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Will Students Come Back?

School Hesitancy Among Parents and Their Preferences for COVID-19 Safety Practices in Schools

School districts are facing several urgent questions as they plan for fall 2021. Will parents send their children to school in person in fall 2021? Why or why not? And what can schools do to reassure parents about sending their children to in-person schooling?

To answer these questions, members of the State & Territory Alliance for Testing—a group of representatives from more than 25 states and territories convened weekly by The Rockefeller

KEY FINDINGS

- As of May 2021, 84 percent of parents said that they planned to send their children to school in person in fall 2021, while another 12 percent were unsure about in-person schooling. Five percent did not plan to have their children return for in-person schooling this fall.
- Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) safety concerns were the dominant reasons why parents planned for remote instruction in fall 2021, suggesting that parental preference for remote schooling could fade as the pandemic does.
- Even after accounting for their urban, suburban, or rural locations, Black and Hispanic parents were most hesitant about sending their children back for in-person schooling in fall 2021. About 20 percent of both Black and Hispanic parents were unsure whether they would send their children to school in person in fall 2021.
- Two-thirds of parents overall wanted to keep COVID-19 school safety measures in place, although subgroups of parents differed. Rural parents and white parents were each much more likely to prefer that schools should reduce or discontinue their COVID-19 safety precautions. Black, Hispanic, Asian, and urban parents were each much more likely to prefer to keep them.
- Heightened percentages of parents who were unsure about sending their children to school in person preferred COVID-19 safety measures compared with parents overall. Seventy-four percent or more of unsure parents wanted classroom ventilation, mandatory masking, regular COVID-19 testing of staff and students, and a minimum of three feet between people at school to feel safe.
- As of May 2021, 52 percent of parents planned to vaccinate their children, and another 17 percent were unsure. Rural parents and those who were not vaccinated themselves were the least likely to intend to vaccinate their children.

Foundation to discuss coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing, vaccination, and kindergarten through 12th grade (K–12) school reopening—worked with RAND Corporation researchers to develop a survey of parents of school-age children.

Detailed information about parents’ schooling plans is crucial because the combination of reduced enrollments and increased remote schooling would have significant impacts on staffing, funding, and programming for brick-and-mortar K–12 public schools.

Surveys from winter and spring 2021 have indicated that as many as 30 percent of parents want their children to remain in remote schooling post-pandemic (Kamenetz and Uzunlar, 2021; Toppo, 2021). Furthermore, one-third of public K–12 teachers who taught mostly remotely in the 2020–2021 school year either preferred to continue with at least some remote instruction or else had no preference for in-person instruction over remote instruction (Kaufman and Diliberti, 2021).

Public schools in the United States are taking opposite approaches to the demand for remote schooling. One-third of K–12 public school principals indicated in a RAND April 2021 survey that they planned to offer a remote option post-pandemic to any parents who want it (Kaufman and Diliberti, 2021). Meanwhile, other districts and states, such as New Jersey and New York City, are forbidding remote instruction in 2021–2022 (Gewertz, 2021).

In addition to remote learning, enrollments declined in a majority of districts between the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years (Schwartz et al., 2021), and the percentage of households that opted out of public schooling altogether for homeschooling increased to 11 percent (Eggleston and Fields, 2021).

Abbreviations

ACS	American Community Survey
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
K–12	kindergarten through 12th grade
KP	Knowledge Panel

We fielded a survey to 2,015 parents of children ages 5–18 from April 30 to May 11, 2021. The survey focused on parents’ willingness to send one or more of their children to school in person in spring 2021 and fall 2021. (We screened out parents whose children were exclusively enrolled in permanent home-schooling or virtual schools.) We also asked parents about their support for various health and safety practices at school, including getting their children tested for COVID-19, and whether they would get their children vaccinated if a vaccine were available. (The Food and Drug Administration’s [FDA’s] approval for the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 12 and older occurred the day before our survey closed.)

Throughout this report, we refer to the survey time period as May 2021 for simplicity. We present survey results that are weighted to represent the national population of parents with children ages 5–18. For each survey question, we also separately report parents’ responses according to their race/ethnicity, urbanicity, and region. We also separately report results by parents’ gender, educational attainment, and household income when strongly related to their responses. (We do not visually present results for each survey question for all parent subgroups because of space constraints.) We use asterisks and bold font in the figures to indicate when parent subgroup responses differ statistically significantly from the rest of the parents’ responses.

Readers should keep in mind that there is considerable overlap among the parental categories that we examined. For example, a majority of rural parents are white (82 percent), as are a majority of the Midwesterners (79 percent) in our survey. Forty-eight percent of parents whose highest educational attainment is high school or less are in households earning less than \$50,000 per year, while 79 percent of those with a bachelor’s degree or higher were in households with incomes over \$100,000.

For a complete description of our methods and the survey sample, please see Appendix A. Because we are publishing this report shortly after the end of the 2020–2021 school year, we do not discuss parent responses to questions about spring 2021 schooling. However, we present all survey questions and parents’ responses—including those about spring 2021 schooling—in Appendix B.

Willingness to Send Children to School in Person in Fall 2021

Our primary survey question is “Will you send your child(ren) to school in person in fall 2021 if your school(s) offer that option?” Figure 1 presents the results.

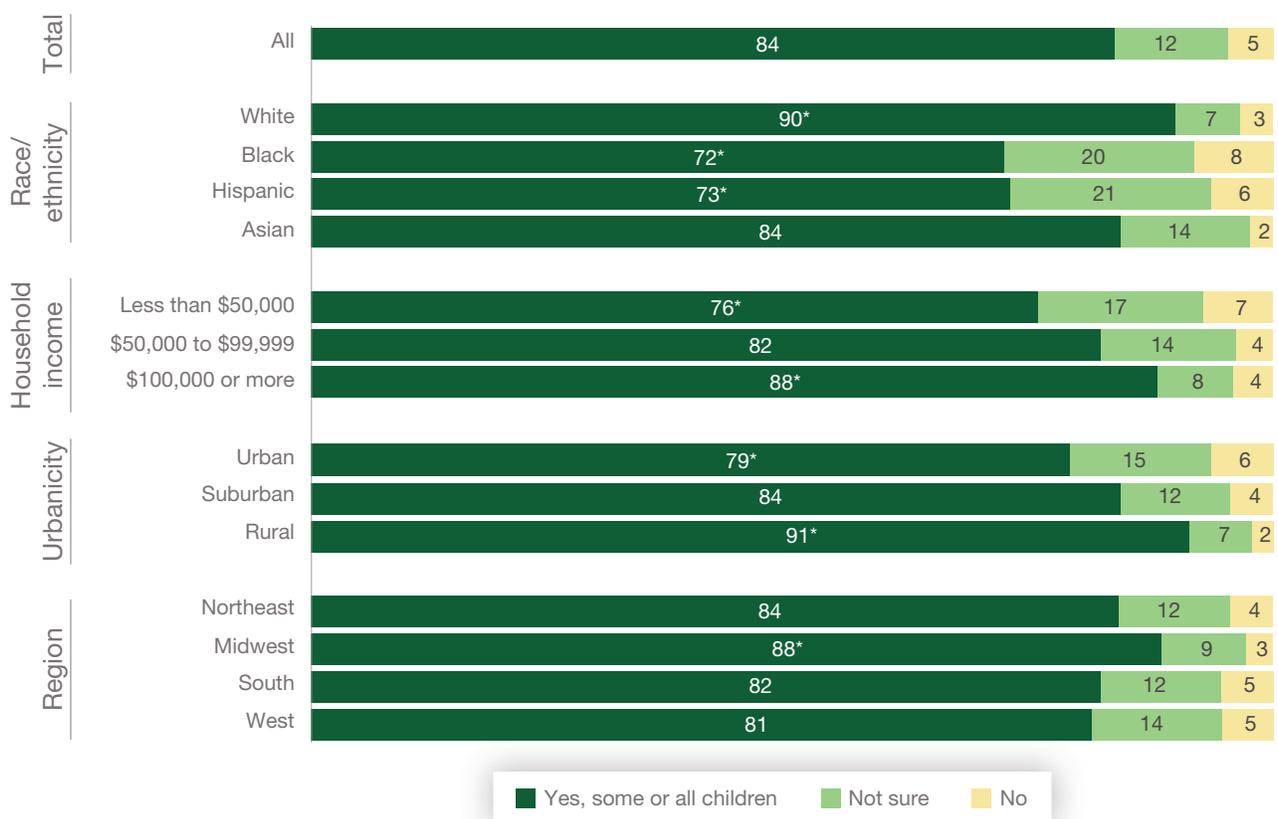
Overall, the large majority (84 percent) of parents said that they planned to send at least one of their children to school in person in fall 2021. Five percent of parents did not plan to send their children to school in-person, and another 12 percent were unsure.

