

WILL

WISCONSIN INSTITUTE
FOR LAW & LIBERTY

Dr. Will Flanders

www.will-law.org

About WILL

- WILL is a non-profit law and policy center in Milwaukee.
- Through education, litigation and participation in public discourse, we work to advance limited government, free speech, transparency, and education reform.
- We provide timely and comprehensive policy research to advance education reform, economic freedom, and healthcare.

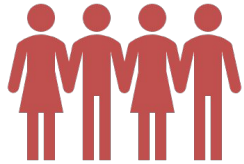
COVID-19 & Education

- The coronavirus and related restrictions have dramatically impacted education in Wisconsin:
 - School closures
 - Virtual and distance learning predominant
 - Districts and other schools varying in approach
- Our goal was to determine: *what is the overall picture of education in Wisconsin today?*

Survey Methodology

- 400 respondents:
 - Wisconsin residents
 - Have a child/children between 5 and 17 years old
- Survey administered by Dynata
 - Online sample
 - April 25-27
- Margin of Error \pm 4.89%

The Sample



Racial breakdown:

87% White
6% African American
3% Hispanic
3% Asian



**Median household
income bracket:
\$50,000-\$75,000**

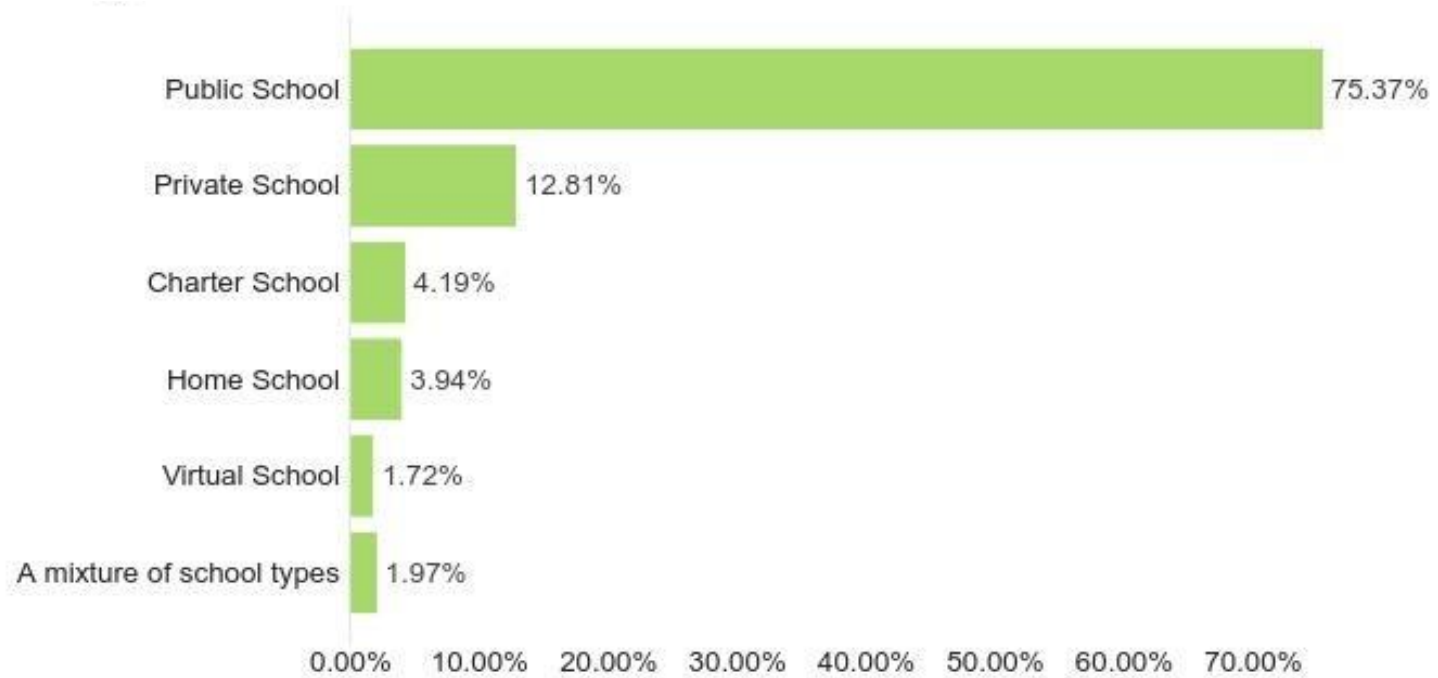


The Sample: School Sectors

- Parents represent all grade levels and school sectors
 - Private school parents represent both ends of the income distribution
- About 56% have students in grades K-5
- About 37% have students in high school
- 25% have at least one student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

