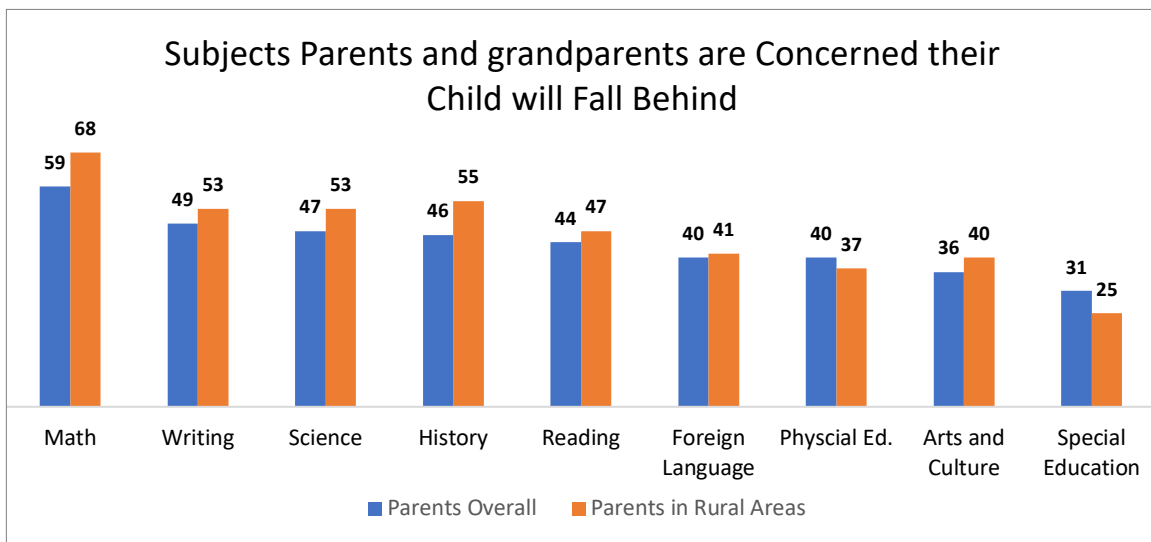


The Impact of COVID-19 on Latino Families Views About Returning to School in the Fall Results From the 2020 National Latino Family Survey

On behalf of Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors, Latino Decisions conducted a national survey of Latino parents and grandparents with children eighteen years or younger to learn more about the many challenges COVID-19 has created for Latino families in continuing their children’s education from home. The survey also provides valuable information for school districts across the country on how Latino families feel about returning to school in the fall in light of the health pandemic. This survey’s results are to our knowledge the most comprehensive study of Latino families regarding COVID-19.

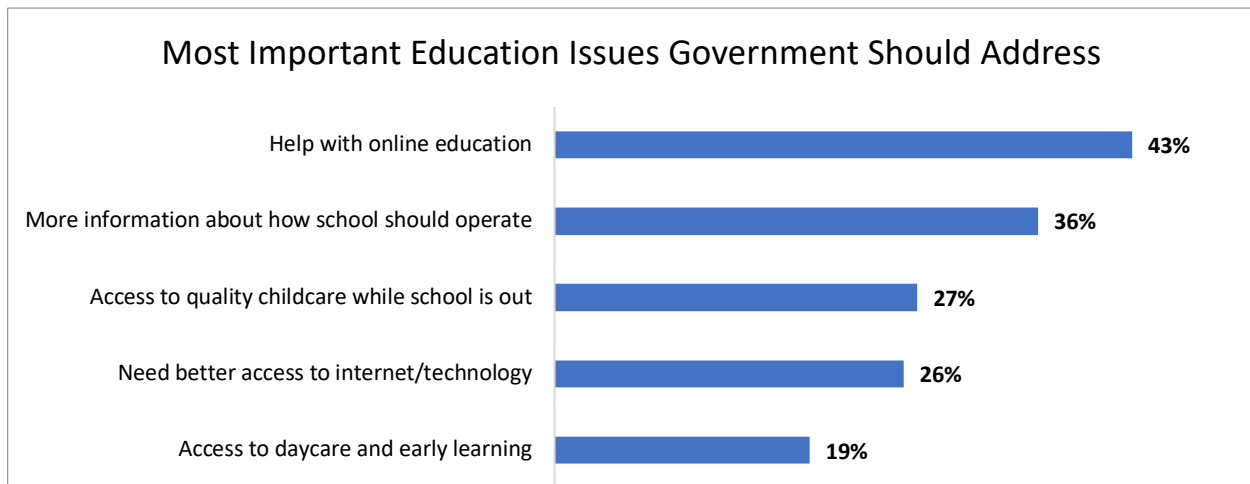
The survey showed that 85% of Latino families reported that they had to provide home-schooling in the fall due to the health pandemic. The difficulties families have had making the transition to home schooling this past spring is reflected in the 83% of survey respondents who are concerned that their children’s school may either have to start in the fall with home schooling or go to that model at some point during the academic year. The survey also identifies that 83% of primary caregivers are concerned that their children are spending too much time away from school or not learning enough from on-line schooling, and will fall behind.

