School Reopening Update

November 18, 2020

Key Messages

1) The health & well-being of students, families, & staff is priority #1.

2) Our focus for this school year is to develop a safe school environment for our students and staff that prioritizes everyone's well-being and enables high levels of learning for all.

3) We are operating based on guidance from public health authorities and the MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education while closely monitoring the latest information from medical experts and the evolving data regarding the pandemic both in Massachusetts and in Shrewsbury.

Reasons to be proud

1) Our staff has gone above and beyond to make the reopening of schools happen successfully

2) Our families have been very supportive of the work we have had to do to reshape how our schools work in order to adapt to the pandemic

3) Our students have been terrific in meeting the new expectations we have set out for them

We need the community's help to stop the spread of COVID-19

It is crucial to follow public health guidance:

- Mask up!

- Keep your distance

- Wash/sanitize your hands frequently

- Use common sense outside of school (socializing, travel, etc.)

- Stay home if you don't feel well

Governor's Travel Order

The expectation for all members of our school community is that if someone travels to a state that is <u>not</u> designated as low-risk, the individual must not return to school in person until a negative COVID-19 test is provided per the guidelines (or 14-day quarantine)

https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order

Thanksgiving

- Please use common sense

- Please take health and safety precautions seriously

- Based on consultation with medical experts, we are continuing with our hybrid, in-person schedule the following week

Current Case Count in District

In-School Hybrid Model Cases

Cases this week to date = 8

Cumulative cases since start of school = 43

Cases traced to exposure in school = 0

Cases in Remote Program

Cases this calendar week = 0

Cumulative cases since start of school = 3

SPS COVID-19 Data Dashboard
Published weekly on Mondays
https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/district/sps-weekly-covid-19-data-dashboard

SPS WEEKLY COVID-19 DATA DASHBOARD

Shrewsbury Public Schools

COVID-19 Data Dashboard – Week of November 8-14, 2020

Positive Cases This Week in Hybrid Model = 4   Positive Cases Cumulative in Hybrid Model = 35

Cases This Week Traced to Exposure in School = 0   Cumulative Cases Traced to Exposure in School = 0

SCHOOL	POSITIVE CASES THIS WEEK	CUMULATIVE POSITIVE CASES
Parker Road Preschool	0	3
Beal Early Childhood Center	0	1
Calvin Coolidge School	0	5
Floral Street School	0	1
Walter J. Paton School	0	3
Spring Street School	0	1
Sherwood Middle School	1	3
Oak Middle School	0	5
Shrewsbury High School	3	13
TOTALS	4	35

Positive Cases This Week in Remote Model = 0   Positive Cases Cumulative in Remote Model = 3

SPS COVID-19 Data Dashboard
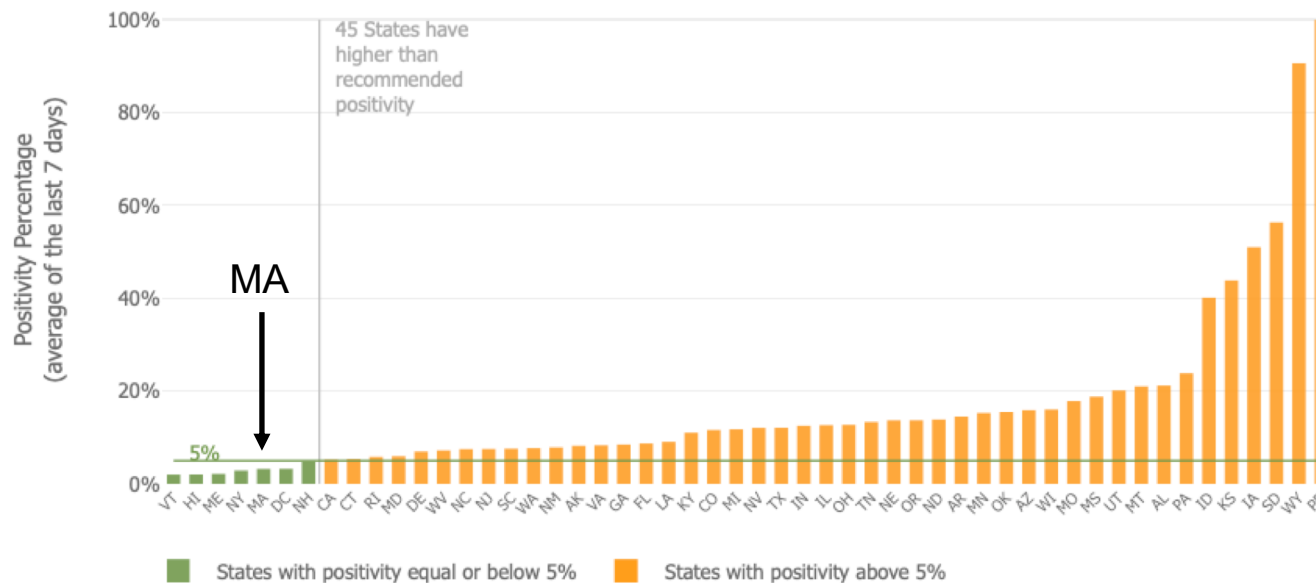## Published weekly on Mondays
https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/district/sps-weekly-covid-19-data-dashboard

