

2020-21

STATE OF D.C. SCHOOLS



D.C. POLICY CENTER

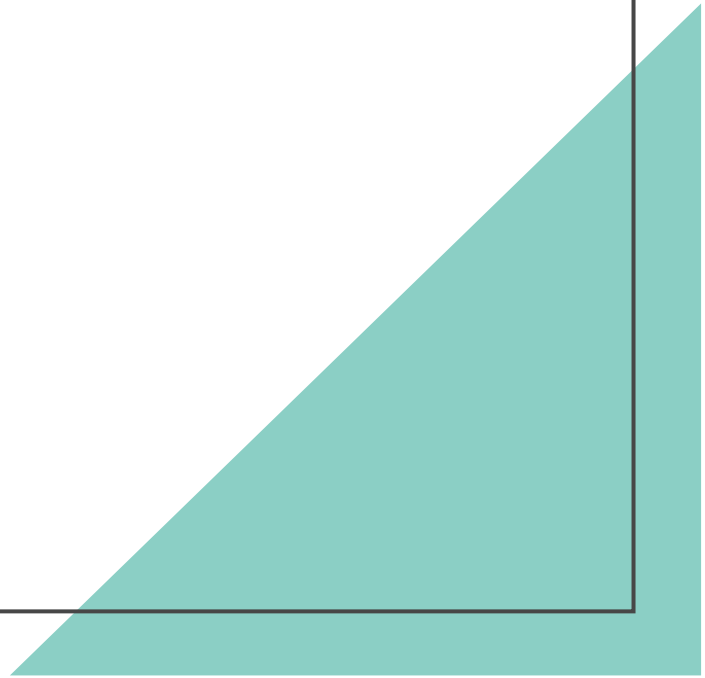
Education Policy Initiative



2020-21

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Ice breaker:



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DESCRIPTION

- Provides an annual systemwide overview of public education in the District of Columbia
- Gives D.C. residents, parents, caregivers, and other stakeholders a snapshot of the overall performance of the District's public schools
- Focuses on virtual learning in 2020-21 and recovery

INFORMATION SOURCES

- School report card data
- Local surveys
- LEA's Continuous Education plans
- Government reports
- Other analyses
- Focus groups

SUPPORT

- Education Forward DC

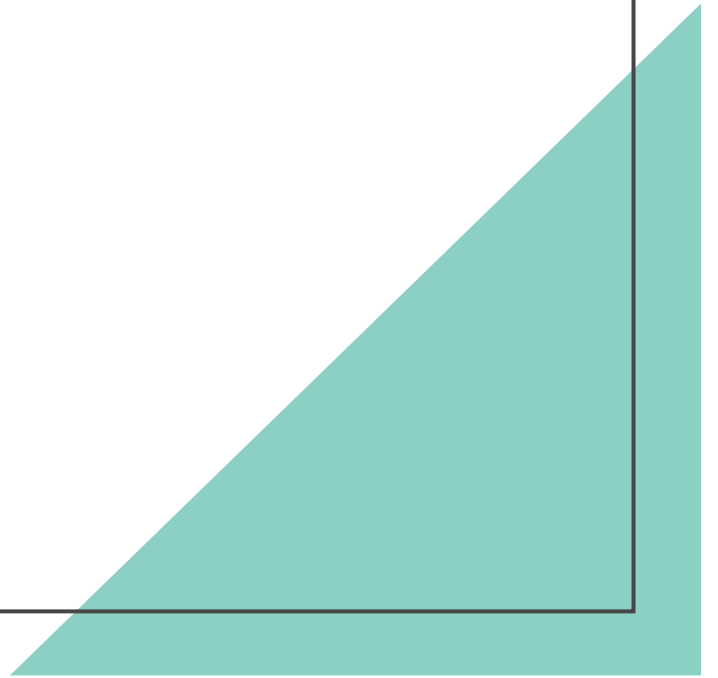
REVIEWERS

- DCPS
- DME
- DC SBOE
- Office of the Student Advocate
- Ombudsman for Public Education
- EmpowerK12
- Community Advisors