In all demographic groups, more than 70 percent of parents planned to send their children back to

school. White, high-income, rural, and Midwestern parents were the four groups who were the most likely to plan to send their children to school in-person. (We note that a majority of the high-income, rural, and Midwestern parents who took our survey were white.) Parents with more education were also more likely to plan to send their children to school in person in fall 2021 (results not shown).

Black and Hispanic parents, meanwhile, were the least likely to plan to send their children to in-person schooling in fall 2021; only 72 and 73 percent, respectively, planned to send their children to school in person, while another approximately 20 percent of each group was unsure. These racial/ethnic differ-

FIGURE 1
Percentage of Parents Who Did and Did Not Plan to Send Their Children to School in Person in Fall 2021



NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “Will you send your child(ren) to school in person in fall 2021 if your school(s) offer that option?” ($n = 2,006$). Parents could indicate whether they planned to send all or only some of their children to in-person schooling in fall 2021. Of those who intended to send at least one of their children back to in-person schooling, 97 percent said that they planned to send all of their children back; only 3 percent planned to send only some, but not all, of their children back. Percentages might not sum to 100 because of rounding. Asterisks (*) indicate that the percentage of parents in that subgroup who said that they planned to send some or all of their children to in-person schooling in fall 2021 is statistically different ($p < 0.05$) from the overall percentage of parents who planned to do so.

ences in parents' plans for schooling held true even after accounting for their urban, suburban, and rural locations.

Notably, the 31 percent of parents who do not plan to vaccinate their children were also more likely to plan for in-person schooling in the fall than the 52 percent of parents who do plan to vaccinate their children (data not shown).

Reasons for Sending Children to School in Person (or Not) This Fall

For all parents who planned to send their children back to school in person in fall 2021, we then asked them to select which one or more of 11 possibilities (along with a 12th "other" option) were their reasons for planning to do so. The results are shown in the heat map in Figure 2.

The two most common reasons why parents planned to send their children to school in person (with the exception of Asian parents) were that their children did better in school in person—whether for social, mental health, developmental, academic, or other reasons—or that their children wanted to go to school in person (Figure 2). Generally consistent with the results from Figure 1, higher percentages of white parents, rural parents, and high-income parents than of Black, Hispanic, Asian, urban, and low-income parents selected the reasons "I am not concerned that

COVID-19 is a significant risk for my children" and "I am not concerned that others in my family will get COVID-19."

Only 131 parents who responded to the survey were not planning for all of their children to return to school in person in fall 2021. This small number prevents us from teasing out how the importance of different reasons for not returning varies across parental subgroups. We instead report in Figure 3 the most to least common reasons why parents plan not to send their children back for in-person schooling.

Two out of the three most common reasons why parents indicated that they would not send their children in person relate to COVID-19 safety concerns. The prevalence of COVID-19 safety-related concerns suggests that parents' preferences for remote instruction might fade as the pandemic recedes. Parents reported that their children felt safer at home (which could refer to physical or mental health, bullying, or some other safety concern) or indicated health concerns related to their children contracting or transmitting COVID-19, presumably to family members. Only the fourth most common answer, which 22 percent of the 131 parents selected, was children preferring remote instruction. Very few parents selected nonschool reasons for staying remote, such as teens needing to work or older children caring for younger ones at home.

What Schools Can Do to Help Parents Feel That In-Person Schooling Is Safe

We presented all parents who took the survey with a list of 13 conditions or safety practices and asked which needed to be in place for the parent to feel safe about in-person schooling. The results are shown in Figure 4.

Of the practices needed to feel safe, ventilation was the top choice of every group except for Black parents, who most commonly selected mandatory masking. Slightly more than half of parents said that they would need most teachers to be vaccinated to feel that in-person school was safe.

Looking vertically down the columns of Figure 4, much higher percentages of Asian, Black, and Hispanic parents preferred each safety measure

How to Read the Heat Maps in This Report

The heat maps use colors to show the percentage of parents who selected a given survey response. Lighter yellow cells represent smaller percentages of parents, while progressively darker shades of green represent larger percentages of parents. In each heat map, we order the rows from the most to the least common survey response among parents overall. Each column shows responses for a different parent subgroup. Bold font indicates that the percentage of parents in a given subgroup who selected the survey is statistically different ($p < 0.05$) from the balance of parents in the survey who selected that response.

FIGURE 2

Percentage of Parents Selecting Reasons to Send Their Children Back to School in Person in Fall 2021

	Race/ethnicity ^a					Urbanicity			Region			
	All parents n = 1,714	White n = 1,233	Black n = 108	Hispanic n = 218	Asian n = 102	Urban n = 499	Suburban n = 914	Rural n = 301	Northeast n = 266	Midwest n = 440	South n = 562	West n = 446
My child(ren) do better at school	69	74	63	58	62	68	69	71	69	73	66	71
My child(ren) want to go to school in person	69	74	56	63	54	64	71	72	68	72	65	71
My school(s) have made adequate efforts to reduce COVID-19 risks	56	58	43	51	66	55	59	51	61	57	51	59
Enough school staff will be vaccinated by fall 2021	37	35	27	37	52	37	41	24	42	33	33	43
In-person school is easier for the adults in my house to manage	34	37	26	25	37	33	33	36	34	33	33	35
I am not concerned that COVID-19 is a significant risk for my child(ren)	33	43	13	17	23	27	32	46	33	37	29	36
I am not concerned others in our family will get COVID-19	32	43	16	14	18	28	32	43	31	34	30	35
Enough children will be vaccinated by fall 2021	16	13	13	17	33	15	17	12	22	14	15	14
To access school-delivered programs and services	12	12	7	16	12	12	12	14	9	14	10	16
My school is not offering fully remote learning	11	11	13	8	9	8	11	13	12	9	13	8
Our home internet access isn't good enough for remote schooling	4	4	2	7	2	3	3	11	1	4	4	8

NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “Why do you plan to send at least one of your children to school in person?” (n = 1,714). Only parents who said that they planned to send some or all of their children back to in-person schooling in fall 2021 received this question. Parents could select more than one reason. The figure does not depict an “other” category, which 4 percent of these respondents selected. For the majority of these respondents, we were able to recode their “other” responses to one or more of the answer choices presented on the survey. Bold font indicates that the subgroup percentage of parents reporting that reason for sending their children back in person is statistically different (p < 0.05) from the overall percentage of parents reporting that reason.

^a Race/ethnicity counts will not sum to the total because the total also includes an “Other” category not shown separately.

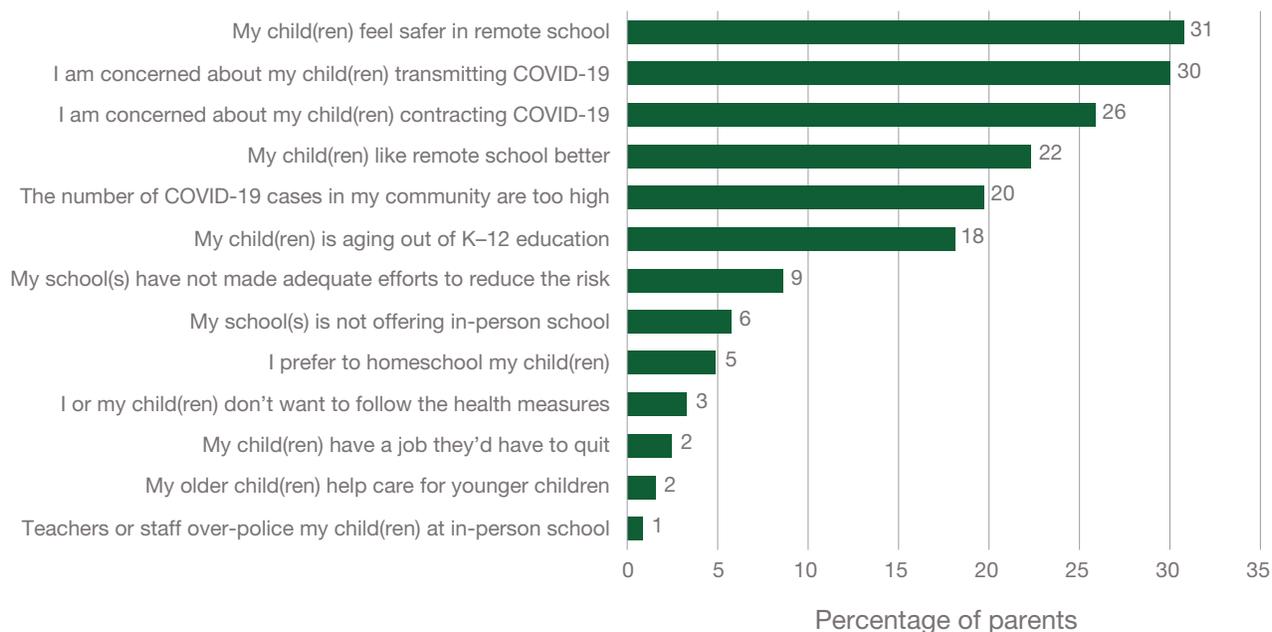
compared with white parents. For example, only 15 percent of white families indicated that having most children at school vaccinated would make them feel safe, compared with 41 percent of Asian parents, 36 percent of Hispanic parents, and 35 percent of Black parents.