SPS Positive Cases Past 4 Weeks (Hybrid Model)
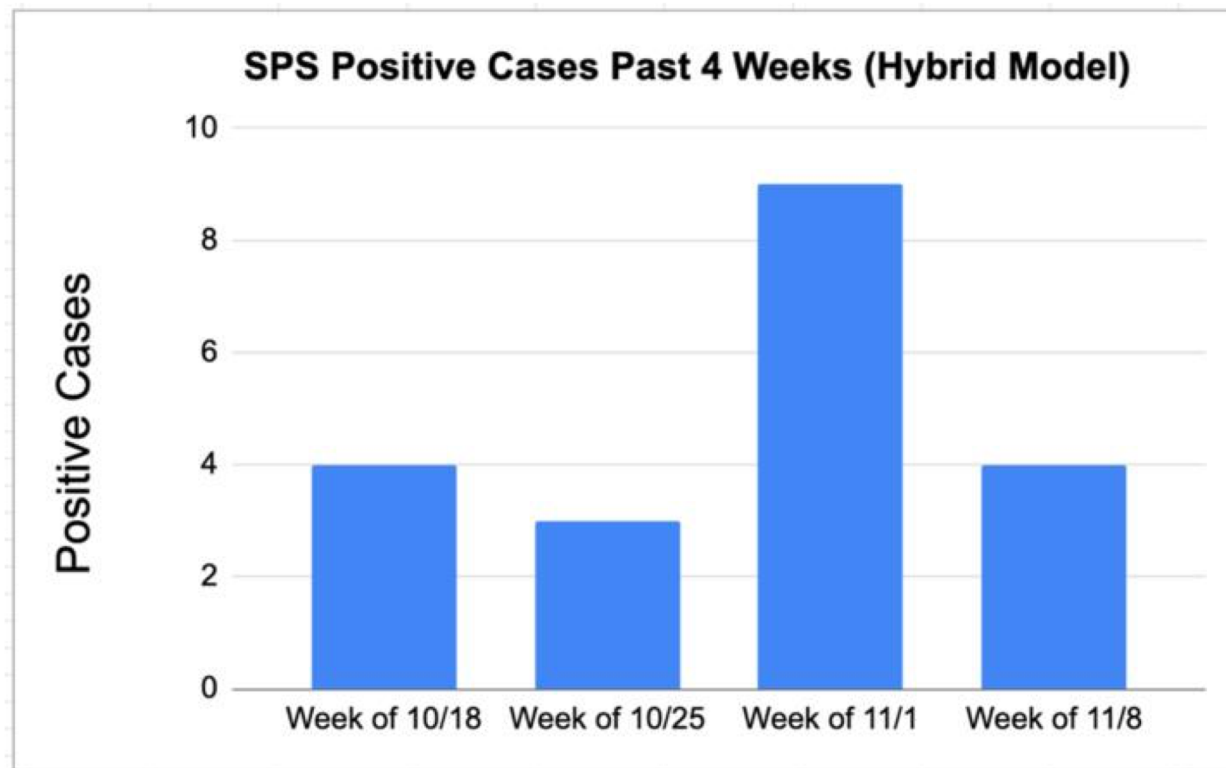
Current Public Health Data
MA 7-Day Positivity Rate = 3.22%
(Up from 1.78% two weeks ago)
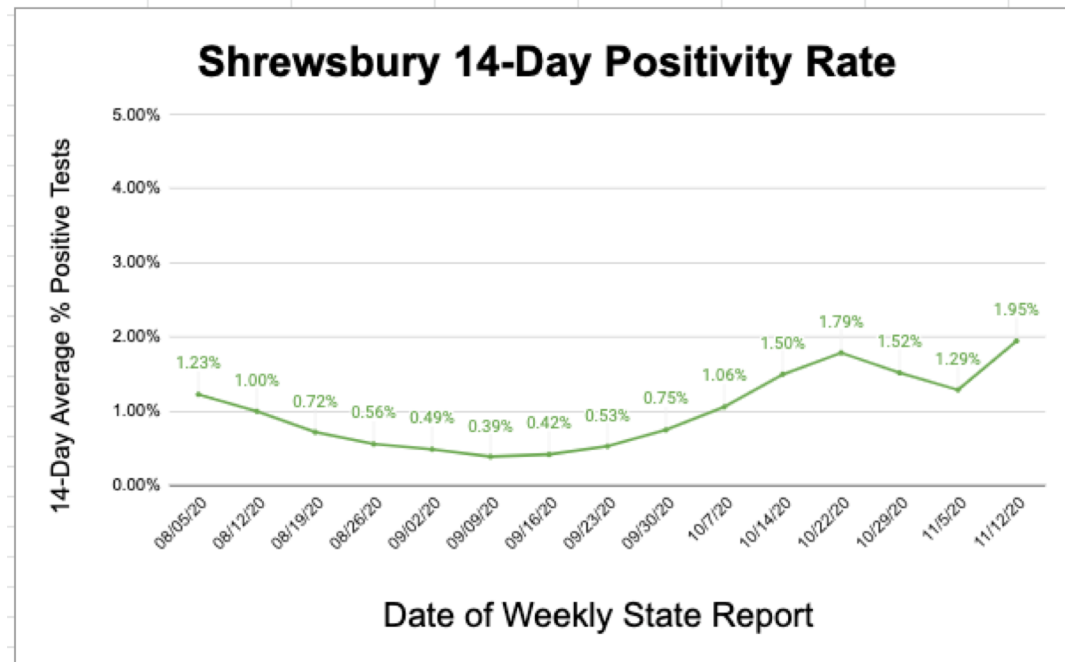## Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center
https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity

Current Public Health Data
Shrewsbury 14-Day Positive Test Rate
(vs. 5.0% Benchmark)
As of November 12 (Last Published)

Shrewsbury Weekly Public Health Data
(As of last report of November 12)

Case Count Oct 25-Nov 7 = 67 (4.8 cases/day)
14-Day Cases per 100,000 = 12.1: Yellow Zone

Case Count Oct 18-Oct 31 = 39 (2.8 cases/day)
14-Day Cases per 100,000 = 7.1: Green Zone

Group	Population		
	Under 10K	**10K-50K**	**Over 50K**
Grey	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 15 total cases
Green	Less than or equal to 15 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >10 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >15 total cases
Yellow	Less than or equal to 25 total cases	>=10 avg cases/100k OR >= 5% pos rate	>=10 avg cases/100k OR >= 4% pos rate
Red	More than 25 total cases	>=10 avg cases/100k AND >=5% pos rate	>=10 avg cases/100k AND >=4% pos rate

Medical Literature Focusing on In-School Transmission Risk

Table 1: Modified from "CDC indicators and thresholds for risk of introduction and transmission of COVID-19 in schools" (published September 2020).

Indicators	Lowest risk of transmission in schools	Lower risk of transmission in schools	Moderate risk of transmission in schools	Higher risk of transmission in schools	Highest risk of transmission in schools
Core Indicators					
Number of new county-level cases per 100,000 persons within the last 14 days	<5	5 to <20	20 to <50	50 to ≤ 200	>200
Percentage of county-level RT-PCR tests that are positive during the last 14 days	<3%	3% to <5%	5% to <8%	8% to ≤ 10%	>10%
Ability of the school to implement 5 key mitigation strategies: • Consistent and correct use of masks • Social distancing to the largest extent possible • Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette • Cleaning and disinfection • Contact tracing in collaboration with local health department	Implemented **all 5 strategies** correctly and consistently	Implemented **all 5 strategies** correctly but inconsistently	Implemented **3-4 strategies** correctly and consistently	Implemented **1-2 strategies** correctly and consistently	Implemented **no strategies**

These are the core indicators CDC issued to inform risk assessment decisions for school reopening. Secondary indicators included hospital and ICU load and local indicators of outbreaks.

Updated State Guidance to Decision-Making Process for Determining Change in Educational Program (i.e., Potential for Moving to Remote Learning): <u>Determine Whether There is Transmission in Schools</u>

From the MA COVID-19 Command Center & DESE (November 6, 2020):

"Districts are expected to prioritize in-person learning across all color-coded categories, unless there is suspected in-school transmission, in accordance with DESE's *Guidance on Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios*. Transmission in schools is defined as spread of the virus between people during interactions in the school setting."

Updated State Guidance to Decision-Making Process for Determining Change in Educational Program (i.e., Potential for Moving to Remote Learning): <u>Expectations for In-Person Learning</u>

From the MA COVID-19 Command Center & DESE (November 6, 2020):

"...Districts and schools in communities designated gray, green, or yellow are expected to have students learning fully in-person, **if feasible**. A hybrid model should be used only if there is no other way to meet health and safety requirements. Parents and caregivers will continue to have the option to choose a district's remote learning program for their children.

Schools in red communities should implement hybrid models, while maximizing in-person learning time for high-needs students."

