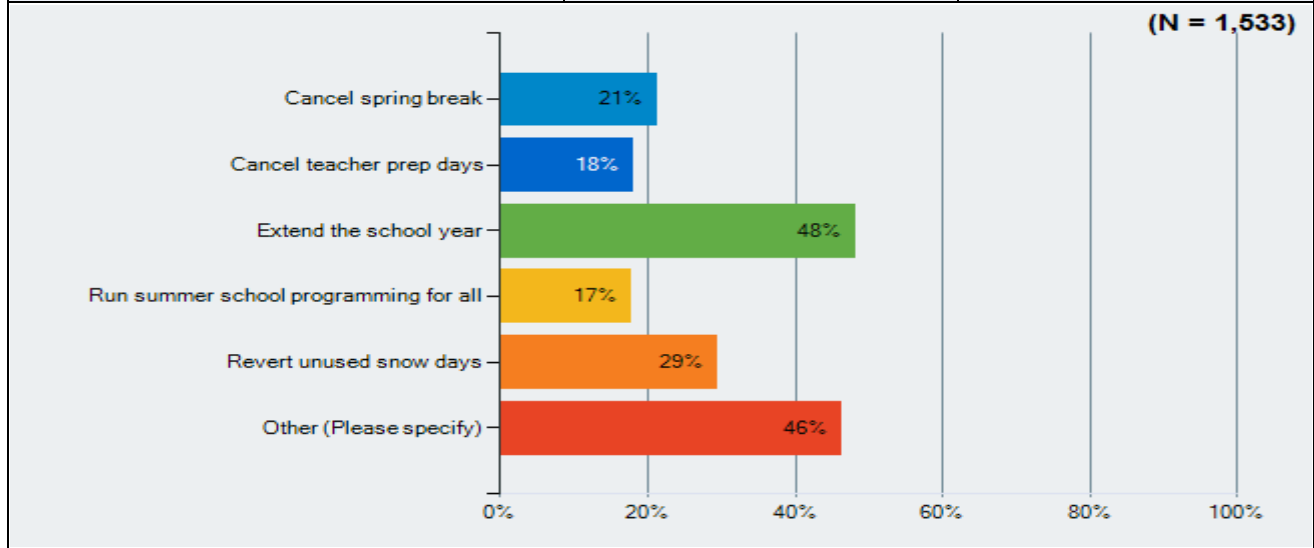


Findings:

- 79% of respondents indicated they have a plan in place to respond to pandemics, while 21% said they had no plan to respond to pandemics.

Question 14: How would a prolonged school closure impact your school calendar? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Cancel spring break	325	21%
Cancel teacher prep days	275	18%
Extend the school year	737	48%
Run summer school programming for all	268	17%
Revert unused snow days	448	29%
Other (Please specify)	705	46%
Total Responses	2,758	N/A



Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

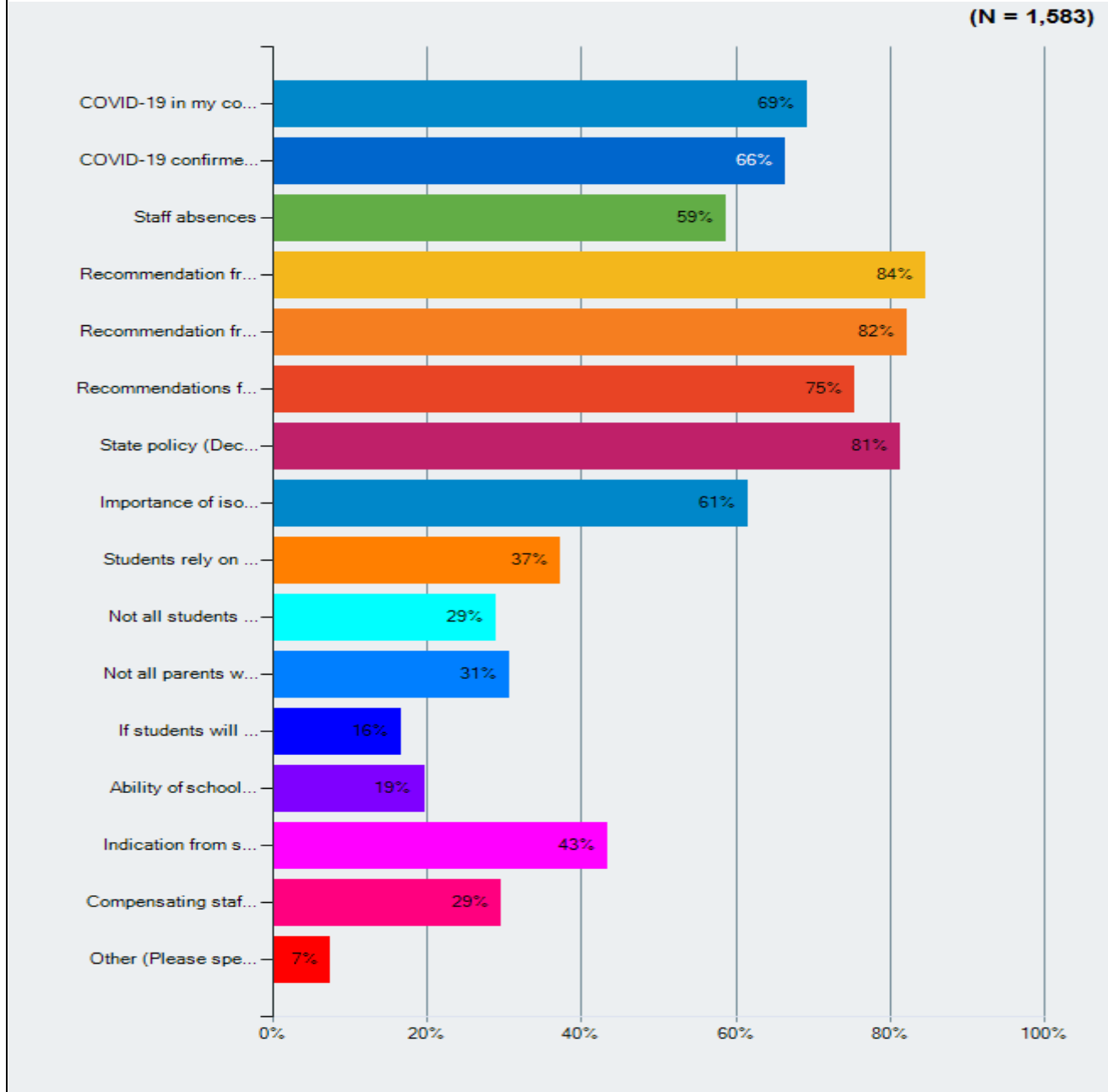
Findings:

- Extending the school year (48%), other (46%), reverting unused snow days (29%), canceling spring break (21%), canceling teacher prep days (18%) and running summer school programming for all were top-5 responses for how a prolonged school closure would impact their district.