The lack of access to high speed internet and difficulty with understanding the content that their children are learning in class were challenges that families identified with home-schooling. For example, 65% of Latino families report that it is difficult to help their kids with on-line schooling because they are not familiar with the class subjects and assignments. This is even higher for respondents who live in rural areas of the country (76%) and those with less than a high school education (73%). When asked which subjects they were most concerned their children are falling behind in, math (59% overall 68% for rural respondents), writing (49%), and science (47% overall 53% for rural respondents) were the most common subjects identified.



Math was also the subject area that parents and grandparents indicated being the most challenging for them to help their children with during homeschooling, particularly for Latinos who live in rural areas of the country – 53% overall 60% for rural respondents. Nearly a third of Latino families also indicate that they feel their children are falling behind in special education or specialized needs. This is an important data-point, as addressing the needs of children who require specialized education is particularly challenging without face-to-face interaction.

Lack of access to high speed internet and the on-line tools many schools employed in the fall to continue education from distance also posed major challenges for Latino/Hispanic families. The survey asked respondents to identify the most important issues that government should address specific to their children’s education. As reflected in the figure below, getting help with on-line education was by far the most cited issue among Latino families at 43%.



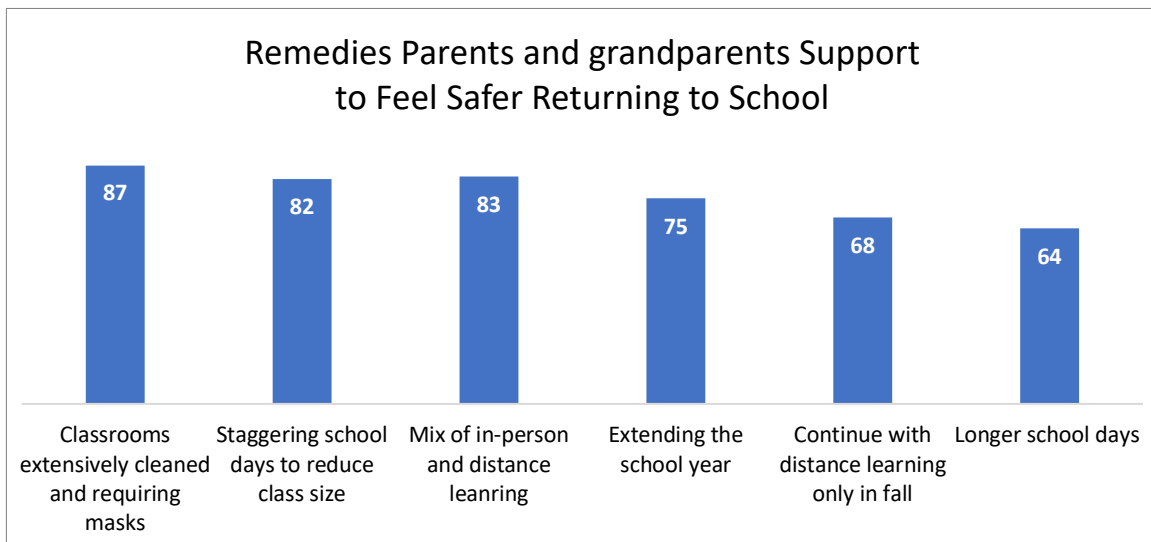
When we consider that another 26% reported that they need better access to the Internet or technology, it is clear that better preparing families for the potential of moving back to distance learning should be a priority between now and the fall.