School Department Unemployment Fraud

Claims Received

(January 1, 2020-October 19, 2020)	150 (different individuals)
(October 20, 2020-November 16, 2020)	94 (different individuals)
Total	244

Fraudulent Claims

(January 1, 2020-October 19, 2020)	57
(October 20, 2020-November 16, 2020)	84
Total	141
% Fraudulent since Oct 20	**89.36%**

School Department Unemployment Fraud

Messages to Impacted Staff

Report the claim as fraudulent on the unemployment website
at https://www.mass.gov/info-details/report-unemployment-benefits-fraud and follow all
of the steps to report the fraudulent claim, which include (see site for more information):

1) Contact the IRS and Social Security
2) Report fraud to all three credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Transunion, Experian)
3) File a police report
4) Call the state's fraud line at 1 800 354 9927
5) Go to: www.identitytheft.gov
6) Change your personal and work-related passwords as soon as possible

Staff Quarantine During COVID-19

Staff have been required to quarantine for a variety of reasons, including having one or more of the symptoms on the symptom checker, travel to a high risk state, being identified as a close contact of an infected person (no in-school transmission to date):

Since August 31, 2020 185 staff have had to quarantine for 1 day or more

102 are Teachers/Professional Staff (55.1%)
59 are Paraprofessionals including ABA Techs (31.9%)
24 are in Other Roles, including IT, Leadership, and Secretaries (13%)

Approximately 20% of the staff have needed to quarantine at some point this year

Staff Quarantine During COVID-19: Impacts

- In-person staffing at all schools is difficult. We are hiring 1-3 subs per week for a need that is larger than resources we can find to staff it.   Absences are usually a minimum of 2 days (due to symptoms with a negative test that comes back within 24 hours) up to 14 days (for being a close contact) up to longer (for a personal positive test with symptoms and recovery)

- If staff are well enough to work from home they perform modified duties

Food Services Update

- Lunch is **FREE for ALL students** for the remainder of the school year.

- We highly encourage ALL students to take advantage of this federally funded program.

- This year's free lunches are not just for students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. It's for ALL students.

- More participation brings in more federal reimbursement which we need to run the program.

Food Services Update

Avg. Daily Lunches Served

Hot sandwiches are now also an option!
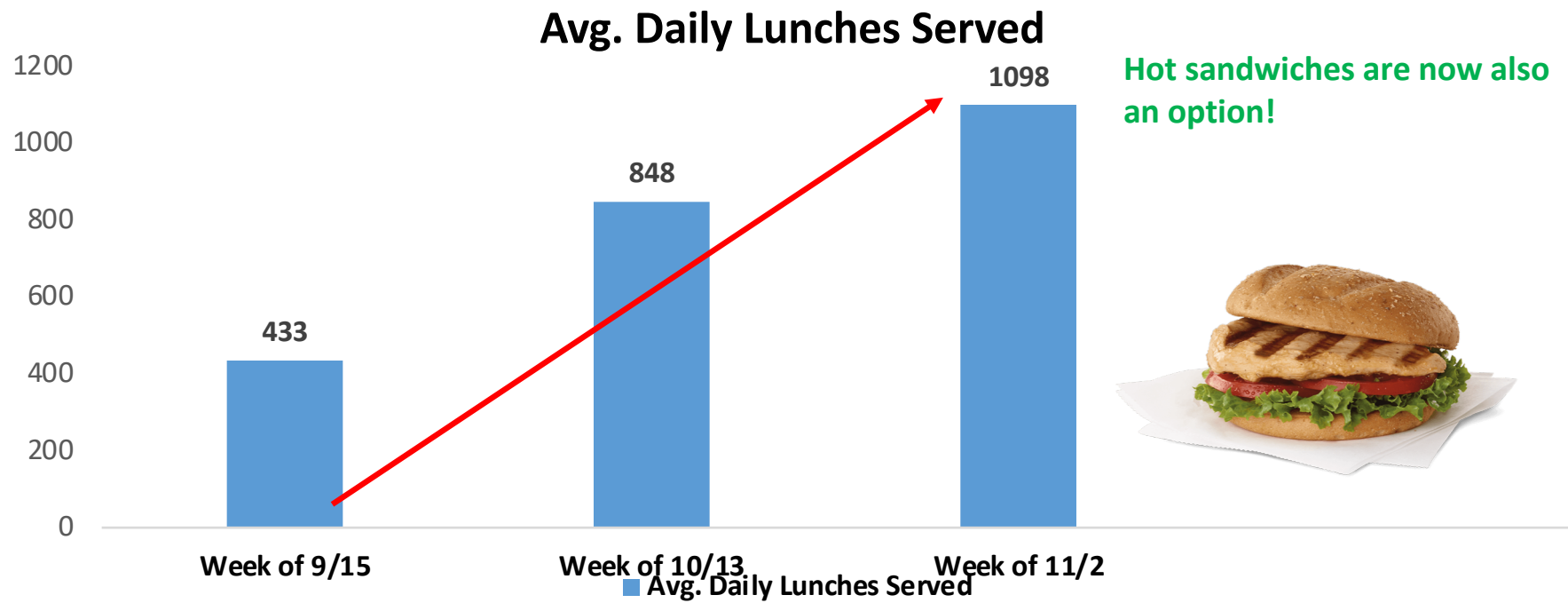
Breakfast Program Re-started

- The Breakfast Program at Coolidge School started at the beginning of the school as it's a mandated program at that school.