2020-21

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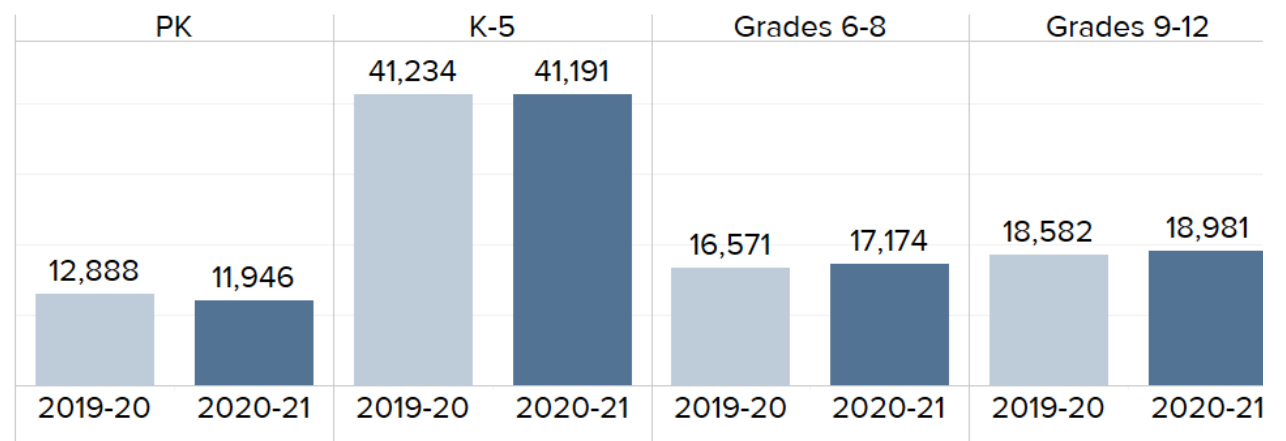
Enrollment in 2020-21



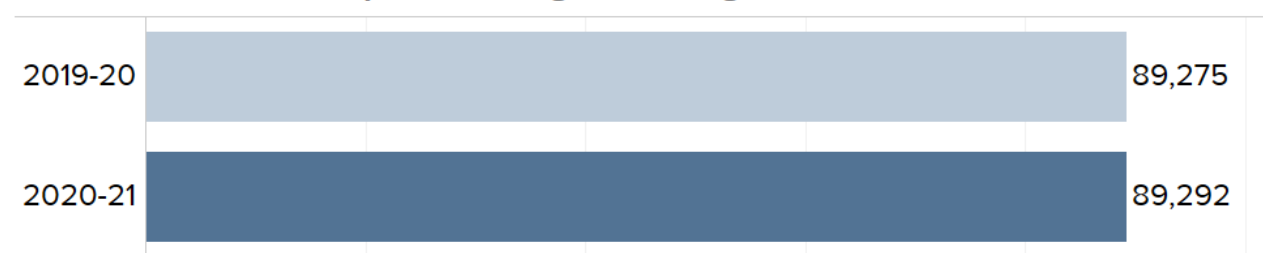
Despite projections of growth, total enrollment stayed mostly the same as last year.

- Systemwide enrollment was projected to increase by 4,000 students, but only increased by **17 students**.
- **7% fewer students** enrolled in pre-kindergarten than the previous school year.
- By student group:
 - 45% of students were at-risk,
 - 16% of students had disabilities, and
 - 12% of students were English learners.

Enrollment in D.C.'s public schools by grade band

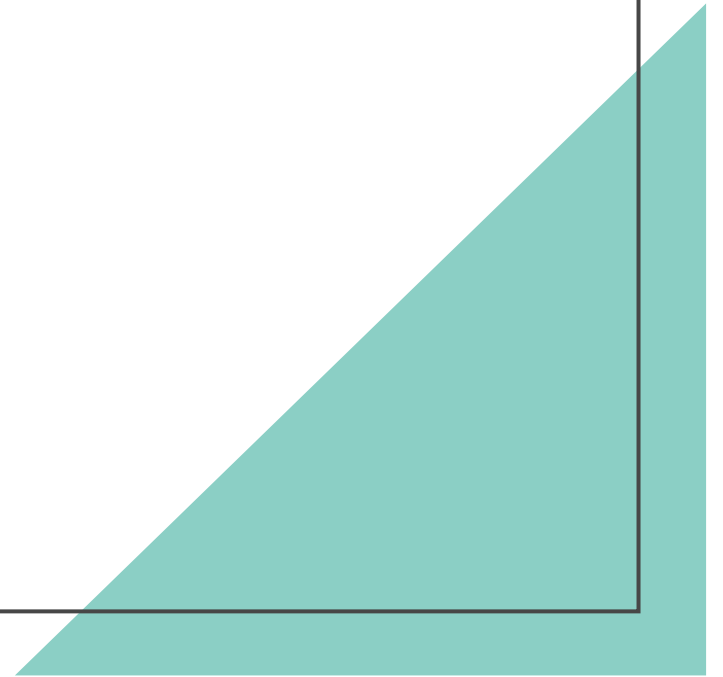


Total enrollment in pre-kindergarten to grade 12



Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2021. Enrollment audit reports for FY 2021 and FY 2020. Retrieved from: <https://osse.dc.gov/enrollment>