Question 15: Which of the following factors would influence your decision to close schools or remain open? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
COVID-19 in my community	1,093	69%
COVID-19 confirmed in one of my students	1,049	66%
Staff absences	927	59%
Recommendation from state health agency	1,337	84%
Recommendation from state education agency	1,296	82%
Recommendations from local health agencies	1,189	75%
State policy (Declared emergency, etc....)	1,283	81%
Importance of isolation/quarantine to help prevent spread	971	61%
Students rely on schools for meal access	587	37%
Not all students will have a safe environment during the day if school is closed	456	29%
Not all parents will be able to stay home with kids	483	31%
If students will end up in a separate communal setting (i.e., day care, day camp, or other setting with multiple children) when school is closed, why not just keep them in school so learning can	261	16%

happen?		
Ability of school calendar to adjust to prolonged closure	308	19%
Indication from state and federal policy makers re flexibility around significant/prolonged closure and impact on attendance	683	43%
Compensating staff if closure exceeds allocated/available sick leave	464	29%
Other (Please specify)	116	7%
Total Responses	12,503	N/A

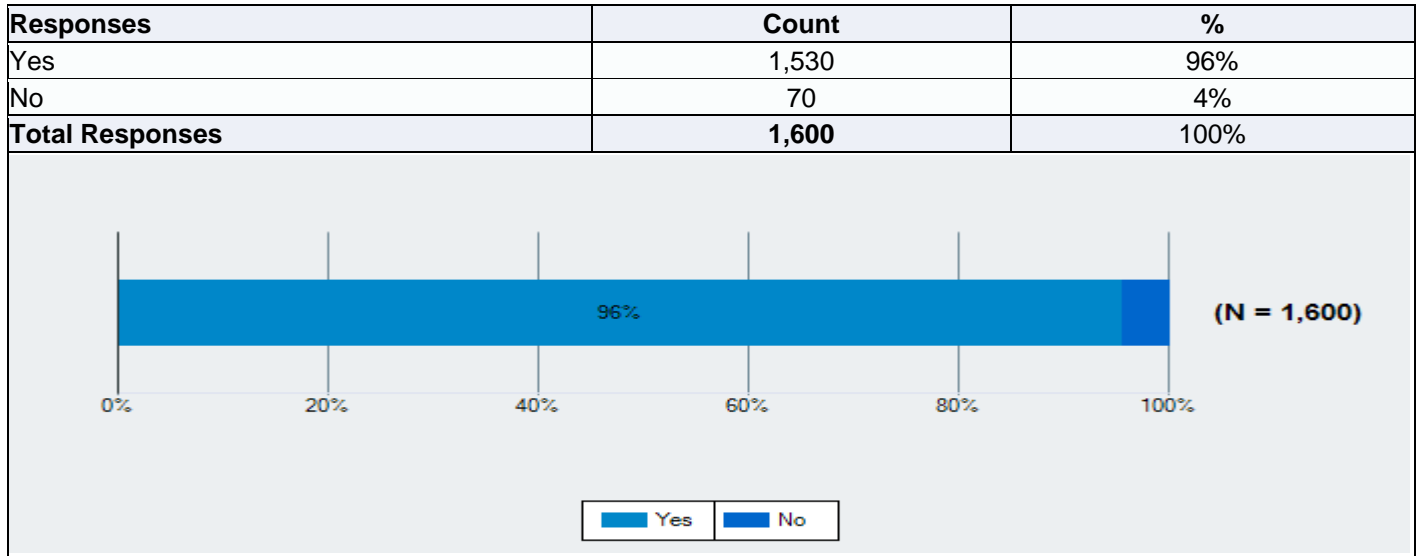


Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Findings:

- Respondents indicated that recommendations from state health agency (84%), recommendations from state education agency (82%), state policy (81%), recommendations from local health agencies (75%), and COVID-19 reported in their community (69%) would influence local decisions to close schools or stay open.
- 61% of respondents also mentioned that the importance of isolation/quarantine to help prevent spread of COVID-19 would influence their decisions to remain open or close.

