

# Policy Watch Webcast

Reimagining K-12 - Emerging from Disruption with Insights for Reform  
June 17, 2021



# Some of the critical questions and issues we will be answering today

- A  
What has been the impact of remote learning on K-12 students during the pandemic and how has that impacted longer-standing challenges?
- B  
How has the pandemic's impact affected longer-standing challenges facing K-12 education in the US?
- C  
What are the main lessons and best practices learned from the crisis pivot to remote learning technologies?
- D  
What needs to be done to take advantage of the unique opportunities that remote learning design can contribute to reimagine a more effective, engaging, and equitable educational system?.



# Today's Speakers



**Ed Cox**  
Former Partner  
**Patterson Belknap  
Webb & Tyler LLP**  
Trustee  
**Committee for  
Economic  
Development of The  
Conference Board**



**Chris Dede**  
Timothy E. Wirth Professor  
in Learning Technologies  
at Harvard's Graduate  
School of Education  
**Harvard University**



**Larry Jensen**  
Member of the Tennessee  
State Board of Education  
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**Committee for Economic  
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**Gabriella Rowe**  
Director, Operation  
Connectivity Initiative  
**State of Texas**



**Elizabeth Crofoot**  
Senior Economist  
**Committee for Economic  
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Conference Board**



**Dr. Lori Esposito  
Murray**  
President  
**Committee for Economic  
Development of The  
Conference Board**

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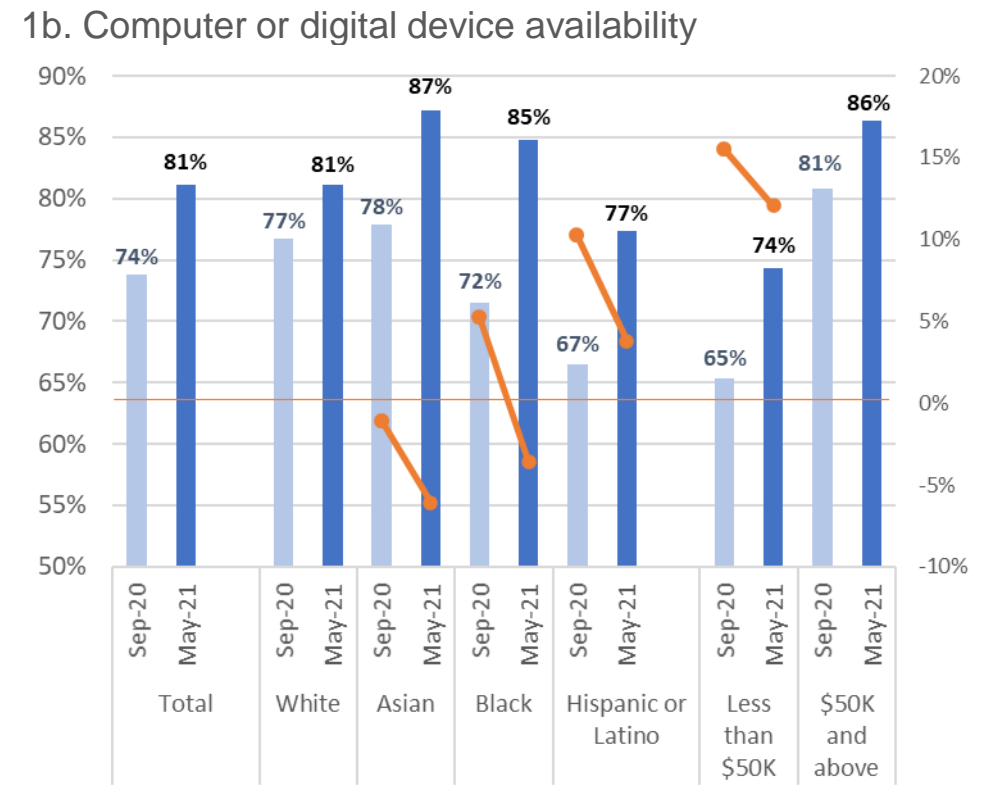
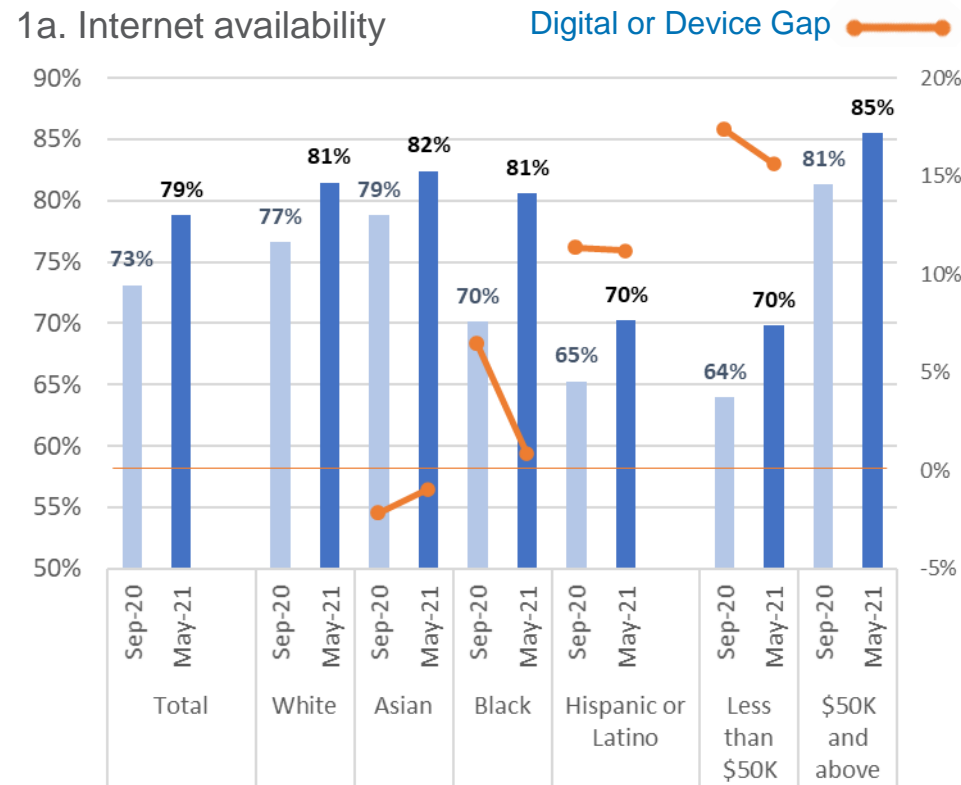
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# The digital and device divide has narrowed since the start of the pandemic, but internet and device availability remain least reliable in Hispanic and lower-income households

Percent of households with children in public or private school reporting that internet or computer/digital devices for educational purposes are “always available,” by race, ethnicity, and income



Note: Data for September 2020 refer to September 2-14, 2020 (Week 14 of the survey). Data for May 2021 refer to May 12-24, 2021 (Week 30)