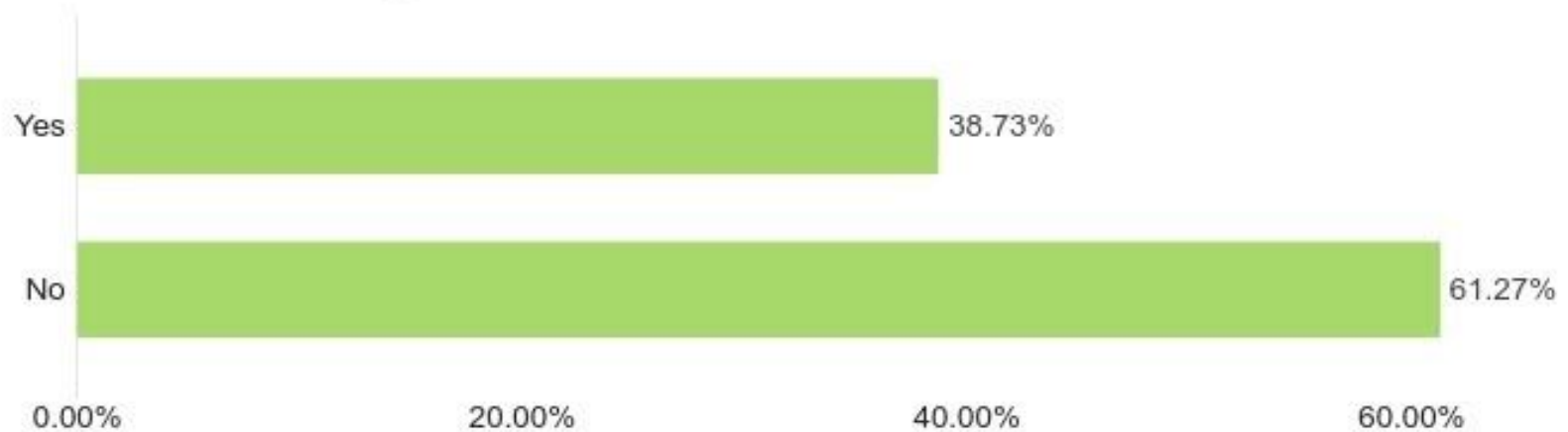


The Sample: School Sectors



COVID-19 is impacting families financially

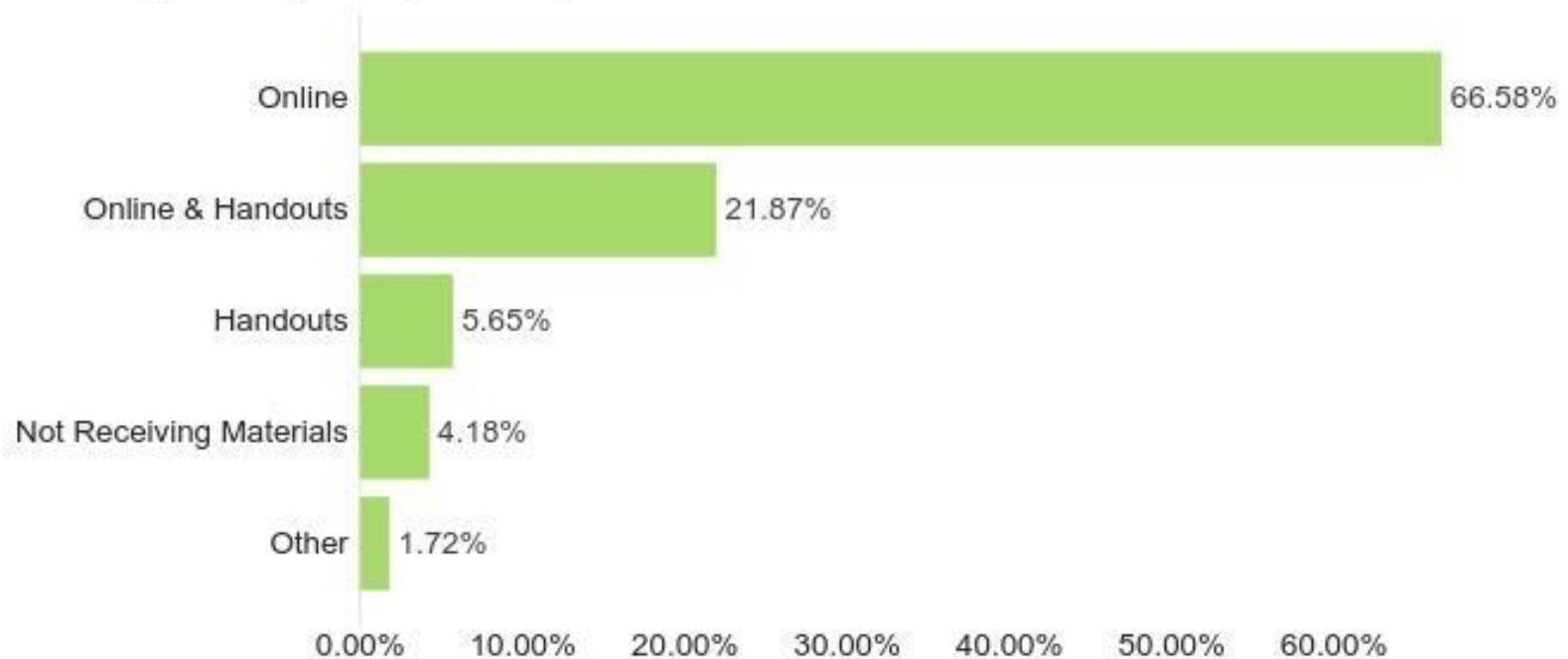
