

ALSDE PARENTS HOME TECHNOLOGY SURVEY



THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA[®]

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Office of Evaluation Research
and School Improvement

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ALSDE Parents Home Technology Survey

Introduction

The ALSDE Parents Home Technology Survey was designed and administered through The Innovative Programming Research Collaborative, a strategic partnership between The Office of Evaluation Research in The University of Alabama's College of Education and The Akribos Group. The main aim of administering the Parents Home Technology Survey was to explore how parents perceived their own and their school-aged children's adaptation to remote and blended learning options throughout the state of Alabama due to COVID-19. More specifically, the aim was to explore a statewide school technology list detailing Internet connectivity and device availability. The survey is composed of several sections including demographic information, parents' approach to the upcoming school year, access to internet and technology, usage of the Alabama Public Television educational program (APT) and other online educational resources, students' learning performance during COVID-19, and parents' opinion about the importance of having educational resources. After removing incomplete responses, data was collected from 26,174 parents from various school districts in the state of Alabama.

Two types of analysis were conducted to the data collected from parents. First, a descriptive analysis was performed to explore the variations in the responses and locate any noteworthy observations. The second round of analysis was conducted to identify any differences between the responses provided by parents who are planning to send their children to school in the traditional classroom setting (Group 1) for the fall 2020 semester and those who are planning to utilize remote learning (Group 2) for the same semester. In other words, the second analysis shed light about parents' perspectives regarding the factors associated with utilizing the remote learning. For the sake of keeping the report concise and informative, only those correlations that reached the significant level are reported.

Demographic Information

The questions in this section were related to the number of children and the number of school-aged children in each household (i.e., elementary, middle/ junior high school, and high school) along with the number of students attending special school programs. On average, there were two children in each household with at least one of them of school age. The majority of parents

reported having at least one child in elementary school. Forty-one percent of parents reported having children assigned to special school programs; the most common placement (16%) was in advanced placement courses. Table 1 and Figure 1 provide a summary of school-aged children at each level and children attending special programs at schools.

Table 1. Distribution of Students in Each School Level

	Percentage	Count
Elementary school-aged children	66%	17,219
Middle/ Junior high school children	43%	11,241
High school children	42%	11,028

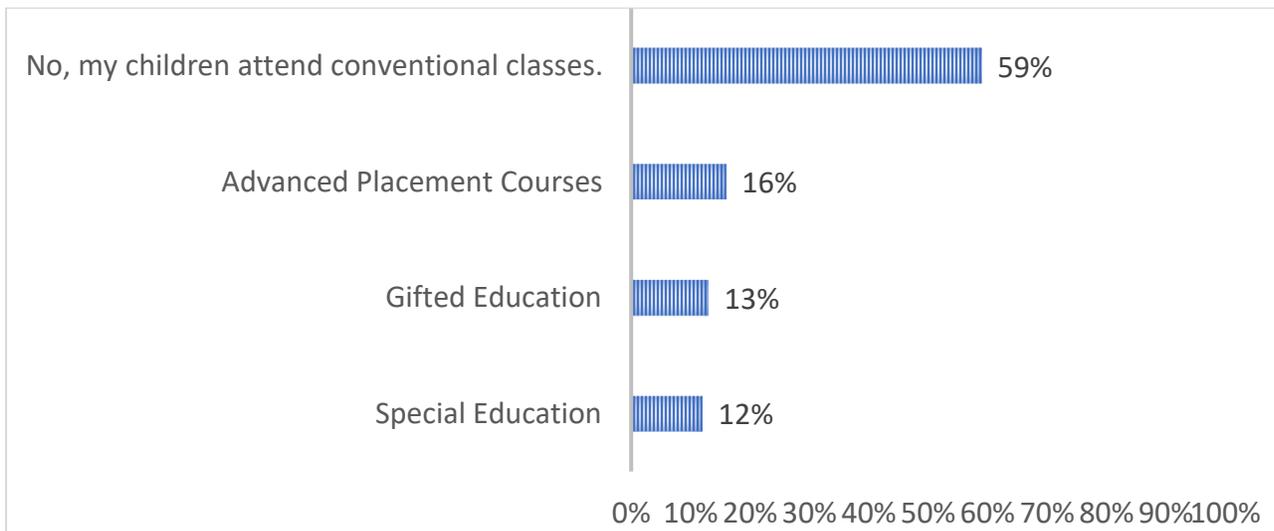


Figure 1. Distribution of Students in Special School Programs

Main Theme of the Report

The main theme of the report is related to parents' willingness to send their children to school this fall semester. Out of 26,174 responses, 65% of parents ($N = 16,992$) stated that they were planning to send their children to school, while 35% of parents ($N = 9,182$) stated that they did not plan to send their children to school. Sixty percent of parents ($N = 2,065$) with a child in a special education program reported planning on sending their kids to school. Additionally, 64% ($N = 11,074$) of parents with a child in elementary school, 62% ($N = 6,985$) of parents with a

child in middle/ junior school, and 65% ($N=7,215$) of parents with a child in high school stated that they would send their children to school. As evident in Figure 2, the main reasons for those who were concerned about sending their children to school were COVID-19 and health issues. Similarly, 71% of parents stated that they were not comfortable allowing their kids to ride the bus to school because of a health concern (Figure 3). It should be noted that some of the questions required written comments for which we conducted thematic analyses. The results are illustrated in forms of word-clouds with word/word cluster in varied sizes. The larger the word/word cluster on word-clouds means that a word/word cluster was more commonly reported. Appendix A summarizes the responses to all questions based on parents' willingness to send their children to school.



Figure 2. Parents' Concerns for not Returning to Traditional Classroom

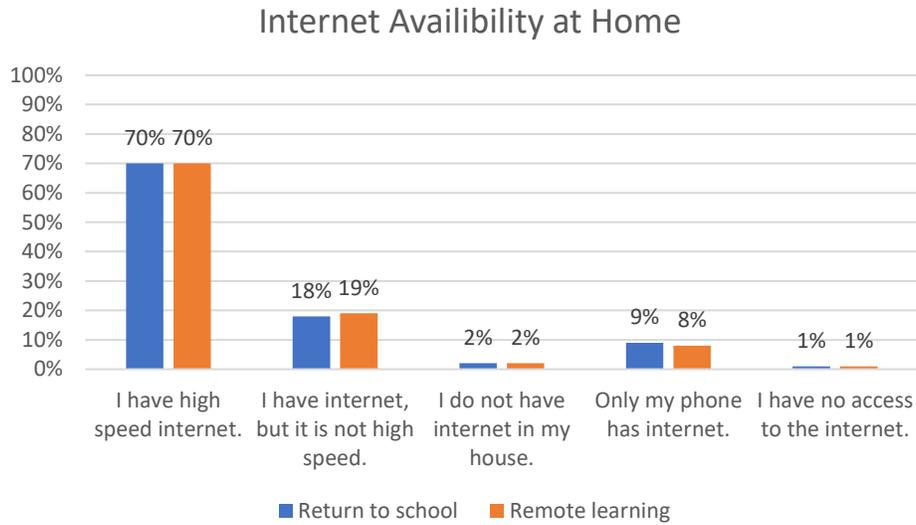


Figure 4. Comparison of Internet Availability at Home between Group 1 and Group 2

Technology Access

Questions in this category were related to the type and number of technological devices either available at home or received from school. It should be noted that some of the questions collected more than one response, and respondents could select as many options as they wanted. The most frequent personal device available at home was a smart phone (87%) followed by a laptop (68%) and an iPad (44%). Sixty-nine percent of parents ($N = 18,105$) stated that their child had a personal technological device with internet access. On average, there were at least two personal technological devices in each household which could be used by K-12 children. Additionally, 67% ($N = 17,437$) of K-12 children did not need to share their devices while doing their homework. Yet, 33% of K-12 children needed to share technological devices with at least another sibling to do their homework.

In regard to receiving school-issued technological devices, most parents (59%) reported they did not receive any device from school. Among the 41% of parent who received a school-issued device, Chromebook was the most common technological device. Most (73%) respondents stated that they have a television with cable, a satellite dish, or an antenna. The remaining respondents stated they either had a television without cable (25%) or did not have a television at home (2%).

Alabama Public Television

Fewer than one-fifth ($N = 4,085$; 16%) of the respondents knew about the Alabama Public Television Learn at Home (APTLH) broadcast, whereas the rest of the participants (84%) did not know about the program. Among those who knew about the program, only 25% ($N = 687$) watched it. Eighty-five percent of those who did watch APTLH ($N = 584$) found the program and the related supplemental material helpful. As depicted in Figure 5, PBS Kid was the most common resource utilized and found to be the most helpful.

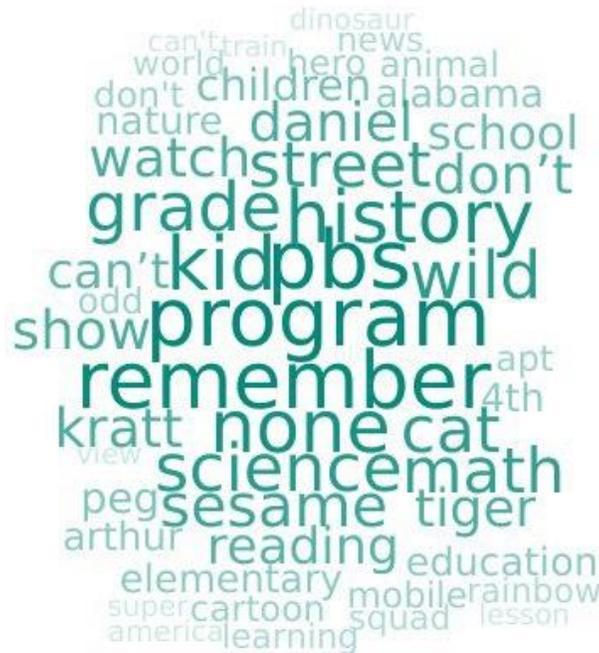


Figure 5. Most Helpful Programs on APT

Out of the 26,174 responses collected, 55% ($N = 14,266$) reported using other online educational resources to support their children's learning. As depicted in Figure 6, the most frequent online educational resources were ABC Mouse, Khan Academy, YouTube, and Google Classroom. There was a very small statistically significant difference between the two groups (parents sending their kids to school and those preferring remote learning) with respect to using online resources (Figure 7).

Parents' Preparedness to Support Students Learning

Three questions in this category asked about how much parents with a child or children in each school level (i.e., elementary, middle/ junior high school, high school) were prepared to support their children's learning at home. Among 17,219 parents with children in elementary school, 43% felt prepared to support their children's learning from home. On the other hand, 21% did not feel that they could support their children's leaning at home. Out of the 11,241 parents with children in middle/ junior high school, 42% felt prepared to support their children's learning from home, while 20% did not feel that they could support their children's learning at home. Similarly, among the 11,028 parents with children in high school, 42% felt prepared to support their children's learning from home compared to 21% who did not feel that they could support their children's learning at home. To summarize, it seems that children's school level does not affect parents' preparedness in supporting their children's school learning from home. Although the majority of respondents with children in each level felt prepared either all the time or sometimes, one-fifth of the respondents stated they could not support their children's school learning at home.

Looking at the responses to these questions correlated to the responses provided to the first question (willingness to send the children to school) showed that parents who were not planning to send their children to school for the fall semester felt more prepared to support their children's learning.

Students' Learning Performance at Home

Only 33% of the respondents ($N = 8,669$) reported that their children learned at home as if they were still attending school. However, there was a significant difference between the two groups of parents (i.e., parents planning on sending their kids to school and those preferring remote learning) in their responses to this question. For example, 58% of parents who *were not* planning to send their children to school reported that their children's learning was the same as if they were in school, compared to only 20% of parents who *were planning* to send their children to school reported that their children's learning was the same as if they were in school (Figure 8).

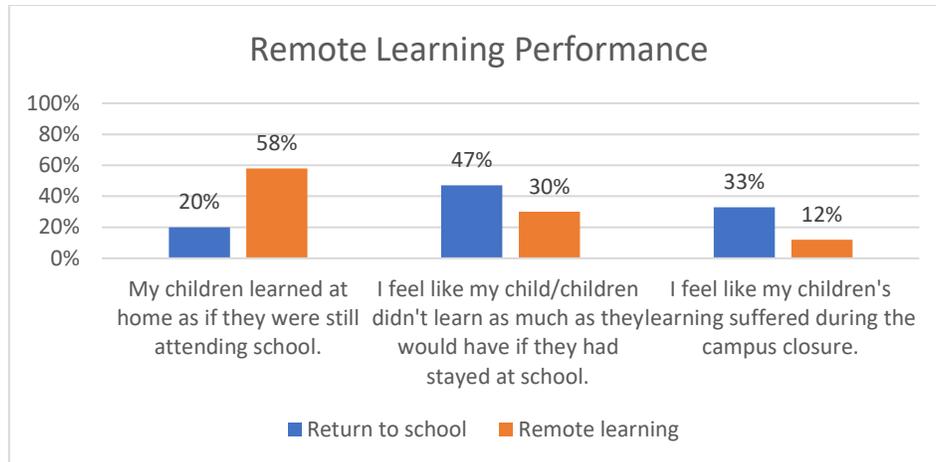


Figure 8. Comparison of Students' Learning Performance at home between Group 1 and Group 2

The most common reason parents gave for feeling like their children did not learn as much as they would have if they had stayed at school was related to “teachers.” As an example, a respondent wrote: “In the spring, teachers were a bit lost and didn’t know what they were doing. They [teachers] get great effort, but their skills were lacking” (Figure 9). Similarly, the same reason was given by parents who felt like their children’s learning suffered during the campus closure. For instance, a respondent wrote: “My children learned nothing from online learning. Children need [a] structured face to face learning environment with trained teachers. I am not trained to be a teacher nor can I teach my children and prepare them for their continued education. My children also couldn’t focus on learning in the home environment either” (Figure 10).