Comparing the unsure parents (Figure 5) with all parents (Figure 4), higher percentages of unsure

parents preferred COVID-19 safety measures across the board. To feel safe, 84 percent of the 205 unsure parents wanted ventilation in classrooms (compared with 71 percent of parents overall), 79 percent wanted mandatory masking (compared with 66 percent of parents overall), 75 percent wanted regular COVID-19 testing (compared with 50 percent overall), and 74 percent wanted a minimum of three feet

FIGURE 3

Reasons Why Parents Do Not Plan to Send Their Children to School in Person in Fall 2021



NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “Why do you not plan to send at least one of your children to school in person in fall 2021?” ($n = 131$). Only parents who said that they did not plan to send all of their children back to in-person schooling in fall 2021 received this question. Parents could select more than one response. This survey question included an “other” option, which 32 percent of these respondents selected; we reviewed these responses and created two new answer categories that were not presented on the survey: “I prefer to homeschool my child(ren)” and “My child(ren) are aging out of K-12 education.” We were also able to recode some “other” responses to one or more of the answer choices presented on the survey.

between people at school (compared with 60 percent overall). Higher percentages of unsure parents in the Northeast wanted ventilation and mandatory masking than those in the South did, in particular.

Among the unsure parents, the same racial patterns emerge, with lower percentages of unsure white parents and higher percentages of Asian parents preferring various safety measures.

In results not shown, the 5 percent of parents who do not plan to send their children back for in-person schooling (i.e., 84 parents in total) indicated the same three safety measures as being most important: Specifically, 74 percent of these parents wanted ventilation in classrooms, 70 percent wanted masks to be required, and 63 percent wanted regular COVID-19 testing.

In addition to listing specific safety practices or conditions, we also posed the following open-ended question to all survey respondents: “What could your school(s) or community do to make you or your child(ren) feel more confident about going back to

school in person in fall 2021?” We received substantive responses from 1,865 parents, which we coded as belonging to one or more of 29 topics. These topics included having smaller class sizes, mandating mask wearing, getting adults vaccinated, getting children vaccinated, doing nothing, and good enforcement of safety guidelines. We then collapsed these 29 topics into the following four major themes:

1. **standard safety precautions, including vaccinations:** encouraging adult or child vaccinations (or both) or a desire for schools to follow standard forms of safety practices, such as required masking, COVID-19 testing, social distancing in school, cleaning surfaces, regular temperature taking, or following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines (67 percent)
2. **return to normal:** a desire to get back to “normal” by stopping mask wearing, eliminating safety practices, doing nothing, stopping talk about COVID-19, or otherwise recog-

FIGURE 4

Percentage of Parents Selecting Measures That Need to Be in Place for Them to Feel Safe Sending Their Children to School in Person

	Race/ethnicity ^a					Urbanicity			Region			
	All parents n = 2,013	White n = 1,376	Black n = 153	Hispanic n = 300	Asian n = 122	Urban n = 611	Suburban n = 1,072	Rural n = 330	Northeast n = 311	Midwest n = 491	South n = 669	West n = 542
Ventilation in each classroom at school	71	63	78	82	89	76	72	58	73	64	71	77
Required mask-wearing for students and adults	66	53	86	78	89	74	67	45	71	63	63	68
A minimum of three feet between people at school	60	49	71	72	85	66	61	42	69	54	58	61
Most teachers being vaccinated	55	45	60	65	88	62	55	35	57	46	54	61
Regular COVID-19 testing of staff and students with reporting	50	36	74	64	74	60	49	32	53	42	50	54
No group congregation at meal times when masks are off	48	37	62	59	72	51	50	34	54	43	47	51
A minimum of six feet between people at school	42	27	74	61	61	49	41	32	44	33	44	46
All adults in my household being vaccinated	41	33	42	47	72	47	41	26	44	35	41	43
Sneeze guards around each student's desk	33	16	60	55	58	42	32	19	31	22	38	37
Hybrid schooling to limit the number of people at school each day	32	18	60	47	52	43	30	19	34	20	35	39
My own child(ren) being vaccinated	26	18	31	38	43	30	27	17	27	20	28	28
Most children at your school(s) being vaccinated	24	15	35	36	41	28	24	14	24	18	27	24
No team sports	15	9	20	23	33	19	15	7	17	11	15	19

NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: "Which of the following need to be in place for you to feel your child(ren) will be safe at school in person?" (n = 2,013). Parents could select more than one option. Bold font indicates that the subgroup percentage of parents reporting that something needs to be in place for them to feel comfortable sending their children back to school is statistically different (p < 0.05) from the overall percentage of parents with that response.

^a Race/ethnicity counts will not sum to the total because the total also includes an "Other" category not shown separately.

FIGURE 5

Percentage of Parents *Unsure* About Fall 2021 In-Person Schooling Selecting Measures That Need to Be in Place for Them to Feel Safe Sending Their Children to School in Person

	Race/ethnicity ^a					Urbanicity			Region			
	All parents n = 205	White n = 92	Black n = 31	Hispanic n = 61	Asian n = 16	Urban n = 78	Suburban n = 107	Rural n = 20	Northeast n = 32	Midwest n = 38	South n = 74	West n = 61
Ventilation in each classroom at school	84	72	85	91	87	83	85	76	93	85	74	91
Required mask-wearing for students and adults	79	66	89	83	93	87	75	62	94	79	70	84
Regular COVID-19 testing of staff and students with reporting	75	65	85	77	93	83	71	66	83	79	71	75
A minimum of three feet between people at school	74	61	84	77	93	83	71	52	58	68	66	80
Most teachers being vaccinated	67	63	71	68	73	71	64	66	78	65	62	69
No group congregation at meal times when masks are off	65	55	69	71	71	64	66	62	62	67	60	72
A minimum of six feet between people at school	64	44	82	67	87	61	67	57	63	49	67	67
Hybrid schooling to limit the number of people at school each day	62	36	74	71	90	68	58	52	74	44	60	67
Sneeze guards around each student's desk	57	31	66	73	71	58	57	54	57	44	59	62
All adults in my household being vaccinated	53	50	61	53	51	57	50	47	51	45	52	59
Most children at your school(s) being vaccinated	43	33	52	46	54	45	43	37	43	29	47	47
My own child(ren) being vaccinated	42	41	47	40	41	45	40	37	32	39	41	50
No team sports	30	24	31	34	35	33	29	25	34	22	32	32

NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “Which of the following need to be in place for you to feel your child(ren) will be safe at school in person?” (n = 205). This figure only includes the 12 percent of respondents who indicated that they were unsure about sending their children to in-person schooling in fall 2021. Parents could select more than one option. Bold font indicates that the subgroup percentage of parents reporting that something needs to be in place for them to feel comfortable sending their children back to school is statistically different (p < 0.05) from the overall percentage of parents with that response.

^a Race/ethnicity counts will not sum to the total because the total also includes an “Other” category not shown separately.

nizing that the risk from COVID-19 is low (19 percent)

3. **not applicable:** responses that did not directly answer the question, such as parents whose students were graduating from high school in spring 2021 and those who didn't know what would make them feel more confident (17 percent)
4. **frequent communication:** a desire for frequent communication with parents, such as publishing vaccination rates, publishing infection rates, and generally keeping parents informed about COVID-19 at the school (4 percent).