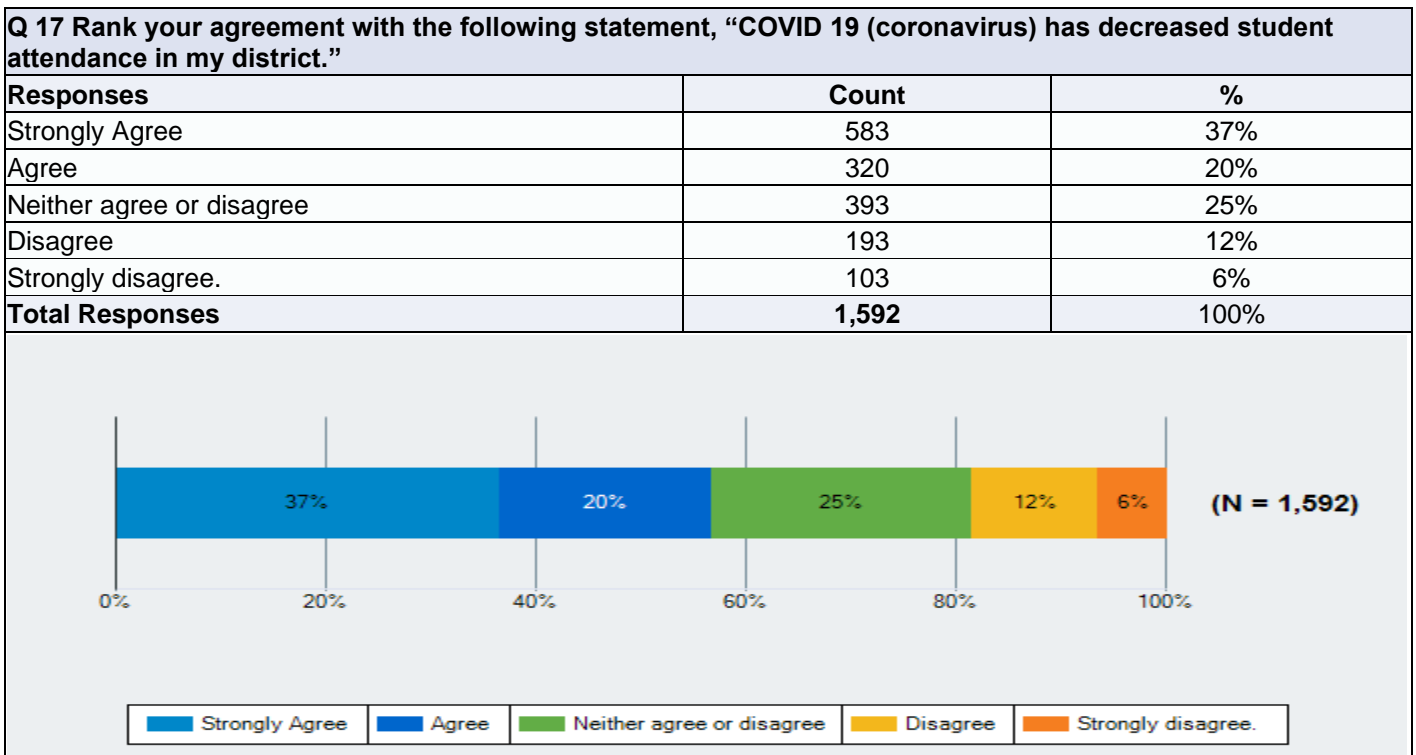
Question 16: Has your district sent out informational materials about COVID 19 to students, families, and staff?



Findings:

- 96% of respondents sent out informational materials about COVID-19.

Question 17: Rank your agreement with the following statement, “COVID 19 (coronavirus) has decreased student attendance in my district.”

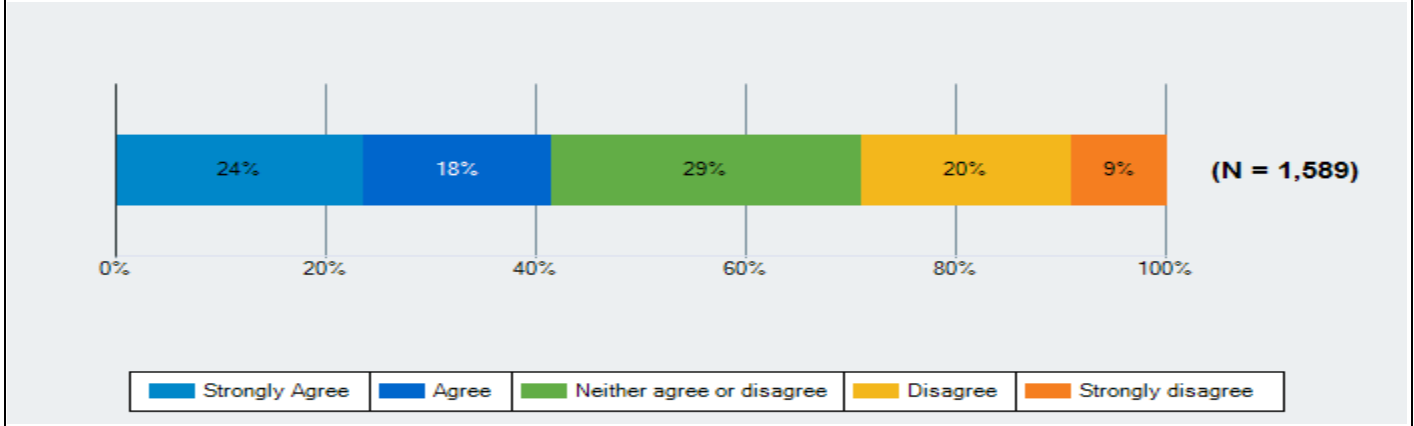


Findings:

- 57% of respondents indicated that COVID-19 has decreased student attendance in their districts, while 18% of respondents disagreed that the virus has decreased student attendance in their districts.
- Additionally, 25% of respondents were neutral on whether COVID-19 has decreased student attendance.

Question 18: Rank your agreement with the following statement, “COVID 19 (coronavirus) has decreased staff attendance in my district.”

Responses	Count	%
Strongly Agree	374	24%
Agree	286	18%
Neither agree or disagree	467	29%
Disagree	317	20%
Strongly disagree	145	9%
Total Responses	1,589	100%

