

To: Interested Parties

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New Poll Explores Chicago Public Schools Parents' Opinions About Learning During the Pandemic

Tulchin Research recently conducted a poll on behalf of Stand for Children to assess the attitudes of parents and guardians of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students about learning from home and in-person classroom instruction during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. In this memo, we detail some of the poll's key findings.

CPS Parents' Preferences for Student Instruction During the Upcoming Fall Term

Most Parents Favor At Least Some Continued Home Learning in the Fall; Plurality Say Schools Should Remain Closed

We asked parents about how they would prefer CPS proceed with student instruction in the fall in light of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and found that most parents (75%) feel that at least some home learning should continue in the new school year. Our poll finds that 40% of parents agree with the statement that schools “should remain closed and learning from home should continue for the time being” and 35% feel that schools “should partially re-open in the fall with some learning from home continuing,” while just 1 in 5 (19%) feel that “Chicago Public Schools should fully reopen.” Nearly half of Latino parents (47%) and 42% of African American parents feel that schools should remain closed for the time being while just 18% of Latinos and 14% of African Americans feel they should fully reopen in the fall.

<u>Parent Preferences for Student Learning in the Fall</u>			
<i>Which of the following statements do you agree with more?</i>	<u>All Parents</u>	<u>African American Parents</u>	<u>Latino Parents</u>
<i>Chicago Public Schools should fully reopen in the fall.</i>	19%	14%	18%
<i>Chicago Public Schools should remain closed and learning from home should continue for the time being.</i>	40%	42%	47%
<i>Chicago Public Schools should partially re-open in the fall with some learning from home continuing.</i>	35%	38%	30%
Don't Know	6%	6%	5%

Parents’ Views About the Coronavirus Pandemic

Parents Rate “Keeping Children’s Education on Track” Their Top Concern During the Crisis

We asked parents how concerned they are personally with some of the different challenges people are facing during the coronavirus crisis and found that “keeping my child or children’s education on track” was their top concern (8.32/10 mean), even more than “getting sick, or close friends or family members getting sick” (7.94 mean). Six in 10 parents (60%) rated keeping their students’ education on track as a 10 out of 10, indicating it is a very serious concern for them. Other top concerns for parents during the pandemic include “balancing the demands of a job with children at home” (7.44 mean), “the challenges of my child or children learning from home” (7.38 mean), and “losing work and/or income” (7.26 mean).

Top Concerns Parents Have During the Coronavirus Crisis

Here is a list of concerns some people have during the coronavirus crisis. On a scale from 1-10, please indicate how serious of a concern each is for you personally, with a 10 meaning it is a very serious concern, and a 1 meaning it is not a concern at all. You can use any number from 1 to 10.

	Mean Concern Score	%10 “Very Serious” Concern
<i>Keeping my child or children’s education on track</i>	8.32	60%
<i>Getting sick, or close friends or family members getting sick</i>	7.94	51%
<i>Balancing the demands of a job with children at home</i>	7.44	46%
<i>The challenges of my child or children learning from home</i>	7.38	43%
<i>Losing work and/or income</i>	7.26	47%

Parents See the Coronavirus Pandemic in the United States Getting Worse, Widely Believe Virus Disproportionately Impacts Communities of Color

Our poll finds a wide majority of CPS parents see the coronavirus pandemic in the United States getting worse while feelings about the current state of the pandemic locally are more divided. Nearly 6 in 10 parents (59%) say that the coronavirus pandemic in the United States is “getting worse,” while just 15% feel it is “getting better” and 22% say that is staying about the same. Parents are split on how the pandemic is progressing in Chicago specifically, with 31% who see it getting better compared to 29% who see it getting worse and 36% who say it is staying about the same.

Do you think the coronavirus pandemic in the United States/Chicago is getting better, staying about the same, or getting worse?

