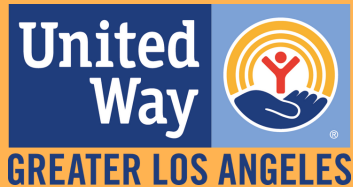


WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

STUDENTS SPEAK ABOUT LEARNING NEEDS IN COVID-ERA L.A.



2021

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WELCOME

Welcome Partners,

I am eager to share the outcomes and findings of *Where Do We Go From Here: Students Speak About Learning Needs in COVID-era L.A.* with you. I'm personally proud of the energy and effort put forth by all parties who made this possible: Communities for Los Angeles Student Success (CLASS) coalition partners, United Way of Greater Los Angeles' Young Civic Leaders students, United Way of Greater Los Angeles' Education team members: Katherine Trejo and Martha Maciel Serratos, and our partners from Castillo Consulting Partners. This was a collaborative effort to ensure the report showcases an equitable and realistic representation of what Black, Indigenous, and Students of color (BIPOC) experienced and need as we navigate through the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a first-generation daughter of immigrants from a low income background, my educational journey was challenging to navigate. I was fortunate to have influential mentors and accessible resources that helped me achieve academic and ultimately professional success. Now this is my life's work; I am deeply committed to paving the way for current and future generations of students of color throughout Los Angeles County to access opportunities that will help them thrive and break generational cycles of poverty. Our hope is that this report will shed critical light on opportunities to center and support BIPOC students as we emerge from the pandemic and move into the future, as well as to center the bright spots and lessons learned that our students shared that can be implemented into the future. Through both individual and collective efforts, this report confirms that we have a real opportunity to actualize our shared value of equity, foster meaningful and impactful partnerships, lift up student voices and celebrate their joy in our L.A. education system.

Throughout the pandemic, students were largely missing from ongoing conversations that most directly impacted them. In order to bridge this gap, we were determined to go straight to the source: Los Angeles County students. We needed to learn, from students themselves, what circumstances they were facing and what they needed to be prepared to return to school.

The opportunity to call for bold change and to prioritize centering lived experiences of students is **now**. My hope is that those with decision-making power -- the district, advocates, and community partners -- will actively engage and partner with students as we move our education system into the future.

In partnership,



NORMA RODRIGUEZ
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND POLICY
UNITED WAY OF GREATER LOS ANGELES

WHO WE ARE

THE CLASS COALITION

Communities for Los Angeles Student Success (CLASS) is a collaborative of parent, student, educator, community-based and civil rights organizations dedicated to ensuring that historically underserved students receive an equitable education through advocacy and community engagement. The coalition's membership represents over 150,000 students, families and teachers who work together to close opportunity gaps in Los Angeles.

UNITED WAY OF GREATER LOS ANGELES

United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA), which houses the CLASS coalition, is a nonprofit organization that creates pathways out of poverty by helping unhoused people move into housing, providing students with critical support needed to graduate high school, prepared for college and the workforce, and by helping hard-working families obtain financial stability and economic mobility. UWGLA identifies the root causes of poverty and works strategically to solve them by building alliances across all sectors, funding targeted programs and advocating for change.

For more information, visit www.unitedwayla.org.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the Spring of 2021, as school districts across the country began making plans to return to in-person learning, countless perspectives were shared about the hopes and concerns of getting students back into the classroom - few of those included students. The CLASS Coalition sought to understand the experiences, perspectives and insights of those most impacted by the unforeseen shift to virtual learning, so we went directly to the students.

After spending the summer administering a survey and hosting focus groups with students across LAUSD to better understand what they needed as they prepared to return to in-person learning in the Fall of 2021 and beyond, here is what we've learned:

- ***Students have complex identities, challenges, and needs, all of which have been impacted by the pandemic.***

A holistic approach to supporting students that is inclusive of their perspectives and voice, places us in a better position to respond to their unique needs and situations.

- ***Students have identified technology as the top resource they need to continue their education as they've returned to in-person learning.*** We understand that there are challenges stoked by socioeconomic differences across our schools and families--differences that have been emphasized by a pandemic as students began to learn from home--and technology, though by no means a panacea, has provided some of the foundation necessary to level those differences.

- ***Students understand that simply throwing money at the problem is not a solution.*** An investment in technology requires follow-through: fostering an environment where technology and applications can be embedded into their everyday lives (i.e. using calendar apps, classroom apps, etc.), providing needed technology without a return date (i.e. they can use their computers outside of the school year, and from year-to-year), and leaning into the support flexibility that students can receive in the digital realm (i.e. online tutoring, chatting with a teacher without bringing attention to yourself in the classroom).

- ***Student mental health cannot be ignored.*** 42% of all students surveyed listed mental wellness as a top priority, and focus group data illuminate just how much of a non-negotiable mental wellness is for scholastic success--in fact, many view it as a prerequisite to academic success. This is especially concerning as 1/3 of BIPOC students in the survey do not agree that they have an adult at school that they feel safe enough to talk to about how they are feeling.

- ***Students want their voices to be heard;*** they have powerful perspectives and innovative ideas about how adults can better support them along their educational journeys, and we should listen.

Centering student voices will be critical as the district continues to navigate the complexities of meeting student needs in COVID-era L.A. Our students know what's working well, are keenly aware of the challenges impacting their ability to excel, and want to be involved in finding solutions, as well as shaping the direction of the future of public education with new insights and experiences from the virtual learning environments they were thrust into without warning during this global pandemic. We have a unique and powerful opportunity to co-design a new LAUSD in partnership with students, and our recommendations in this report, shaped by student voices, provide some preliminary thinking on what that could look like.

METHODOLOGY

4.1 DATA SOURCES

In an effort to adequately assess students' views and feelings about returning to in-person learning, as well as what students believe they will need to thrive in the wake of the pandemic, we collected data from two primary sources:

- 2021 Student Perspective Survey
- CLASS Student Perspectives Focus Groups

Castillo Consulting Partners, in partnership with CLASS and the United Way of Greater Los Angeles, designed and distributed the 2021 Student Perspective Survey to students across Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). We included student input on the survey and focus group questions before they were administered, a unique approach intended to promote inclusion and equity while centering student voices as qualified researchers, and meaningful contributors to the survey design and data collection process. The survey asked 18 Likert scale questions centering students' feelings, health, wellbeing, and academic preparedness, as well as potential stressors as they approached a new school year.

The survey also asked 1 rank choice question, which focused on 16 potential resources and supports that students felt they needed to continue their education. The survey was open to all of LAUSD's middle and high school students starting in June 2021 and closed at the end of August 2021. A list of the questions asked in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

We received fully anonymous demographic information from a total of 769 survey respondents, representing more than 100 schools and organizations in Los Angeles County. This demographic information includes grade level, ethnicity, race, gender, LGBTQIA+ and disability status. The survey also captured additional demographic data, including free-reduced lunch status, household size, highest level of parent education, and responsibilities outside of school. An exhaustive list of demographic questions asked in the survey can be found in Appendix B, while demographic visualization graphs and population sizes can be found in Appendix C and Appendix D.

A Note About Race vs. Ethnicity

In an effort to better understand the unique experiences and needs of the diverse population of LAUSD students, our survey asked separate questions for race and ethnicity, modeling each question after the race and ethnicity questions utilized in the US Census. The survey first asked students if they identified as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina, followed by a question that asked students to share their race, with an option to not disclose if they preferred not to identify with or select a race from the list (which did not include Latinx/Latino/Latina). Posing these separate questions allowed for a deeper analysis of the unique experiences of students who identify as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina across various racial categories. One notable trend that emerged in the distinction between race and ethnicity is that while 50.1% of survey respondents identified as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina, the majority of those (62%) opted to not disclose their race.

Key insights regarding the differences in responses from students based on both race and ethnicity are highlighted throughout this report. References to Latinx/Latino/Latino refer to all students who identified as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina, regardless of race. References to BIPOC Latinx students refer to students who identified as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina, and racially Black, Indigenous and/or other racial group of color, whereas references to White Latinx students refers to students who identified as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina, and racially White. Overall, of those students who identified as ethnically Latinx/Latino/Latina, 22% identified as racially BIPOC, and 16% identified as White.