Lost Job, Hours Cut, Furloughed?



- A majority (53.2%) of lowest income families said “yes.”

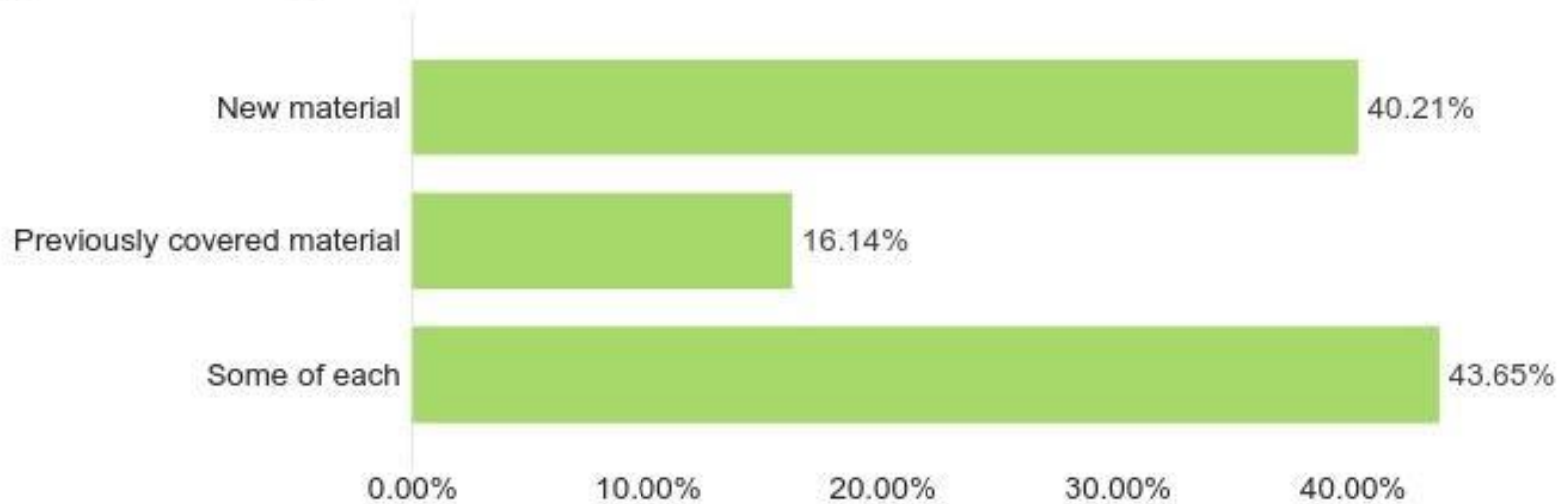
How are students receiving educational materials?