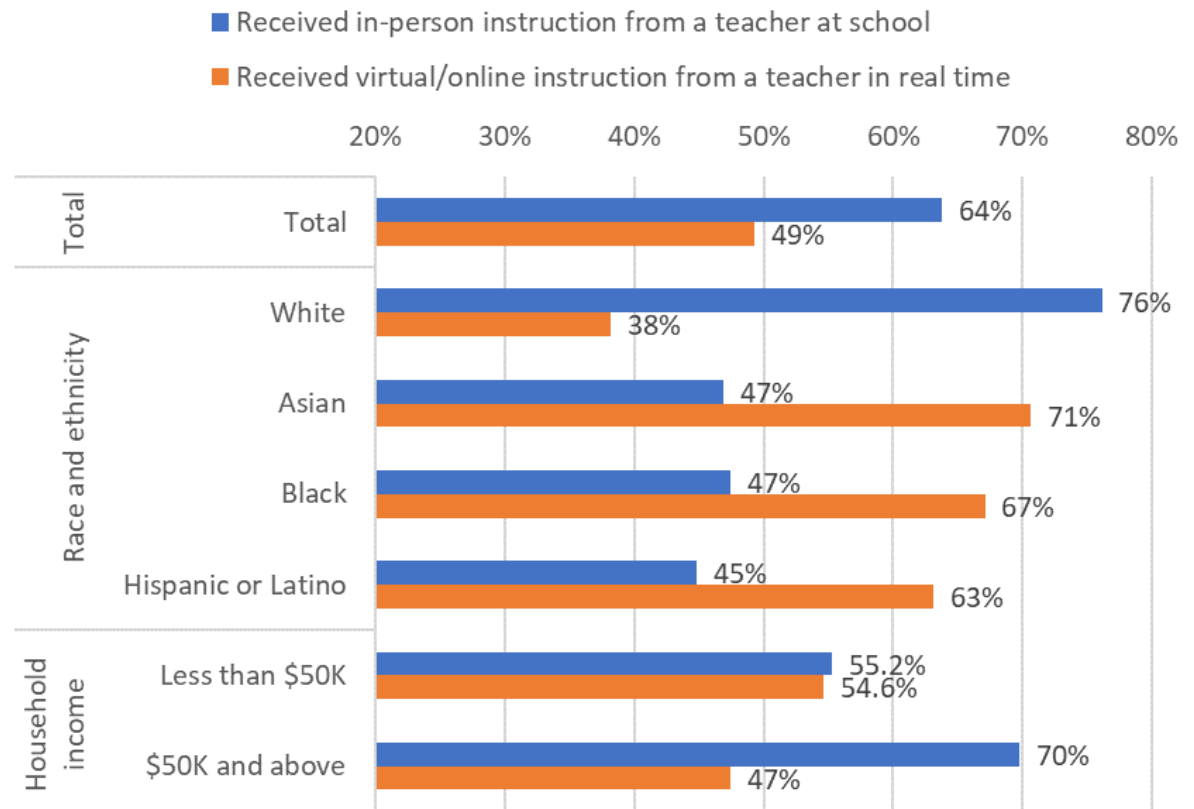
Source: “Education Table 3. Computer and Internet Availability in Households with Children in Public or Private School, by Select Characteristics: United States,” [US Census Household Pulse Survey](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipeds-tables/ipeds-education-table-3-computer-and-internet-availability-in-households-with-children-in-public-or-private-school-by-select-characteristics-united-states/)



# The students least equipped for online learning are those most likely to have been put into virtual instruction

- In **Sept 2020**, 65% of households reported children engaged in online education. By **May 2021**, this share dropped to 49%
- On average, students in about two-thirds of non-White households **experienced online instruction**, compared to 38% of White students
  - ✓ A similar disparity exists between low- and high-income households, but the most acute differences occur by race and ethnicity
- Means that **closed classrooms** during the pandemic were composed disproportionately of students of color and those from low-income households

How children received education, by race, ethnicity, and income May 2021



Source: "Education Table 2. Coronavirus Pandemic Impact on How Children Received Education for the 2020-2021 School Year, by Select Characteristics: United States," [US Census Household Pulse Survey](#), Week 30, May 12-24, 2021