Remote Learning Utilization

More than half of the respondents ($N = 14,557$; 56%) reported that they are now more likely to utilize remote learning. Looking at each school level individually, the majority of responses with children in elementary school ($N = 9,569$), middle/ junior high school ($N = 6,516$), and high school ($N = 6,190$) reported that they are now more likely to utilize remote learning. However, there was a significant difference between the two groups of parents (i.e., parents planning on sending their kids to school and those preferring remote learning) in their responses to this question. For example, 91% of parents *who were not* planning to send their children to school reported that they will utilize remote learning, compared to only 37% of parents *who were planning* to send their children to school reported that they will utilize remote learning (Figure 11).

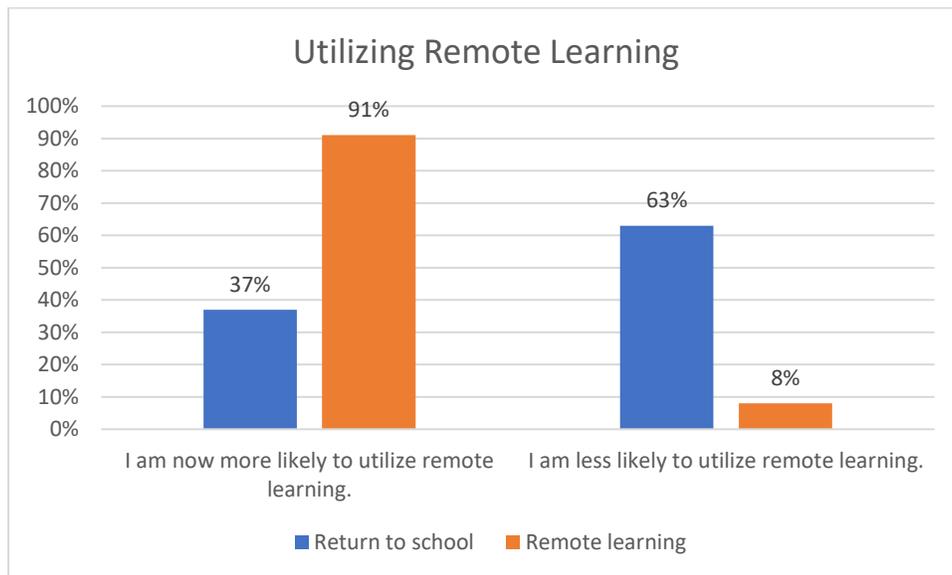


Figure 11. Comparison of Remote Learning Utilization between Group 1 and Group 2

The most common reason parents gave for being less likely to utilize remote learning was related to children’s learning performance at home and working full time. As an example, a respondent wrote: “I am a single parent, therefore I feel that I cannot give my child adequate time nor patience to learn new things nor implement the already learned things. I have to work. I do not have anyone that can watch him and teach him while I work. After getting off of work there is already enough stress of wrapping up the day and preparing for the next” (Figure 11).



Figure 12. Most Common Reasons for not Utilizing Remote Learning

The Importance of having Before and After School Academic Resources

In this section, six questions asked about the importance of having academic help, supervised enrichment opportunities, a place to be supported/ supervised in accessing technology, school working with community, meals for children, and extra learning support. Among all the questions, the majority of respondents reported that it is very important to have academic help before and after school (69%). Slightly more than half of parents reported it is important for schools to work with the community and help parents keep their jobs/looking for jobs (55%). Having after-school programs in or near schools to help provide extra learning support and providing meals for children were the next two important factors (47% and 45% respectively).

Recommended Next Steps

After an analysis of the current data collected, members from The Office of Evaluation Research in The University of Alabama's College of Education and The Akribos Group recommend the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) staff consider:

- Performing a deeper analysis of the survey to include designated special populations (i.e. Advanced Placement, Gifted Education, and Special Education).
 - Findings may lead to the need for an additional survey targeting subgroups.
- Performing a broader analysis of the survey by region or other significant divisions such as rural, urban, or county.
 - Findings may lead to the need for an additional survey targeting specific regions.
- Conducting a subsequent distribution of the survey to assess internet access for various student populations as follow up to the recent funding initiatives to expand broadband internet accessibility.
- Exploring strategies and methodologies to increase awareness of Alabama Public Television Learn at Home (APTLH) programming. This would include intentional marketing efforts to school personnel and student households.
- Exploring strategies and methodologies to improve parental support for student learning at home.
- Conducting a follow-up survey, at a determined interval, to examine parental perceptions and attitudes addressing the following questions:
 - For the 2020-2021 school year, has your child received a device, such as a Chromebook or iPad, to help with assignments?
 - Does your child's school utilize Khan Academy, APT, YouTube or other on-line resources to help students learn?
 - What are the observed social and emotional issues for students who have chosen virtual or distance learning options?
 - What are the observed social and emotional issues for students who have chosen to participate in the traditional classroom?
 - Given current trends, how would you rate your child's school for teaching and learning experiences delivered through remote or virtual methods?

- Given current trends, how would you rate your child's school for teaching and learning experiences delivered through the traditional classroom?
- Given the current trends, when would you anticipate your child returning to the traditional classroom setting?

Appendix A. Group Comparison

Questions	Return to School	
	Yes N = 16,992	No N = 9,182
How many children are in your household?	2 children N = 7,767 (46%)	2 children N = 3,738 (41%)
How many children in your household are school-aged (grades K-12)?	1 child N = 7,446 (44%)	1 child N = 4,129 (45%)
Are any of your K-12 children assigned to special education programs?	Yes N = 2,065 (12%)	Yes N = 1,362 (15%)
Are any of your K-12 children assigned to gifted education programs?	Yes N = 2,565 (15%)	Yes N = 1,151 (13%)
Are any of your K-12 children assigned to advanced placement courses?	Yes N = 3,283 (19%)	Yes N = 1,292 (14%)
Do you feel comfortable allowing your children to ride the bus to get to school?	No N = 9,959 (59%)	No N = 8,681 (95%)
Is high speed internet service available where you live?	No N = 2,819 (17%)	No N = 1,152 (13%)
Do you have internet at home?	High Speed N = 11,807 (70%)	High Speed N = 6,458 (70%)
Where else do you or your child have access to the Internet where your child does schoolwork?	Family N = 7,305 (43%)	Family N = 4,409 (48%)
Can you stream a YouTube or other video at home without it cutting out or freezing?	Yes N = 13,026 (77%)	Yes N = 7,507 (82%)
What type of personal technological devices do you have access to at home?	Laptop N = 11,601 (68%)	Laptop N = 6,214 (68%)
Does each child in your house have a personal technological device to access the internet?	Yes N = 11,669 (69%)	Yes N = 6,436 (70%)
How many personal technological devices are used by K-12 children in your household?	2 devices N = 5,647 (33%)	2 devices N = 3,000 (33%)
How many of the K-12 children in your household share devices in order to do their schoolwork?	0 device N = 11,400 (67%)	0 device N = 6,037 (66%)
What type of school-issued technological devices do you have access to at home?	None N = 9,571 (56%)	None N = 5,856 (64%)
Does your home have a television and cable, satellite dish, or an antenna?	Yes N = 12,510 (74%)	Yes N = 6,507 (71%)
Did you know about the Alabama Public Televisions Learn at Home broadcast?	No N = 14,422 (85%)	No N = 7,667 (84%)
Did you watch Alabama Public Television's Learn at Home broadcast? (N = 2,570)	No N = 2,228 (87%)	No N = 1,170 (77%)
Did you find Alabama Public Television's (APT) Learn at Home broadcast and related supplemental material helpful? (N = 687)	Yes N = 280 (82%)	Yes N = 305 (88%)
Have you used other online educational resources to support your child's learning?	Yes N = 8,945 (53%)	Yes N = 5,321 (58%)

If you have a child or children in elementary school , do you feel prepared to support their learning at home? (N = 17,219)	Yes N = 3,457 (31%)	Yes N = 3,967 (65%)
If you have a child or children in middle/junior high school , do you feel prepared to support their learning at home? (N = 11,214)	Yes N = 2,185 (31%)	Yes N = 2,551 (60%)
If you have a child or children in high school , do you feel prepared to support their learning at home? (N = 11,028)	Yes N = 2,392 (33%)	Yes N = 2,264 (59%)
Generally, do you feel like your child/children learned well at home when campuses closed during Spring 2020?	Yes N = 3,337 (20%)	Yes N = 5,332 (58%)
Are you more or less likely to utilize at home learning for children after the Spring 2020 campus closure?	More likely N = 6,208 (37%)	More likely N = 8,349 (91%)
How important is it for your child to have academic help with school?	Not Important N = 623 (4%)	Not Important N = 464 (5%)
How important is it for your child to have supervised enrichment opportunities after or before school?	Not Important N = 5,020 (30%)	Not Important N = 3,296 (36%)
If schools continue with remote learning, or a hybrid of remote and in-person learning, how important is having a place, such as before or after school program, for your child to be supervised and supported in accessing technology and using online learning on remote learning days?	Not Important N = 6,391 (38%)	Not Important N = 4,285 (47%)
How important is it for schools to work with community, faith-based, and employer groups to help supervise children and help parents keep their jobs or look for jobs?	Not Important N = 2,206 (13%)	Not Important N = 1,664 (18%)
How important is it to have after-school programs in or near schools to provide meals for children?	Not Important N = 3,978 (23%)	Not Important N = 2,052 (22%)
How important is it to have after-school programs in or near schools to help provide extra learning supports?	Not Important N = 2,607 (15%)	Not Important N = 1,707 (19%)