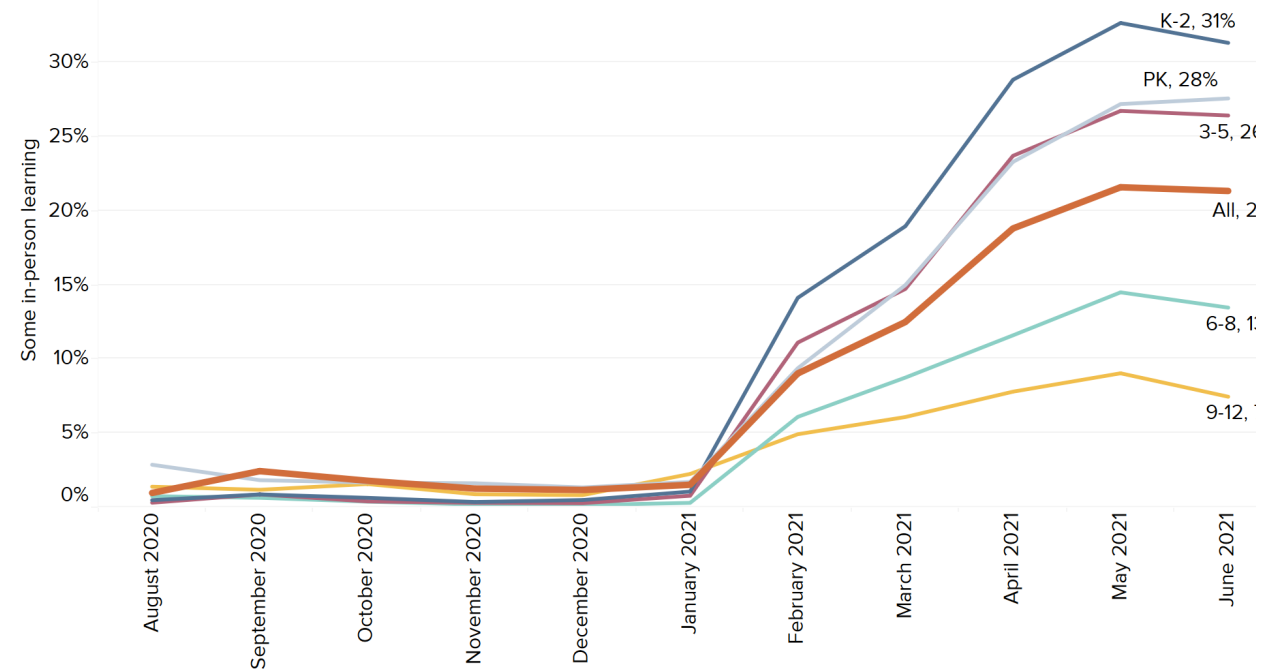
School Environment



Virtual learning was prevalent but often inadequate for students, teachers, and families

- **79% of students** were still learning completely from home at the end of the year, after almost all students began the year virtually
- **46% of students** said their internet was always good enough to participate fully in school activities
- **17% of teachers** said they had all the supports they needed for virtual learning

Percent of students with some in-person learning by grade band, 2020-21 school year



Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2021. School Report Card Data. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/dcschoolreportcard/>