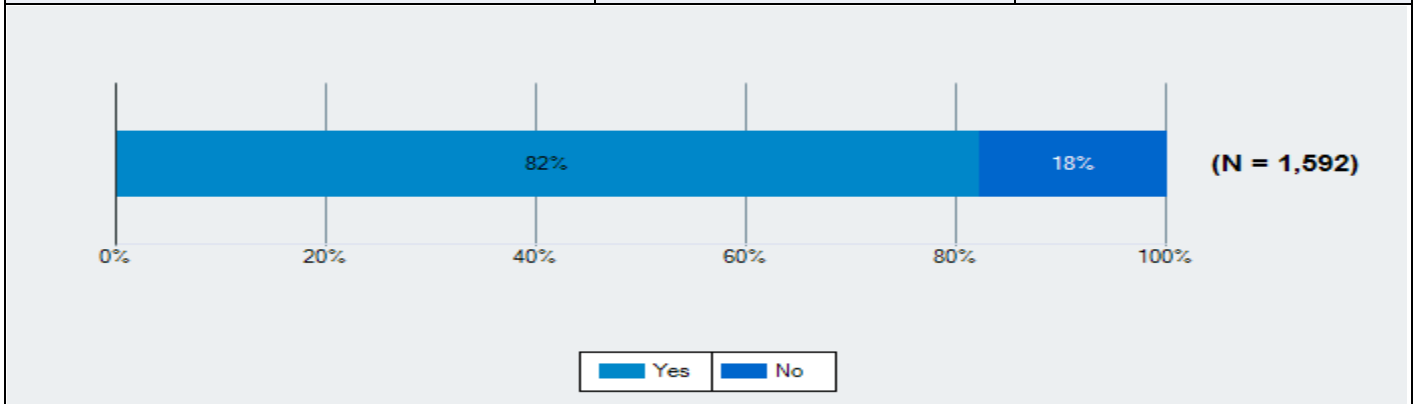


Findings:

- 42% of respondents agree that COVID-19 has decreased staff attendance, while 29% disagreed that COVID decreased staff attendance.
- Additionally, 29% indicated they were neutral on whether or not COVID-19 decreased staff attendance.

Question 19: Is your network capable of carrying the heavy data load associated with all teachers, students and staff working remotely?

Responses	Count	%
Yes	1,308	82%
No	284	18%
Total Responses	1,592	

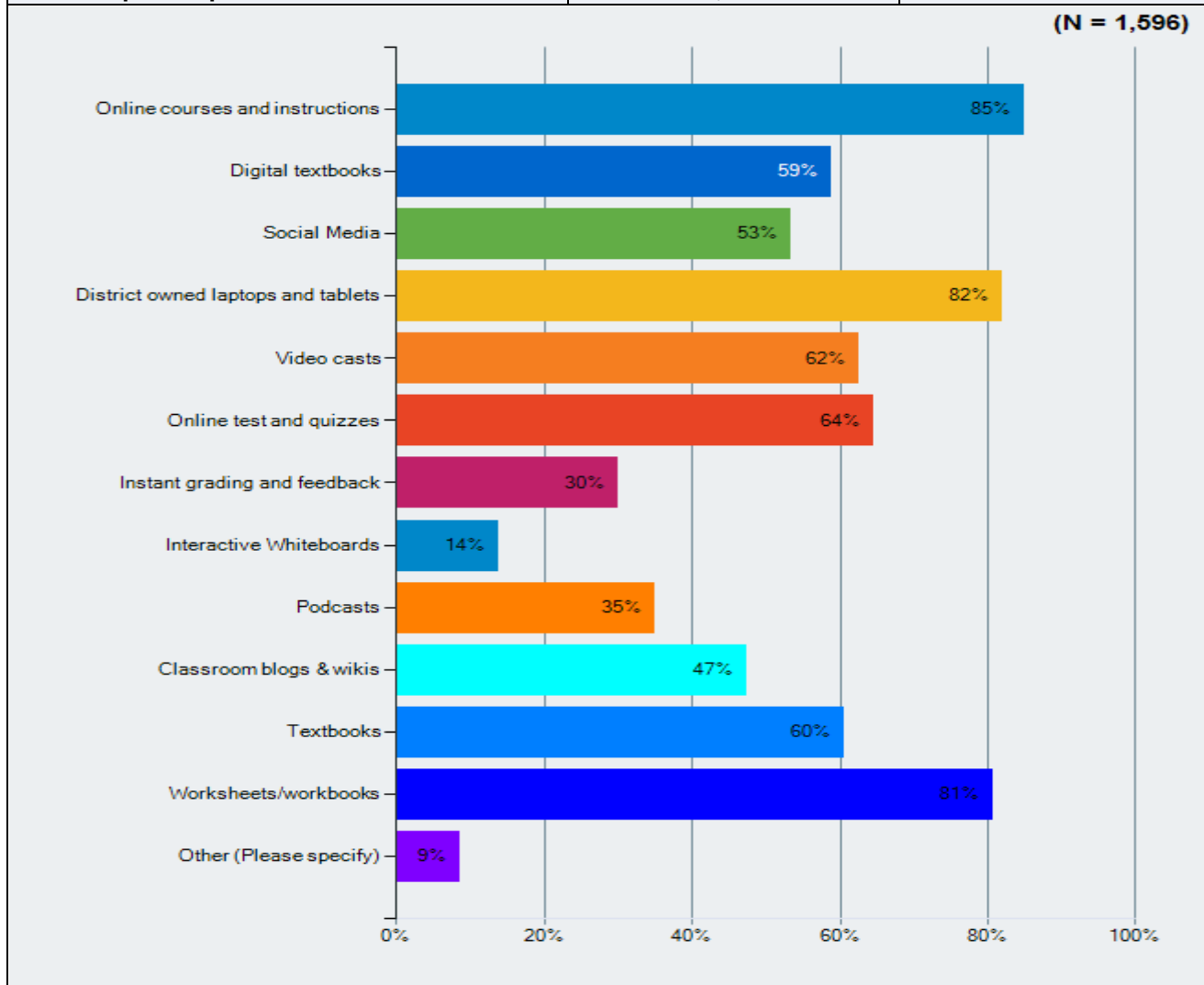


Findings:

- 82% of respondents reported that their network could carry the heavy data load associated with all teachers, students and staff working remotely.

Question 20: Which of these options would your district employ to offer students instruction and curriculum during an extended COVID 19 outbreak? Mark all that apply.