Appendix B. Initial Analysis

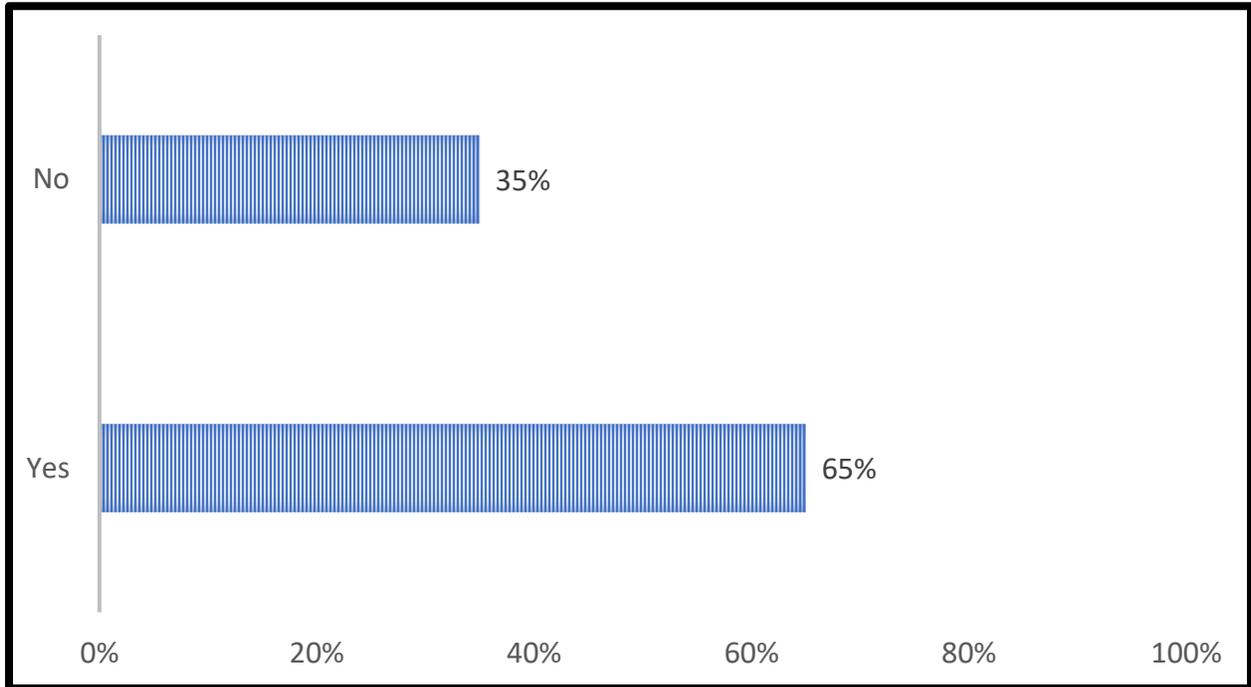


ALSDE 2020 Parent Survey

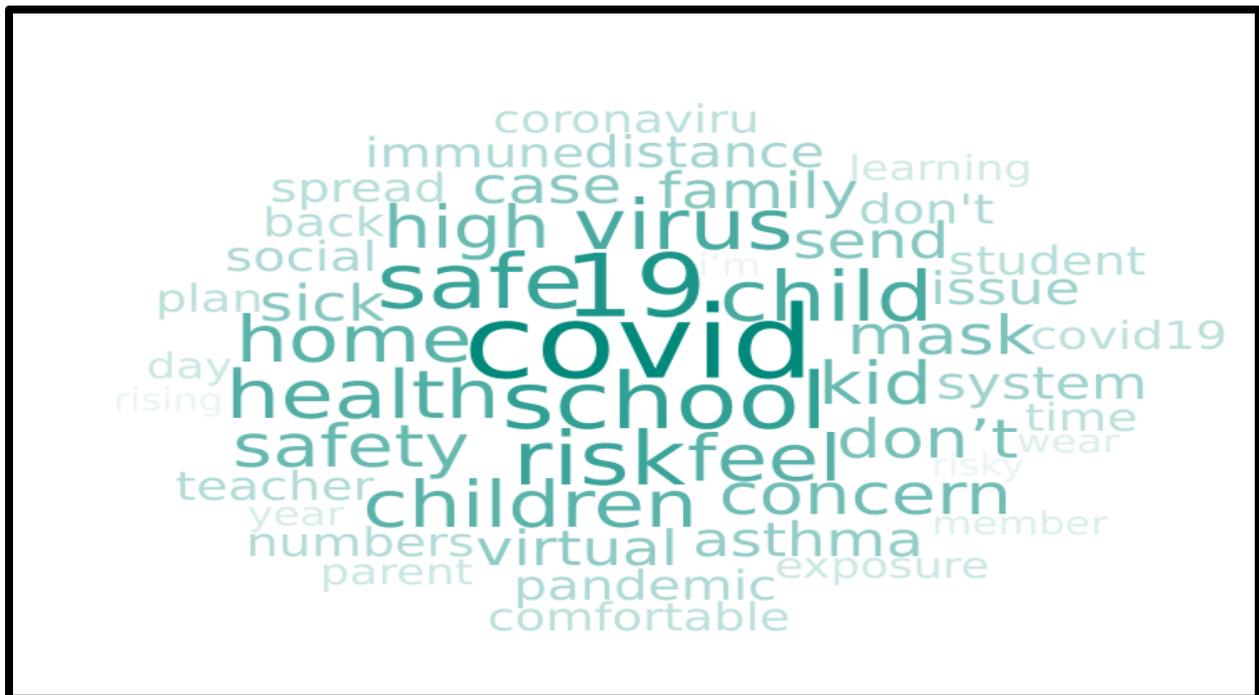
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August 2020**

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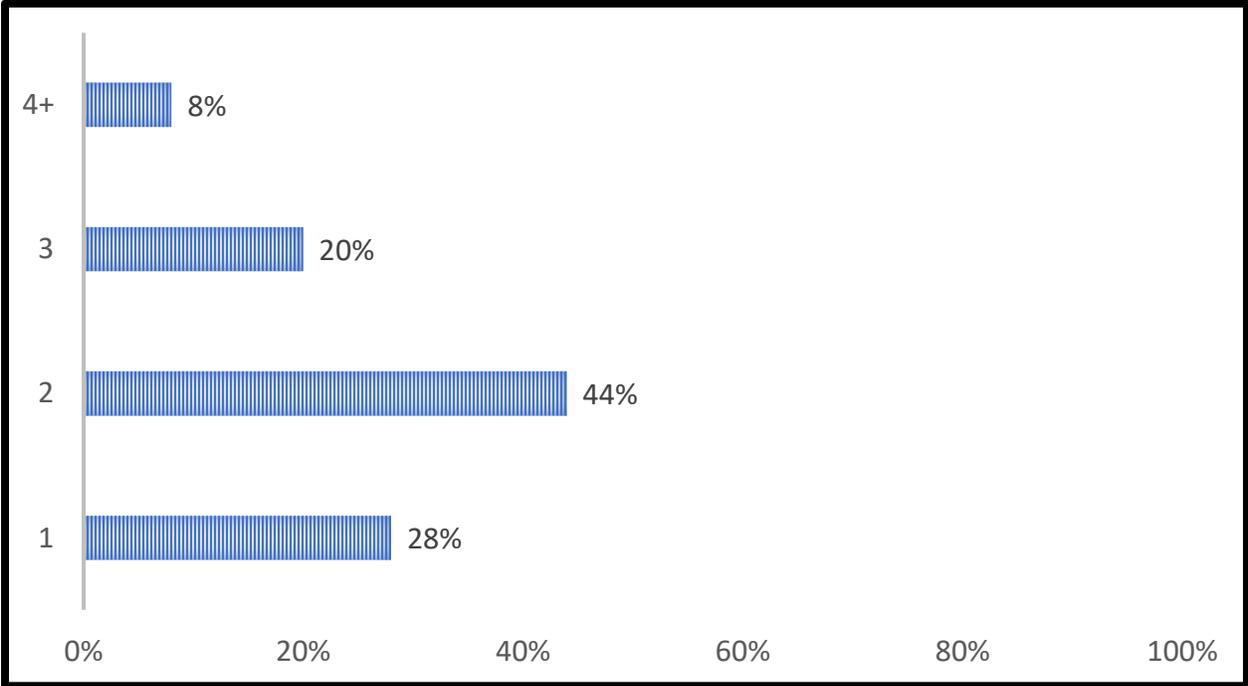
Q1-Are you planning on sending your children to school in a traditional classroom setting on campus when schools reopen this fall?



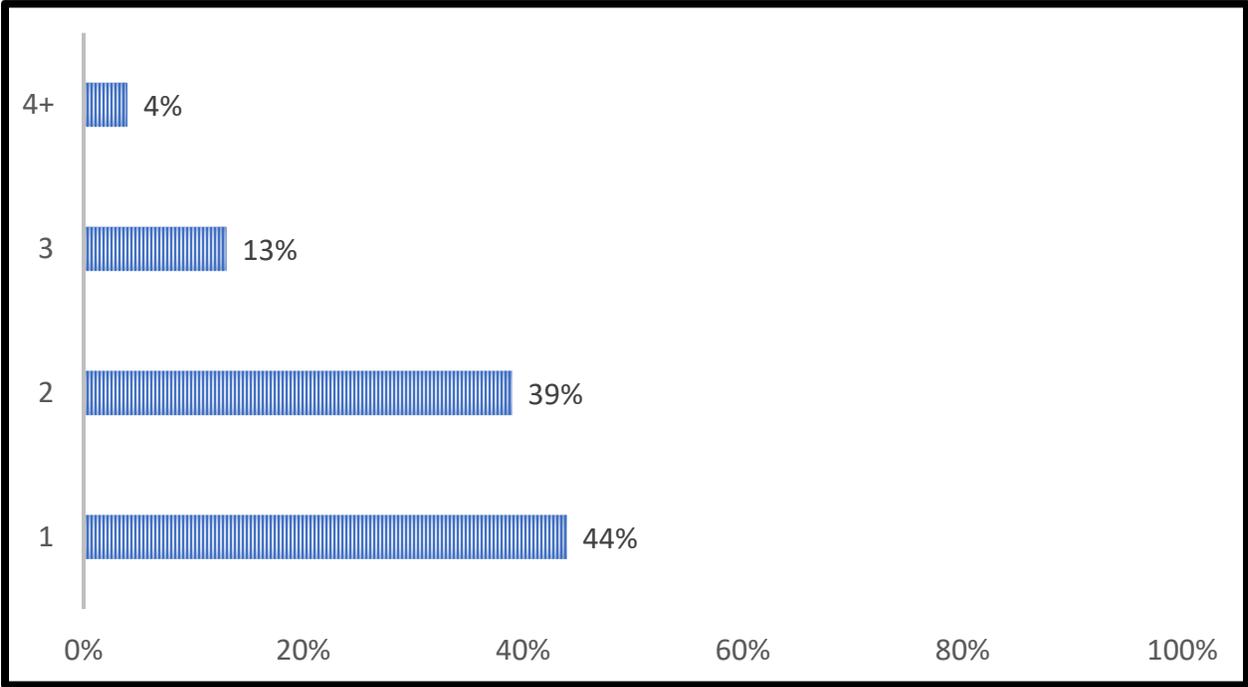
Q1- If no, why not?



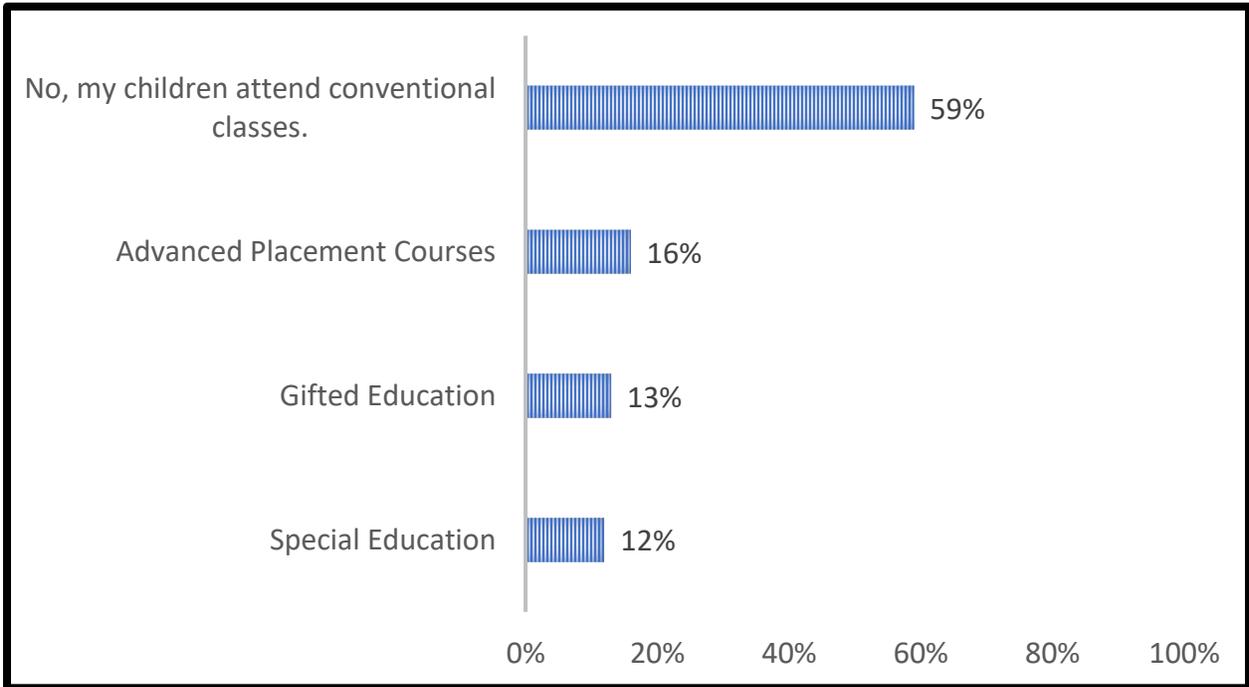
Q2 - How many children are in your household?