We present the two most common themes in Figure 6. Consistent with the results in Figure 4, two-

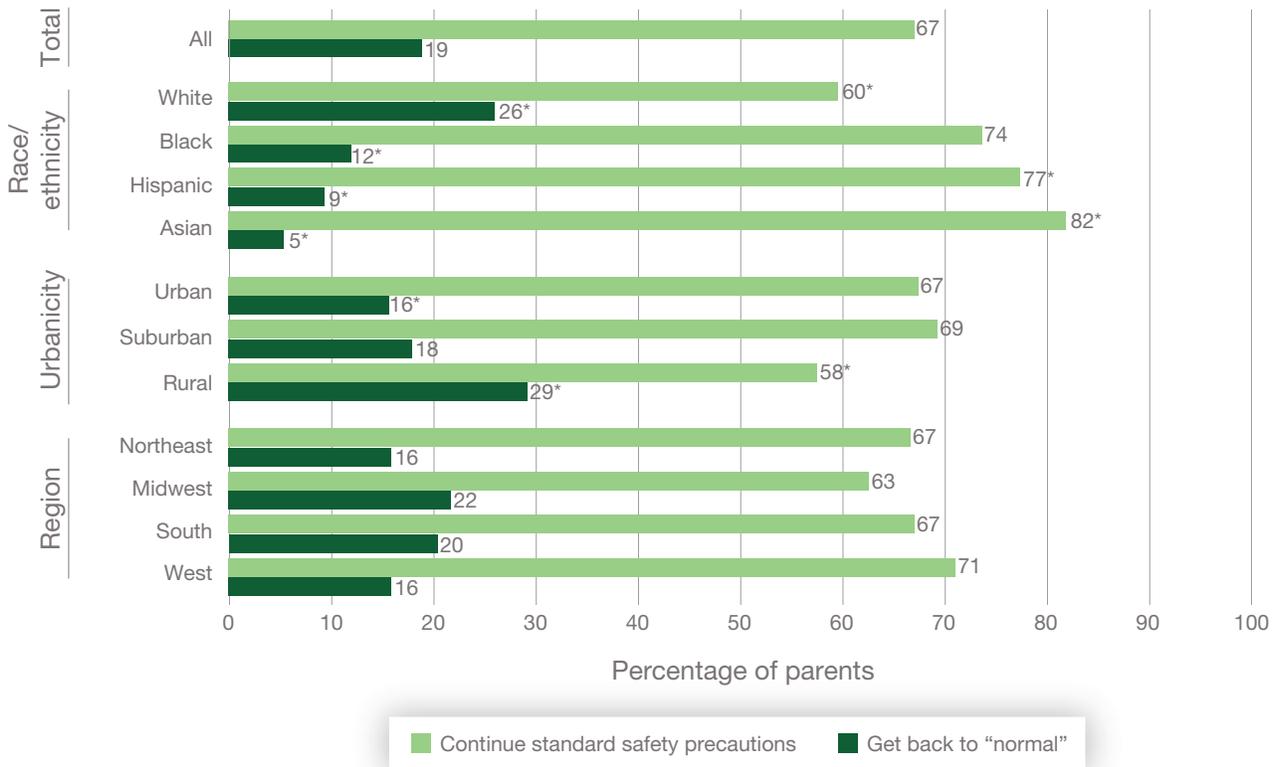
thirds of parents overall wanted schools to adhere to standard safety precautions. Conversely, two in ten wanted schools to relax or discontinue COVID-19–related safety precautions.

The largest discrepancies in parental preferences over schools' continued use of health and safety precautions again fall along racial and ethnic lines, with Black, Hispanic, and Asian parents much more likely to want schools to continue following safety protocols than white parents. Meanwhile, rural parents and white parents were more likely to say that they wanted schools to stop COVID-19 precautions and get back to “normal.”

We also asked about COVID-19 testing in particular. Figure 7 presents the percentage of parents who selected the three listed responses to the question, “If

FIGURE 6

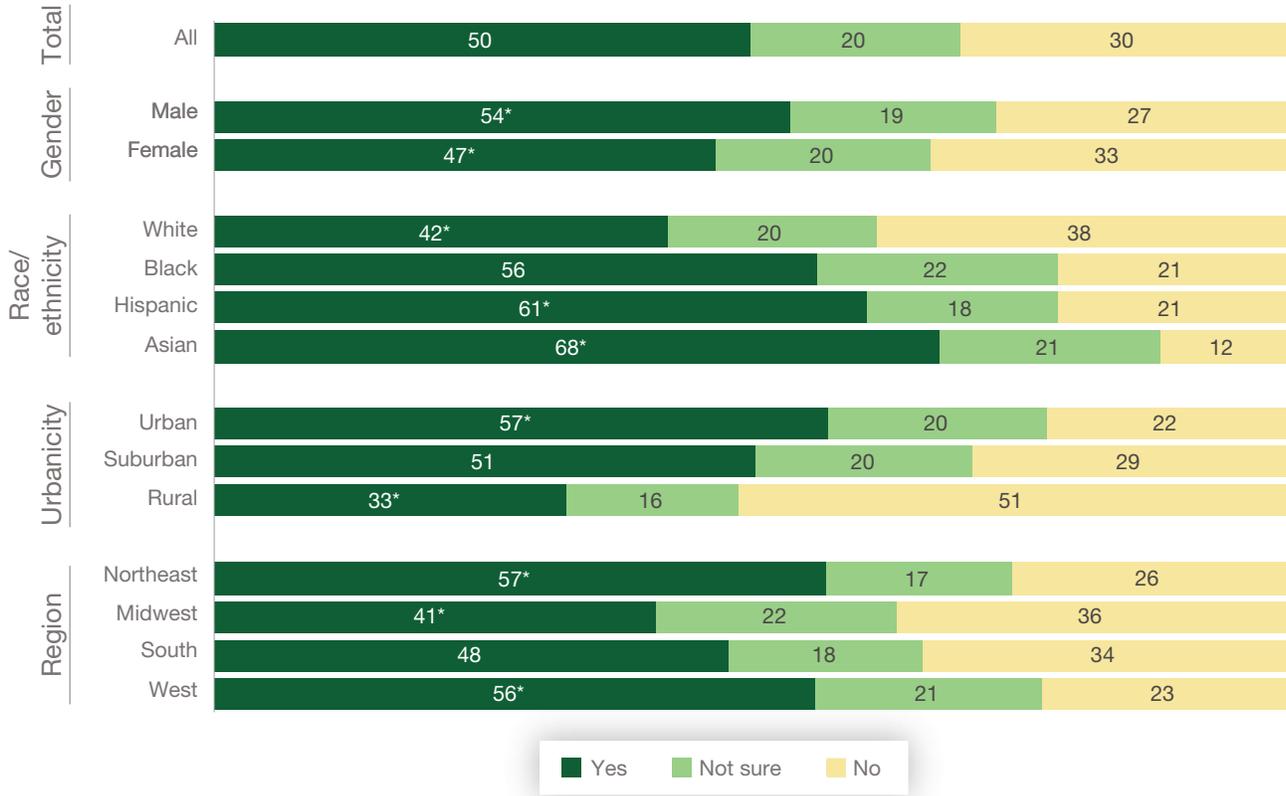
Percentage of Parents Who Want Schools to Continue Safety Measures or to Get Back to “Normal” in Fall 2021



NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “What could your school(s) or community do to make you or your child(ren) feel more confident about going back to school in person in fall 2021?” (n = 1,865). This open-ended survey question asked respondents to provide a written response. We reviewed respondents' answers and grouped them into four main themes, of which we present the two most common here. Asterisks (*) indicate that the percentage of parents in that subgroup who said that they wanted to continue safety procedures or get back to “normal” is statistically different (p < 0.05) from the overall percentage of parents with that response.

FIGURE 7

Percentage of Parents Who Would Support (or Else Were Unsure Whether They Would Support) Their Children Getting Tested If There Were Voluntary, Free Weekly COVID-19 Testing at School



NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “If there was voluntary, free weekly COVID-19 testing of students at your child(ren)’s school(s), would you support your children getting tested?” (n = 2,011). Percentages might not sum to 100 due to rounding. Asterisks (*) indicate that the percentage of parents in that subgroup who said that they would support voluntary, free weekly COVID-19 testing is statistically different (p < 0.05) from the overall percentage of parents with that response.

there was voluntary, free weekly COVID-19 testing of students at your child(ren)’s school(s), would you support your children getting tested?”