An additional data source we make use of in this report are qualitative data captured from student-facilitated focus groups. We held a total of 7 focus groups with over 50 LAUSD school student participants. Focus group questions can be found in Appendix E. Further details regarding the focus groups are woven throughout this report.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

We analyzed several quantitative metrics collected from the 2021 Student Perspective Survey. Data cleaning and analysis was conducted using Qualtrics and Excel. We examined participant-level data and isolated responses by each demographic category to identify response trends within the survey (shown in Appendix B). The purpose of this analysis was fourfold. First, we sought to describe the participant population and identify aggregate-level findings. Second, we sought to identify any demographic-specific trends. Third, we sought to compare in-group and out-group responses to identify any disparities or differences in student experiences, feelings, and perceptions leading up to a new academic year. Lastly, we aimed to identify gaps in population responses so that we could provide recommendations for improving the overall data collection process.

With the available survey responses, we constructed three new demographic categories. The first category constructed was the school level category, which made use of grade level responses to differentiate between middle and high school students at the time of the survey.

Categorizing grade level allows us to identify differences in needs between students in middle school and those in high school. The second demographic category constructed was the BIPOC category, which combines Black, Indigenous, People of Color responses into one group so that non-White student responses can be compared to the White student responses. The third demographic category that was constructed was the responsibility category, which identifies those students who have non-school-related responsibilities. Students with non-school-related responsibilities include those who: (1) have a job outside of school, (2) are responsible for taking care of younger siblings or relatives, or (3) are responsible for taking care of parents, grandparents, or other adults. This responsibility category would allow us to compare responses between those who have responsibilities outside of school and those who do not. While we constructed a few variables to aid in our analysis, we were also intentional about highlighting the intersectional identities in the data, namely intersectionality within the Latinx community. We sought to explore the rich diversity of the Latinx student population in LAUSD by examining cross sections of ethnicity, gender, and race.

4.3 LIMITATIONS

One of the greatest limitations in our survey data is that there are relatively small sample sizes for specific demographic categories, such as Black students. This stems from a combination of the absolute number of participants in the survey and the number of students that selected to not disclose their race. However, although the representation of some groups is low, they may still be in line with district demographics, which are included in Appendix F for reference.

Another limitation stems from the survey mode of distribution. Outreach was conducted primarily through CLASS organizations and with community based organizations that work with BIPOC students across Los Angeles County, mostly in LAUSD. Thus, we might expect a larger representation of students that are associated with identity-related organizations, or who are from particular neighborhoods in Los Angeles, in the survey data. Of note is that CLASS member organizations serve students in some of the most under-resourced communities across Los Angeles; this survey and accompanying focus groups have created a unique opportunity for students to share their experiences and for these student voices to be heard.

FINDINGS

5.1. BEYOND STUDENT IDENTITY

Student identities are complex and expand beyond attending school. We must acknowledge that our students also play integral roles at home, among friends, and/or at work. More than 1/3 (39%) of students in the survey disclosed having some non-school-related responsibility. Approximately 11% of students surveyed report having a job outside of school. In addition, 13% of survey respondents are responsible for taking care of parents, grandparents or other adults, while 29% are responsible for taking care of younger siblings or relatives.

29%

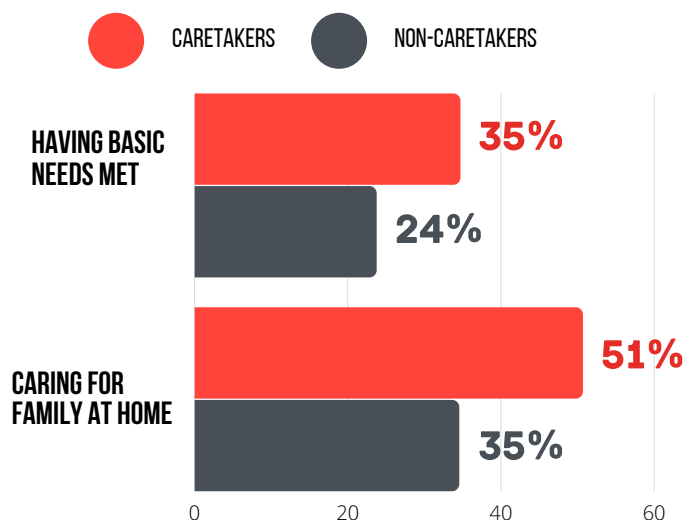
ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING CARE OF YOUNGER SIBLINGS OR RELATIVES

51%

OF STUDENTS CARING FOR YOUNGER SIBLINGS OR RELATIVES REPORTED THAT IT SERVES AS A STRESSOR

About half (51%) of those responsible for taking care of a younger sibling report that taking care of a parent, sibling, or loved one at home serves as a potential stressor for them. Those who are responsible for caring for a younger sibling are also more worried than those who are not responsible for caring for a younger sibling about the mental health of their parents, family, or other loved ones by about 7 percentage points.

POTENTIAL STRESSORS



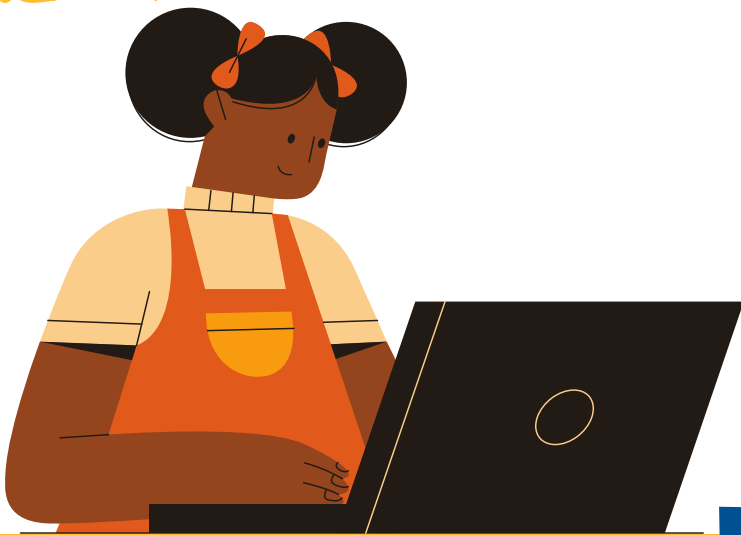
Overall, about a quarter (24%) of students surveyed are at least a little worried about having their basic needs met at home (i.e. having food, water, a place to live, access to broadband, necessary devices, etc.). BIPOC students exceed this statistic, with 26% of them reporting that they are worried about having their basic needs met at home. In addition, 36% of students surveyed are at least a little worried about taking care of their siblings or other loved ones at home. Interestingly, those responsible for caring for a younger sibling are more worried than those not responsible for caring for a younger sibling about having their basic needs met at home by about 10 percentage points. Likewise, we find that those who are receiving free and reduced lunch are more worried than those who do not receive free and reduced lunch about having their basic needs met at home by about 10 percentage points. Taken together, additional responsibilities and indicators of poverty are but a few factors that can significantly influence students' academic outcomes as they work to balance multiple responsibilities.

FINDINGS

5.2. BIPOC STUDENT PREPAREDNESS AND RESOURCES: SURPRISING SILVER-LININGS

The connection between academic preparedness and educational resources cannot be understated. In order to address preparedness, we should prioritize the specific resources that BIPOC students have identified.

Students were asked to rank (on a scale of 1 to 5), from a list of 16 pre-ascribed resources, which resources they would need in the Fall to continue their education.



60%

OF BIPOC STUDENTS IDENTIFIED TECHNOLOGY AS A TOP 5 NEED OR RESOURCE TO SUPPORT THEIR EDUCATION WHEN THEY RETURN TO SCHOOL IN THE FALL

RESOURCES BIPOC STUDENTS NEED IN THE FALL

TECHNOLOGY



TUTORING



MENTAL WELLNESS



ENRICHMENT CLASSES



EXTRACURRICULARS



While we intentionally emphasize the needed resources that BIPOC students cited, students across all racial categories agreed that technology, tutoring, and mental wellness are important resources needed for the Fall and beyond. 60% of all students in the survey listed technology as a needed resource, while 50% listed tutoring and 42% listed mental wellness as a needed resource. These findings were underscored by the data captured in the focus groups.