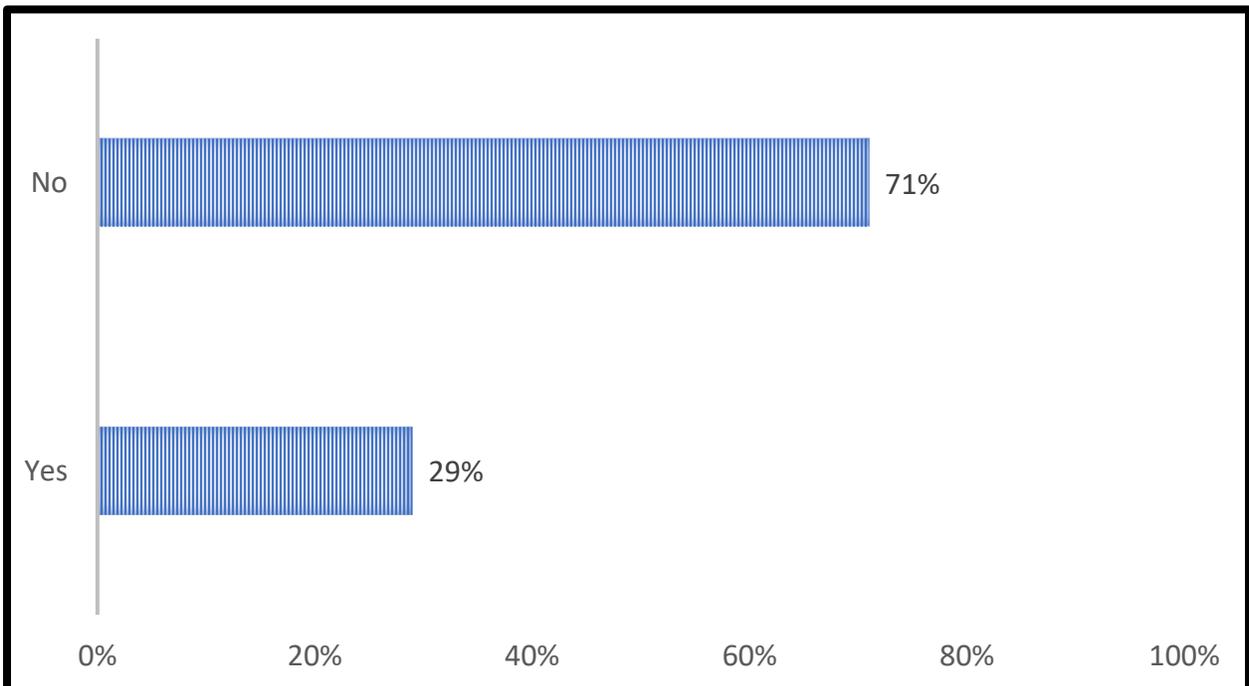
Q3 - How many children in your household are school-aged (grades K-12)?



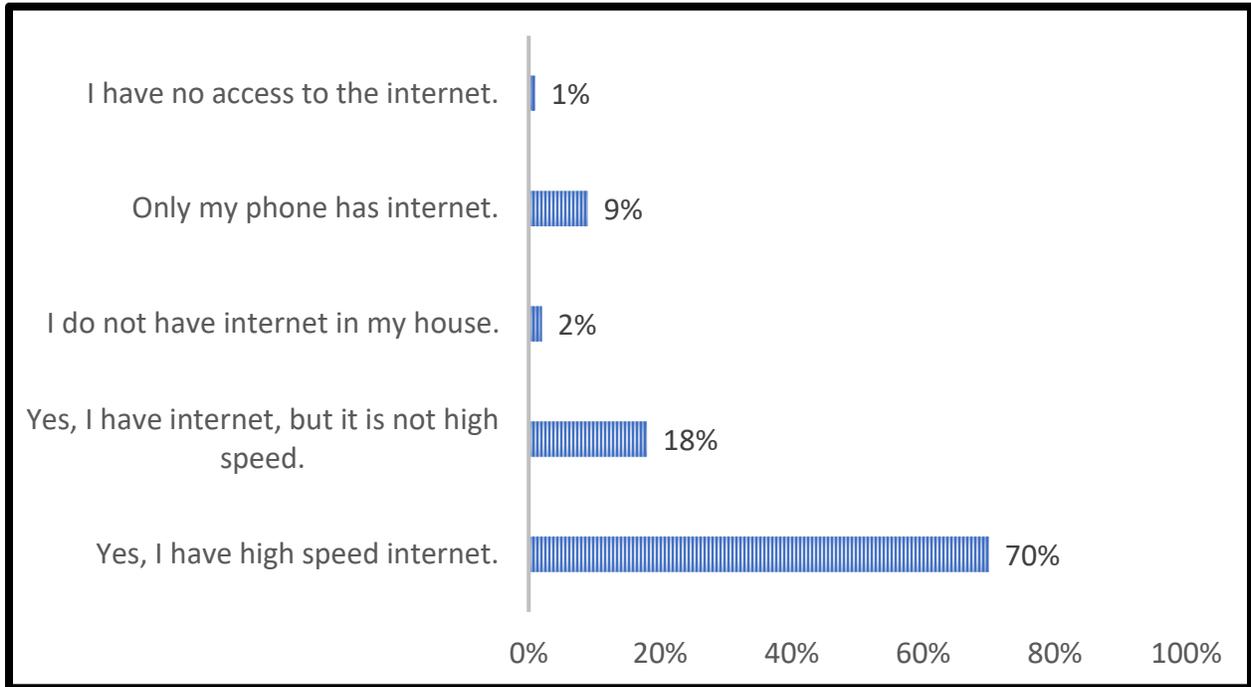
Q4- Are any of your K-12 children assigned to special school programs? Check all that apply



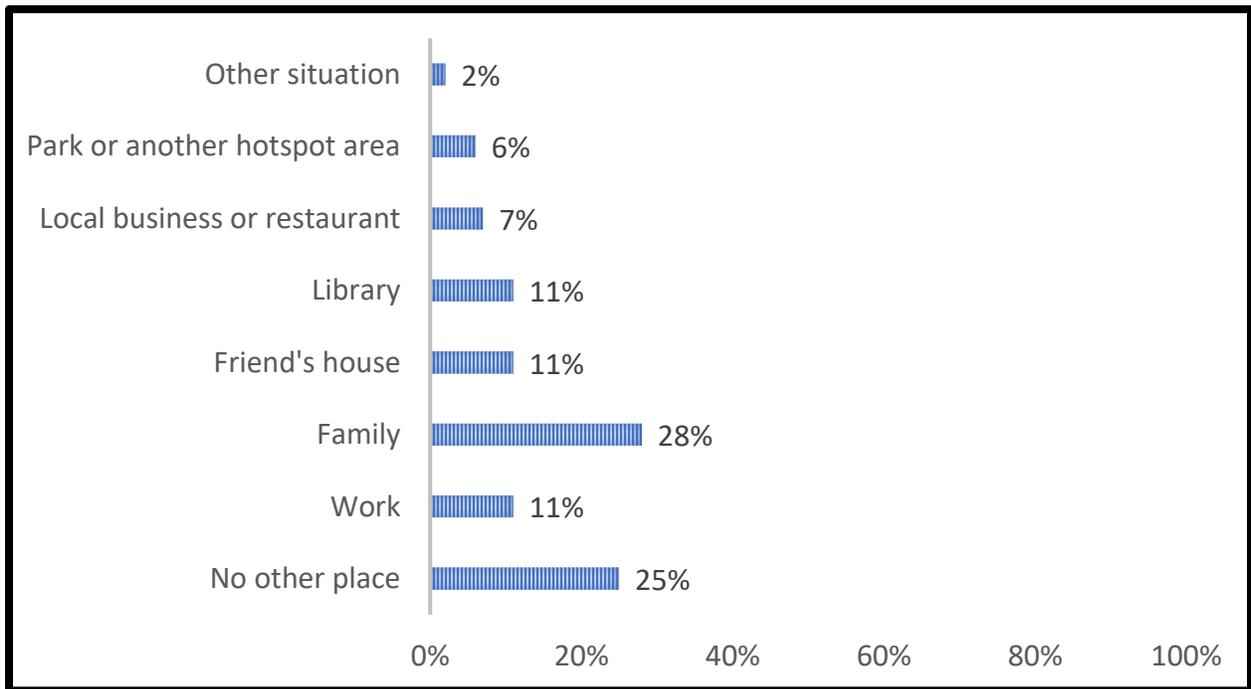
Q5 - Do you feel comfortable allowing your children to ride the bus to get to school?



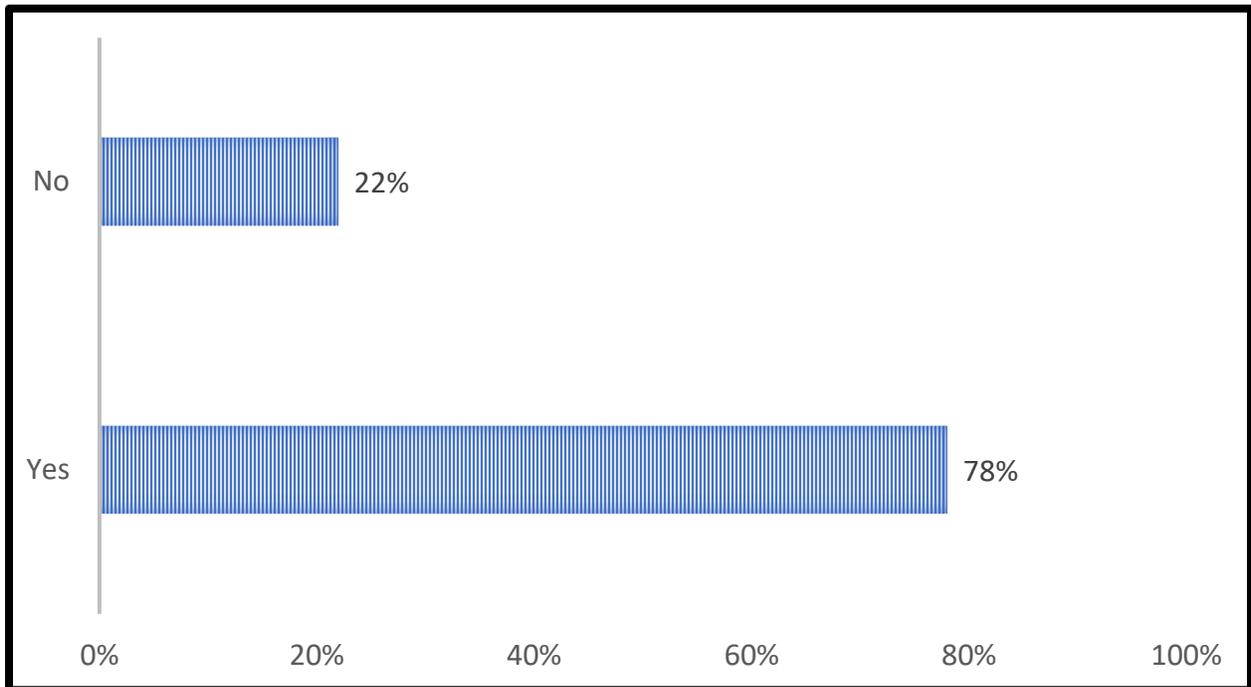
Q7 - Do you have internet at home?



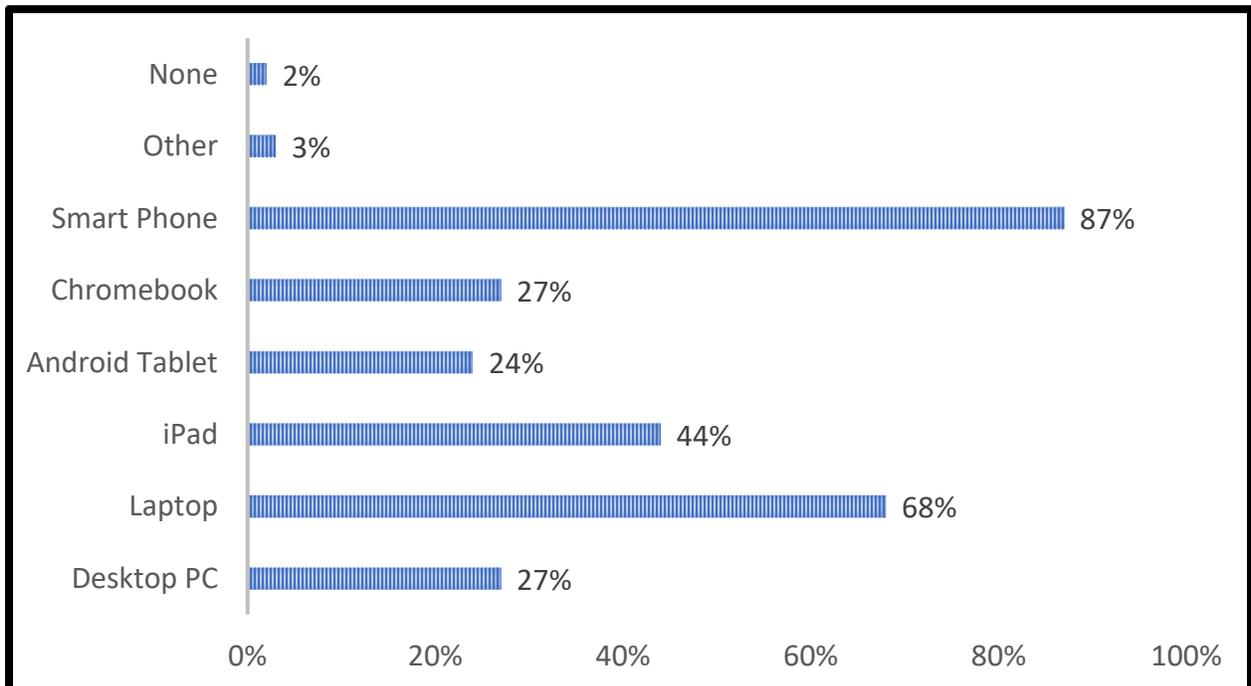
Q8- Where else do you or your child have access to the Internet where your child does schoolwork? Check all that apply.