Half of parents said that they supported testing, another 20 percent were unsure, and 30 percent said that they did not support testing. As in the prior question in which we asked parents to select which of numerous measures would make in-person schooling feel safe, we again found strong racial/ethnic differences about COVID-19 testing specifically. A majority of Asian parents (68 percent) followed by Hispanic (61 percent) and Black parents (56 percent) support COVID-19 testing, compared with a minority (42 percent) of white parents (see Figure 7).

There was a large difference in urbanicity, with 57 percent of urban parents compared with 33 percent of rural parents supporting weekly, free, optional testing at schools. Finally, there was greater support for testing in the Northeast and West than in the Midwest, where support was lowest among the four regions. Interestingly, support for COVID-19 testing did not differ by parental income (results not shown), even though levels of support for other school safety measures did increase with parental income.

For the 983 parents who responded “no” or “unsure” to the question, we further asked, “For which of the following reasons would you not support or are not sure if you would support your chil-

dren getting tested for COVID-19?” and presented respondents with six reasons plus an “other” option.

Unlike other survey items, we observed fewer differences across parent subgroups in the reasons why they did not support testing (see Figure 8). However, some differences do stand out: Echoing their responses elsewhere on the survey, white parents and rural parents (and high-income parents in results not shown) were more likely than their counterparts to indicate that testing was not necessary because schools were already safe enough from COVID-19. Rural and white parents were also especially likely to be concerned that the government had too much information or say about their children. Suburban parents and Southern parents were especially worried about their children getting stigmatized by a positive test result.

We coded the respondents’ “other” answers, producing another eight reasons. The most common of these additional “other” reasons—which is shown in the last row in Figure 8—relates to the physically unpleasant experience of a child getting a nasal swab. These parents referred the discomfort of a COVID-19 test as “traumatic” or “stressful.” The following quote was characteristic of parents’ concerns about the physical discomfort of a COVID-19 test: “The COVID-19 test is really uncomfortable. Having to go through that weekly could demoralize the kids over time and create a negative association with school.” The other reasons that small percentages of parents mentioned in their open responses largely related to the frequency of testing. (For more information, see the final table in Appendix B.)

FIGURE 8
Percentage of Parents Selecting Reasons Why They Would Not Support or Reasons Why They Were Unsure Whether They Would Support COVID-19 Testing for Their Children

	Race/ethnicity ^a					Urbanicity			Region			
	All parents n = 983	White n = 744	Black n = 62	Hispanic n = 114	Asian n = 36	Urban n = 253	Suburban n = 513	Rural n = 217	Northeast n = 123	Midwest n = 276	South n = 347	West n = 237
Testing is not necessary; our schools are safe	41	53	14	19	25	30	40	56	40	46	37	42
I do not trust the COVID-19 test is accurate	37	37	43	39	34	33	37	44	34	39	40	33
The government has too much information or say	27	33	14	22	12	23	27	36	25	32	27	23
I do not trust that my child(ren)’s results will be kept confidential	23	21	19	30	24	23	24	18	20	20	26	21
My child(ren) might be stigmatized if they get a positive test result	19	17	25	26	19	19	23	12	13	13	24	22
My child(ren) will have to quarantine if they got a positive test result	16	13	19	26	14	14	16	16	12	14	18	16
The test is unpleasant	10	10	10	8	15	7	12	10	10	9	10	12

NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: “For which of the following reasons would you not support or are not sure if you would support your children getting tested for COVID-19?” (n = 983). This survey question included an “other” option; we reviewed these responses and created eight additional categories. We only show the most common “other” response (“The test is unpleasant”) in this figure. Bold font indicates that the subgroup percentage of parents reporting that reason for not supporting COVID-19 testing is statistically different (p < 0.05) from the overall percentage of parents reporting that reason.

^a Race/ethnicity counts will not sum to the total because the total also includes an “Other” category not shown separately.

Getting Children Vaccinated for COVID-19

Finally, we asked on the survey, “How much do you agree with the following statement? ‘If a vaccine for COVID-19 were available for children, I would get my child(ren) vaccinated.’” We offered five possible responses, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” In Figure 9, we present the percentage of parents who agreed, who said that they neither agreed nor disagreed, and who disagreed.

When asked about their plans to vaccinate their children, about half of parents (52 percent) agreed, 17 percent were not sure, and 31 percent disagreed.¹ The percentage of parents who disagreed in our survey was slightly higher than in another recent survey; in April 2021, 25 percent of parents of children ages 12–16 said that they would definitely not get their children vaccinated (Hamel et al., 2021).

Those who were vaccinated themselves (about 60 percent of our parent sample) and Asian parents were the two parent groups most likely to indicate that they would get their children vaccinated. Seventy-seven percent of those who had been vaccinated planned for their children to also get the vaccine, compared with only 14 percent of those who had not yet been vaccinated themselves.

Rural parents were among the least likely to agree that they would vaccinate their children: 46 percent of rural parents disagreed that they would vaccinate their children, 37 percent of rural parents agreed that they would vaccinate their children, and the remaining 17 percent were unsure. Mothers, white parents, Black parents, those with less than a bachelor’s degree, and those who earned less than \$50,000 per year were each less likely to indicate that they would vaccinate their children than parents overall. Notably, the percentages of white and Black parents who planned to vaccinate their children were not that different (49 percent and 44 percent of the respective two groups), despite data showing greater vaccine hesitancy among Black adults.

¹ We remind readers that parents answered this question in early May 2021, before the FDA had approved a vaccine for children as young as 12.

We did not note statistically significant differences by region in parents’ responses to this question.

Implications

Put together, these parent survey results show a path forward for schools to return to in-person schooling and help increase vaccination rates for children.

Returning to School in Person

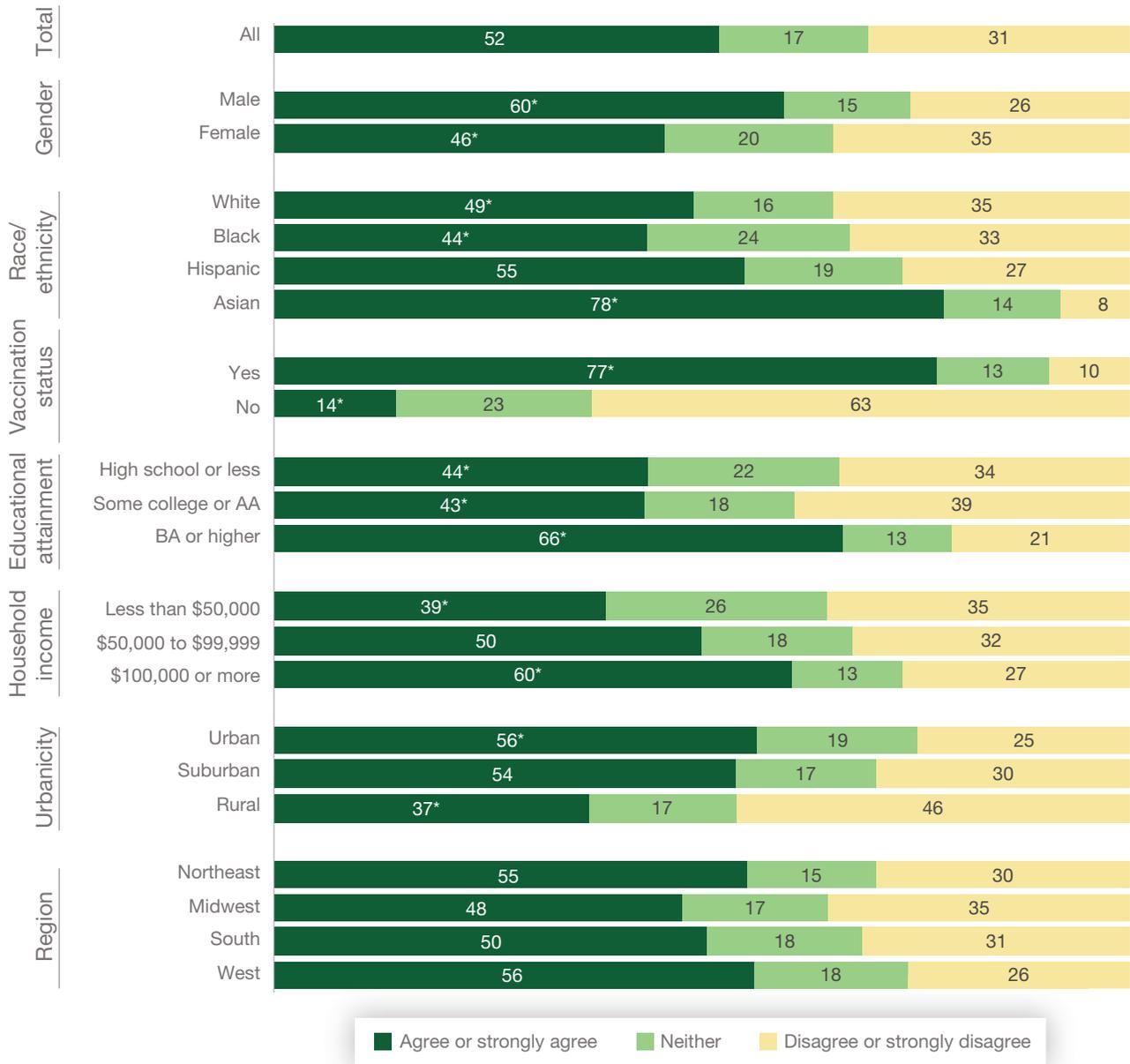
Overall, this nationally representative survey of 2,015 parents shows widespread support for in-person schooling in fall 2021. Only 5 percent of parents did not plan to send their children to school in fall 2021, while 84 percent did, and another 12 percent were unsure. Of those parents in our survey who planned to send their children to school in person in fall 2021, about seven in ten said that it was because their children did better in person, and the same proportion said that it was also because their children wanted to return. The large majority of all demographic groups (gender, race/ethnicity, urbanicity, region, income, education) planned to send their children to school in person in the fall.

