



To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group

Date: January 14, 2021

Re: New York State survey among public school parents' highlights need among high school students

Global Strategy Group partnered with The Education Trust–New York to conduct an online (desktop and mobile) survey among 800 parents of children in New York State public schools from October 16th to 21st, 2020. Key findings on parents of high school students are outlined below.

Key Findings:

High school parents were overwhelmingly concerned about their children's transition to college and the workforce in the midst of the pandemic. Sixty percent of high school parents were *very* concerned about their child falling behind academically (81% total concerned), with Hispanic parents the most concerned (76% very concerned, 91% total concerned). In addition, 54% of parents of high school students were not only *very* concerned about ensuring that their child is on track to go to college (80% total concerned) but were also concerned with ensuring that their child is on track to graduate from high school (54% very concerned, 81% total concerned) and that their child is on track to get a job that pays well after they graduate college (52% very concerned, 85% total concerned). Parents of color in particular were more concerned about some of these issues (89% total concerned with ensuring child is ready for college; 94% total concerned about their child finding a well-paying job after graduating) than their white counterparts (72%, 76%). Additionally, high-school parents were also notably concerned about ensuring their child is taking the courses to prepare them for college admissions and success in college (82% concerned) and that their child is emotionally and socially prepared to go to college (79% concerned).

The pandemic has created significant uncertainty for families about their plans after high school graduation. Many high school parents said their child is more likely to attend a college nearby instead of going further away (52% more likely, 10% less likely), especially among parents of color (57% more likely). Likely reflecting the dire economic impact of the pandemic, one in three parents of high school students (33%) said their child is more likely to attend college part-time instead of full-time so they can help support themselves and their family – this is particularly true for families of color (38% more likely) compared to white families (29%). High school parents were more likely to say that their child's job prospects post-graduation have also changed: 35% of high school parents said that their child is more likely to study a trade instead of pursuing a college degree and 32% of high school parents said their child is less likely be able to find a job that pays well after they graduate from high school.

The impact of the coronavirus has not only decreased opportunities for high school students but increased educational challenges. High school parents indicate clear issues that need to be addressed:

High school parents were less positive about their schools' handling of the coronavirus pandemic and had less confidence in the precautions put in place than parents with younger children. Seventy-three percent of high school parents rated the job their school is doing handling the coronavirus as positive, compared to 76% of elementary school parents and 77% of middle school parents. Additionally, while 50% of parents in New York State said they have confidence in the health and safety precautions schools had in place last fall, high school parents had less faith (45% confident).

Parents of high school remote learners were less likely to say that their child's education has been better than in-person pre-pandemic learning. Of the options given, high school parents were consistently less likely to rate their child's remote learning as better than in-person pre-pandemic instruction, when compared to both elementary and middle school parents of remote learners in the state.

For each of the following items, please indicate if you think each one has been better or worse for your child during remote or distance learning compared to traditional in-person classes before the pandemic and school closures.

High School	% <i>better</i> / <i>worse</i>
30% / 31%	Your child's ability to access their teacher for personal assistance, questions, and support
30 / 43	Your child's overall educational experience
23 / 42	The quality of teaching and instruction your child receives
27 / 18	Your child's school's grading policies and practices

Overall, there was mixed satisfaction among high school parents on remote learning, with academic concerns a top issue. Forty-three percent (ratings of 8-10 on a 0-10 scale) of high-school parents of remote learners said that remote learning has been successful for their child, with these parents also less likely to say that remote learning in the fall had been better than last spring (64% better) than parents overall (68%). It is imperative to address the dissatisfaction around remote learning and meet the current educational needs of high school students in the state:

- High school parents wanted regular access to their child’s teachers and more academic support.** After testing an extensive list of things schools could do to help support parents and students, we found that although parents were receptive to all proposed options, 93% of high school parents said that their child having regular access to their teacher through live online lessons or phone/video calls would be helpful. However, only about half (55%) of high school parents said that this is something offered at their child’s school. Similarly, 93% of high school parents said that regular contact with their child’s teachers would be helpful, but again only 53% said this is available to them. High school parents also consider extra support options for their child if they are struggling academically as particularly helpful (89%), but this was largely lacking for most high school parents (43% have access).
- Many high school parents were not getting the information they need to make sure their child is progressing.** Sixty-seven percent of high school parents said that regular feedback on how well their child is doing academically would be *very* helpful (92% total helpful), but less than half (48%) of parents said this is something offered at their school. Another 66% of high school parents said that information about whether their child is on track to meet academic expectations for their grade would be *very* helpful (93% total helpful), but only 46% of parents said they receive this.
- When asked to quantify how much information is given to them about whether their child is meeting academic expectations, about a third (31%) of high school parents said they have received little to no information.** Similarly, almost half (45%) of high school parents said they have received little to no information about whether their child has suffered “learning loss” or has fallen behind as a result of the school closures during the pandemic. These numbers are particularly striking when compared to elementary school parents (25% little to no information on grade level expectations, 39% little to no information on learning loss), who were much more likely to be receiving this information than parents of high school students.

About this poll: The survey had a confidence interval of +/-3.5%. The margin of error among New York State high school, middle school, and elementary school parents’ sub-samples are greater. All interviews were conducted via web-based panel. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of public-school parents are properly represented.

High school parents vs. elementary and middle school parents: High school parents in this New York State poll represent parents whose child is in the 9th-12th grade levels, while middle school represents those in the 6th-8th grade levels, and elementary school represents those in 5th grade or lower.