- We re-started breakfast at Sherwood Middle, Oak Middle, and Shrewsbury High School on 11/2.

- Breakfast is FREE for ALL students for the remainder of the school year.

Fiscal Challenges Persist

- Due to significantly decreased daily enrollment, we still face severe financial distress because the costs for labor and food are exceeding our federal meal reimbursements, despite having laid off approximately one-third of the staff and reduced hours for the remaining café workers.

- More student participation means more reimbursement revenue comes to Shrewsbury Public Schools Food Service Program.

- ALL students are encouraged to take free meals!

  - *This year, there is such a thing as a FREE LUNCH!*

Thank You!

- Thank you to all of our cafeteria workers who are working to make sure our students have access to appetizing and healthy meals!

Family & Staff Feedback on Reopening Schools

- Feedback from families on 2,447 students (~40%)

- Feedback from 456 staff members (~54%)

- Evenly distributed according to school population, grade level, role, etc.

- 1,178 written comments from families

- 3,790 written comments from staff

Feedback validates our work, provides insight into what's working and what's not, & will help us improve
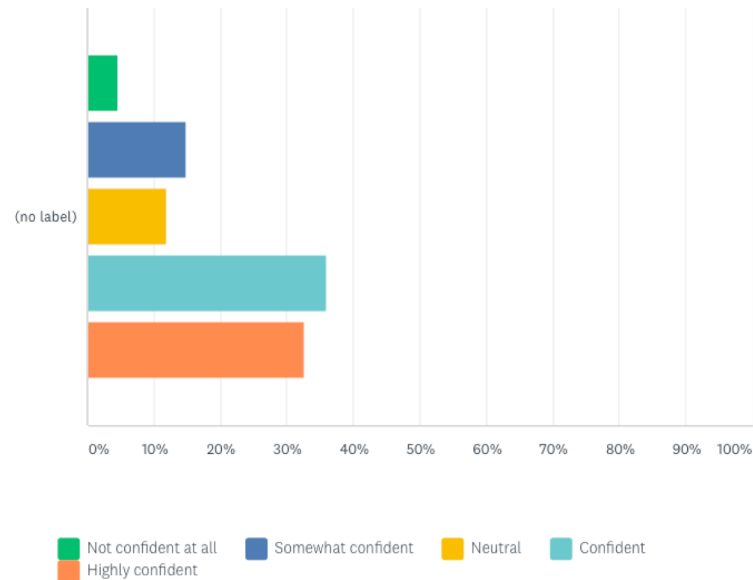
Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Majority of families (68%, shown) & staff (61%) are confident or highly confident in our approach to reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission

How confident are you in the school's approach to reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission at school?

Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0

Legend:
- Not confident at all
- Somewhat confident
- Neutral
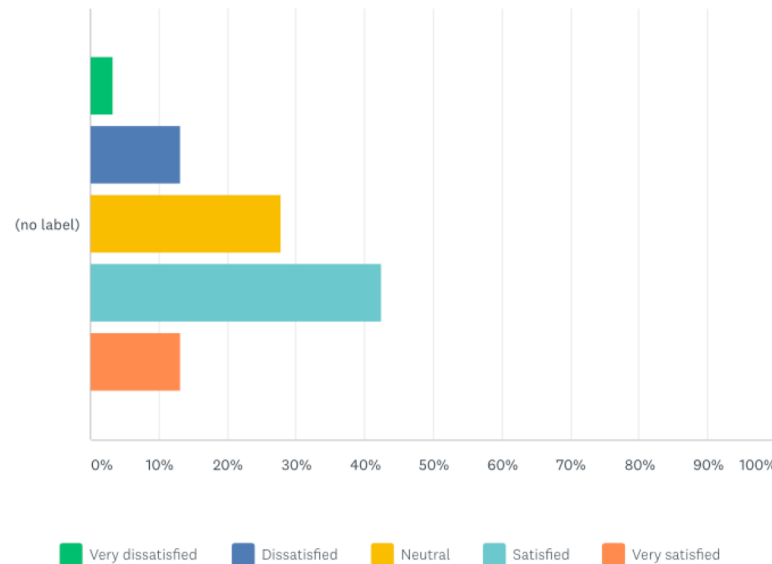- Confident
- Highly confident

Family & Staff Feedback on Reopening Schools: Themes

- Majority of families (56%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's academic learning experiences; many comments indicate concerns are connected to the situation, not the district's response to it