Below, we highlight feedback by BIPOC focus group participants' regarding the top 3 resources identified in the survey.

TECHNOLOGY

While many students acknowledged that technology is expensive, they also expressed a desire to embed technology and online tools into their day-to-day lives and education. Many also suggest repair and/or upgrade options for their existing technology, rather than new technology outright.



“ZOOM HAS A LOT OF PROS. MY ENGLISH CLASS OFFERED OFFICE HOURS AND I CAN GET SUPPORT WITHOUT FEELING EMBARRASSED BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE KNOWS. ZOOM WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO STAY IN CONTACT WITH TEACHERS...TAKES AWAY THE NEGATIVE STIGMA OF ASKING FOR HELP.”

“TECHNOLOGY IS SUPER IMPORTANT. IT’S EASIER TO TAKE NOTES AND GO THROUGH OUR DAY WITH IT. FOR EXAMPLE, IN MY SCHOOL WE USED NEARPOD WHERE OUR TEACHERS CAN CONTROL WHAT YOU CAN SEE BUT WHAT MAKES IT COOL IS THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE AHEAD WITH THEIR WORK CAN GO AT THEIR OWN PACE AND FOR STUDENTS WHO STILL NEED MORE SUPPORT CAN STAY BEHIND AND TEACHERS CAN TRACK THAT AND FOCUS ON THE STUDENTS WHO NEED MORE HELP. NEARPOD WAS A GOOD RESOURCE AND IT WAS ALSO SUPER FUN.”

TUTORING

More than half of all students in the survey mentioned that they are worried about their grades. Perhaps unsurprisingly, tutoring was strongly mentioned across all focus groups as a needed resource for the Fall and beyond. Many participants shared that they feel they cannot ask people at home for help with school work, which further underscores the need for tutoring.



“HAVING ACCESS TO TUTORING REALLY GIVES KIDS THAT EXTRA BOOST THEY MAY OR MAY NOT NEED. IT’S JUST ALSO NICE TO KNOW THAT WE HAVE ACCESS TO THAT EXTRA HELP. UNFORTUNATELY SOME DON’T BUT I’M HOPING EVERYONE WILL AT SOME POINT.”

“I WOULD SAY PRIORITIZE FREE TUTORING BECAUSE MANY KIDS DO NOT HAVE PARENTS WHO CAN HELP WITH HOMEWORK AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS.”

MENTAL HEALTH

Generally, students in the focus groups shared similar sentiments about the value of mental wellness, how mental wellness impacts their lives, and their desire for mental health support(s). Virtually all participants agreed that mental health is important. In fact, many view mental wellness as a precursor or requirement for academic success.



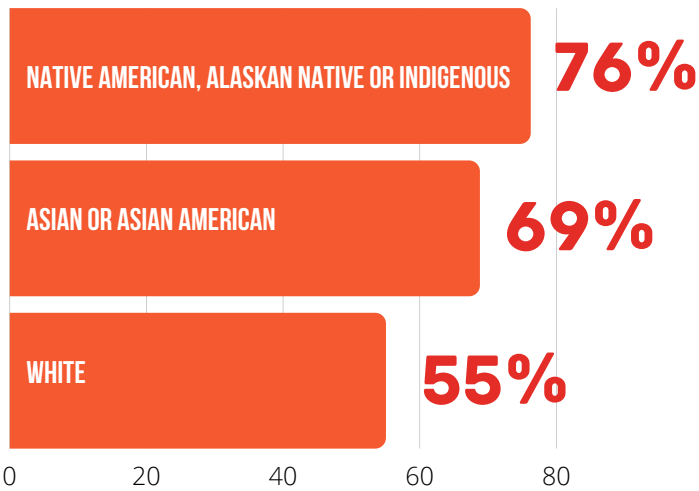
“MENTAL WELLNESS SHOULD BE A PRIORITY BECAUSE IT AFFECTS HOW MOTIVATED EACH PERSON IS TO LEARN AND WORK.”

“I THINK IT’S IMPORTANT BECAUSE A LOT OF US WENT THROUGH A LOT DURING QUARANTINE AND IT WOULD BE GREAT TO HAVE THAT (MENTAL WELLNESS) SUPPORT.”

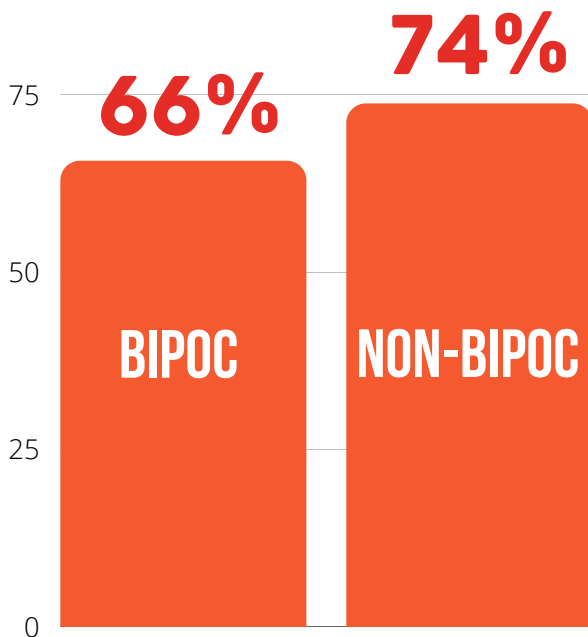
FINDINGS

5.3. STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

POTENTIAL STRESSORS: YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?



THERE IS AT LEAST ONE ADULT AT SCHOOL THAT I FEEL SAFE TO TALK TO ABOUT HOW I'M FEELING



“MENTAL WELLNESS IS ESSENTIAL FOR EVERYONE BECAUSE WE CAN'T PROGRESS IN OUR EDUCATION IF WE AREN'T IN THE BEST STATE.”

Overall, about half (~51%) of all survey respondents have reported that they are at least a little worried about their mental health. There are nearly equivalent amounts of survey respondents who are at least a little worried about the mental health of their parents, family, or other loved ones, as well as the mental health of their friends (49% and 53%, respectively).

When we examine race, we find that there are differences in response trends pertaining to mental health as a potential stressor. Specifically, we find that BIPOC students are more worried than non-BIPOC students when it comes to their mental health by 7 percentage points. In disaggregating the race category, we find that Native American, Alaskan Native or Indigenous students are most worried about their mental health, with 76% of those students reporting that they are worried about their mental health, with Asian and White students following behind—all racial demographics that are included within the Latinx population.

Another dimension is added to these findings when we consider the fact that a larger proportion of non-BIPOC students agree or strongly agree that there is at least one adult at school that they feel safe to talk to about how they are feeling. That is, approximately 74% of non-BIPOC students agree or strongly agree that they have at least one adult they feel safe to talk to at their school about how they are feeling, compared to 66% of BIPOC students that agree or strongly agree.