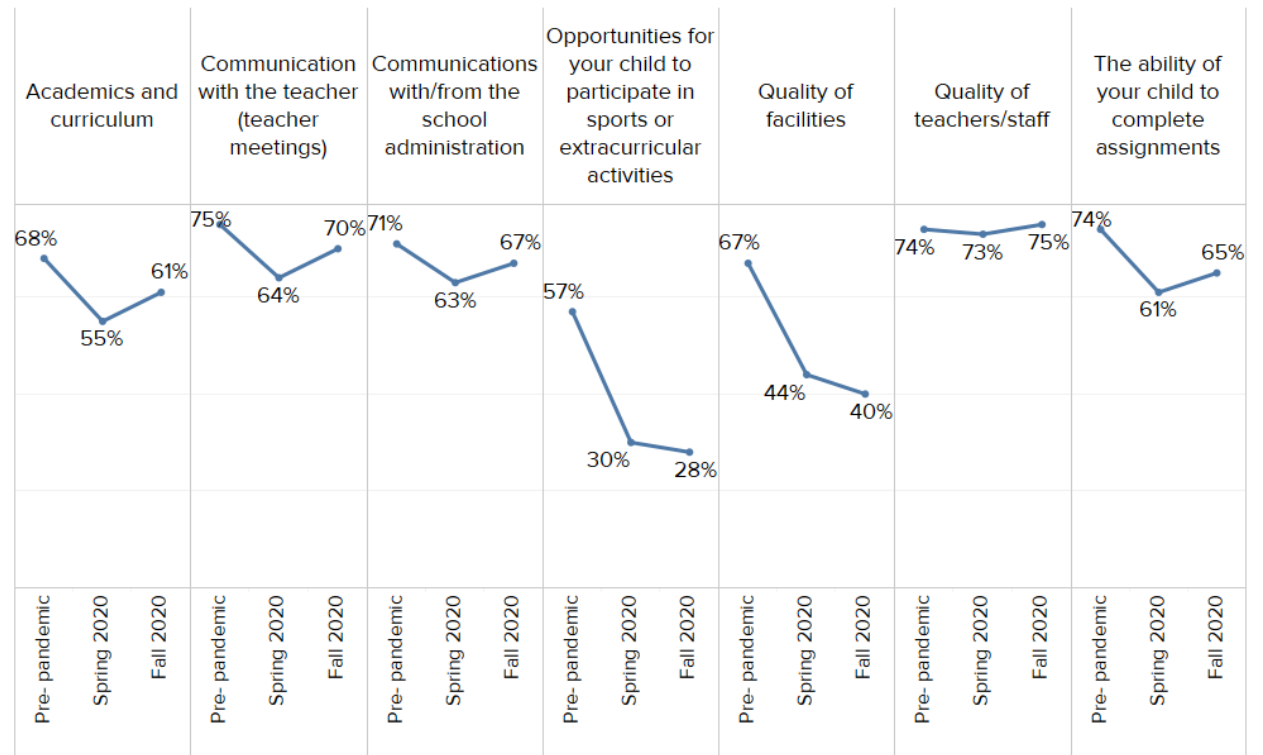
Grade Band
All
PK
K-2
3-5
6-8
9-12

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Parents and families

- **39 percent of parents** mentioned managing children's education at home as a top challenge during school year 2020-21 (PAVE survey)
- Some Spanish-speaking parents shared that **language barriers** and advocating for **children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)** presented an additional challenge
- **Communication and engagement** was identified as an issue in over half of the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education's cases

Share of D.C. parents who are very or extremely satisfied with certain school aspects before and during the pandemic



Source: D.C. Policy Center/SSRS survey.

School leaders and educators expended tremendous effort to reach families and meet students' needs during an unprecedented school year



Mental health

- Hired additional staff
- Initiated partnerships
- Integrated social-emotional learning



Technology Access

- Ensured students had learning devices and internet at home
- Provided technical support



Virtual learning

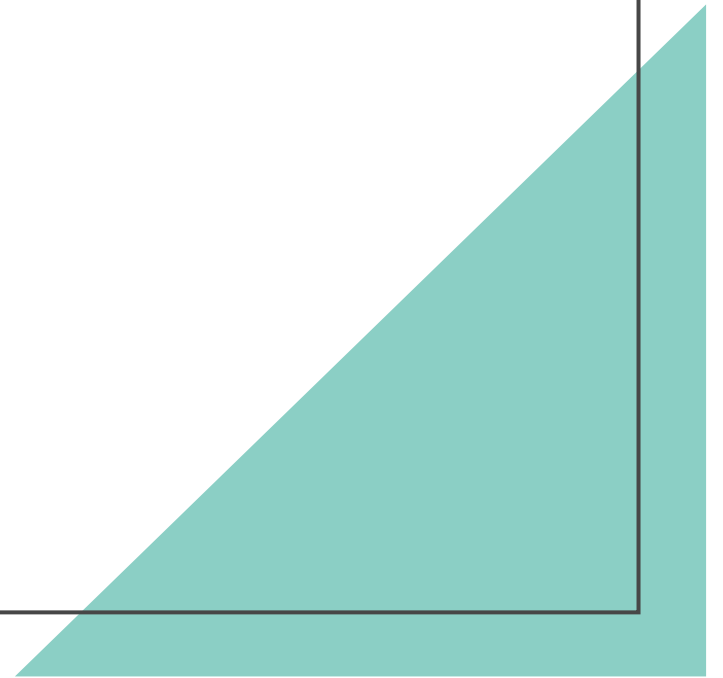
- Utilized real-time data to identify students who need additional help



Communication

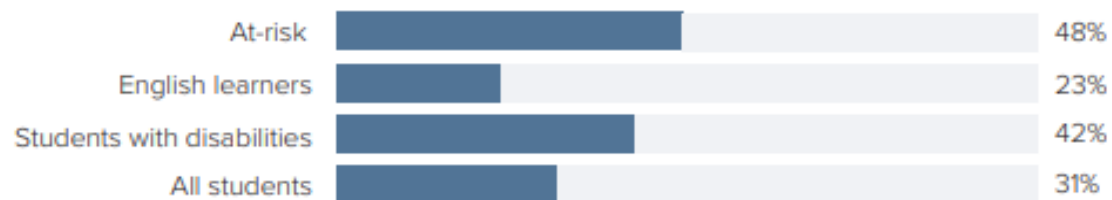
- Increased flexibility in mode of communications with families and teachers