Q 20 Which of these options would your district employ to offer students instruction and curriculum during an extended COVID 19 outbreak? Mark all that apply.		
Responses	Count	%
Online courses and instructions	1,351	85%
Digital textbooks	937	59%
Social Media	848	53%
District owned laptops and tablets	1,305	82%
Video casts	995	62%
Online test and quizzes	1,027	64%
Instant grading and feedback	476	30%
Interactive Whiteboards	218	14%
Podcasts	553	35%
Classroom blogs & wikis	753	47%
Textbooks	963	60%
Worksheets/workbooks	1,286	81%
Other (Please specify)	136	9%
Total Unique Responses	1,596	N/A



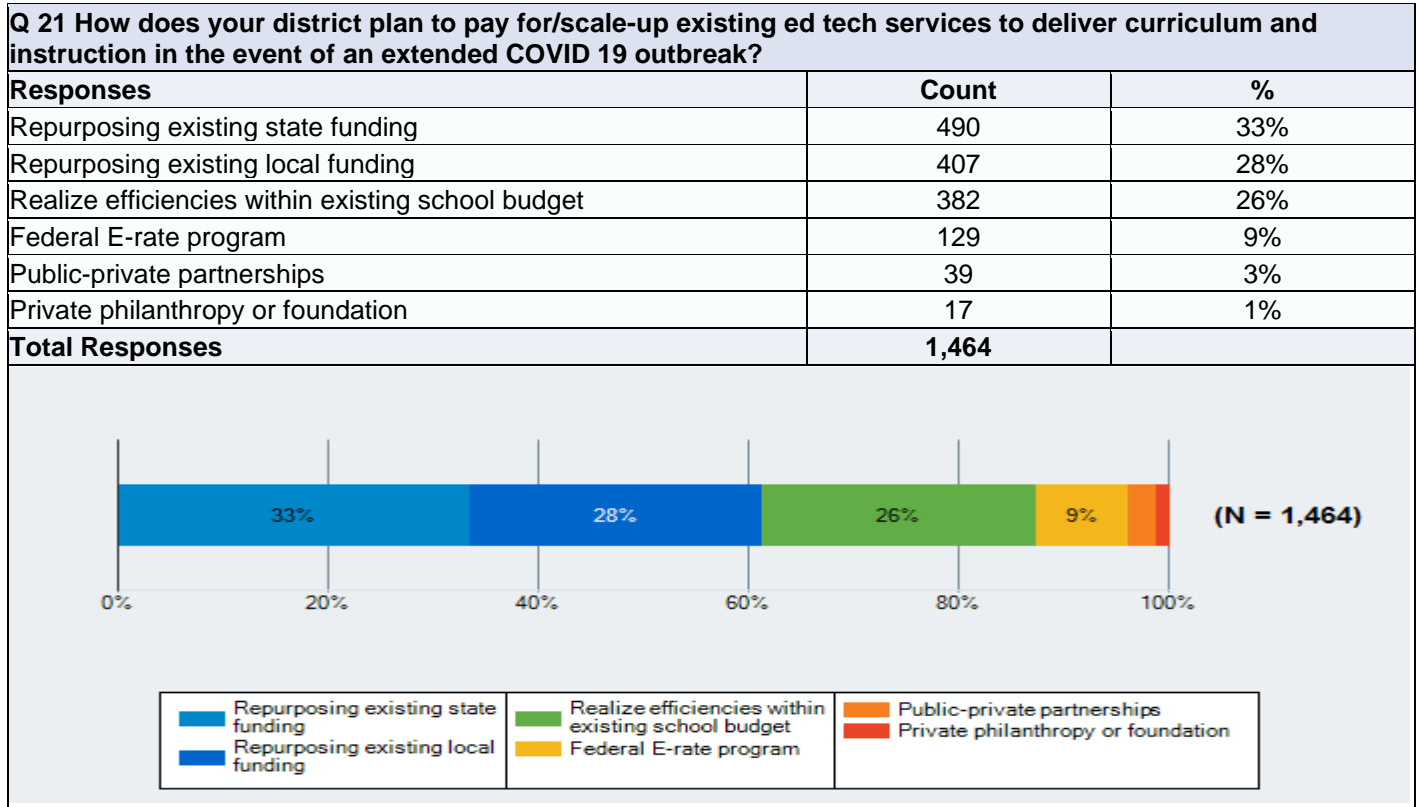
Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer to this question.

Findings:

- Online courses and instructions (85%), district-owned laptops and tablets (82%), worksheets/workbooks (81%), online tests and quizzes (64%), and video casts were top 5 responses to strategies offering students instruction and curriculum during an extended COVID-19 outbreak.

SECTION #3: FISCAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

Questions 21: How does your district plan to pay for/scale-up existing ed tech services to deliver curriculum and instruction in the event of an extended COVID-19 outbreak?



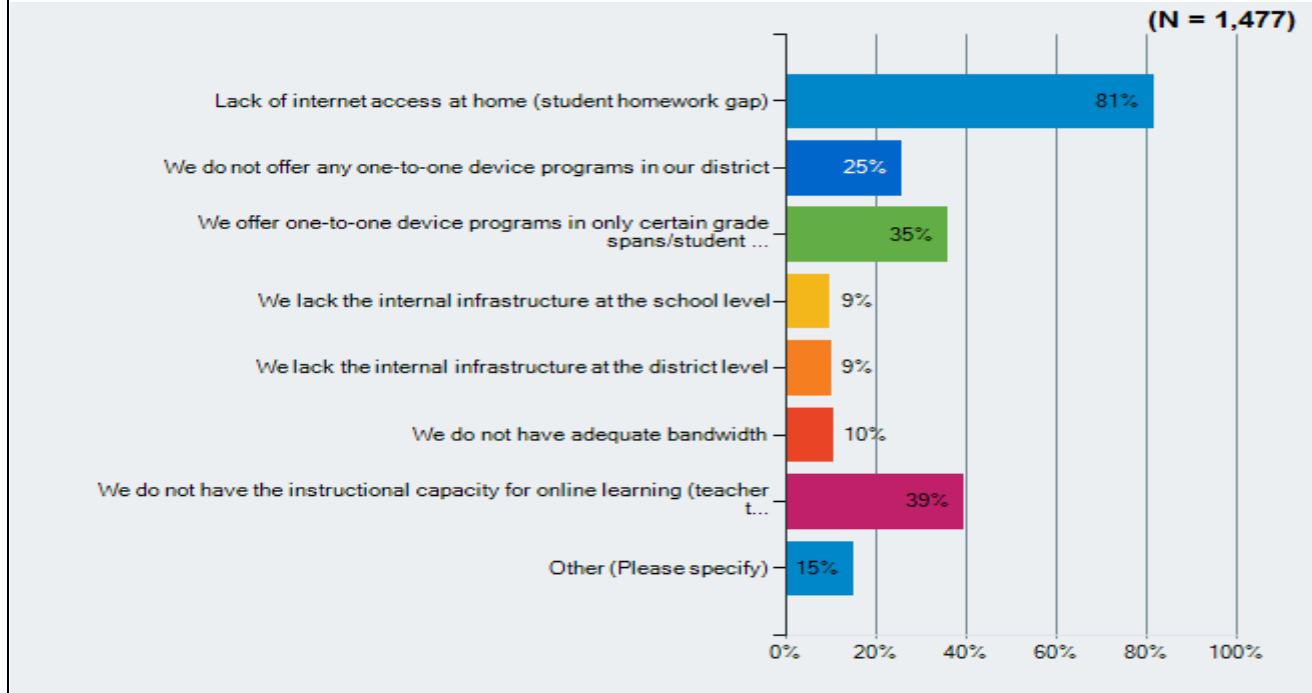
Findings:

- Repurposing existing state funding (33%), repurposing existing local funding (28%), realizing efficiencies within existing school budget (26%), the federal e-rate program (9%), and public-private partnerships were top 5 responses for how their districts plan to pay for/scale up existing ed-tech services.
- These statistics are consistent with other national findings considering the break down between local, state and federal education streaming sources.

Question 22: Which of the following barriers would prohibit your district from transitioning to a fully online learning modality? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Lack of internet access at home (student homework gap)	1,198	81%
We do not offer any one-to-one device programs in our district	369	25%
We offer one-to-one device programs in only certain grade spans/student clusters	524	35%
We lack the internal infrastructure at the school level	137	9%

Responses	Count	%
We lack the internal infrastructure at the district level	140	9%
We do not have adequate bandwidth	151	10%
We do not have the instructional capacity for online learning (teacher technology proficiency, lack of online student learning portal/platform, etc....)	576	39%
Other (Please specify)	217	15%
Total Responses	3,312	N/A



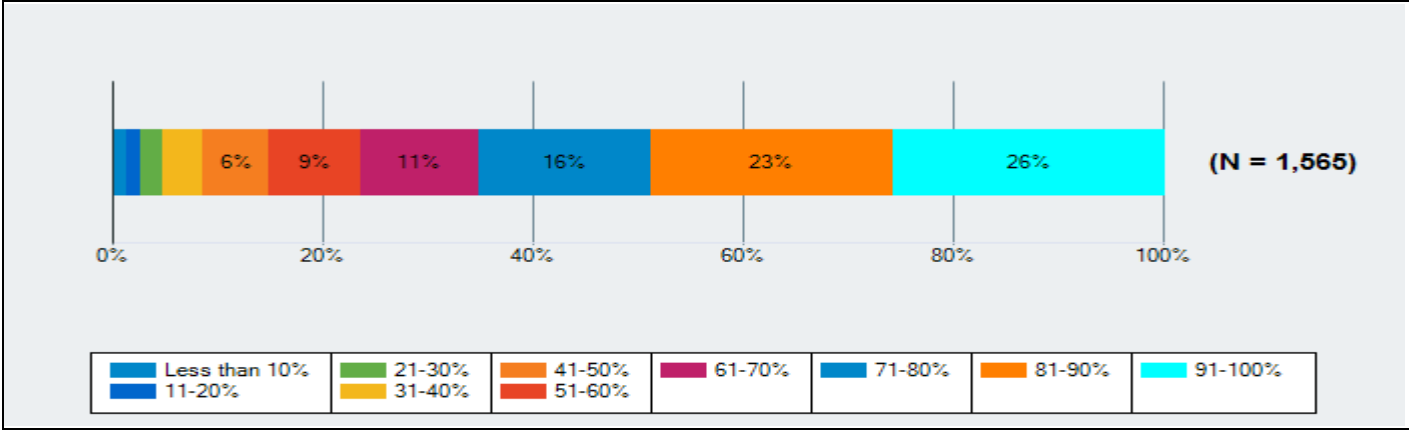
Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Findings:

- Lack of internet access at home (81%), offering one-to-one device programs in only certain grade spans/student clusters (35%), not offering any one-to-one device programs (25%), inadequate bandwidth (10%), and lack the internal infrastructure at the district level (9%) were responses to top barriers for prohibiting districts from transitioning fully to online learning.

Question 23: What percentage of students in your district have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet?