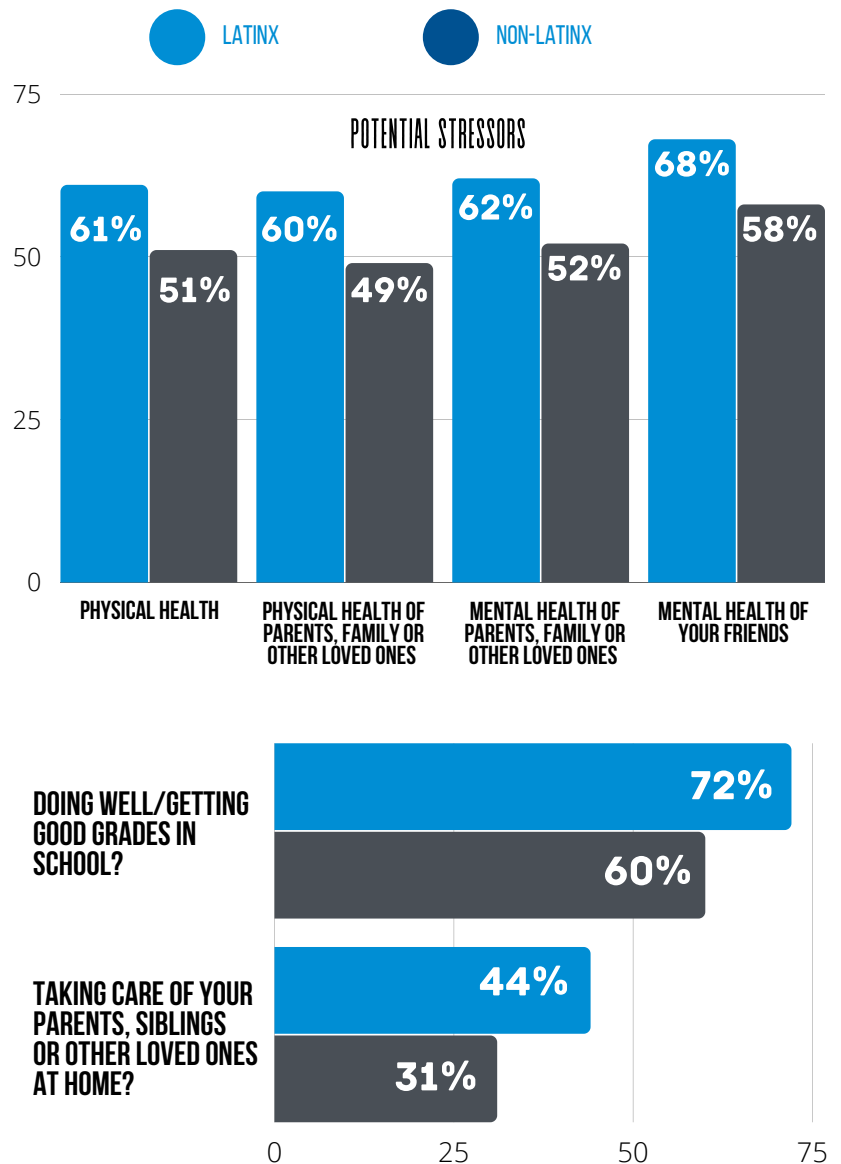
FINDINGS

5.4. LAYERS OF DIVERSITY, WORRIES

Diversity is a distinguishing characteristic of LAUSD. Perhaps unsurprisingly, we find this diversity reflected in the survey population. Half of all survey respondents (50.1%) identify as Latinx, an ethnic category that includes all races. While there are more BIPOC Latinx students (22%) than there are White Latinx students (16%) represented in the data, a majority of those who identified as Latinx did not disclose their race (62%).

We find that Latinx students are more worried than non-Latinx students about their own physical health, the physical and mental health of their family, and the mental health of their friends by roughly 10 percentage points. Similarly, Latinx students that participated in the survey are more worried than non-Latinx students about getting good grades in school, as well as taking care of their parents, siblings or other loved ones at home by approximately 10 percentage points.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH



LATINX STUDENTS ARE MORE WORRIED THAN NON-LATINX STUDENTS ABOUT GETTING GOOD GRADES IN SCHOOL

We would also like to uplift our Black and Native American, Alaskan Native or Indigenous students. 71% of Black students report getting sick at school as a potential stressor for them. By comparison, 60% of White students report getting sick at school as a potential stressor. Looking at our Native student population, we find that there are also significant differences. Namely, we find that only 57% of Native students agree that teachers care about their health and wellbeing. By comparison, 71% of White students agree that teachers care about their health and wellbeing. Over 42% of Black students and Native students report that their own physical health is a potential stressor for them. Additionally, a majority (71%) of Native students are worried about the physical health of their family or loved ones, and about half (51%) of Black students are worried about the physical health of their friends.

These findings underscore the aforementioned note on student identities expanding beyond just being a student. We see that the students that responded to the survey have concerns that extend to family and community, which helps to create a fuller picture of subjects that affect their feelings of academic preparedness and scholastic success.

FINDINGS

5.5. COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS



43% OF COLLEGE-BOUND JUNIOR AND SENIOR STUDENTS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE THAT THEY FEEL ADEQUATELY PREPARED FOR THE FALL SEMESTER.

77% OF THESE STUDENTS WHO INTEND TO OR HAVE ALREADY APPLIED TO COLLEGES ARE WORRIED ABOUT GETTING GOOD GRADES IN SCHOOL.

75% OF STUDENTS SHARED THAT THEIR WORK OR OTHER COMMITMENTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL IS A POTENTIAL STRESSOR.

While our report highlights the general needs of LAUSD students and the particular responsibilities of BIPOC students, there is one more area of student needs we'd like to highlight: college & career success. Our students, particularly BIPOC students, have encountered hardships that have been exacerbated by the pandemic and which have long-lasting effects extending beyond high school. Thus, it is critical that we measure students' feelings of preparedness as they head into college, particularly Junior and Senior students.

We find that college-bound students are also concerned about their own mental health and that of their friends as well.

POTENTIAL STRESSORS FOR COLLEGE BOUND JUNIORS AND SENIORS

THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

79%

MENTAL HEALTH OF THEIR FRIENDS

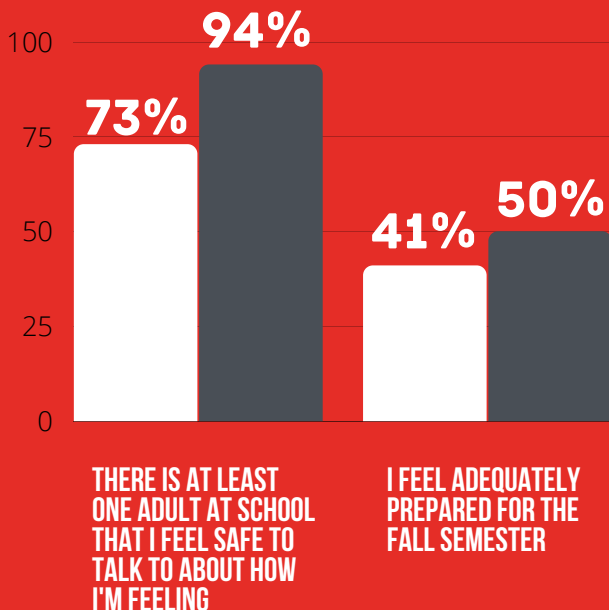
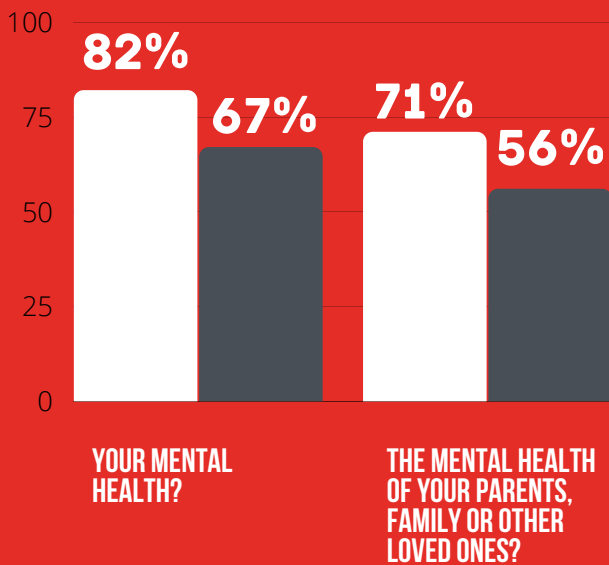
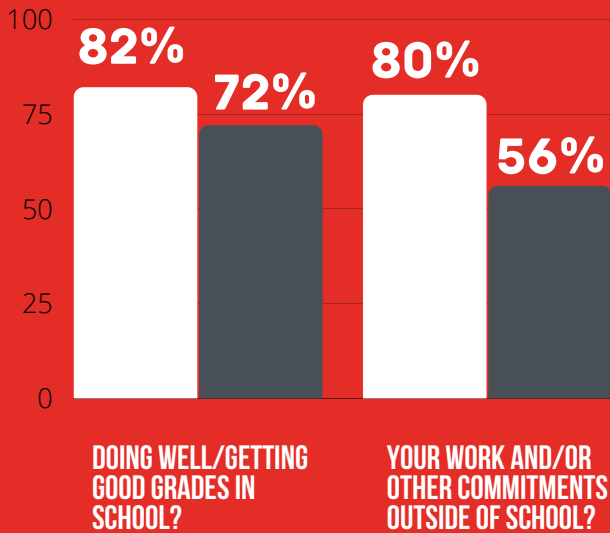
80%

0 20 40 60 80

Some large disparities in the survey data arise when we compare BIPOC and non-BIPOC college-bound Juniors and Seniors. For questions that center on doing well in school and stressors outside of school, we find that BIPOC students are more worried than non-BIPOC students. Likewise, for questions that focus on mental health, we find that BIPOC students are more worried than non-BIPOC students. These trends support the additional survey findings that show that BIPOC college-bound students agreed less than their non-BIPOC college-bound peers about feeling adequately prepared for the Fall semester and if there is at least one adult at school that they feel safe to talk to about how they are feeling. This can be as a result of multiple factors ranging from students deferring college aspirations in order to economically support their families, COVID related job loss within their families or having to step in more to care for younger or older members of their families.