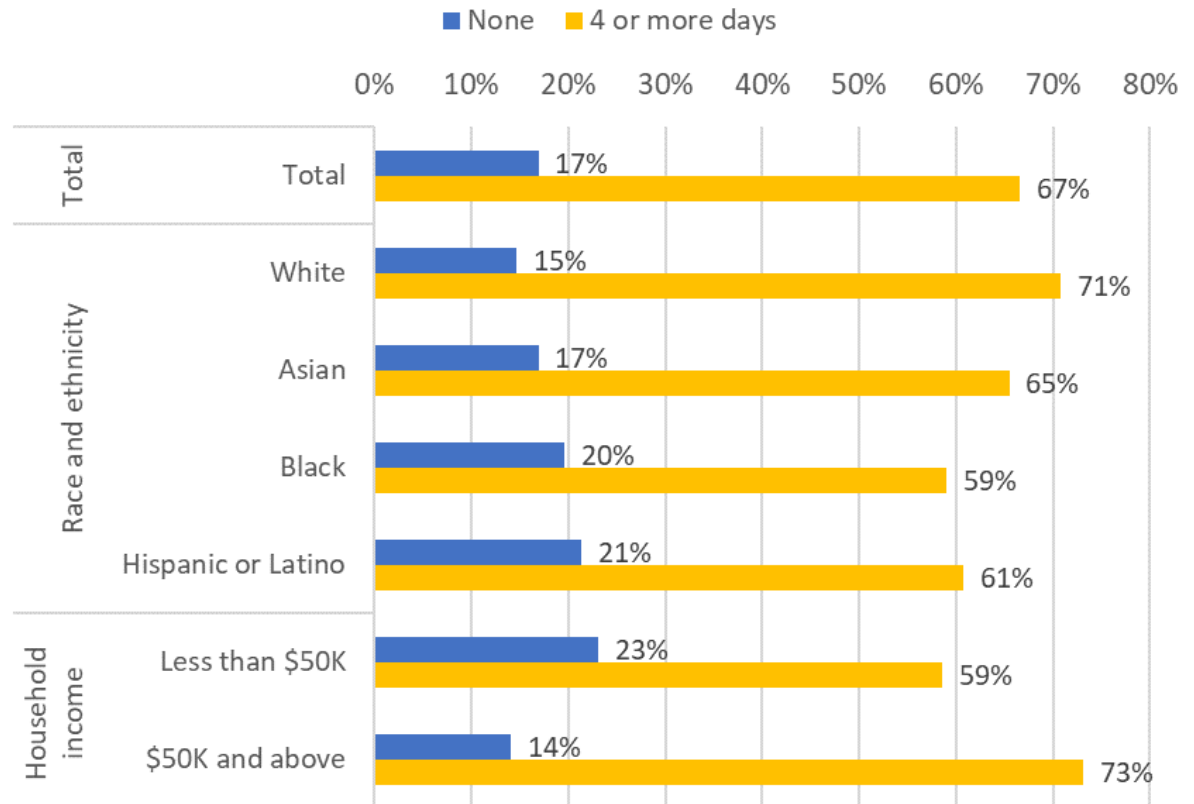
# Many students have fallen behind academically during the pandemic, but those from minority and poorer households have seen the largest setbacks

- Children started the 2020–2021 school year **months behind** in reading, and even more behind in math
  - ✓ Vulnerable populations experienced the most acute learning deficits
- Overall, learning gaps have **shrunk** since the beginning of the school year
- Except for children of color and those in low-income households that have **continued to fall behind**, exacerbating achievement gaps
 

Due to:

  - ✓ The “**homework gap**”
  - ✓ More likely to have been “**lost**” by schools
  - ✓ **Pandemic-related stressors**
  - ✓ **Less live contact with teachers**

Number of days per week that children had real-time contact with teachers, for children enrolled in public or private school, by race, ethnicity, and income, May 2021