How have you been primarily receiving materials?

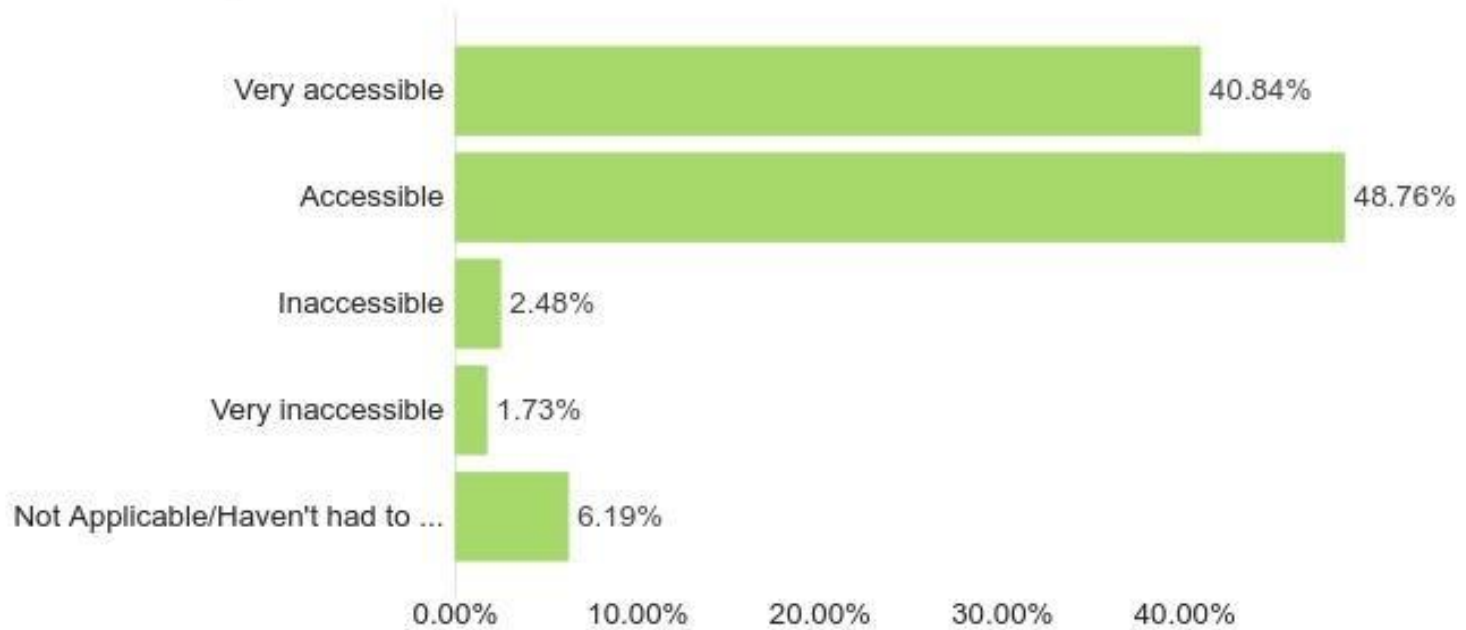


What educational materials are students receiving?