BIPOC COLLEGE - BOUND
 NON-BIPOC COLLEGE - BOUND

POTENTIAL STRESSORS



In a time characterized by cultural upheaval and educational transition, we have the awesome responsibility to capitalize on student voices, leveraging their perspective as we collectively rebuild an LAUSD that ensures that our students leave high school prepared for a prosperous future. While students are transitioning out of high school with the worries that they have experienced over the last two years, we have managed to capture the voices of many in this report and hope to assure that future students leave high school more prepared and prosperous for the future. We know that our students are resilient and often demonstrate the ability to overcome challenges and knock down barriers that might otherwise prevent them from excelling. We view resilience as a byproduct of hardship and inequity rather than as a gift; it is out of necessity to survive that our students build resilience. Our students are resilient because they have to be, not because they want to be, and it's an injustice that they continue to operate in a system with limited resources and support, thereby forcing them into resilience as a means of survival. Many young people are able to thrive without having to be resilient because of the privileges and support afforded to them that are lacking or missing altogether for our students. All students deserve this experience.

CLOSING & RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the survey and focus groups undoubtedly paint a complex picture. However, we are confident that we can channel these critical insights into fuel for change. We -- LAUSD, advocates and community partners -- must ensure that students, particularly BIPOC students, are equipped to move past challenges faced over the last two years and into the next chapter of their lives. Our recommendation is that we take a holistic approach to intentionally concentrate efforts and allocate resources where needed; we must take into active consideration the responsibilities many students are tasked with in addition to the role of being a student.

RECOMMENDATION # 1

Ongoing prioritization and deployment of equitable investments toward students' top priorities: technology, tutoring and mental wellness, including transparency of use of funds and ongoing engagement with students. This includes 1) transitioning student-identified tools deployed during online learning into in-person curriculum as well as 2) culturally competent tutoring, noting the need for students to have access to a reliable tutor with whom they feel safe with and 3) deploying mental health services identified by BIPOC students to support their mental health needs and guaranteeing that every BIPOC student has at least one trusted adult with whom they can trust and safely communicate on campus.

RECOMMENDATION # 2

More effective and meaningful opportunities for student representation and decision making across the LAUSD education system, beginning with a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of existing opportunities and bright spots for meaningful and effective student engagement to be scaled out.

RECOMMENDATION # 3

Create policies and practices in partnership with BIPOC students that prepare and support their transition from K-12 education into both higher learning and career paths.

As an overall final recommendation, we encourage every adult to focus their efforts on hearing directly from students. Actively listen to and seek out students as thought partners; they are the experts with the lived experience. Students possess first-hand knowledge and experience to most accurately identify their needs, and often the most innovative solution-seekers. We leave you with one final quote from a student that when asked what they would say if they had the opportunity to speak with adults with decision-making power pertaining to their education, this is what they shared:

"I WOULD EMPHASIZE THE FACT THAT WE; STUDENTS HAVE A VOICE. A VOICE THAT WHEN VOCALIZED CAN BRING AWARENESS TO ISSUES AFFECTING THEM AND THEIR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT. YOU GUYS ARE NOT LIVING OUR STRUGGLES SO WHY ARE YOU SPEAKING ON OUR BEHALF?"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report would have not been possible without LAUSD students who shared their personal experiences with us and helped create the survey and disseminate it far and wide. Thank you. Additionally, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the following organizations who alongside students contributed to bringing this report to life:

- All Peoples Community
- Alliance for a Better Community
- Boys and Girls Club of Metro LA
- Boys and Girls Club of San Pedro
- Boys and Girls Club of the LA Harbor
- Brother Sons Selves Coalition
- CARECEN
- Castillo Consulting Partners
- Central City Neighborhood Partners
- Chinatown Service Center
- Communities in Schools Los Angeles
- Community Coalition
- Educators For Excellence
- Evitarus
- Families In Schools
- Inner City Struggle
- Los Angeles Job Corps
- MALDEF
- Partnership For Los Angeles Schools
- Promesa Boyle Heights
- Strength Based Community Change (SBCC)
- Teach Plus
- Unite-LA
- United Way of Greater Los Angeles
- United Way of Greater Los Angeles Young Civic Leaders Program
- YMCA Wilmington
- 100 Black Men of Los Angeles

APPENDICES

APPENDIX

Appendix A. *List of Survey Questions*

Last month, LAUSD and other school districts, charter schools and independent schools provided families with the option to return to in-person learning. Did you choose to attend in-person classes or continue remote learning?

- A. I have returned to in-person learning
- B. I have continued remote learning

IF SELECTED A: Likert Scale: 1 - Mad, 2 - Nervous/Unhappy, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Happy, 5 - Very Happy

1. How have you felt since returning to in-person learning?
2. How do you feel about your academic progress/grades this year?

IF SELECTED B: Likert Scale: 1 - Mad, 2 - Nervous/Unhappy, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Happy, 5 - Very Happy

1. How have you felt about continuing remote learning?
2. How do you feel about your academic progress/grades this year?

Likert Scale: 1 - Strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - Neither Agree/Nor Disagree, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree

3. My teachers care about my health and wellbeing.
4. There is at least one adult at school that I feel safe to talk to about how I'm feeling.
5. I feel adequately prepared for the fall semester.

Likert Scale: 1 - Extremely Worried, 2 - Very Worried, 3 - Worried, 4 - A Little Worried, 5 - Not At All Worried

6. As you prepare for school in the fall, on a scale of 1 - 5, how worried are you about...

- Your physical health?
- The physical health of your parents, family or other loved ones?
- The physical health of your friends?
- Your mental health?
- The mental health of your parents, family or other loved ones?
- The mental health of your friends?
- Getting sick at school?
- Doing well/getting good grades in school?
- Having your basic needs met at home (i.e. having food, water, a place to live, access to broadband, device, etc.)?
- Taking care of your parents, siblings or other loved ones at home?
- Your work and/or other commitments outside of school?

Ranking: Choose your top 5

7. What resources and supports do you need in the fall to continue your education?

- Technology (i.e. a computer or tablet)
- Affordable broadband services (i.e. internet)
- Tutoring
- Extra time at school (i.e. after school programs: LA's Best, YMCA, Gear Up, etc.)