The 5 percent of parents who did not plan to send their children to school in fall 2021 is substantially less than the percentage found in prior parent surveys; those surveys found between 20 and 30 percent of parents wanting a remote schooling option indefinitely. Importantly, among parents who said that they were not currently planning to have their children return for in-person schooling, the most common reasons were related to COVID-19 safety concerns. This suggests that parents’ demand for remote options might diminish at least somewhat as the pandemic recedes.

These results imply that most districts should plan for a fairly complete return of public school enrollees to in-person schooling in fall 2021. However, for those districts offering a remote option, even 5 percent of enrollees remaining remote has substantial staffing, technological, and instructional implications. This translates to 2.5 million public school students not attending school in person and another 6 million students with parents who are unsure

FIGURE 9

Percentage of Parents Who Would Get Their Children Vaccinated Against COVID-19



NOTES: This figure depicts response data from the following survey question: "How much do you agree with the following statement? 'If a vaccine for COVID-19 were available for children, I would get my child(ren) vaccinated'" ($n = 2,008$). The light green bars represent the percentage of parents who said "neither agree nor disagree," which we interpret to mean that they were not sure about whether they would vaccinate their child(ren). Percentages might not sum to 100 because of rounding. Asterisks (*) indicate that the percentage of parents in that subgroup who said that they agree or strongly agree that they would get their child vaccinated is statistically different ($p < 0.05$) from the overall percentage of parents with that response. AA = associate's degree; BA = bachelor's degree.

Clear communication this summer from schools to parents about the precise safety measures that schools plan to undertake in fall 2021 could be crucial to convincing unsure and reluctant parents to send their children to school in person. Increasing ventilation, in particular, and clearly communicating that this step had been taken would be particularly important.

whether they might return. Those schools with higher percentages of Black and Hispanic students who plan to offer remote instruction should likely anticipate more than 5 percent of students remaining remote.

Reasons for Hesitancy About In-Person Schooling

This survey also shows that there are actions that schools can take to allay the concerns of the 12 percent of parents who were unsure whether they would send their children to school in person in fall 2021. Our survey suggests that COVID-19–related safety measures at schools not only could help reflect what two-thirds of parents overall prefer but also could convince unsure parents, in particular. Three-quarters or more of unsure parents endorsed ventilation in classrooms, mandatory mask-wearing, and regular COVID-19 testing.

Clear communication this summer from schools to parents about the precise safety measures that schools plan to undertake in fall 2021 could be crucial to convincing unsure and reluctant parents to send their children to school in person, and it could reassure most of those who already plan to send their children in person. Increasing ventilation, in particular, and clearly communicating that this step had been taken would be particularly important, as venti-

lation was consistently the top-ranked safety concern among parents.

In fact, a majority of public schools are enacting several of the safety-related measures that unsure and reluctant parents want. For example, in a separate survey, school principals from 42 percent of schools said that, as of spring 2021, they had or were upgrading their heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, while 47 percent were leaving doors and windows open to increase airflow, for a combined total of 61 percent increasing classroom ventilation through one or both means (Kaufman and Diliberti, 2021). And national vaccination rates among educators are high, with 83 percent of principals and 75 percent of teachers reporting having been vaccinated as of March 2021 (Kaufman and Diliberti, 2021).

The results of this survey also imply that tailored messaging is important. Especially for schools that serve a majority of Black and Hispanic children, among whom parental hesitancy about in-person schooling is highest, soliciting parent input about desired safety practices could help boost in-person attendance. By contrast, in schools where a majority of parents are white or in Midwestern and rural schools, school leaders might find less support for a large suite of school safety measures.

Frequent communication from the school about COVID-19 practices could help assuage the concerns

of those who were the most hesitant. For example, in some schools, continued requirements for masking in fall 2021, even as many states drop school masking requirements (Lehrer-Small, 2021), could be important. Similarly, regular COVID-19 testing had the support of a large majority of Black, Hispanic, and Asian parents.

Children’s Vaccinations Against COVID-19

As of May 2021, when parents took the survey, only 52 percent of parents planned to vaccinate their children against COVID-19. Parents responded to our survey right before FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 12 and up. We note that this rate might increase as the FDA approves more vaccines and also as parents gain assurance about the safety of the vaccines for children.

Parents who reported that they were most likely to vaccinate their children against COVID-19 include (in descending order) Asian parents (78 percent), parents who were themselves vaccinated (77 percent), parents with a bachelor’s degree or higher (66 percent), parents in households that earned more than \$100,000 annually (60 percent), fathers (60 percent), and urban parents (56 percent).

Those parents who were least likely to intend to vaccinate their children include (in ascending order) parents who were not themselves vaccinated (14 percent), rural parents (37 percent), those households that earned less than \$50,000 per year (39 percent), those with less than a bachelor’s degree (43–44 percent), Black parents (44 percent), mothers (46 percent), and white parents (49 percent).

Although three-quarters or more of Black parents preferred schools to enact COVID-19 safety measures, such as masking and routine COVID-19 testing, significantly fewer Black parents supported receiving the vaccine against COVID-19. A little less than half of Black parents supported their children receiving the vaccine, and less than half required that adults in their own households be vaccinated as a condition for feeling safe for their children to attend school in person.

White parents, by contrast, generally expressed lower support for safety measures across the board—including vaccines. About half of white parents and two-thirds of rural parents were vaccine hesitant for their children, yet large majorities of both groups planned to send their children to school in person, and about one-quarter of white and of rural parents wished for schools to stop COVID-19 safety precautions.

Although 17 percent of parents overall were unsure whether they would vaccinate their children, some parent groups had as many as about one-quarter of parents who were unsure. These include Black parents, parents who earn less than \$50,000, and those who were not themselves vaccinated. For these unsure parents, public information and targeted messaging could be key to helping assuage their hesitation.

One implication of these relatively low rates of parents who planned to vaccinate their children is that schools could serve a critical function as vaccination centers to boost children’s vaccination rates. Schools play a central role in communities as a convenient location for services and as trusted messengers for parents.

APPENDIX A

Survey Methods

Our survey of parents of school-age (ages 5 through 18) children was conducted using the Ipsos Knowledge Panel (KP). KP is a high-quality online panel that employs probability-based sampling to recruit members, is representative of the adult population in the United States, and has been in operation since 1999. The size of KP allowed us to complete the survey with a large and relatively diverse sample of English- and Spanish-speaking parents of school-age children.

To complete the desired 2,000 surveys, Ipsos invited 4,697 KP members to participate. These members were invited based on the expectation that their household included children who were 5 to 18 years of age. Among invited panelists, 2,490 (53 percent) completed at least the first part of the survey. The survey first asked several items to determine survey eligibility, including (1) that the respondent consented to take the survey, (2) that the respondent was the parent of a child 5 to 18 years of age living in the household, and (3) that at least one of their children was enrolled in a K–12 school (traditional or charter public school, private school, or a special-purpose school). We excluded parents whose children were exclusively enrolled in permanent homeschooling or virtual schools. Among those who completed the first part of the survey, 2,015 (43 percent) were deemed eligible and completed the survey. Among the completed surveys, 122 were completed in Spanish.