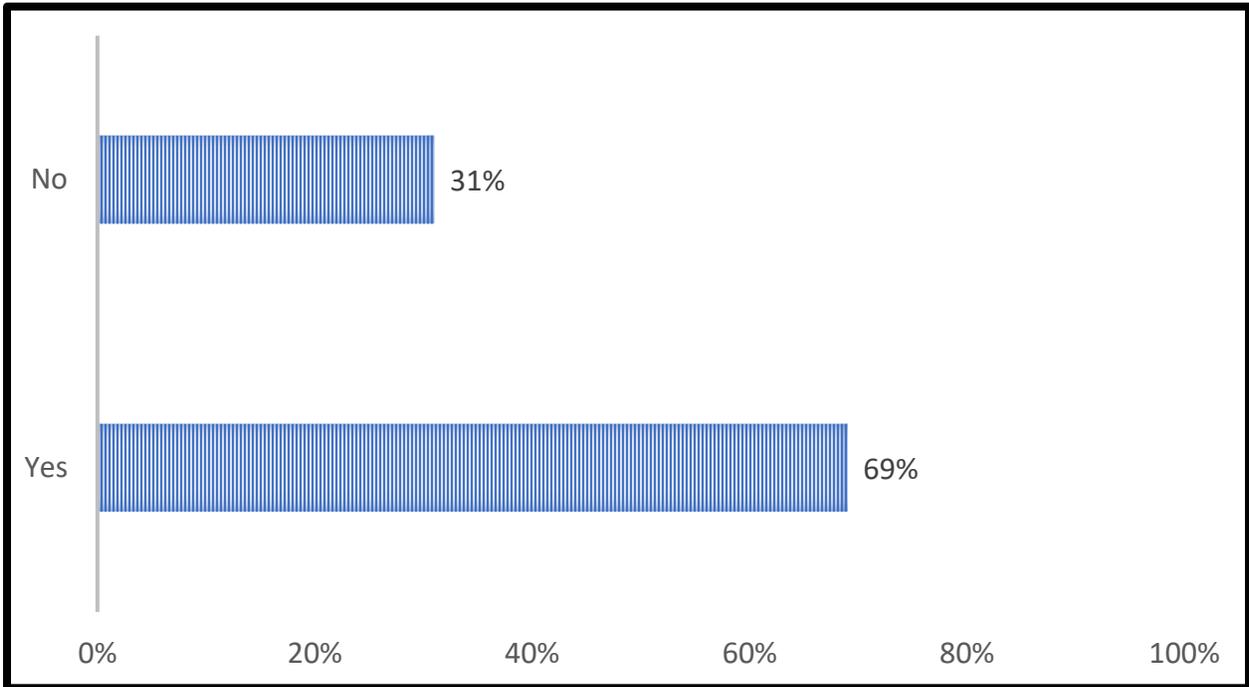
Q9- Can you stream a YouTube or other video at home without it cutting out or freezing?



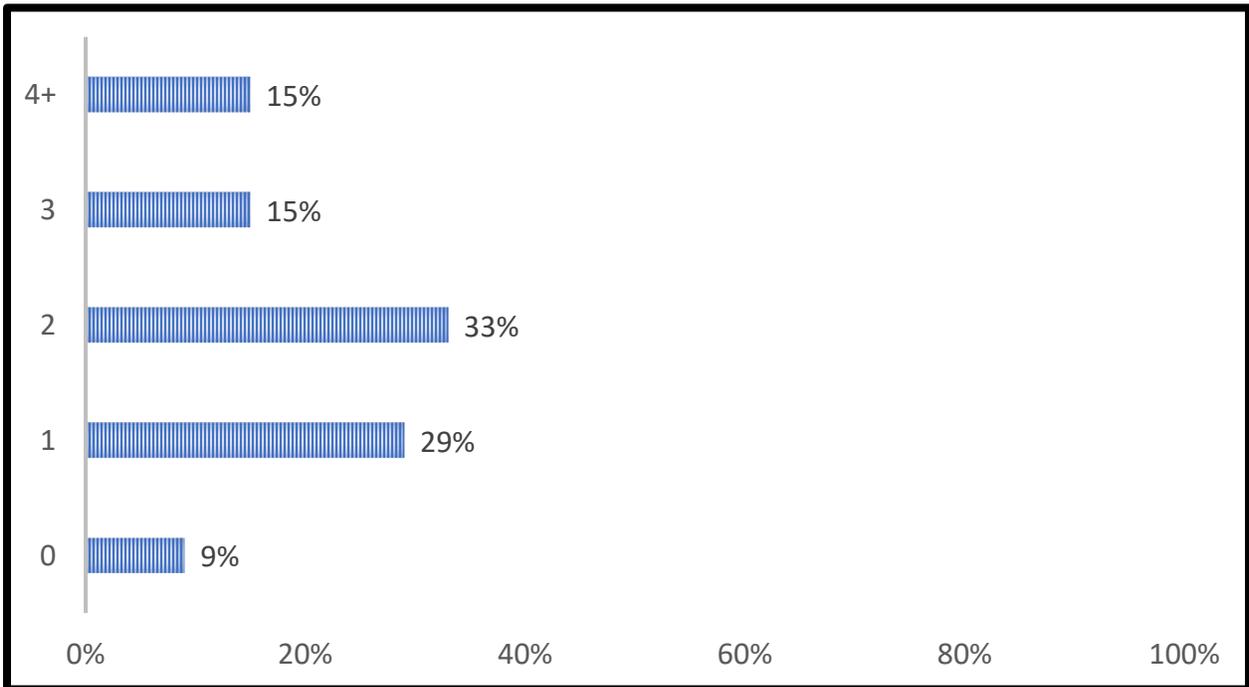
Q10 - What type of personal technological devices do you have access to at home? Check all that apply



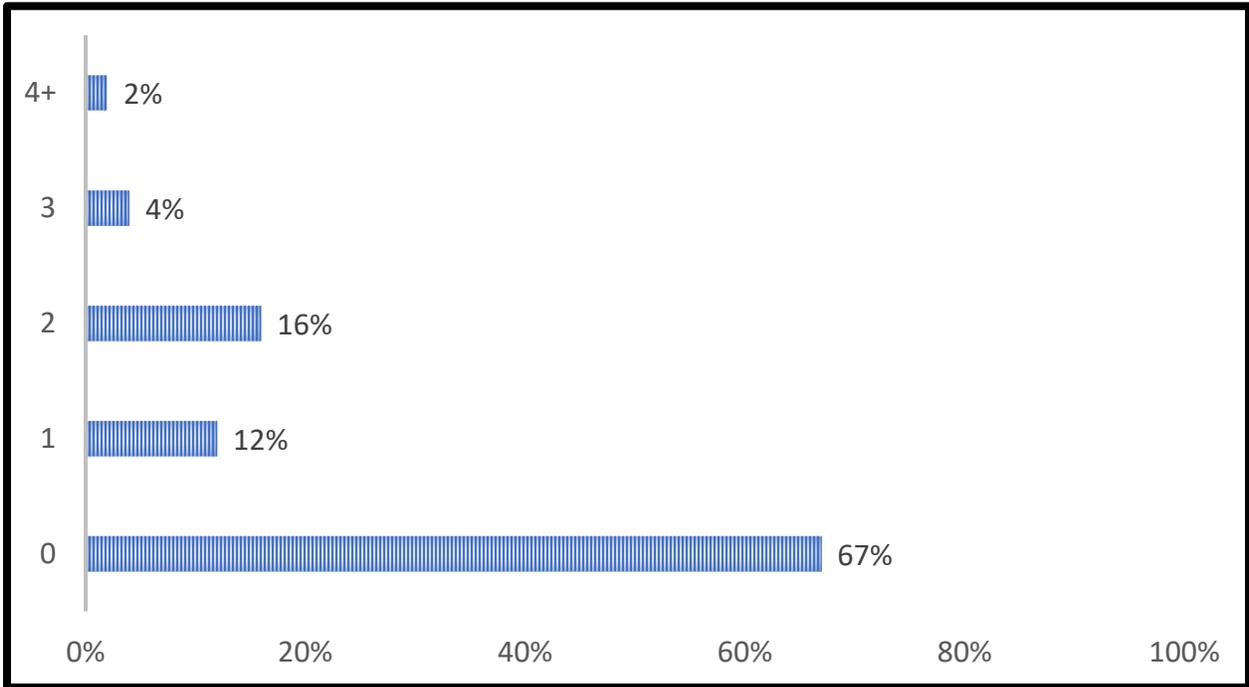
Q11 - Does each child in your house have a personal technological device to access the internet?



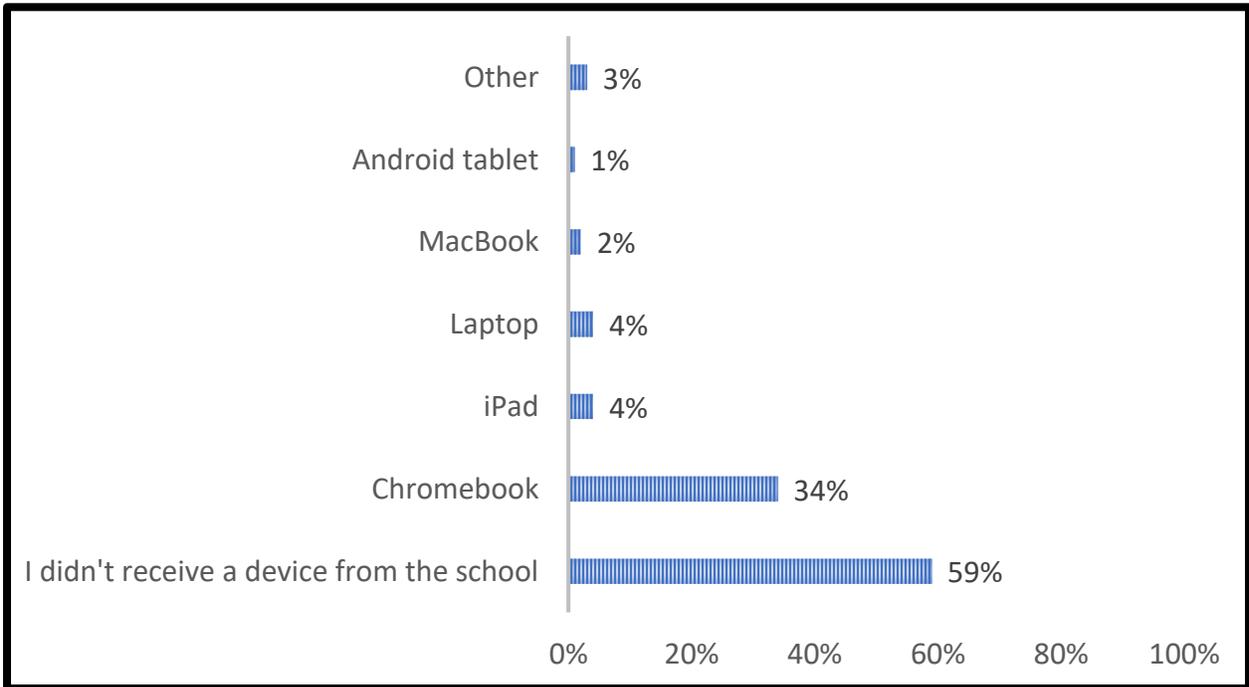
Q12 - How many personal technological devices are used by K-12 children in your household?



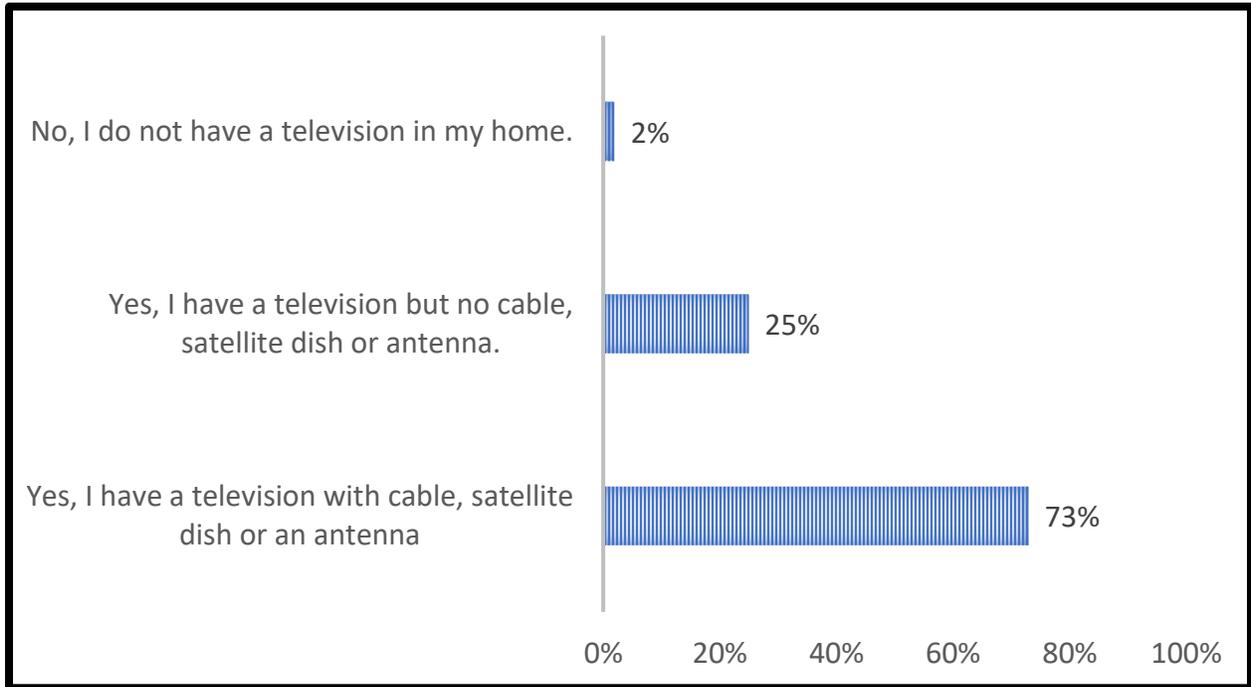
Q13 - How many of the K-12 children in your household share devices in order to do their schoolwork?