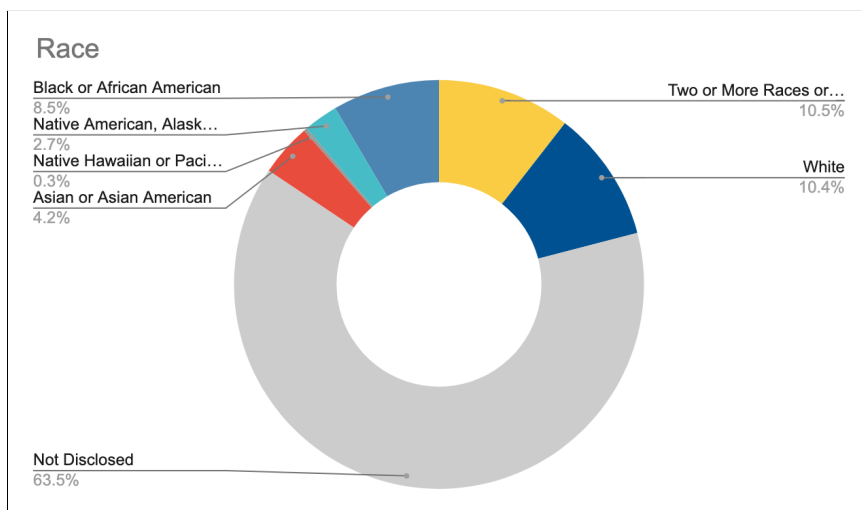
- Opportunities to take extra classes for credit recovery
- Opportunities to take extra classes for enrichment (i.e. Art, STEM, other electives)
- Mental wellness support (i.e. someone to talk to about how you're feeling)
- Extracurricular Activities
- Food
- Affordable Housing
- Shelter
- A healthy community
- Police-free campus
- Participation in decisions about your education
- Racially and culturally responsive curriculum
- Identity inclusive spaces
- Other: _____

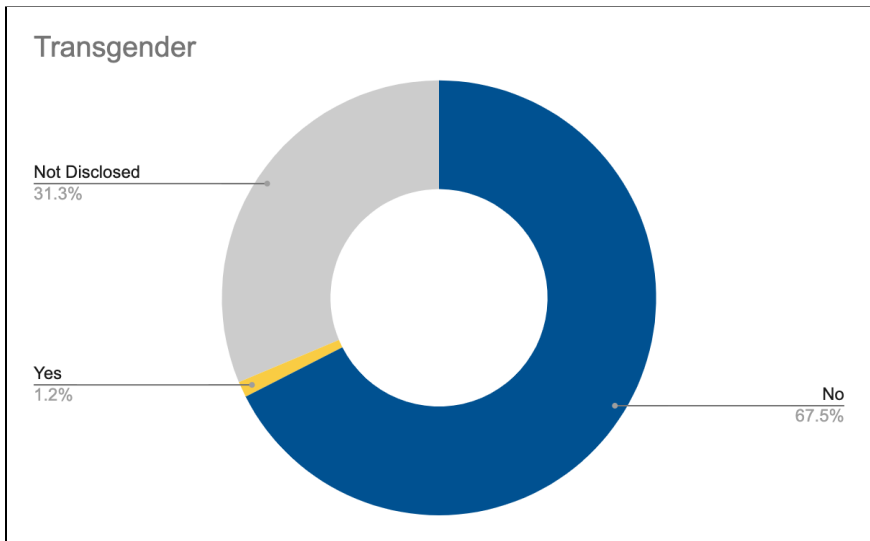
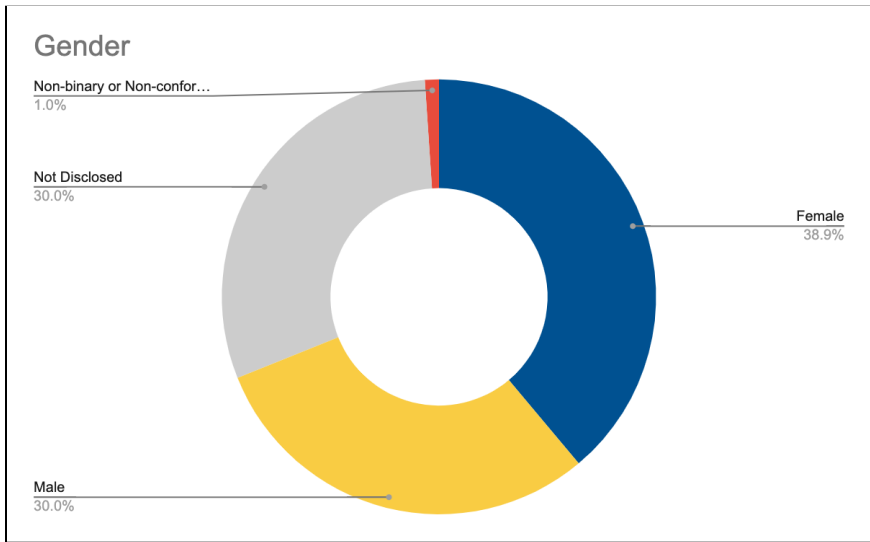
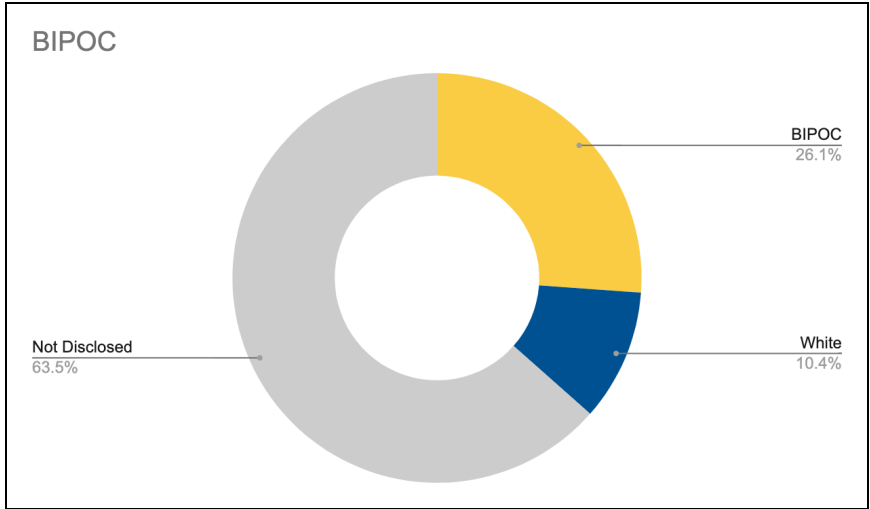
Appendix B. *List of Demographic Questions*

1. Which school do you attend?
2. Which grade are you in?
3. Have you applied to or do you plan to apply to college within the next year?
4. Do you identify as Latinx/Latino/Latina?
5. What is your race?
6. What is your gender?
7. Do you identify as transgender?

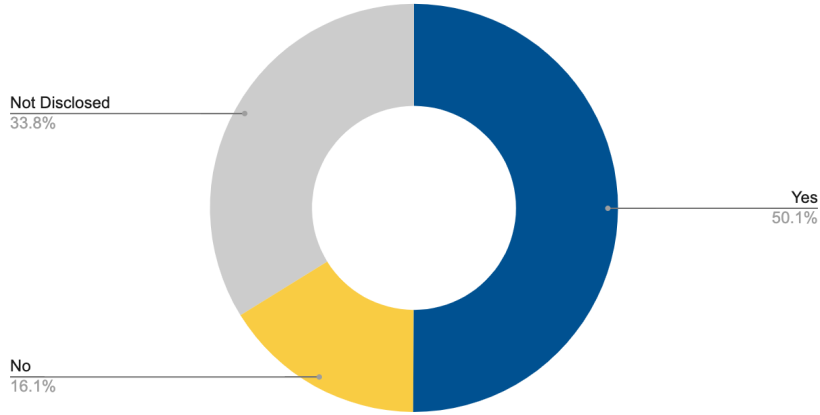
8. Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community?
9. Are you an English Language Learner (ELL)?
10. Do you receive free or reduced lunch?
11. Do you have a job or work outside of school?
12. Are you responsible for taking care of younger siblings or relatives (i.e. cousins, nieces/nephews, your own child, etc.)?
13. Are you responsible for taking care of parents, grandparents or other adults?
14. Are you or members of your family immigrants to the US?
15. Are you currently, or have you ever been in foster care or kinship care?
16. Are you living with a disability?
17. How many people live in your household (including yourself, your parent(s) or guardian, siblings and other family members and friends?)
18. What is the highest level of schooling achieved by your parents or guardian?