Student outcomes

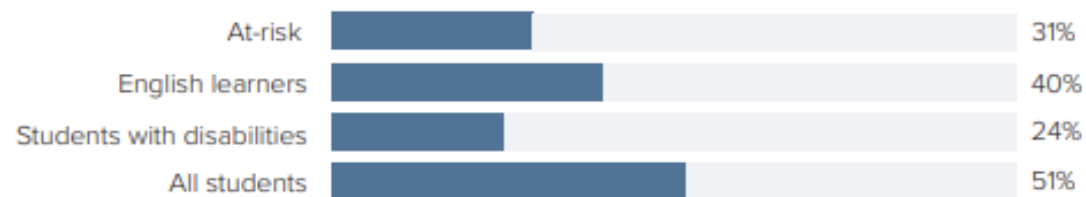


Students designated as at-risk, English learners, and students with disabilities experienced disproportionate impacts

Chronic absenteeism (missing 10% or more of the school year)



Reading on grade level for kindergarten through grade 2 students



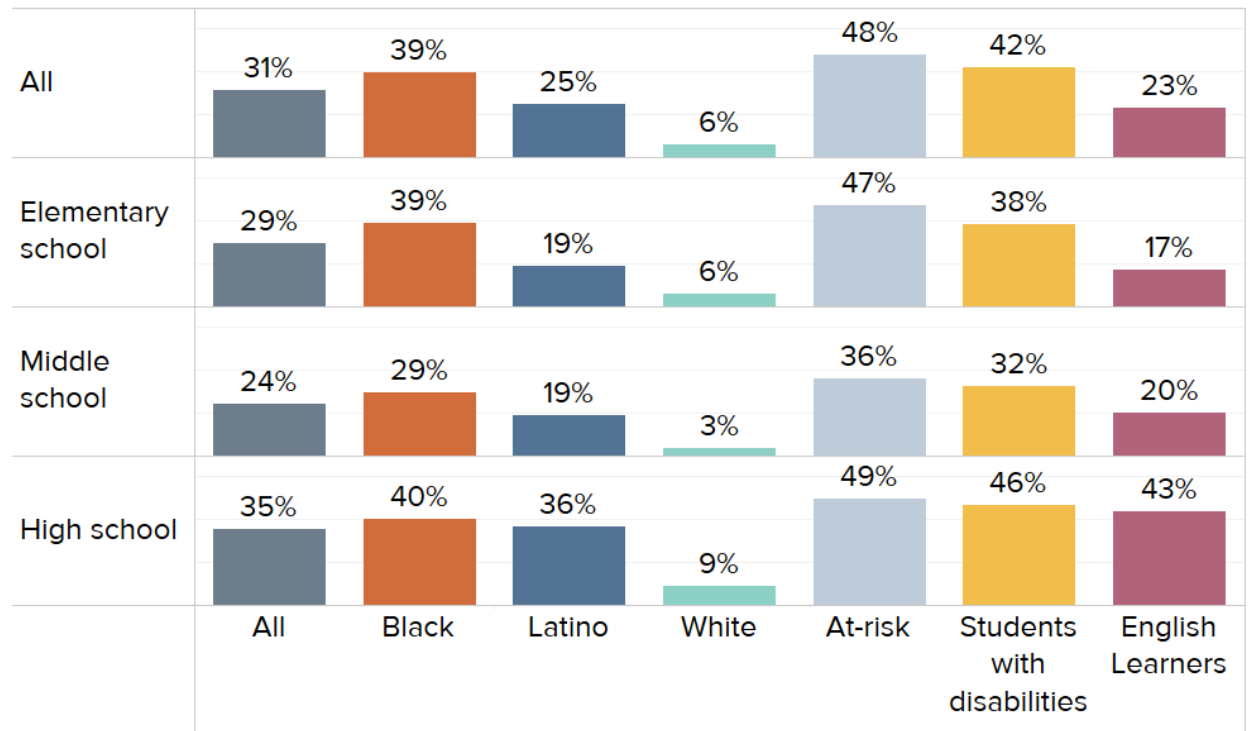
Four-year graduation rate



Attendance and chronic absenteeism

- With a more flexible definition for attendance in school year 2020-21 to account for virtual learning, the **recorded attendance rate was 89.5 percent**
- **31 percent of students** were chronically absent, missing 10 percent or more of the school year