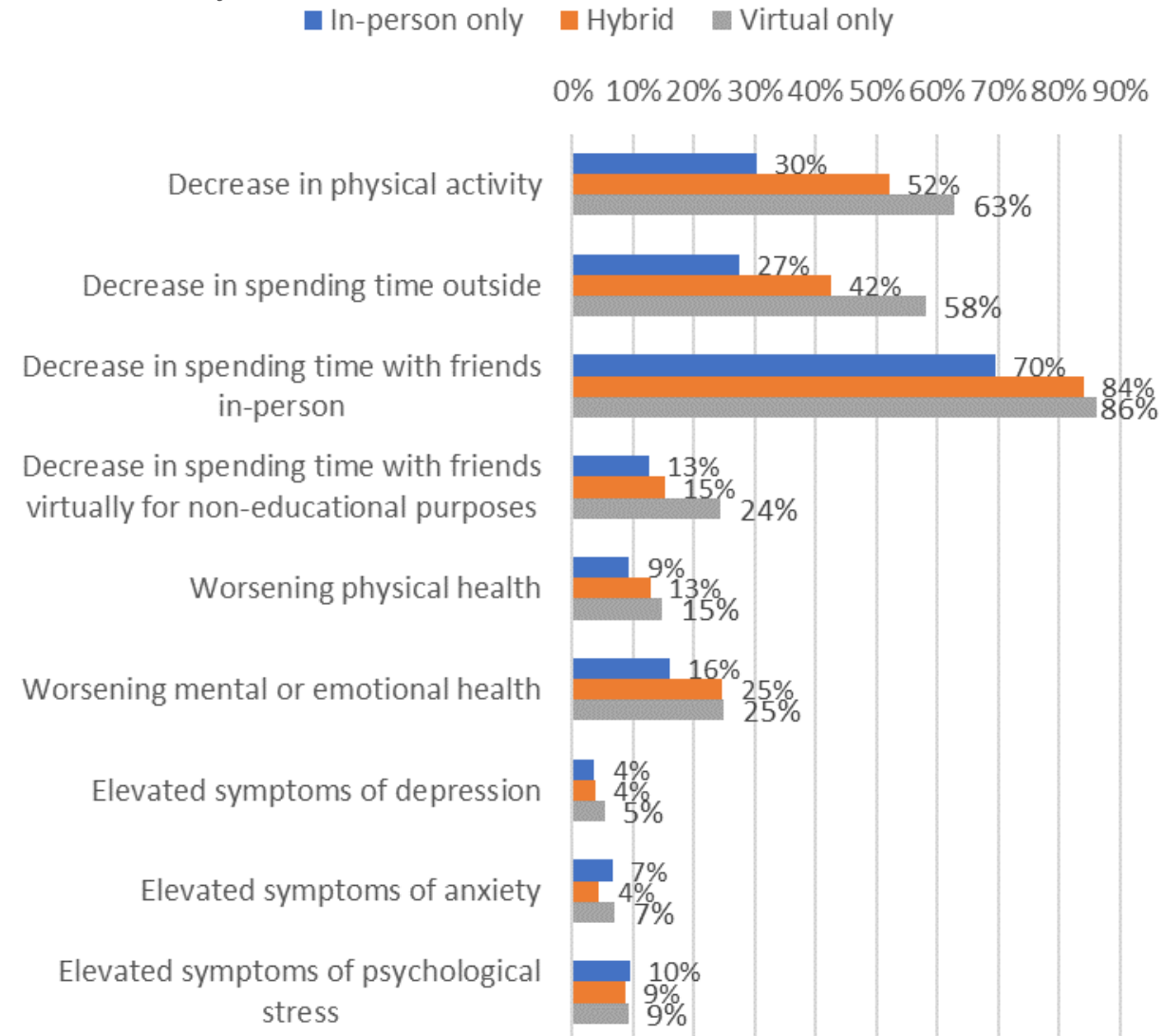
Source: “Education Table 1b. Days Spent in Live Contact with Teachers, in the Last 7 Days, Relative to Before the Coronavirus Pandemic, by Select Characteristics: United States,” [US Census Household Pulse Survey](#), Week 30, May 12-24, 2021



## Children receiving hybrid or virtual-only instruction during the pandemic were more likely to have experienced negative mental, emotional, and physical health outcomes

- Means that students of color and those from low-income households were disproportionately impacted by **health challenges** that could have **long-term effects** on learning outcomes
- Direct link** between mental/physical health and academic performance suggests that students must feel good to perform well academically

Percent of parents reporting child experiences and well-being indicators by mode of child's school instruction



Source: Table 2, [COVID Experiences Survey, United States, October 8–November 13, 2020](#), US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





# Five proposals that business leaders and policymakers should implement to harness remote learning technology more effectively in the future