Appendix C. Demographic Visualizations

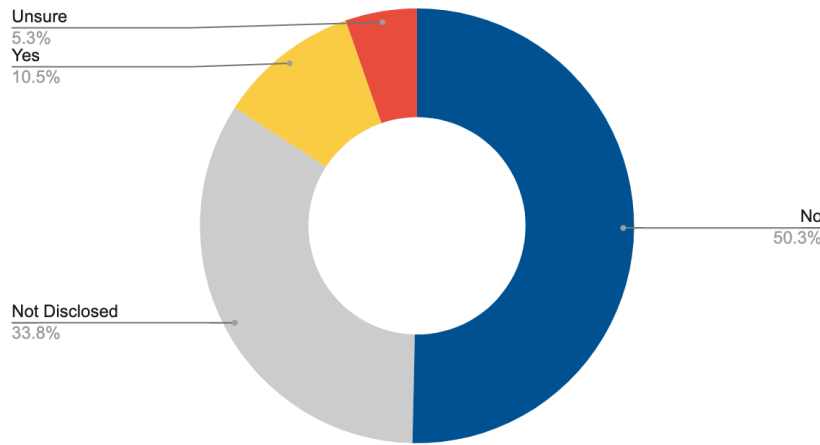




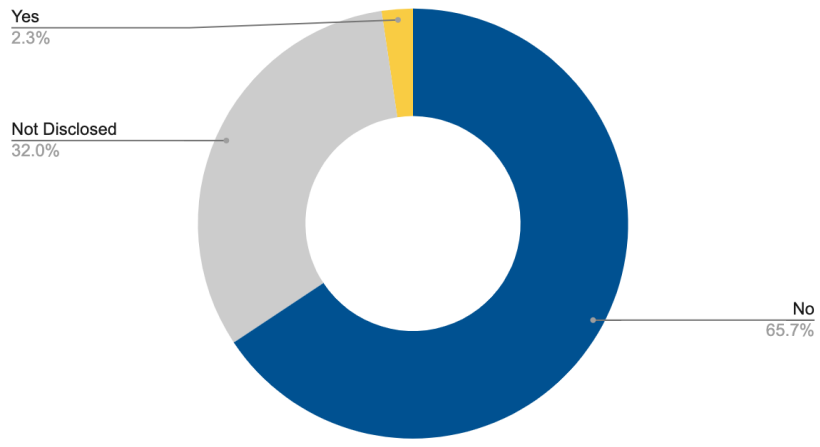
Ethnicity: Latino/Latina/Latinx

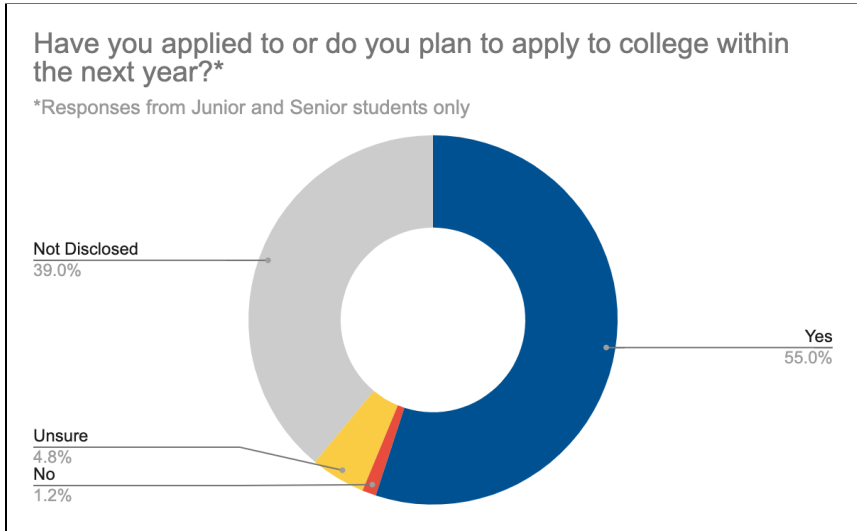
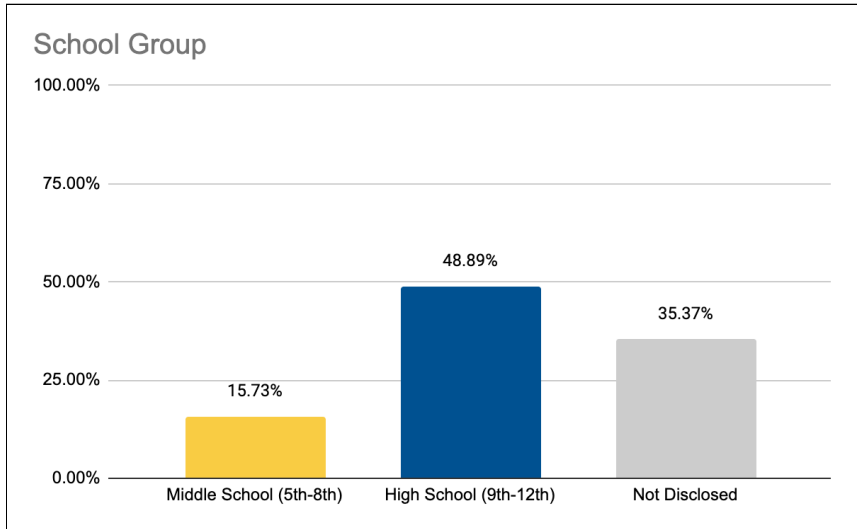
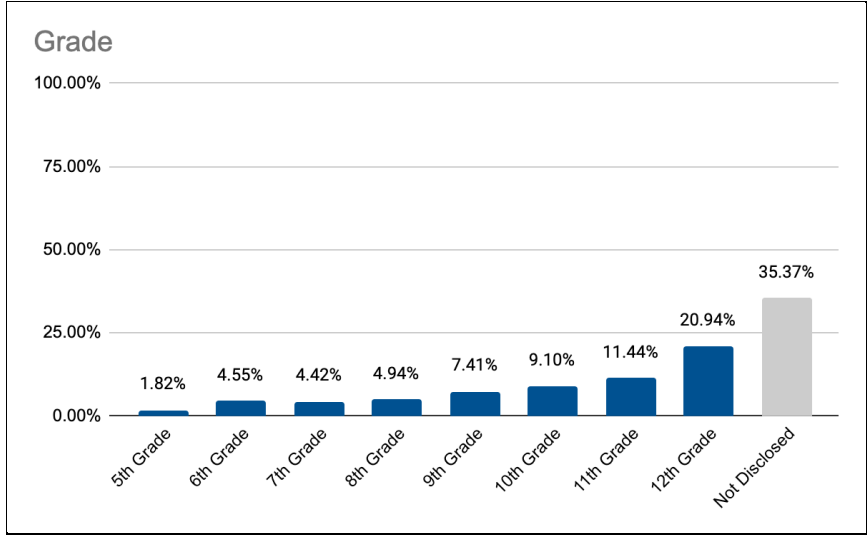