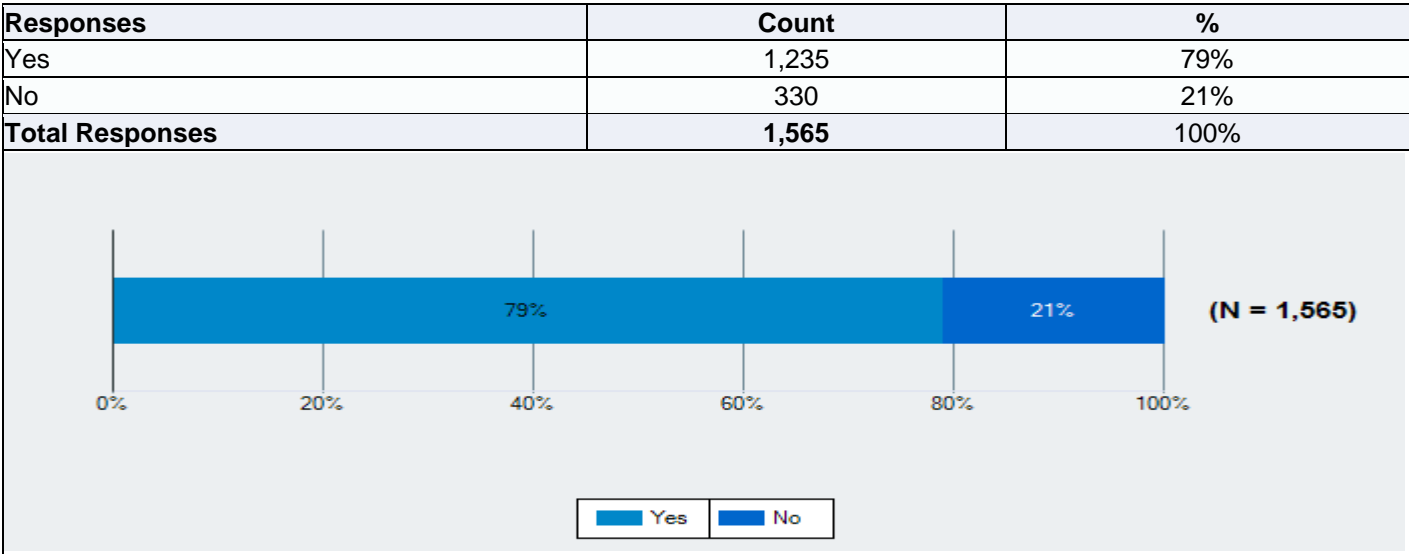
Responses	Count	%
Less than 10%	20	1%
11-20%	21	1%
21-30%	34	2%
31-40%	60	4%
41-50%	97	6%
51-60%	137	9%
61-70%	175	11%
71-80%	258	16%
81-90%	359	23%
91-100%	404	26%
Total Responses	1,565	



Findings:

- 26% of respondents reported that 91-100% of students have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet, 23% reported that 81-90% of their students have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet, 16% of reported 71-80% of their students have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet, 11% indicated that 61-70% of their students have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet, and 9% answered that 51-60% of their students have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet.
- 13% of respondents indicated that half of the students in their districts have access to a device at home that can connect to the internet.

Question 24: Do you intend to provide staff development related to delivering online learning?

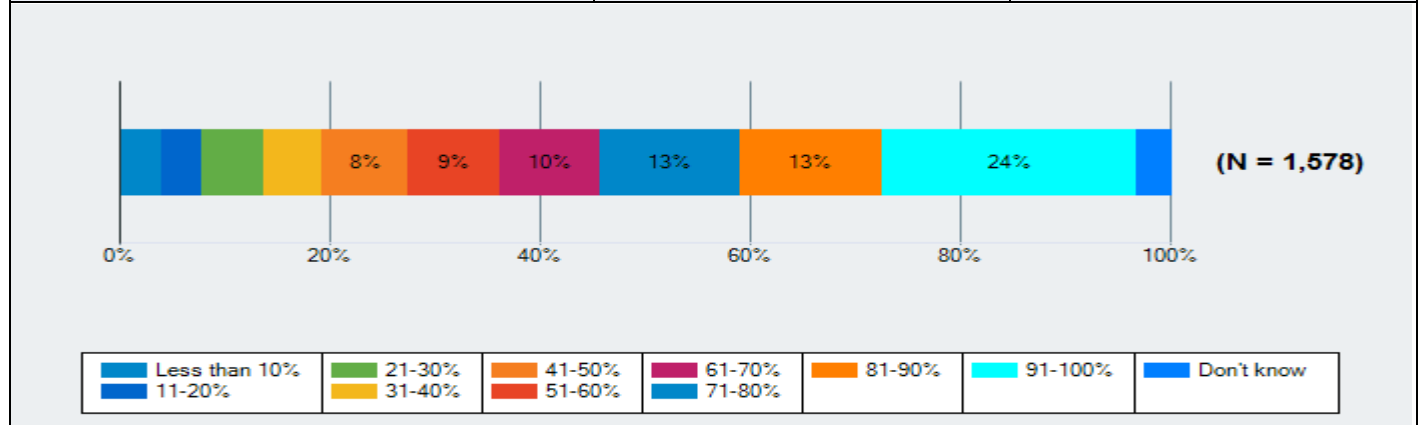


Findings:

- 79% of participants indicated that they intend to provide staff development related to delivering online learning, 21% had no plans to provide staff with additional training.

Question 25: What is the estimated percentage of instructional staff currently equipped to deliver online learning? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Less than 10%	63	4%
11-20%	60	4%
21-30%	94	6%
31-40%	86	5%
41-50%	131	8%
51-60%	136	9%
61-70%	152	10%
71-80%	209	13%
81-90%	212	13%
91-100%	384	24%
Don't know	51	3%
Total Responses	1,578	100%