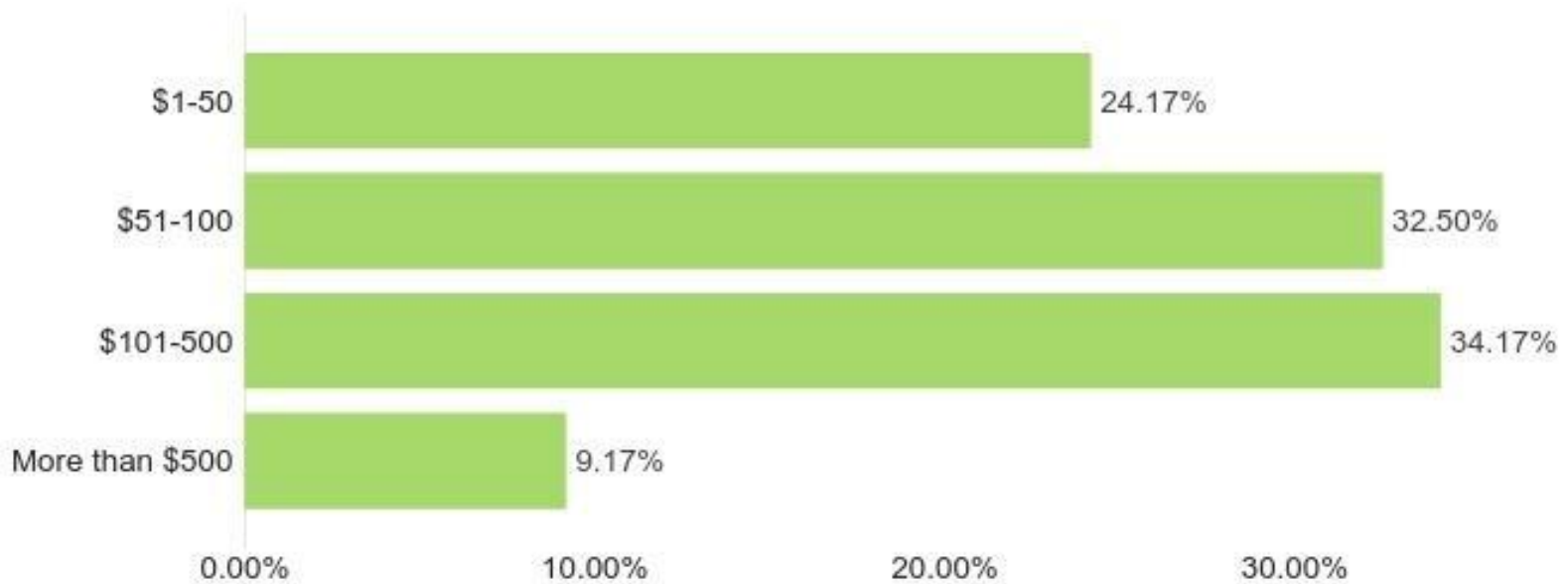
Type of Material Being Covered



How accessible are the student's teachers?



How much money are parents spending on educational materials?