Chronic absenteeism rates by student group and grade band, school year 2020-21



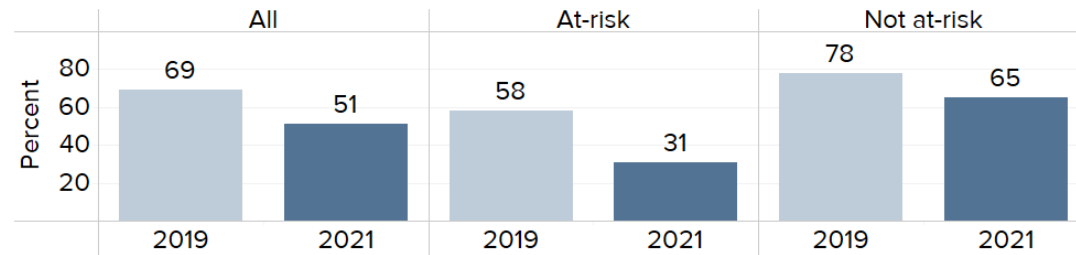
Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education. 2021. *D.C. School Report Card* data. OSSE. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/dcschoolreportcard/>

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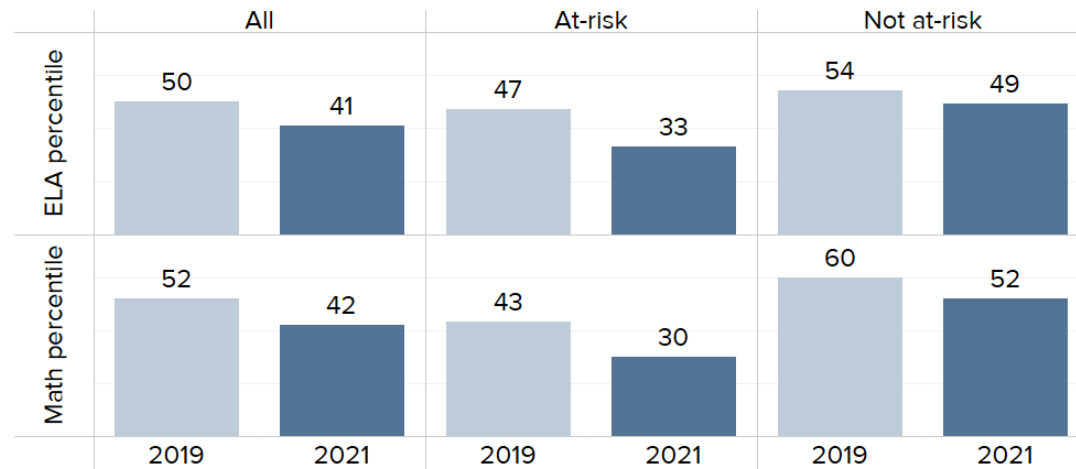
Learning outcomes for elementary and middle school students

- For 5 years before the pandemic, learning outcomes had been improving on PARCC state assessment
- According to an EmpowerK12 analysis comparing SY20-21 and SY18-19:
 - Fewer early elementary students in kindergarten through grade 2 were **reading on grade level**
 - **9 percentile-point decline** in achievement levels in ELA and a **10 percentile-point decline** in Math.

Percent of kindergarten through grade 2 students reading on grade level in EmpowerK12 sample, by student group



Median achievement percentile ranks for students in grade 2 through grade 8 in EmpowerK12 sample, by student group and subject



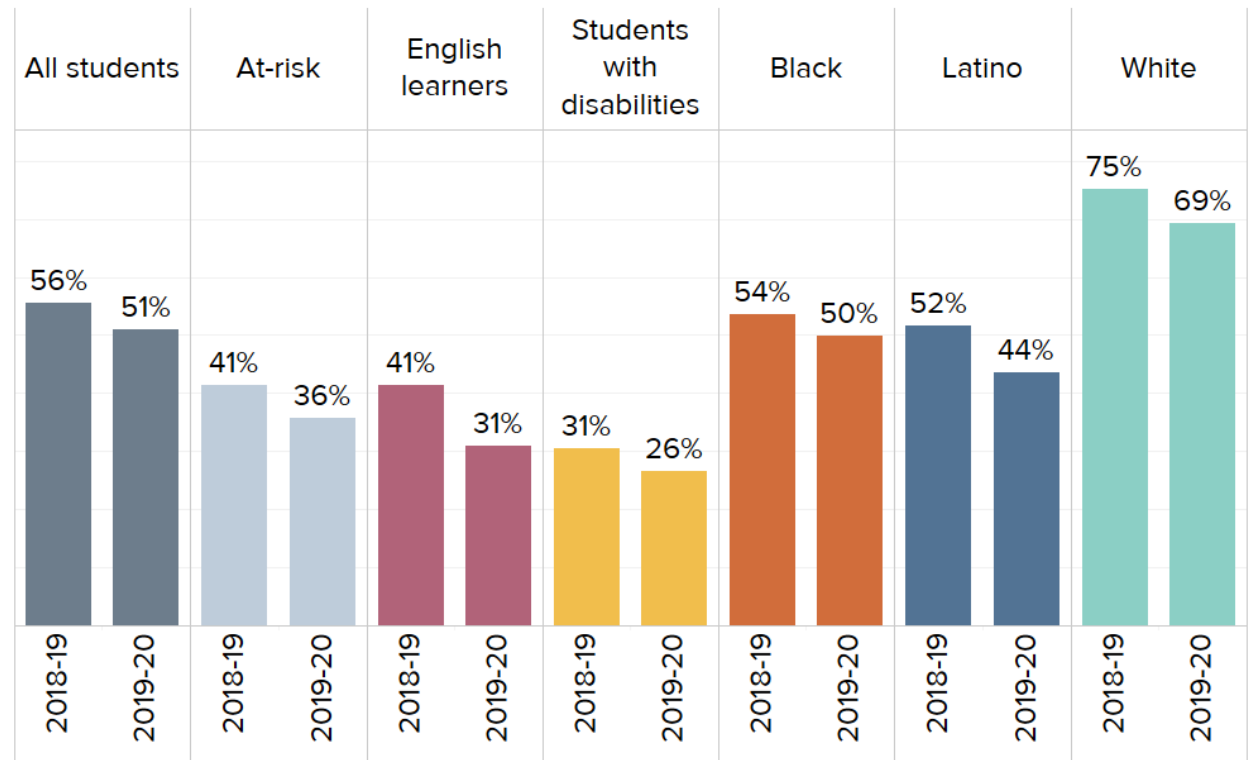
Source: EmpowerK12. 2021. *Update on Unfinished Learning in DC*. EmpowerK12. Retrieved from <https://www.empowerk12.org/research-source/covid-impact-achievement-dc>