The survey found that many Latino families were not able to easily transition to distance learning due to lack of access to high speed internet required for Zoom and most learning applications. A third (33% overall, 36% among rural residents) of Latino families across the country do not have regular access to the internet at home. Among those who do have internet access at home, 37% of parents and grandparents report that they only have access the internet through their cell-phone, which is not ideal for home-schooling.

Even for families who do have online access, with many families having multiple children engaged in home-schooling on top of parents and grandparents having to work from home, half of Latino families reported that they did not have enough computers, tablets, or laptops to support everyone’s needs. Similarly, 51% of Latino families reported that their internet and/or cell phone bill was higher with so many people needing to use technology in their household.

More than half of respondents (58%) also reported that they faced technical problems providing home-schooling due to the websites or programs their schools asked them to use not working properly. Furthermore, 65% of Latino families feel that learning is more difficult for their children due to communication with teachers being more difficult while schooling on-line and from home.

One of the biggest questions facing school systems across the country is what precautions to take in the coming school year that will reduce the spread of COVID-19 and help families and educators feel safe to return. Below are some of the findings from the survey’s battery of questions focused on what would make parents and grandparents feel safer about their children returning to school in the fall that can help school districts with their strategic planning efforts.

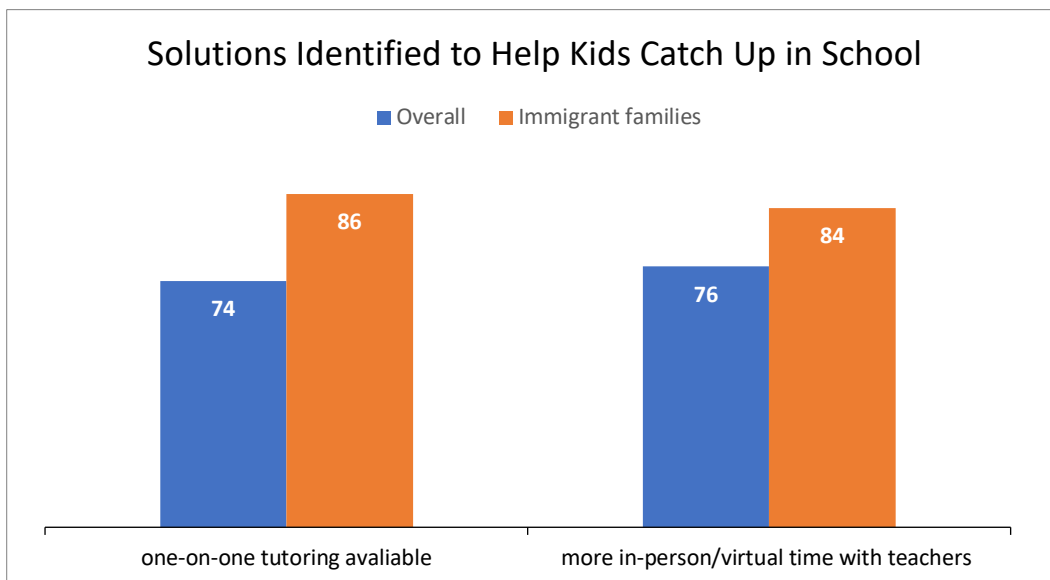


There is near universal support to have the classrooms extensively cleaned every day and requiring teachers and students to wear masks to prevent the spread of the virus (**87% Support**). This would require many states to take a more aggressive stand on mask policies than are in place now. There is also high support for a hybrid model that would combine in-person attendance and distance learning (**83% Support**), and staggering school days for different classes of students to reduce class sizes (**82% Support**). The large majority of Latino parents and grandparents support extending the school year to help kids catch up with their studies (**75% Support**), and longer school days to help kids make up some ground lost during home schooling (**64% Support**).