LGBTQIA+

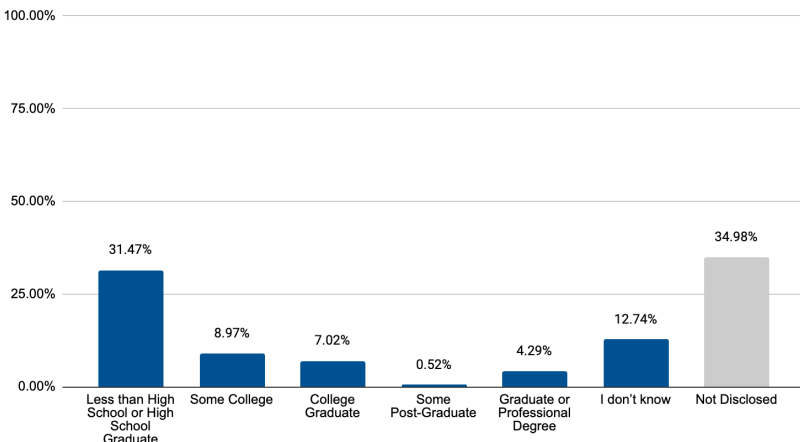


Disability

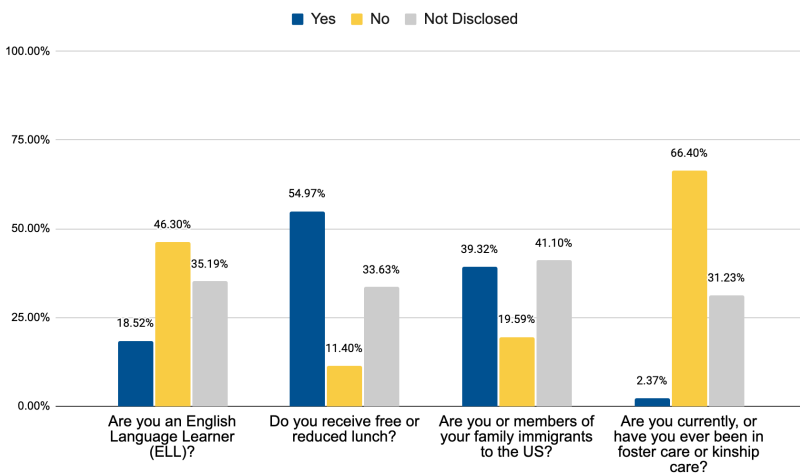




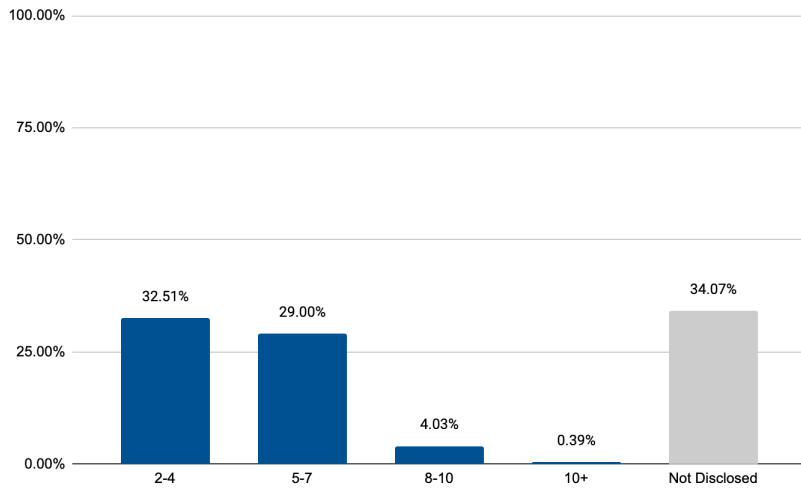
What is the highest level of schooling achieved by your parents or guardian?



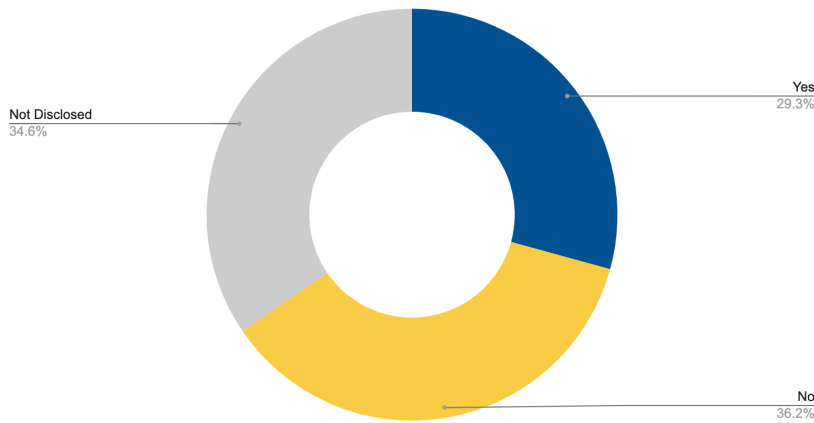
ELL, Reduced Lunch, Immigrant Affiliation, Foster/Kinship Care

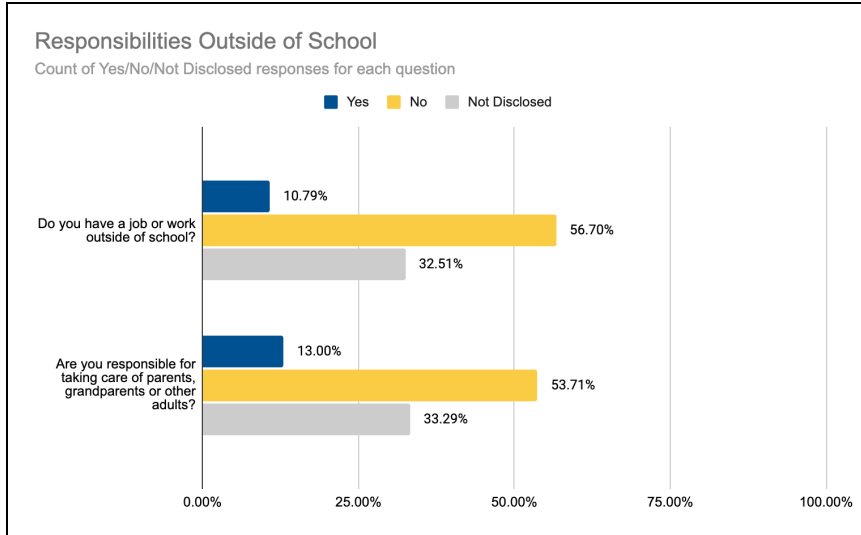


How many people live in your household (including yourself, your parent(s) or guardian, siblings and other family members and friends?)



Are you responsible for taking care of younger siblings or relatives (i.e. cousins, nieces/nephews, your own child, etc.)?





Appendix D. Demographics and Population Sizes

Group	Population Size
Overall	N= 769
Male	N= 231
Female	N= 299
Latinx	N= 385
Non-Latinx	N= 124
BIPOC	N= 201
Non-BIPOC	N= 80
Asian or Asian American	N= 32
Black or African American	N= 65
Native American, Alaskan Native or Indigenous	N= 21
White	N= 80
Younger Siblings	N= 225
No Younger Siblings	N= 278
Free+Reduced Lunch (Poverty)	N= 376
No Free+Reduced Lunch	N= 78
White Latinx	N= 62
Black Latinx	N= 4
BIPOC Latinx	N= 85
Race ND Latinx	N = 235

Mental Health Priority (Top 1)	N= 40
Mental Health Priority (Top 2)	N= 89
Mental Health Priority (Top 5)	N= 224
College Bound	N= 137
In-Person	N= 261
Remote	N= 417
Male BIPOC	N= 91
Male White	N= 40
Female BIPOC	N= 104
Female White	N= 35
Male In-Person	N= 261
Male Remote	N= 417
Female In-Person	N= 261
Female Remote	N= 417
LGBTQIA+	N= 81
Not LGBTQIA+	N= 387
College-Bound BIPOC	N= 51
College-Bound White	N= 18

Appendix E. Focus Group Questions

1. What has been the most memorable or rewarding part about your educational experience over the past year?
2. What are some benefits and practices from your remote learning experience that you would like to be incorporated in the classroom and/or on-campus?
3. If you received \$1 million dollars to transform your school into the dream school that you would want to walk into everyday, what would it look and feel like? How would you spend that money? What would you prioritize and why?

4. If you had the opportunity to do so, what would you tell an elected school official about your hopes for the new school year?
5. We asked students what they needed to feel prepared to return to school in the fall, the top responses were:
 - Technology
 - Tutoring
 - Mental Wellness Support
 - Enrichment Classes
 - Extracurricular Activities & Healthy Community

Do you agree with these? If so, why? If not, why not? What would your top choices be?

6. Why do you think technology came up as the top choice? Why is technology so important for students?
7. What about tutoring? Why is this a top priority for students?
8. What does mental wellness mean to you? Why do you think mental wellness is a top priority for students returning to school in the fall?

Appendix F. LAUSD District Demographics

“The ethnic composition of the LAUSD student population is primarily Latino (73.4%); the remainder are African American (10.0%), White (8.8%), Asian (3.9%), Filipino (2.2%), Pacific Islander (.04%), American Indian (.04%) and two or more races, not Latino, (1%). In all, 92 languages other than English are spoken in LAUSD schools. The District has 161,484 English language learner students. Their primary languages are Spanish (93.4% of English language learners), Korean (1.1%), and Armenian (1.1%) with Tagalog, Cantonese, Arabic,

Vietnamese and Russian each accounting for less than 1% of the total. As of October of the 2012-2013 school year, approximately 80% of LAUSD students qualified for free or reduced-price meals. Of the more than 27,000 educators LAUSD employs, 887 are adult education teachers.”

Source: <https://laraec.net/los-angeles-unified-school-district/>