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Learning outcomes for high school students

- High school outcomes are similar or better
 - **18 percent of seniors** met the SAT college and career ready benchmark
 - **39 percent of students** passed AP/IB exams, but participation was lower by four percentage points
 - Four-year graduation rate **increased to 72.6 percent**
- Postsecondary outcomes are worse
 - Share of students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution within six months of graduation decreased

Percent of alumni enrolled in postsecondary 6 months after graduation



Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2021. School Report Card Data. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/dcschoolreportcard/>

Learning outcomes for students with disabilities and English learners

- EmpowerK12 analysis suggests more unfinished learning for students with disabilities and English learners
- Office of Student Advocate reported that special education concerns were the source of **24 percent of the calls** they received from families seeking assistance
- **63 percent of teachers** said English learners were receiving the supports they need

“My son academically was supposed to get extra time on assignments, extra support and low homework. And because of the public nature of the Google chat, Google channels, the Google classroom, it’s like the teachers couldn’t force the technology to build in those allowances.”

—Parent

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- What is your initial reaction to these figures about disparate impacts?
- Do these reflect your knowledge and experience?

“The school provided other activities or programs to relax, like yoga. But it was hard for me to participate because I needed to be involved in the classes of my eldest child, and my smallest child was starting to walk.”

—Adult learner

“It got to the point that it was starting to be so much violence that they didn’t even want to leave out the house to go to school. They didn’t want to hear shootings, get shot, any of that, so they didn’t want to go outside.”

—Parent

“My mental health wasn’t in a good place. It just caused me to not log on to class, because there’s so much that I was dealing with.”

—Student

Student mental health

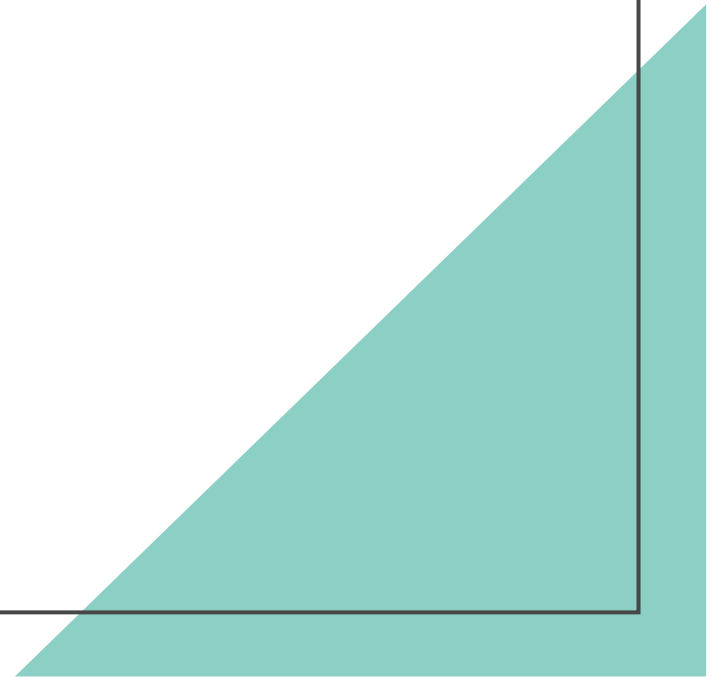
- Teachers at 16 of 55 LEAs received **additional training** on integrating social-emotional learning practices into their curriculum
- Mental health was a concern for many students due to **loneliness, family issues, heightened anxiety, technology troubles, and excessive workload**—and that these were contributing factors to lower rates of class participation, engagement, and productivity
- **Sharp increase in violent crimes** across the city amplified concerns around neighborhood safety and mental well-being for students, parents, and teachers

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- While most LEAs seemed to offer mental health resources, students and families seemed to have mixed experiences accessing help.
 - How does access this year compare to access last year?
 - Are there differences in different parts of the city or for different age students?