Despite the challenges Latinos faced in the Spring with distance learning, the survey indicates a strong majority of Latino parents and grandparents would also support continuing with distance learning only in the fall (**68% Support**), a strong indication of the level of concern Latino families have about COVID-19.

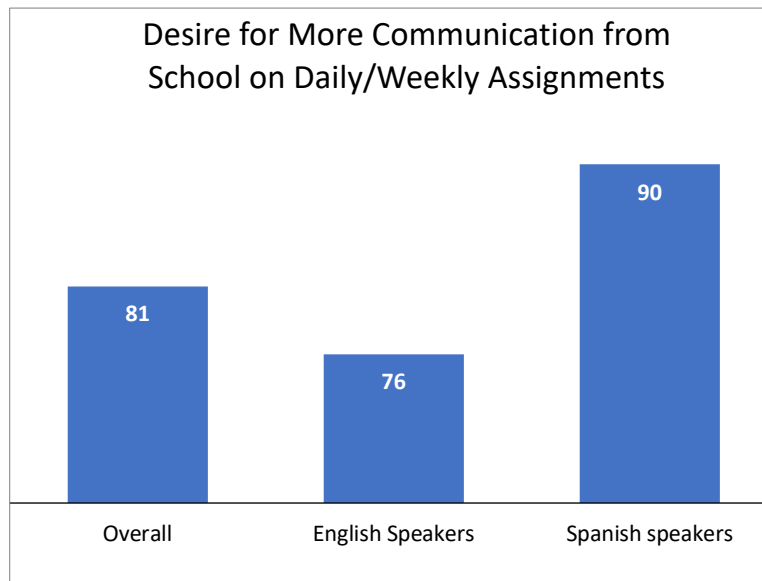
The survey also reveals that many Latino families across the country are considering not enrolling their children in school or childcare programs due to the fear of COVID-19. Over half of the sample (58%) of parents and grandparents and primary caregivers are not planning to send their children to a summer program or camp that they normally would, and even more telling of the fear of COVID-19, 53% are considering not sending their children to school or childcare in the fall.

In addition to identifying the challenges and fears that Latino families across the country have about educating their children during this incredibly difficult COVID-19 era, the survey also identifies resources that Latino families support to help them continue their children's education. Below are figures that illustrate some of the solutions that respondents identified would help their kids catch up or not fall behind that schools and teachers could provide.



As reflected in the figure above, 74% would like to have one-on-one tutoring available their child, including 86% among immigrant families. Similarly, 76% of respondents want to have more in-person time with their children's teachers, even if that has to happen on-line or over the phone. We again see greater interest from immigrant families in connecting with teachers.

Emphasizing the desire from Latino families for greater communication from schools, we found that 81% of respondents want more communication from the school on the daily and weekly assignments and how their children are doing meeting expectations. There is a significant difference based on language use, with Spanish speaking respondents having a much greater desire for communication from their children's school- 90% compared to 76% for English dominant respondents.



It is also clear that schools will have to find creative paths to engage parents and grandparents in their children's education, as the concerns with COVID-19 are causing families to consider taking steps to increase their safety. Although 45% will not participate with in-person parent meetings, groups, convenings, 66% of parents and grandparents report that they will look for virtual participation in parent meetings, groups, and convenings. Roughly half of families are planning to participate less with in-person parent meetings, groups, convenings, and plan to visit their child's school less when school returns.

Survey Methodology: Latino Decisions collected opinions from 1,195 Latino parents and grandparents using a blended approach that included online surveys, and live telephone interviews conducted via landlines and cell phones. The survey was available in English or Spanish and carries an overall +/- 2.8% margin of error, with larger margins for sub-samples. Upon completion, the data were weighted to match the U.S. Census ACS for parents and grandparents of Latino origin. The survey was conducted from June 12-June 19, 2020. This survey's results are to our knowledge the most comprehensive study of Hispanic/Latino families regarding COVID-19.