Ipsos weighted the completed surveys to match the national distribution of demographic characteristics among parents of children 5 through 18 years of age. Ipsos's weighting method started by calculating design weights for survey completers based on their selection probabilities (selection from KP to be invited to participate in this survey). The design weights were then calibrated along multiple demographic indicators from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) data (2019), including gender by age, race/ethnicity, census region

by metropolitan status,² educational attainment, household income, and language proficiency. The final weights were trimmed to eliminate extreme values.

How We Conducted the Analyses in This Report

In this report, we calculated the percentages of parents who selected each survey response and compared their responses by five categories yielding 20 subgroups: gender (male versus female), urbanicity (urban, suburban, and rural), region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West), race/ethnicity (white, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other), household income (less than \$50,000, \$50,000 to \$99,999, and \$100,000 or more), and educational attainment (high school diploma [or equivalent] or less, some college or associate's degree, and bachelor's degree or higher).

Throughout this report, we conducted significance testing to assess whether subgroups were statistically different at the $p < 0.05$ level. Specifically, we tested whether the percentage of parents in one subgroup reporting a response was statistically different from the balance of parents who took the survey (e.g., white parents versus the rest of the parents who took the survey who are not white). In the figures, we use asterisks (*) to represent when a subgroup was statistically different from the total. Because of the exploratory nature of this study, we did not apply multiple hypothesis test corrections.

² Census region by metropolitan status is from the March supplement to the 2020 Current Population Survey.

TABLE A.1
Profile of the Parents in the Survey

	Number	Unweighted Percentage	Weighted Percentage	ACS Estimate of Parents with Children Ages 5–18 in the United States
Total, all parents	2,015	100%	100%	53,398,798
Gender				
Male	911	45%	46%	45%
Female	1,104	55%	54%	55%
Race/ethnicity				
White	1,377	68%	57%	57%
Black	153	8%	11%	11%
Hispanic	300	15%	22%	22%
Asian	123	6%	8%	n/a
Other ^a	62	3%	3%	10%
Vaccination status (as of survey fielding)				
Received COVID vaccine	1,285	64%	60%	n/a
Did not receive COVID vaccine	709	35%	39%	n/a
Doesn't know	13	1%	1%	n/a
Educational attainment				
High school diploma (or equivalent) or less	447	22%	34%	35%
Some college or associate's degree	547	27%	29%	29%
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,021	51%	37%	36%
Household income				
Less than \$50,000	380	19%	22%	24%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	595	30%	30%	31%
\$100,000 or more	1,009	51%	47%	45%
Urbanicity				
Urban	613	30%	32%	n/a
Suburban	1,072	53%	53%	n/a
Rural	330	16%	15%	n/a
Region^b				
Northeast	312	15%	17%	16%
Midwest	492	24%	22%	21%
South	669	33%	37%	38%
West	542	27%	24%	24%
Child's school type				
Traditional public school that is not a charter school	1,661	82%	83%	n/a
Charter school	128	6%	7%	n/a
Private school	226	11%	10%	n/a

^a Includes parents who are American Indian or Alaska Native, who are Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or who are of two or more races.

^b Corresponds to the definition used by the U.S. Census Bureau. For more information, please see U.S. Census Bureau, undated.

APPENDIX B

Survey Questions and Responses

Question 1. In what type of elementary, middle, or high school is your child enrolled? If you have more than one child in grades K–12, select all that apply. (n = 2,015)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Traditional public school that is not a charter school	85
Charter school	7
Private school	10
Special-purpose school (e.g., special education; alternative school; technical school)	2
Home school or full-time, permanent virtual school	5

Question 2. Do you send or plan to send your child(ren) to school in person at least one day per week this spring 2021? (n = 2,012)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Yes, for all my children in grades K–12	70
Yes, for some but not all of my children in grades K–12	5
No, none of my children in grades K–12 go or will go to school in person at least one day per week this spring 2021	18
Not sure; it depends	7

NOTES: Respondents were asked to select all that apply. Percentages will not sum to 100. The survey also contained another response option: “No child/children currently enrolled in K–12 school.” If respondents selected this option (or if they selected only “Home school or full-time, permanent virtual school”), they were terminated from the survey.

Question 3. Why do you send or plan to send at least one of your children to school in person? (n = 1,578)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
My school is not offering fully remote learning this spring 2021	6
My child(ren) do better at school in person than at home	71
My child(ren) want to go to school in person	67
In-person school is easier for the adults in my house to manage with their other responsibilities	33
My school(s) have made adequate efforts to reduce COVID-19 risks	57
Our home internet access isn’t good enough for remote schooling	4
To access school-delivered programs and services such as meals or sports	8
Enough school staff are vaccinated to make in-person schooling safe enough	21
I am not concerned that COVID-19 is a significant risk for my child(ren)	32
I am not concerned that others in our family will get COVID-19 if my child(ren) goes to school in person	27
Child is a senior	0
Child(ren) are required to attend at least some classes in person	0
My child(ren) have special needs	0
Low COVID-19 infection rates	0
Remote option was inadequate	0

NOTES: Respondents were asked to select all that apply. Percentages will not sum to 100. Respondents only saw this item if they indicated that they planned to send some or all of their children to school in person in spring 2021. The survey included an “Other (please specify):” option. Responses to that option were reviewed and recoded to fit within response categories provided on the survey. Additionally, several new response categories were created, including “Child is a senior,” “Child(ren) are required to attend at least some classes in person,” “My child(ren) have special needs,” “Low COVID-19 infection rates,” and “Remote option was inadequate.”

Question 4. Why don't you send or plan to send at least one of your children to school in person this spring 2021? (n = 440)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
My school(s) aren't offering in-person school for this spring 2021	10
I or my child(ren) don't want to switch back to in-person school this late in the school year	38
My child(ren) like remote school better	28
My child(ren) feel safer in remote school	34
Teachers or staff over-police my child(ren) at in-person school	1
I or my child(ren) don't want the disruption of returning to in-person school and then possibly switching back to remote again	22
I or my child(ren) don't want to follow the health measures (such as mask-wearing or social distancing) that my school(s) are requiring for in-person school	4
My child(ren) have a job they'd have to quit if they returned to in-person school	0
My older child(ren) help care for younger children at home while doing remote school	1
I am concerned about my child(ren) contracting COVID-19 at school and becoming ill	44
I am concerned about my child(ren) contracting COVID-19 at school and transmitting it to others in our home	34
My school(s) have not made adequate efforts to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school	6
The number of COVID-19 cases in my community are too high to send my child(ren) to school in person	15
No option or space for child(ren) to return in person	1
In-person option is inadequate	2
The remote option is easier	0
The school year has already finished	1
Logistical concerns	1
Prefer to homeschool	1

NOTES: Respondents were asked to select all that apply. Percentages will not sum to 100. Respondents only saw this item if they indicated that they only planned to send some or none of their children to school in person in spring 2021. The survey included an "Other (please specify):" option. Responses to that option were reviewed and recoded to fit within response categories provided on the survey. Additionally, several new response categories were created, including "No option or space for child(ren) to return in person," "In-person option is inadequate," "The remote option is easier," "The school year has already finished," "Logistical concerns," and "Prefer to homeschool."

Question 5. Please rank the importance of the reasons you do not plan to send at least one of your children to school in person this spring 2021. Please drag and drop the reasons to reorder them to best suit your preference. Use 1 for the most important reason, 2 for the second-most important reason, and so on. (n = 440)	Weighted Percentage		
	Top-Three Reason	A Reason, But Not in the Top Three	Not a Reason
My school(s) aren't offering in-person school for this spring 2021	9	0	91
I or my child(ren) don't want to switch back to in-person school this late in the school year	26	9	64
My child(ren) like remote school better	19	6	75
My child(ren) feel safer in remote school	23	8	69
Teachers or staff over-police my child(ren) at in-person school	0	0	99
I or my child(ren) don't want the disruption of returning to in-person school and then possibly switching back to remote again	13	7	79
I or my child(ren) don't want to follow the health measures (such as mask-wearing or social distancing) that my school(s) are requiring for in-person school	4	0	96
My child(ren) have a job they'd have to quit if they returned to in-person school	0	0	100
My older child(ren) help care for younger children at home while doing remote school	1	1	99
I am concerned about my child(ren) contracting COVID-19 at school and becoming ill	40	2	58
I am concerned about my child(ren) contracting COVID-19 at school and transmitting it to others in our home	30	3	67
My school(s) have not made adequate efforts to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school	4	1	94
The number of COVID-19 cases in my community are too high to send my child(ren) to school in person	9	4	86
Other	12	0	88

NOTES: Percentages might not sum to 100 because of rounding. Respondents were only asked to rank their top three reasons if they indicated three or more reasons for not sending their child to school in person in spring 2021. The responses of those who selected only one or two reasons are included in the "Top-Three Reason" category.