Families are spending their own money for distance learning

- 30% of parents report spending money on educational materials
 - Highest rates among lowest income respondents
- 9% of respondents reporting more than \$500
- About 25% report spending less than \$50

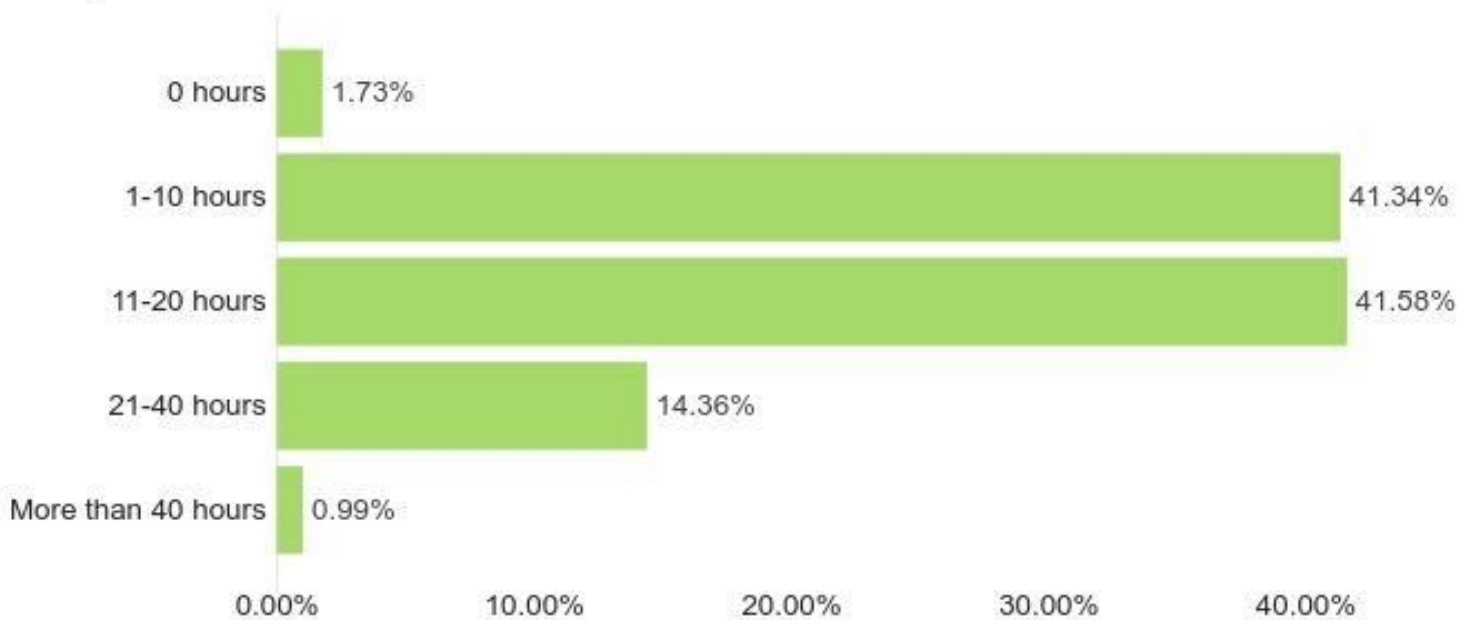
Computer & Internet Access

- More than 90% of respondents report having sufficient computers and internet access for schoolwork to be completed, but...

Percent saying they lack computer / internet access

Question	<\$20K	\$20K-50K	\$50K-70K	\$70K-100K	>\$100K
Computers	21.3%	6.5%	9.9%	3.6%	1.7%
Internet	8.5%	3.9%	6.2%	3.6%	1.7%