	<u>United States</u>	<u>Chicago</u>
Getting better	15%	31%
Staying about the same	22%	36%
Getting worse	59%	29%
Don’t Know	4%	4%

Most CPS parents believe there is a difference in how the coronavirus pandemic has impacted different communities. By a 2-to-1 margin, parents say they believe that the coronavirus pandemic “has had more of an impact on communities of color” (61%) rather than “impacted all communities equally” (30%), with two-thirds of African American parents (66%) and 57% of Latino parents agreeing the virus has disproportionately impacted minority communities.

<i>Do you feel the coronavirus pandemic has impacted all communities equally or has had more of an impact on communities of color, including African American and Latino communities?</i>			
	<i>All Parents</i>	<i>African American Parents</i>	<i>Latino Parents</i>
Impacted all communities equally	30%	28%	35%
More impact on communities of color	61%	66%	57%
Don't Know	9%	6%	7%

Experiences with Home Learning

We asked parents about their children’s experiences learning from home during the spring and found that many CPS students expressed the same frustrations with the process. Wide majorities of parents said their children “missed socializing with their fellow classmates in person” (87%), “missed participating in extracurricular activities like sports and arts after school” (77%), missed “seeing their teachers in person” (74%), and expressed that they “preferred classroom learning to learning from home” (68%).

<u>Student Experiences with Home Learning</u>	
<i>Please indicate whether your child or children regularly expressed each of the following reactions to learning from home during the spring.</i>	
<i>My child(ren) missed socializing with their fellow classmates in person</i>	87%
<i>My child(ren) missed participating in extracurricular activities like sports and arts after school</i>	77%
<i>My child(ren) missed seeing their teacher(s) in person</i>	74%
<i>My child(ren) preferred classroom learning to learning from home</i>	68%

Turning to parents’ own experiences helping their children with schoolwork during the spring term, our poll finds that most found the adjustment challenging. Six in 10 parents (61%) say they found it either very difficult (20%) or “somewhat difficult” (41%) to help their children learn from home.

Parents’ Views About Reopening Schools

Increased Cleaning and Disinfection Seen as Most Important Guidelines for Reopening Schools

We asked respondents about each of the specific guidelines recently announced by Governor J.B. Pritzker that Illinois schools must follow in order to reopen during Phase 4 of the state’s coronavirus recovery plan and found that parents rated all of these measures as highly important for schools to follow. Overall, parents rate increased schoolwide cleanings and disinfections as the most important guideline to follow (9.6/10 mean, with 86% rating this a “10” meaning “extremely important”) followed by the

requirement that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings (8.94 mean, 70% “10”).

Views on State Guideline for Reopening Schools		
<i>As you may know, Governor J.B. Pritzker recently released a series of guidelines that schools must follow in order to reopen during Phase 4 of Illinois’ coronavirus recovery plan. On a scale from 1-10, please indicate how important it is for schools to follow each of these guidelines, with a 10 meaning it is extremely important and a 1 meaning it is not at all important.</i>		
	Mean Importance Score	%10 “Extremely” Important
Require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection	9.60	86%
Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings	8.94	70%
Require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings	8.72	73%
Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space	8.70	71%
Require physical distancing be observed, as much as possible	8.63	69%

Plurality Prefer Schedule of Alternating Days if Schools Reopen, Want Regular Updates on the Reopening Process

We asked parents what type of schedule they would prefer if CPS schools were to partially reopen in the fall, allowing only a certain number of students to enter school buildings and classrooms at a time. A plurality of parents (44%) said they would prefer a schedule of alternating days during the week as opposed to alternating mornings and afternoons (18%) or alternating weeks (19%).

If schools reopen and only a certain number of students are permitted to enter schools and classrooms at a time, which type of schedule would you prefer?	
Alternating mornings and afternoons	18%
Alternating days per week	44%
Alternating weeks	19%
Don’t Know	19%

When it comes to how often parents want their children’s schools to communicate with them about the reopening process should CPS resume in-person classroom instruction, the poll finds that a majority (55%) want to hear from their children’s schools once a week about how the process is going, while a third of parents (33%) want daily communication.

Survey Methodology: From July 8-14, 2020, Tulchin Research conducted survey of 660 Parents of Chicago Public Schools in Chicago, Illinois. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.81%.