Look ahead

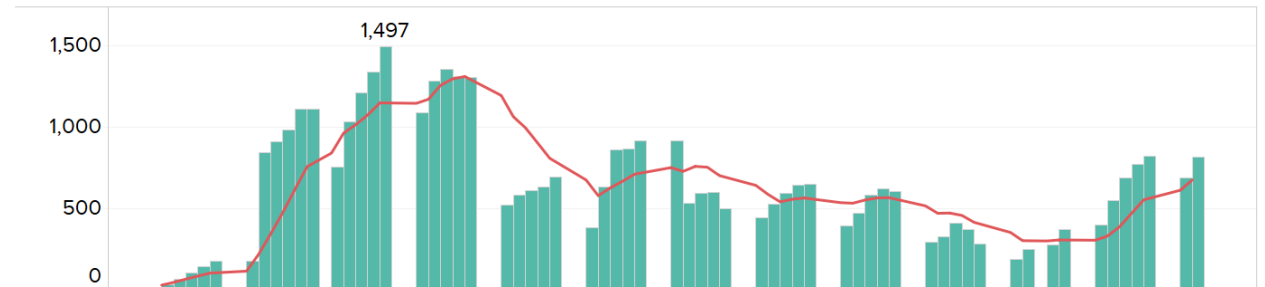


COVID-19 and schools

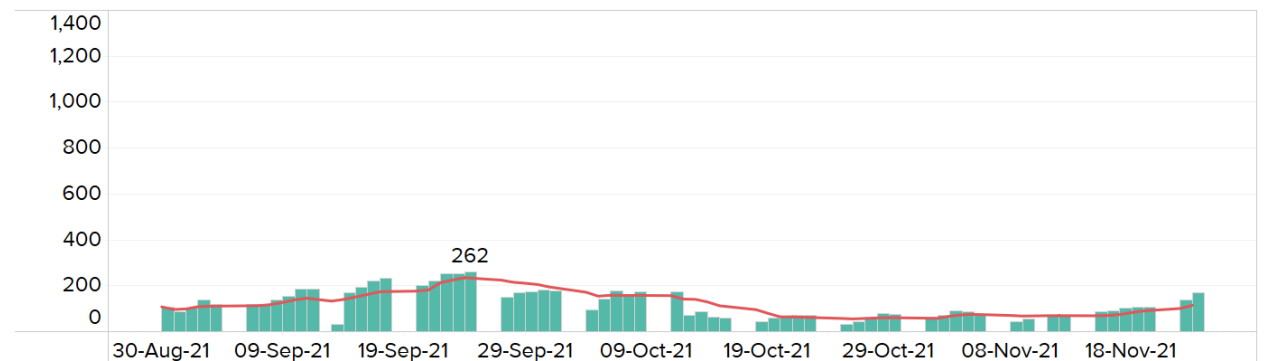
- In the fall 2021, DCPS and public charter schools returned to full-time in-person learning with COVID-19 health and safety measures in place
- In Fall 2021, **16 percent of parents** reported that they found managing their children's education to be a challenge (PAVE survey)
- Impacts of pandemic continue: estimated 1.3 percent of DCPS students and 2.7 percent of DCPS teachers were in quarantine on a given day in the fall 2021

D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) daily counts of quarantine

Quarantine for DCPS students who are usually participating in in-person activities



Quarantine for DCPS personnel who are usually working in-person



Source: Government of the District of Columbia. 2021. "DC Schools data." Retrieved from <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/>

■ Currently in quarantine
■ Weekly average

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The D.C. Policy Center proposes tracking **recovery** progress for different student groups in three areas:

Student Success

- Chronic absenteeism
- Achievement levels and growth
- Transition to college, credentials and earnings

Student supports

- Number of mental health professionals and wellbeing measures
- Exit from English learner status
- Goal attainment for students with disabilities
- Teacher retention and satisfaction

Community factors

- Perceptions of community safety
- Amount of in-person instruction
- Parent or caregiver satisfaction rates and enrollment levels

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- How did your experience of school this year compare to last year?
- What areas or interventions do you think are most important to focus on for recovery or change moving forward?