## 1 Narrow the digital divide

Until broadband is expanded nationally, states, school districts, and business leaders can replicate and scale interim strategies to ensure connectivity across all communities. e.g., extending the reach of Wi-Fi, device and Wi-Fi hotspot lending/funding programs, state-wide connectivity agreements

## 2 Address learning loss

Policymakers and educators should reengage students and accelerate learning through remedial education opportunities. e.g., expanding summer school offerings, providing individualized instruction through tutoring programs, adding additional instruction days to the academic calendar

## 3 Improve student and teacher wellbeing

School districts should hire additional counselors to provide social and emotional support for students, provide teachers counseling resources and time to prepare for hybrid or remote instruction to avoid burnout, and invest in ventilation and school infrastructure

## 4 Improve online learning models and methodologies

Policymakers and educators should develop effective digital curricula and assessment tools for remote and asynchronous learning on personal devices by: increasing teacher training to enhance digital and online/hybrid teaching skills, assessing best practices, and promoting public-private partnerships to build a new digital learning infrastructure

## 5 Identify best practices

Policymakers should establish a National Task Force to research and assess the lessons learned and best practices from remote learning undertaken during COVID-19. The team should identify and codify the best methods for testing the effectiveness of online learning.



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Moderator



**Dr. Lori Esposito Murray  
(Moderator)**

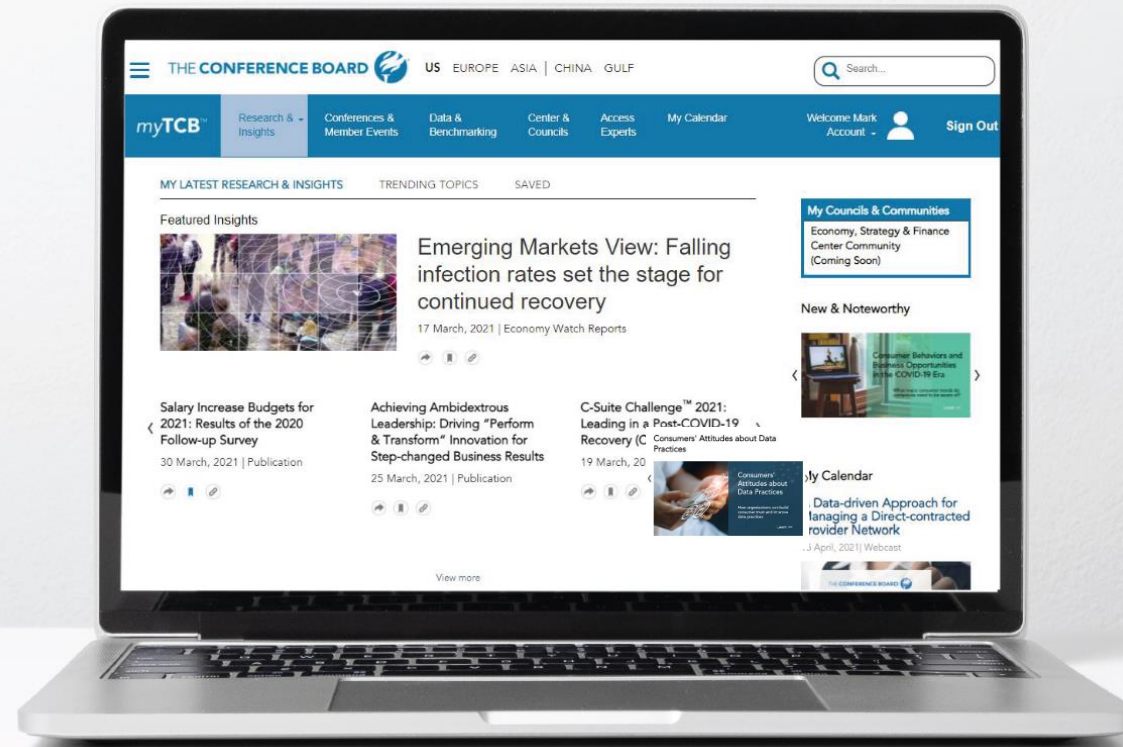
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