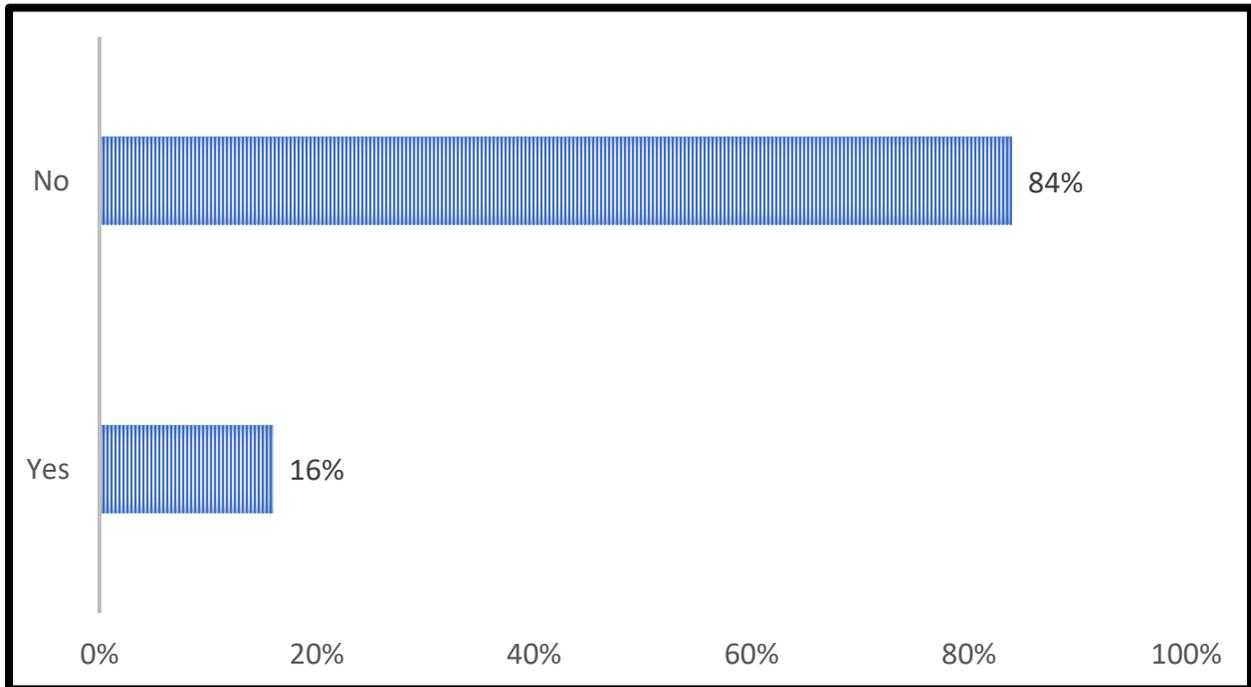
Q14 - What type of school-issued technological devices do you have access to at home? Check all that apply



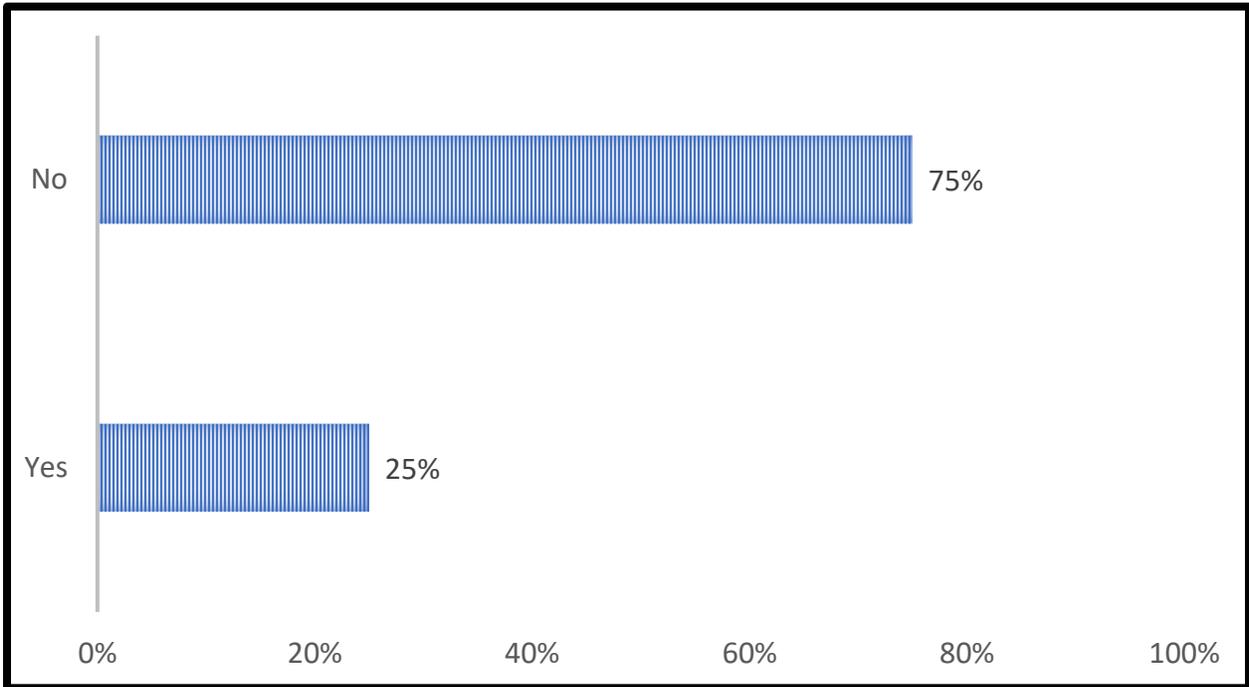
Q15 - Does your home have a television and cable, satellite dish, or an antenna?



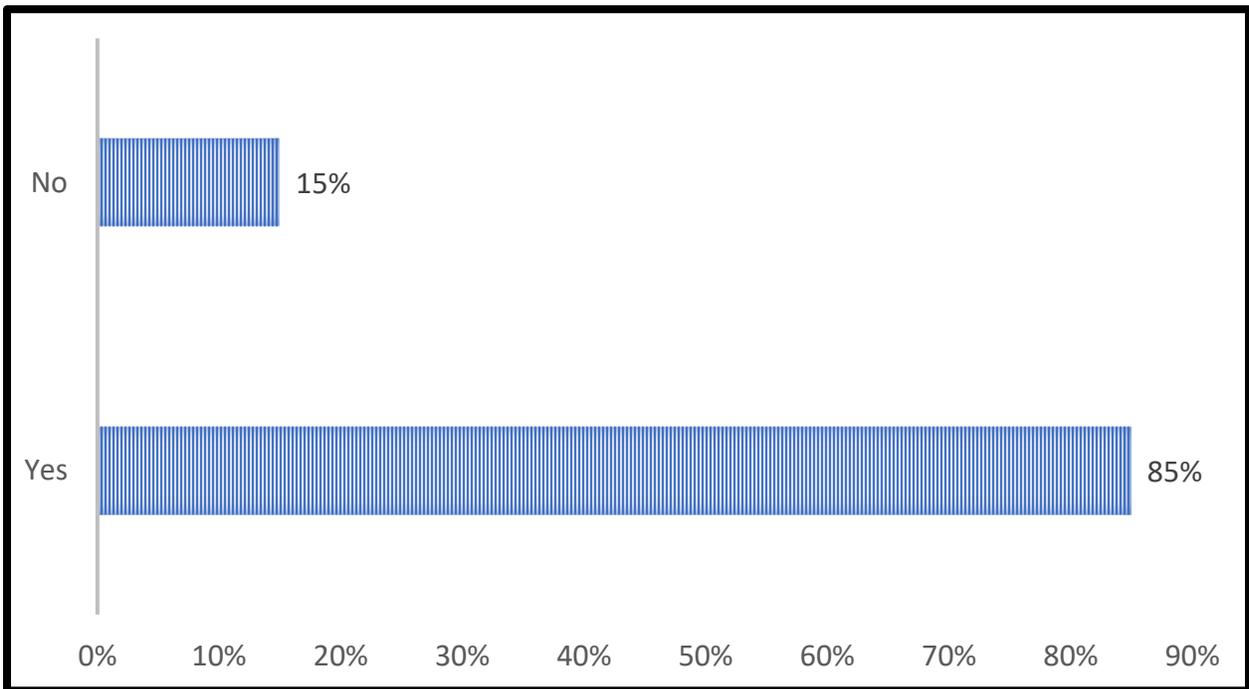
Q16 - Did you know about the Alabama Public Televisions Learn at Home broadcast?



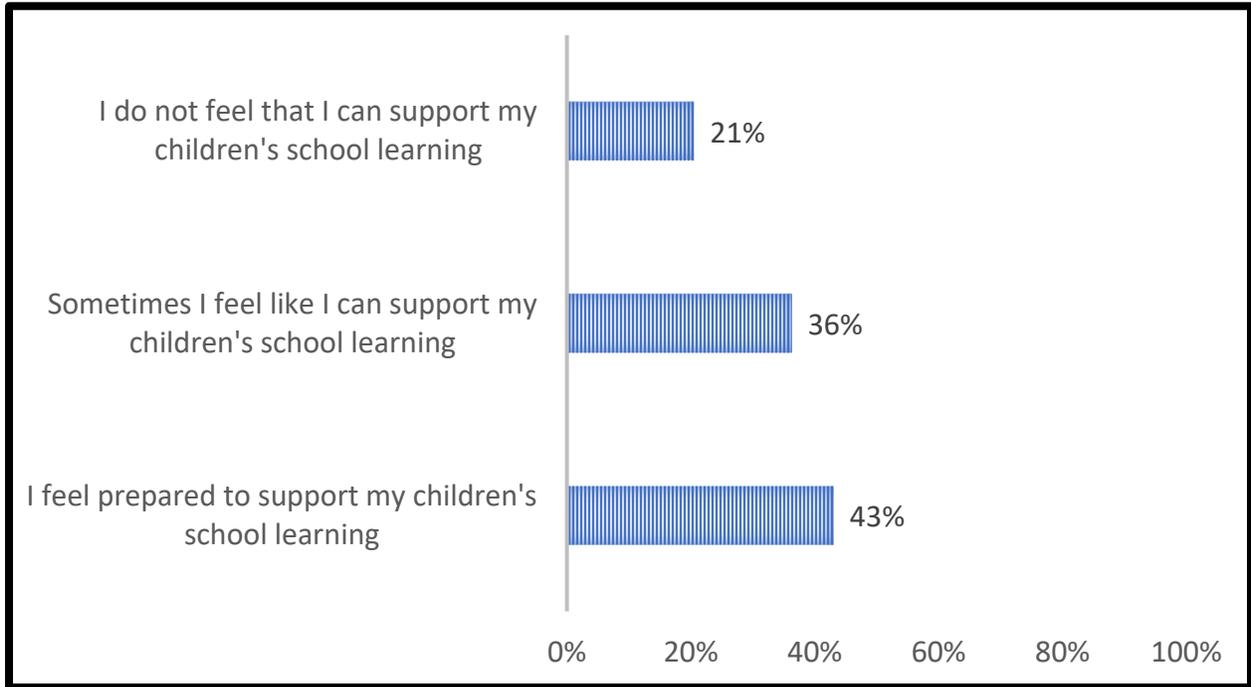
Q17 - Did you watch Alabama Public Television's Learn at Home broadcast?