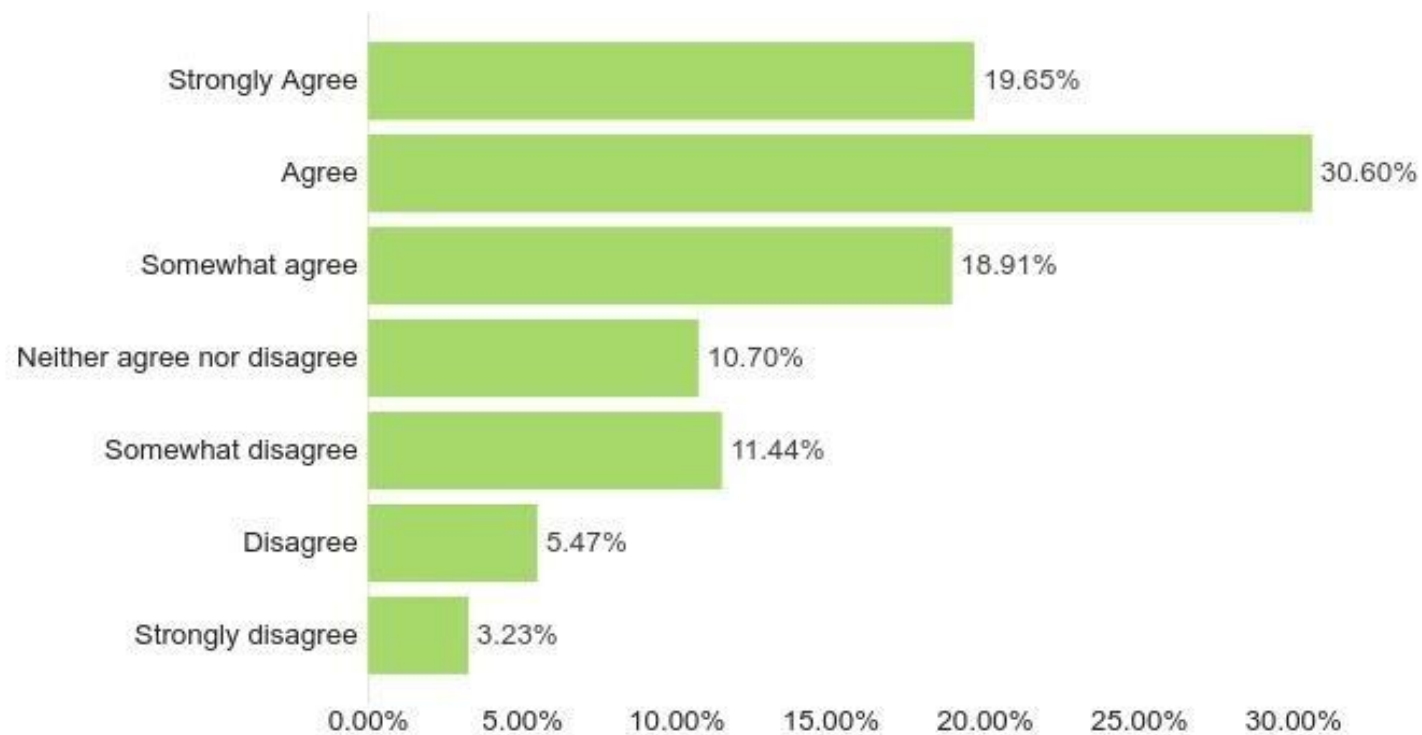
How much time are students spending on distance learning?