How satisfied are you with your child's academic learning experiences so far this year?
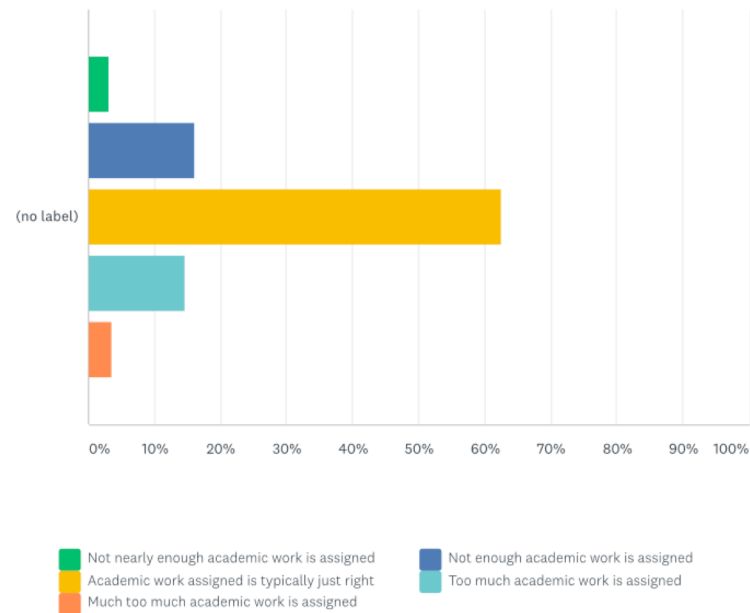
Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Very dissatisfied   ■ Dissatisfied   ■ Neutral   ■ Satisfied   ■ Very satisfied

Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Majority of families (62%) feel remote learning amount is "just right" and distribution of those who feel it's not enough or too much is balanced

On days when your child learns remotely from home, how would you characterize the volume of academic work typically expected to be completed?

Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0

Legend:
- Not nearly enough academic work is assigned
- Not enough academic work is assigned
- Academic work assigned is typically just right
- Too much academic work is assigned
- Much too much academic work is assigned

Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Majority of families (62%) are satisfied or very satisfied with support for their child's social and emotional well-being

How satisfied are you with support for your child's social and emotional well-being so far this year?

Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0

Legend: Very dissatisfied ■ Dissatisfied ■ Neutral ■ Satisfied ■ Very satisfied
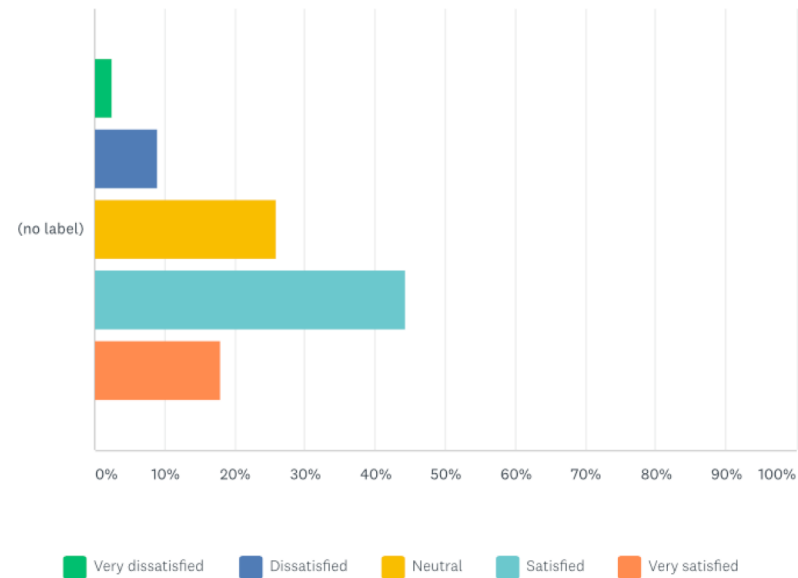
Family & Staff Feedback on Reopening Schools: Themes

- Significant number of families (38%) feel their child is only somewhat connected or not connected at all to their classroom/team/community

How connected does your child feel to their classroom/team/school community so far this year?

Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0

Legend:
- Not connected at all
- Somewhat connected
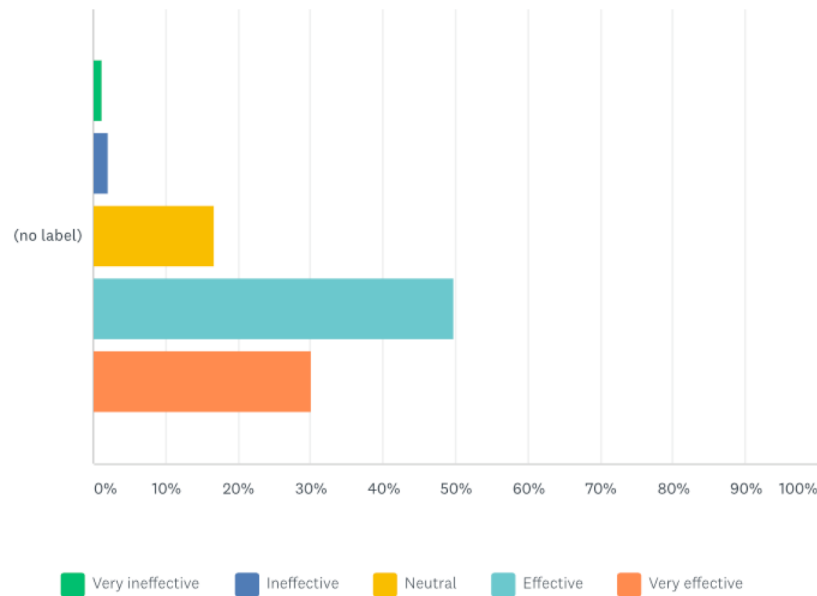- Neutral
- Connected
- Very connected
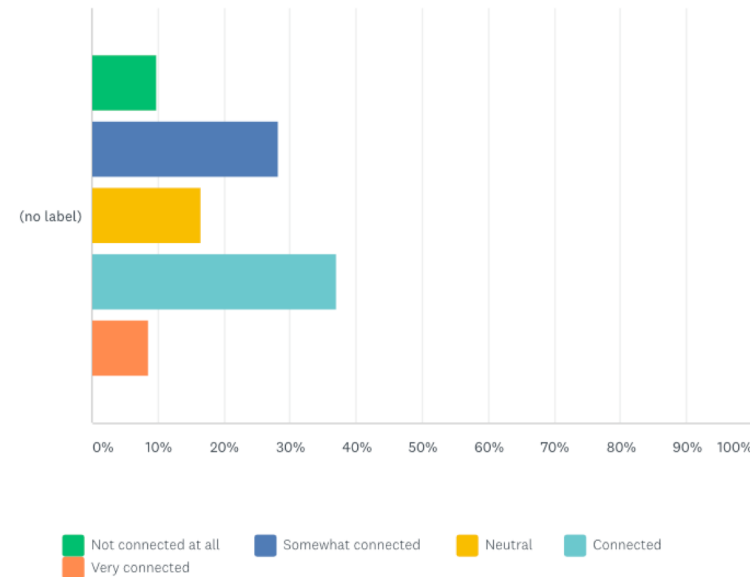
Family & Staff Feedback on Reopening Schools: Themes

- Significant majority of families (>80%) believe that communication has been effective across teachers, principals (shown), & district)

How effective has communication from your child's principal been?

Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0

Very ineffective   Ineffective   Neutral   Effective   Very effective

Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Significant majority of families (75%) believe the reopening of our schools has been successful or very successful

Overall, how successful do you believe the reopening of our schools during the pandemic has been?
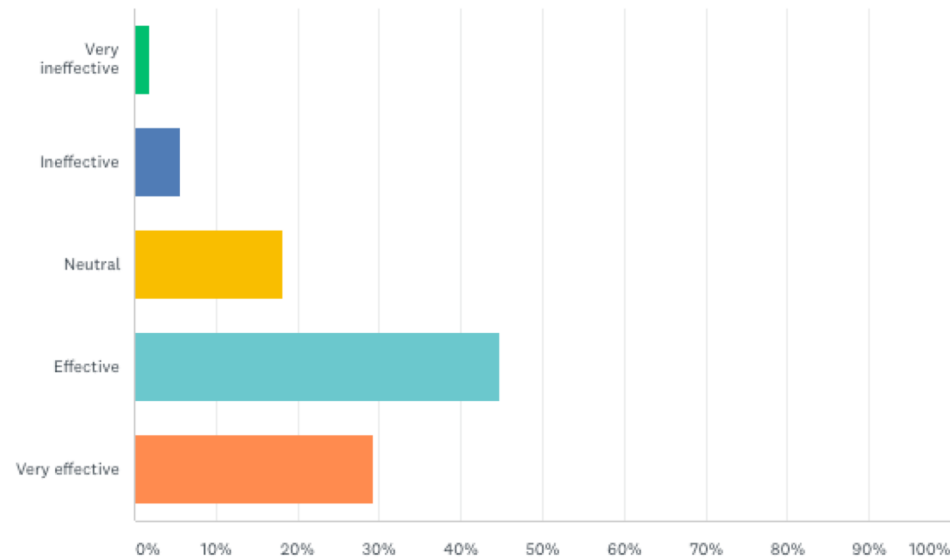
Answered: 2,447   Skipped: 0
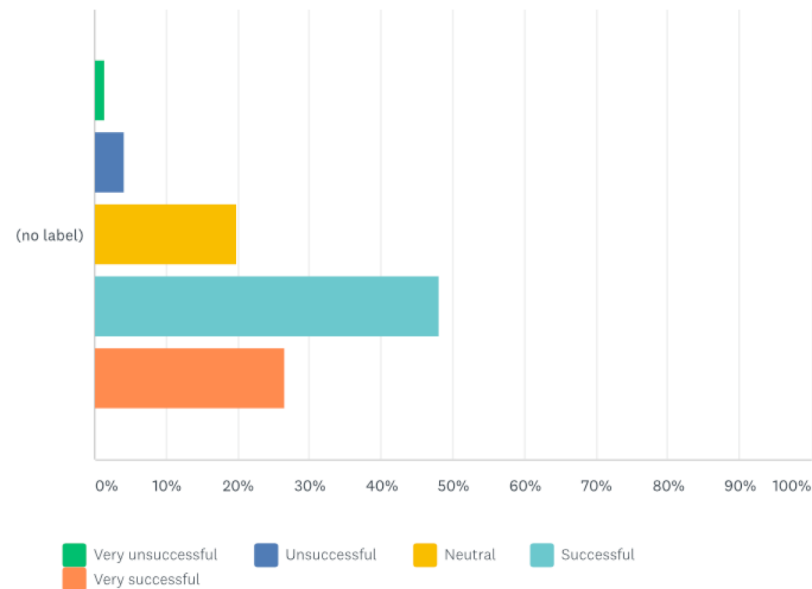
Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Majority of staff (72%) believe that communication across school and district levels (shown) has been effective or very effective