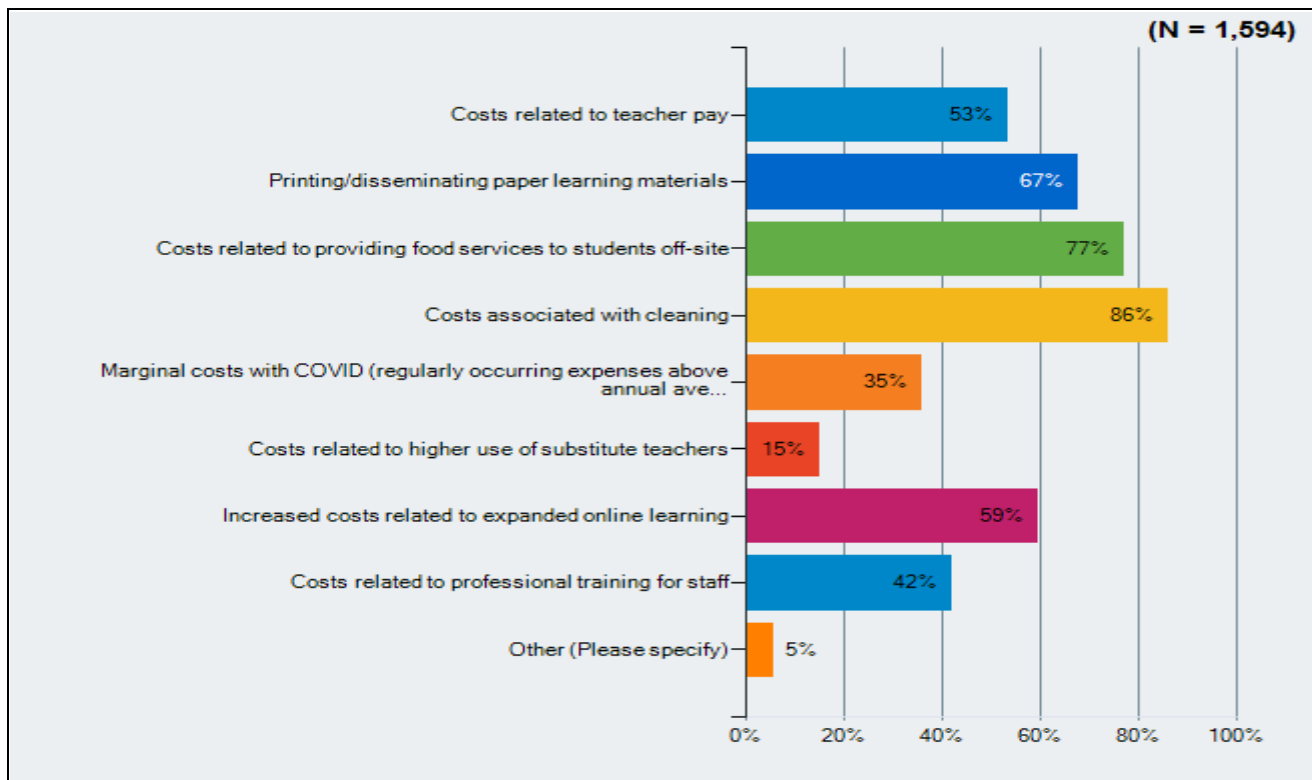


Findings:

- 36% of respondents indicated that less than half of their instructional staff are equipped to deliver online learning.
- 21% of respondents reported that 91-100% of instructional staff are equipped to deliver online learning, 13% of respondents reported that 81-90% staff are equipped to deliver online learning, 13% of respondents reported that 71-80% staff are equipped to deliver online learning, 10% of respondents reported that 61-70% staff are equipped to deliver online learning, and 9% of respondents reported that 51-60% of staff are equipped to deliver online learning.

Question 26: What costs will your district incur in responding to COVID-19? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Costs related to teacher pay	847	53%
Printing/disseminating paper learning materials	1,074	67%
Costs related to providing food services to students off-site	1,224	77%
Costs associated with cleaning	1,363	86%
Marginal costs with COVID (regularly occurring expenses above annual average)	565	35%
Costs related to higher use of substitute teachers	232	15%
Increased costs related to expanded online learning	940	59%
Costs related to professional training for staff	665	42%
Other (Please specify)	86	5%
Total Responses	6,996	N/A



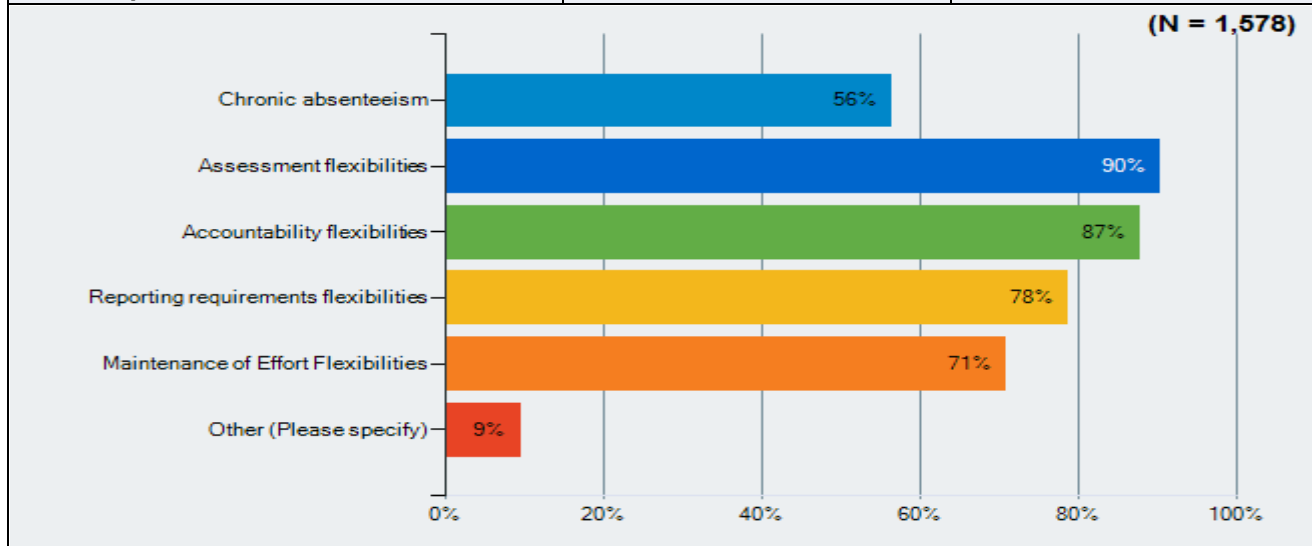
Note: Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Findings:

- Cleaning (86%), providing food services to students off-site (77%), printing/disseminating paper learning materials (67%), expanded online learning (59%), and teacher pay were top 5 responses to expected costs associated with responding to COVID-19.
- Staff training (42%) was also a highly reported cost associated with schools' response to COVID-19.

Question 27: What state policy decisions waivers/flexibility would be most helpful? Mark all that apply.

Responses	Count	%
Chronic absenteeism	884	56%
Assessment flexibilities	1,419	90%
Accountability flexibilities	1,380	87%
Reporting requirements flexibilities	1,238	78%
Maintenance of Effort Flexibilities	1,114	71%
Other (Please specify)	147	9%
Total Responses	6,182	100%



Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Findings:

- Respondents indicated that assessment (90%), accountability (87%), reporting (78%), maintenance of effort (71%) and chronic absenteeism (56%) waivers/flexibilities would be most helpful for school systems.