Question 6. Which of the following need to be in place for you to feel your child(ren) will be safe at school in person? (n = 2,013)	Weighted Percentage		
	Needs to Be in Place	Does Not Need to Be in Place	Not Sure
Regular COVID-19 testing of staff and students with reporting to parents about COVID-19 rates in the school	50	38	13
Most teachers being vaccinated	55	35	11
Most children at your school(s) being vaccinated	24	56	20
My own child(ren) being vaccinated	26	56	18
All adults in my household being vaccinated	41	48	12
A minimum of 3 feet between people at school	60	30	11
A minimum of 6 feet between people at school	42	47	11
Required mask-wearing for students and adults	66	26	8
Ventilation in each classroom at school	71	18	11
Sneeze guards around each student's desk	33	53	14
No team sports	15	66	19
No group congregation at meal times when masks are off	48	37	15
Hybrid schooling to limit the number of people at school each day	32	52	16

NOTE: Percentages might not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Question 7. Will you send your child(ren) to school in person in fall 2021 if your school(s) offer that option? (n = 2,006)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Yes, for all my children in grades K–12	81
Yes, for some but not all of my children in grades K–12	3
No, I do not plan to send any of my child(ren) to school in-person in fall 2021	5
Not sure; it depends	12

NOTE: Percentages might not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Question 8. Why do you plan to send at least one of your children to school in person? (n = 1,714)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
My school is not offering fully remote learning in fall 2021 as far as I know	11
My child(ren) do better at school in person than at home	69
My child(ren) want to go to school in person	69
In-person school is easier for the adults in my house to manage with their other responsibilities	34
My school(s) have made adequate efforts to reduce COVID-19 risks	56
Our home internet access isn't good enough for remote schooling	4
To access school-delivered programs and services such as meals or sports	12
Enough school staff will be vaccinated by fall 2021 to make in-person school safe enough	37
Enough children will be vaccinated by fall 2021 to make in-person school safe enough	16
I am not concerned that COVID-19 is a significant risk for my child(ren)	33
I am not concerned that others in our family will get COVID-19 if my child(ren) goes to school in person	32
Child is aging out of K-12 education	0
In-person school is required	0
Low COVID-19 transmission rates	0
Child has special needs	0

NOTES: Respondents were asked to select all that apply. Percentages will not sum to 100. Respondents only saw this item if they indicated that they planned to send some or all of their children to school in person in fall 2021. The survey included an "Other (please specify):" option. Responses to that option were reviewed and recoded to fit within response categories provided on the survey. Additionally, several new response categories were created, including "Child is aging out of K-12 education," "In-person school is required," "Low COVID-19 transmission rates," and "Child has special needs."

Question 9. Why do you not plan to send at least one of your children to school in person in fall 2021? (n = 131)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
My school(s) is not offering in-person school in fall 2021 as far as I know	6
My child(ren) like remote school better	22
My child(ren) feel safer in remote school	31
Teachers or staff over-police my child(ren) at in-person school	1
I or my child(ren) don't want to follow the health measures (such as mask-wearing or social distancing) that my school(s) are requiring for in-person school	3
My child(ren) have a job they'd have to quit if they returned to in-person school	2
My older child(ren) help care for younger children at home while doing remote school	2
I am concerned about my child(ren) contracting COVID-19 at school and becoming ill	26
I am concerned about my child(ren) contracting COVID-19 at school and transmitting it to others in our home	30
My school(s) have not made adequate efforts to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school	9
The number of COVID-19 cases in my community are too high to send my child(ren) to school in person	20
I prefer to homeschool my child(ren)	5
My child(ren) is aging out of K-12 education	18

NOTES: Respondents were asked to select all that apply. Percentages will not sum to 100. Respondents only saw this item if they indicated that they only planned to send some or none of their children to school in person in fall 2021. The survey included an "Other (please specify):" option. Responses to that option were reviewed and recoded to fit within response categories provided on the survey. Additionally, several new response categories were created, including "I prefer to homeschool my child(ren)" and "My child(ren) is aging out of K-12 education."

Question 10. What could your school(s) or community do to make you or your child(ren) feel more confident about going back to school in person in fall 2021? (n = 1,865)	Weighted Percentage All Parents
Continue standard safety precautions	67
Vaccinations for everyone/get vaccinated	23
Requirement to wear masks	9
Practice social distancing/no gatherings/large crowds	5
Continue to quarantine as needed	1
Keep 6 feet apart	1
Smaller class sizes	2
Offer remote learning/hybrid schedule	2
Install sneeze guards	1
Regular taking temperature	1
Regular cleaning/sanitation/disinfecting	4
Regular testing	2
Regular hand washing/sanitizing	2
Better ventilation	1
Follow CDC guidelines	1
Continue/enforce safety protocols	9
Reduce COVID-19 cases/numbers	2
For COVID-19 to be completely gone	1
Already feel confident/has done enough	16
Stop safety measures and get back to “normal”	19
Getting back to normal/eliminate restrictions	7
Discontinue to wear masks	3
To stop talking about COVID-19/stop the fear	2
Nothing	8
Keep parents and school community informed	4
Keep us informed/better communication	3
Publish vaccination rates	0
Publish infection rates	1
Other	17
Kids are already in school	3
Kids will be graduating/off to college this fall	0
Other	8
Don't know	5

NOTES: This was an open-ended item. We reviewed participants' responses and coded them into the categories presented in this table. Respondents' answers could be tagged with one or more themes. Therefore, percentages will not sum to 100.

Question 11. If there was voluntary, free weekly COVID-19 testing of students at your child(ren)'s school(s), would you support your children getting tested? (n = 2,011)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Yes	50
No	30
Unsure	20

Question 12. For which of the following reasons would you not support or are not sure if you would support your children getting tested for COVID-19? (n = 983)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Testing is not necessary; our schools are safe	41
I do not trust the COVID-19 test is accurate	37
I do not trust that my child(ren)'s results will be kept confidential	23
The government has too much information or say about my child(ren)	27
My child(ren) might be stigmatized if they get a positive test result	19
My child(ren) will have to quarantine if they got a positive test result	16
Testing is too frequent	3
Testing is not necessary if my child(ren) is vaccinated	2
Don't know or are unsure about the point of testing	0
Testing is only necessary if someone is showing symptoms	4
The test is unpleasant	10
Depends on the type of test	0
I don't want my child to be tested at school without a parent present	1
Testing for my child(ren) is my decision, not the school's	0
Frequent testing would disrupt the school day	1

NOTES: Respondents were asked to select all that apply. Percentages will not sum to 100. Respondents only saw this item if they indicated that they did not want or were unsure about having voluntary, free weekly COVID-19 testing. The survey included an "Other (please specify):" option. Responses to that option were reviewed and recoded to fit within response categories provided on the survey. Additionally, several new response categories were created, including "Testing is too frequent," "Testing is not necessary if my child(ren) is vaccinated," "Don't know or are unsure about the point of testing," "Testing is only necessary if someone is showing symptoms," "The test is unpleasant," "Depends on the type of test," "I don't want my child to be tested at school without a parent present," "Testing for my child(ren) is my decision, not the school's," and "Frequent testing would disrupt the school day."

Question 13. How much do you agree with the following statement? "If a vaccine for COVID-19 were available for children, I would get my child(ren) vaccinated." (n = 2,008)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Strongly agree	36
Somewhat agree	16
Neither agree nor disagree	17
Somewhat disagree	7
Strongly disagree	24

Question 14. Have you personally received the COVID-19 vaccine, or not? (n = 2,007)	Weighted Percentage
	All Parents
Yes	60
No	39
Don't know	1

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About This Report

This report provides information about the sample, survey instrument, and resultant data for a survey administered to parents of children ages 5–18. The results are intended to inform school districts' and health officials' planning for operating schools in fall 2021.

RAND Education and Labor

This research was undertaken by RAND Education and Labor, a division of the RAND Corporation that conducts research on early childhood through postsecondary education programs, workforce development, and programs and policies affecting workers, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy and decisionmaking.

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