How effective has communication been from district leadership?

Answered: 456   Skipped: 0

Family & Staff Feedback on Reopening Schools: Themes

- Staff feel supported across dimensions of health & safety and those related to professional work, but feel less supported regarding managing workload and personal well-being/stress management.

|	VERY UNSUPPORTED	UNSUPPORTED	NEUTRAL	SUPPORTED	VERY SUPPORTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Health & safety procedures/expectations	3.31% 15	7.73% 35	21.41% 97	45.47% 206	22.08% 100	453	3.75
Addressing student needs/concerns	2.01% 9	8.71% 39	23.88% 107	50.00% 224	15.40% 69	448	3.68
Addressing parent or caretaker needs/concerns	1.36% 6	6.11% 27	35.75% 158	43.21% 191	13.57% 60	442	3.62
Promoting equity & anti-racism	1.13% 5	4.97% 22	35.21% 156	42.89% 190	15.80% 70	443	3.67
Curriculum & instructional planning	5.77% 25	15.24% 66	29.33% 127	36.95% 160	12.70% 55	433	3.36
Assessment/feedback/grading	3.75% 16	18.03% 77	43.09% 184	29.27% 125	5.85% 25	427	3.15
Professional development/training	3.17% 14	9.98% 44	43.08% 190	35.60% 157	8.16% 36	441	3.36
Utilizing technology	1.35% 6	7.17% 32	30.04% 134	47.09% 210	14.35% 64	446	3.66
Managing workload/job responsibilities	17.26% 77	24.22% 108	26.46% 118	25.78% 115	6.28% 28	446	2.80
Personal well-being/stress management	14.67% 66	20.44% 92	24.89% 112	30.89% 139	9.11% 41	450	2.99
Own personal & family needs (flexibility, etc.)	11.58% 52	19.38% 87	23.16% 104	33.85% 152	12.03% 54	449	3.15

Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Significant majority of staff (71%) believe the reopening of our schools has been successful or very successful

Overall, how successful do you believe the reopening of our schools during the pandemic has been?

Answered: 456   Skipped: 0
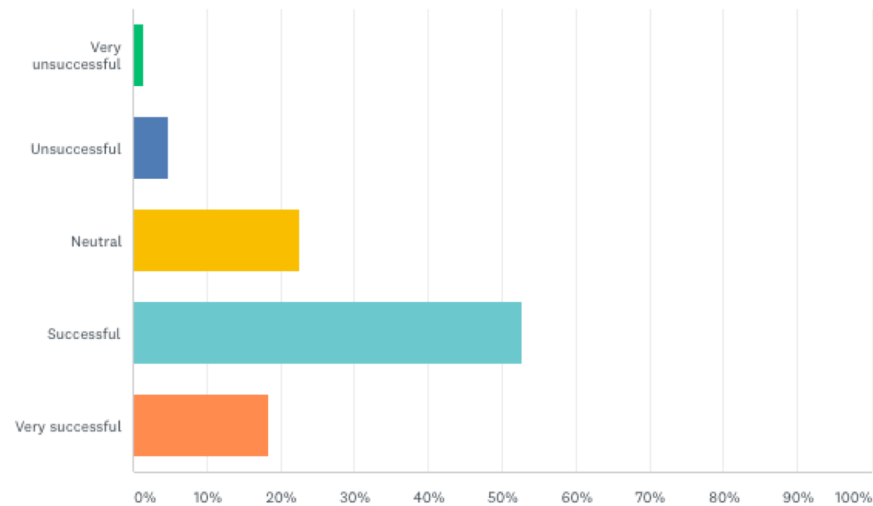
Family & Staff Feedback on
Reopening Schools: Themes

- Both families and staff believe the reopening of our schools has been successful

- Families and students are experiencing challenges related to remote learning, mainly due to the circumstances; range of comments from wanting to keep remote option due to discomfort with in-person school to desire to return to full in-person school

- The volume and intensity of preparation and delivery of lessons along with many other demands are daunting for educators; significant concerns regarding sustaining this level of effort

- We need to be clear about our priorities and realistic about our limits