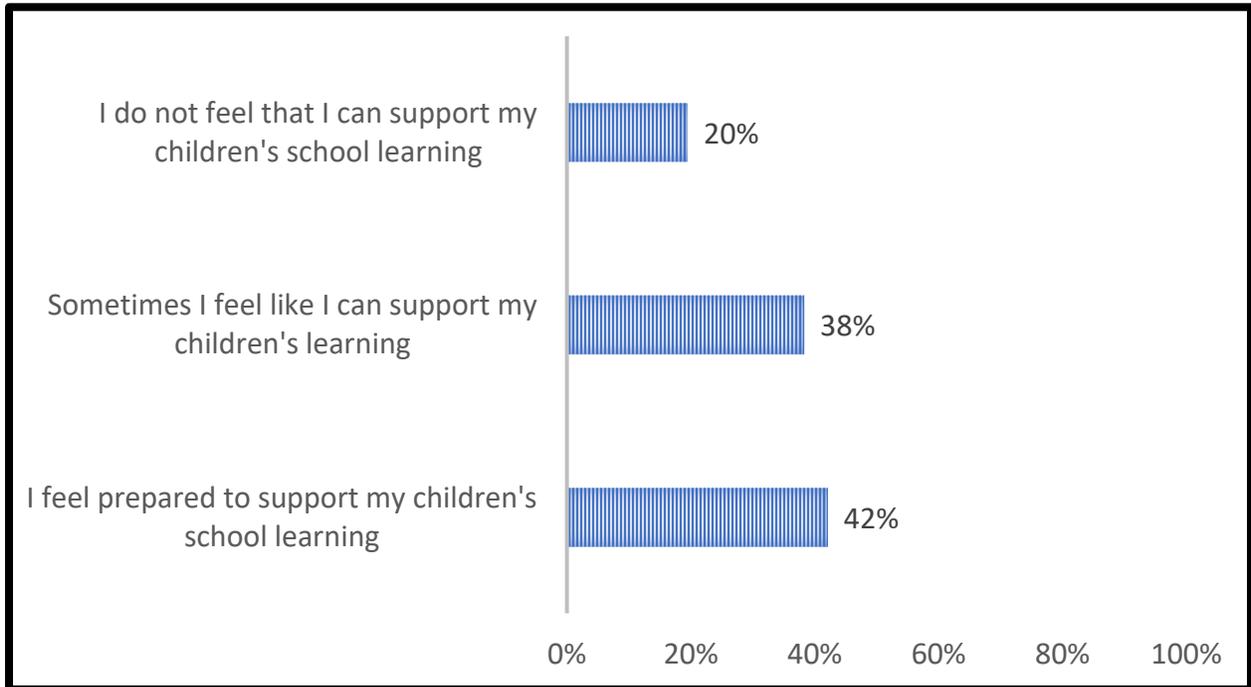
Q18 - Did you find Alabama Public Television's (APT) Learn at Home broadcast and related supplemental material helpful?



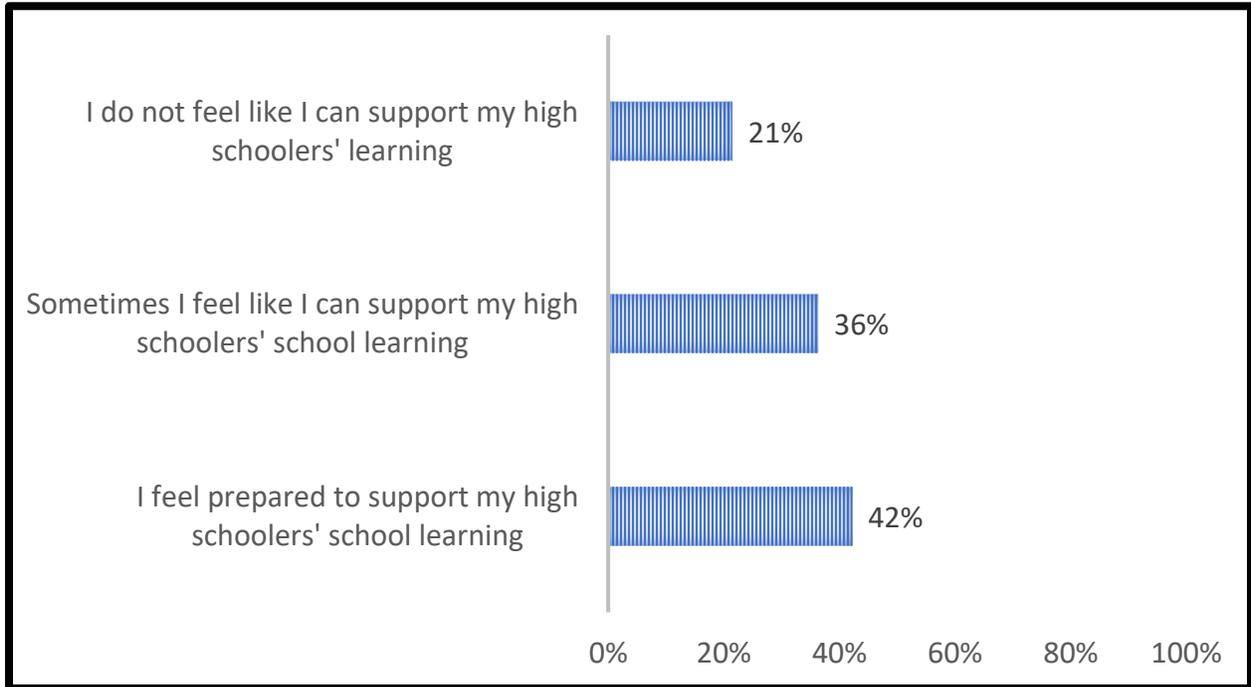
Q21 - If you have a child or children in elementary school, do you feel prepared to support their learning at home?



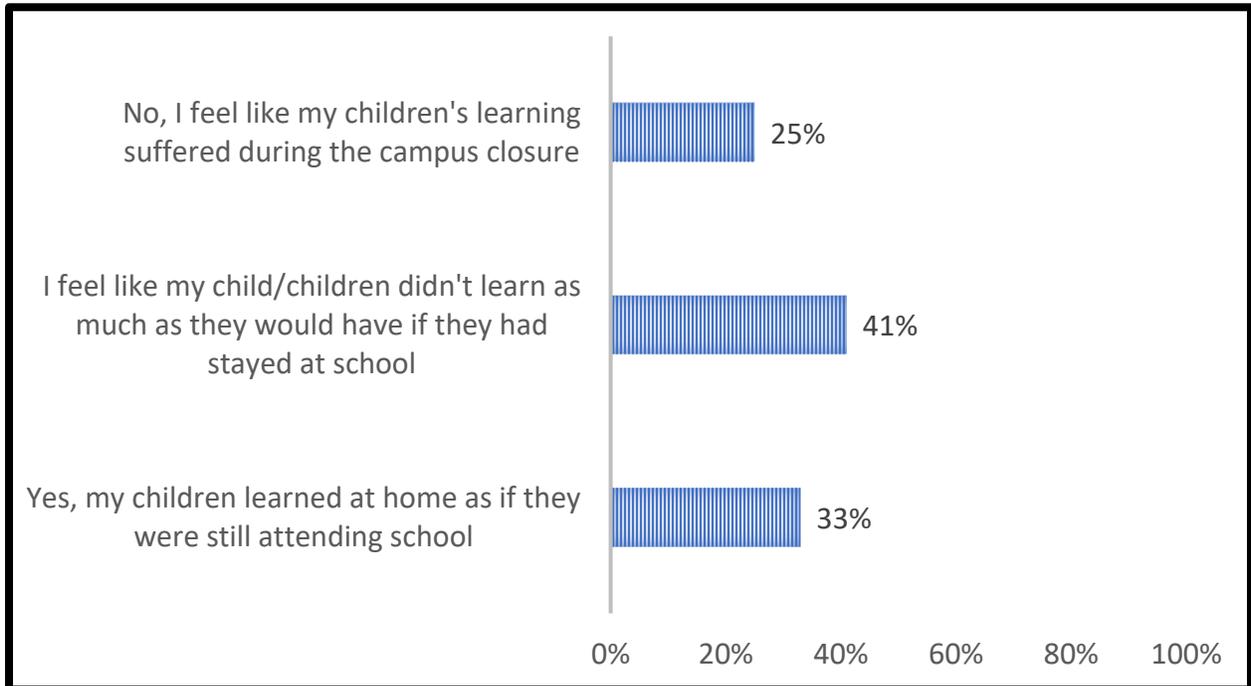
Q22 - If you have a child or children in middle/junior high school, do you feel prepared to support their learning at home?



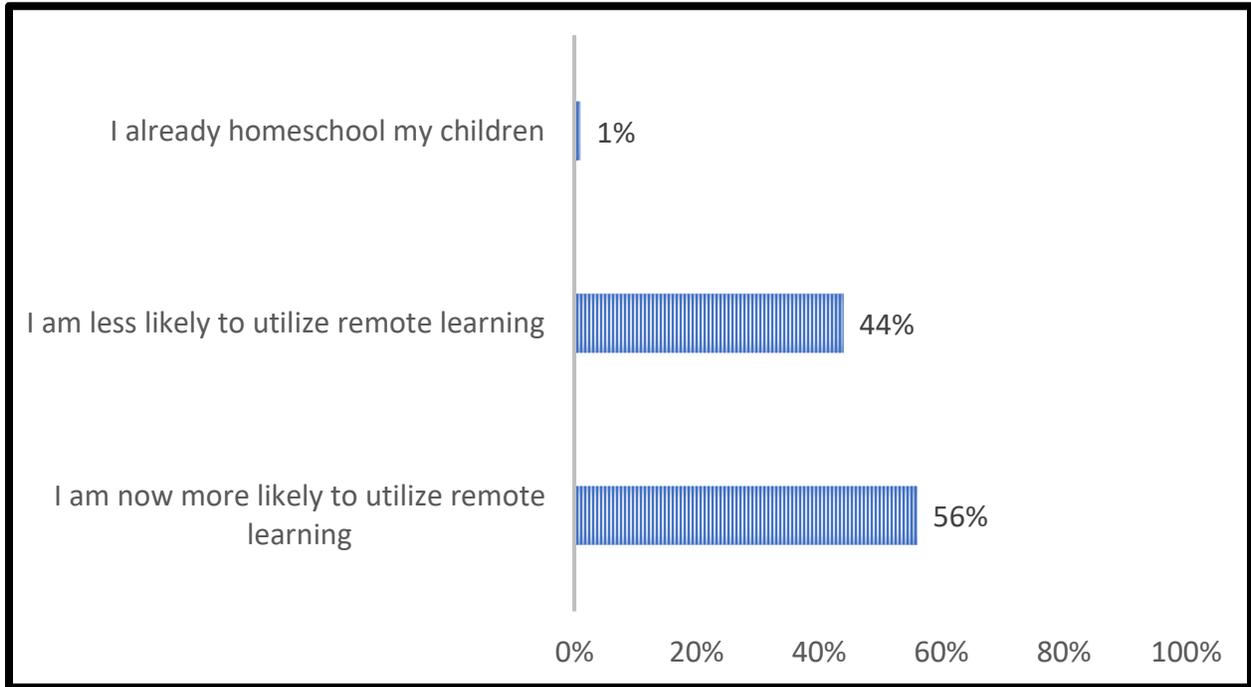
Q23 - If you have a child or children in high school, do you feel prepared to support their learning at home?



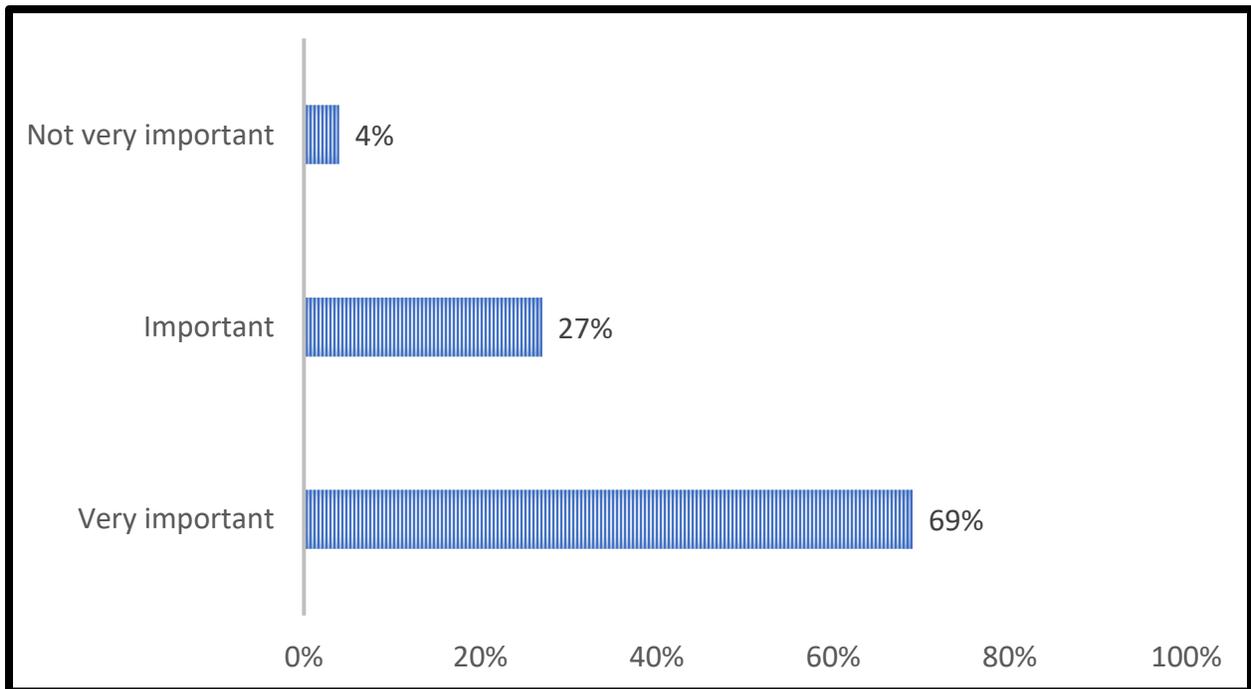
Q24 - Generally, do you feel like your child/children learned well at home when campuses closed during Spring 2020?