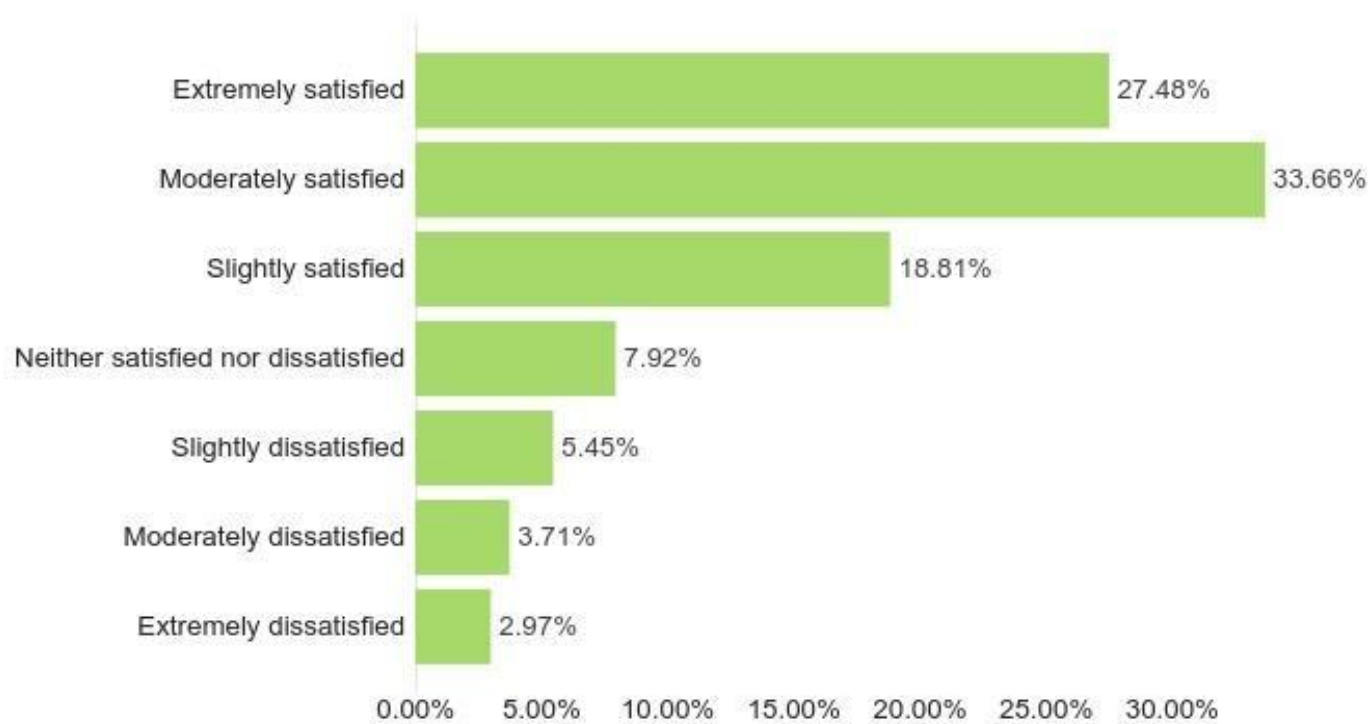
Student learning time broken out by grade levels

	K-5	6-8	9-12
0 hours	1.67%	1.61%	3.18%
1-10 hours	43.10%	41.94%	36.94%
11-20 hours	40.59%	41.40%	41.40%
21-40 hours	13.81%	13.98%	16.56%
More than 40 hours	0.84%	1.08%	1.91%

Do parents believe that their child will be prepared to move to the next grade level?



How satisfied are parents with their student's education?



How satisfied are parents with their student's education?

- Approximately 80% of respondents are satisfied with how schools are educating their child during the coronavirus
 - Predictor of satisfaction: spending money
 - Private school parents are more satisfied
- About 12% expressed dissatisfaction

Parent opinions on policies impacting education

- 55% of respondents said students should be promoted to next grade if distance learning objects are complete
 - 22% support extending the school year into the summer
 - 20% support promoting students regardless if distance learning objectives are completed
 - Only 2% support having students repeat the same grade

Parent opinions on policies impacting education

- 29% of respondents said they would be more interested in participating in programs that expand student access to courses
 - AB 849 / SB 789 – proposed legislation that allows students to take up to two classes, in person or online, that aren't offered at home school

Summary and conclusions

- Parents remain largely satisfied with how schools are handling the impact of COVID-19
- But problems remain:
 - Lack of new content for students
 - Lack of time spent on schoolwork
 - Finding balance between school and work responsibilities
- Low-income parents incurring educational costs
 - 529 Savings Accounts plan changes
 - “Emergency” educational savings accounts

Policy questions to consider

- Will schools/districts that have struggled to provide educational materials to students “catch-up” before the end of the school year?
- How will the school closures impact the existing racial achievement gaps for Wisconsin students?
- Post-Covid Assessment
 - No Report Cards
 - No Forward Exam

Questions?

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