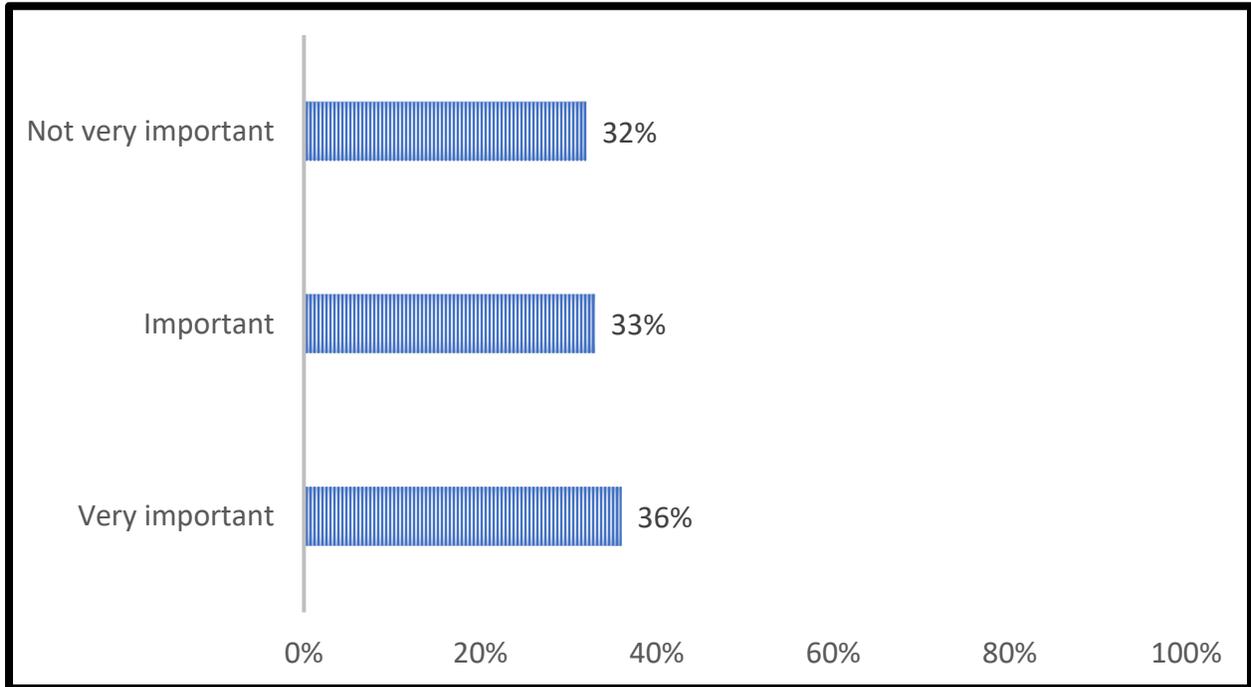
Q25 - Are you more or less likely to utilize at home learning for children after the Spring 2020 campus closure?



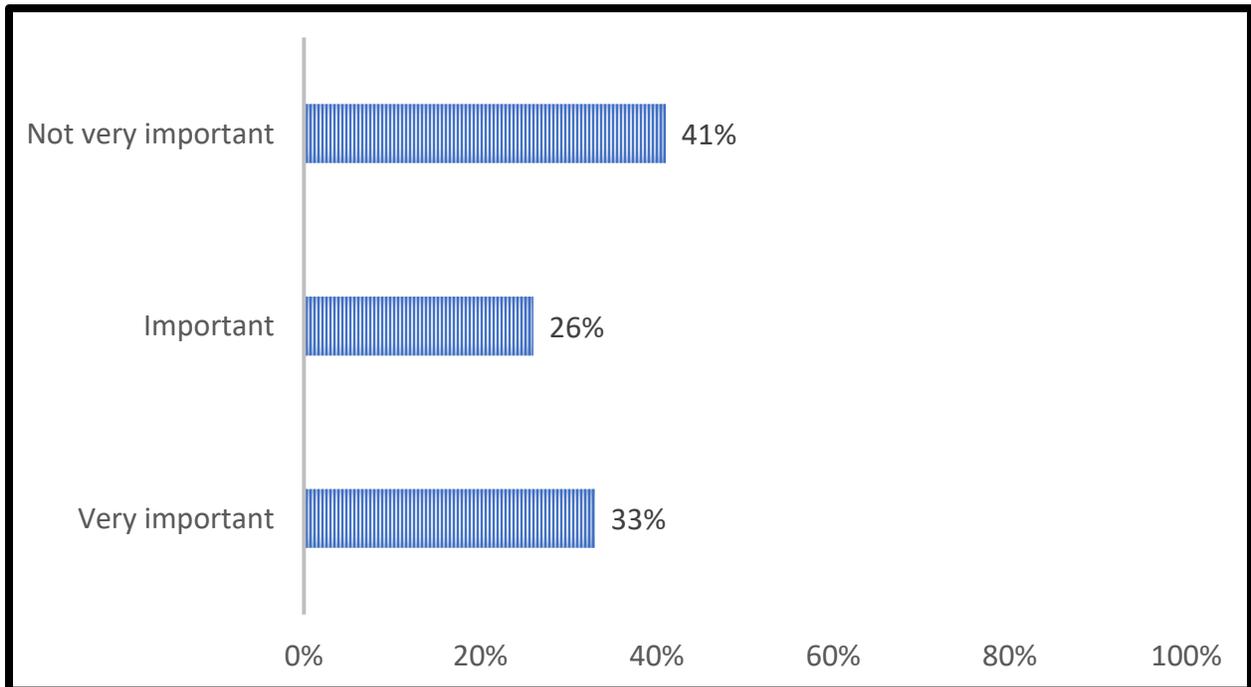
Q26 - How important is it for your child to have academic help with school?



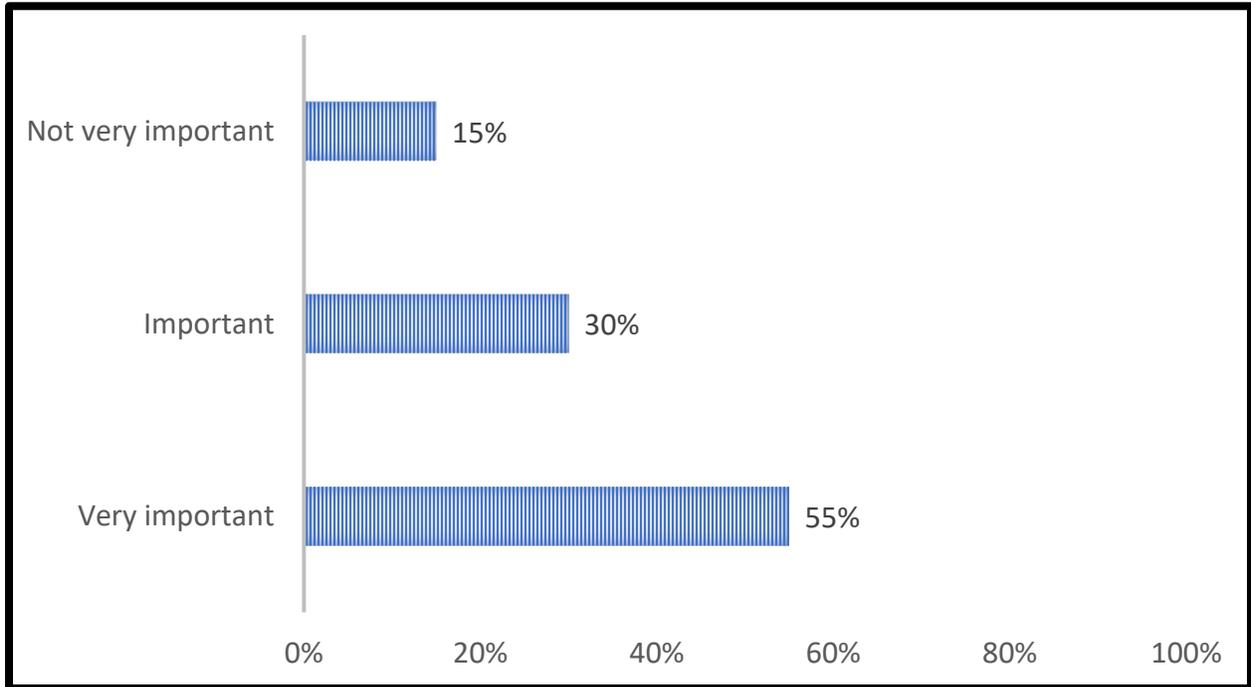
Q27 - How important is it for your child to have supervised enrichment opportunities after or before school?



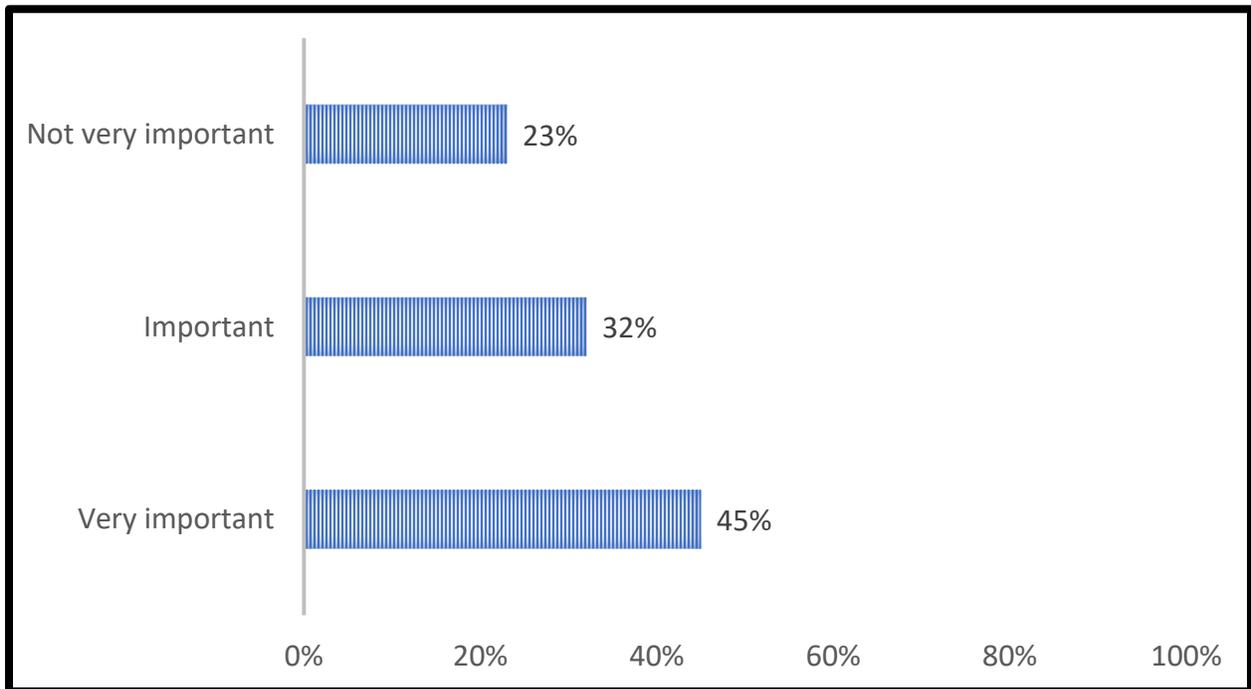
Q28 - If schools continue with remote learning, or a hybrid of remote and in-person learning, how important is having a place, such as before or after school program, for your child to be supervised and supported in accessing technology and using online learning on remote learning days?



Q29 - How important is it for schools to work with community, faith-based, and employer groups to help supervise children and help parents keep their jobs or look for jobs?



Q30 - How important is it to have after-school programs in or near schools to provide meals for children?



Q31 - How important is it to have after-school programs in or near schools to help provide extra learning supports?

