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To: Board of Education

From: Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D.

Date: April 17, 2020

Re: Summary of Survey Feedback on Remote Learning Days

Background

Due to risks from COVID-19, Wilmette Public Schools conducted Remote Learning Days on March 16-20 as well as after spring break on March 31-April 3. On April 3rd, our District 39 administrative team invited students in grades 3-8, faculty and parents to respond to a survey regarding their respective experiences on these Remote Learning Days. The surveys closed following the long holiday weekend, and results of these surveys have been used to guide our improvement efforts and planning for more sustained remote learning in D39.

Information regarding the District's Remote Learning Programming is available online, including additional information for parents regarding D39 Remote Learning Expectations and Opportunities, the School Calendar, Resources for Parents, Frequently Asked Questions and the District's e-Learning Program Plan. In addition, the Illinois State Board of Education Remote Learning Recommendations to Illinois schools is available.

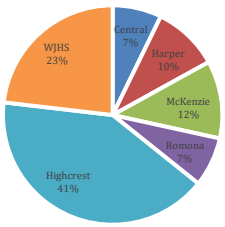
Summary of Results

- Survey Participants –

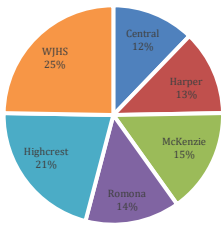
The District received 2626 responses to surveys.

1231 Student Responses | 1246 Parent Responses | 149 Teacher Responses

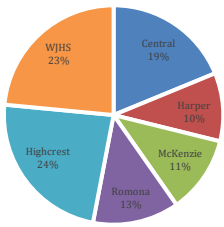
3rd-8th Grade Student Responses by Schools



Parent Responses by Schools



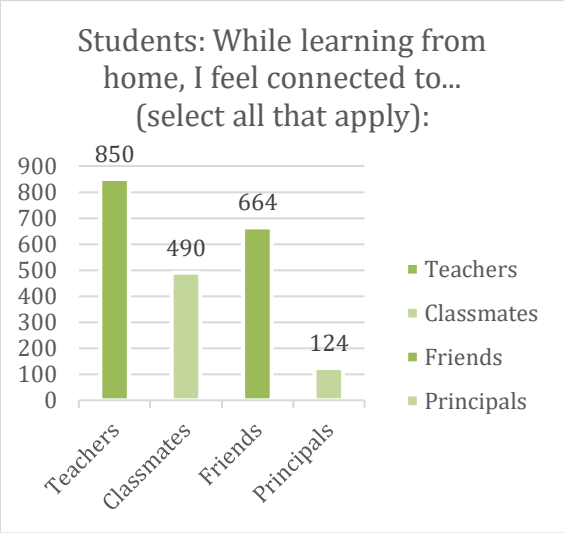
Teacher Responses by Schools

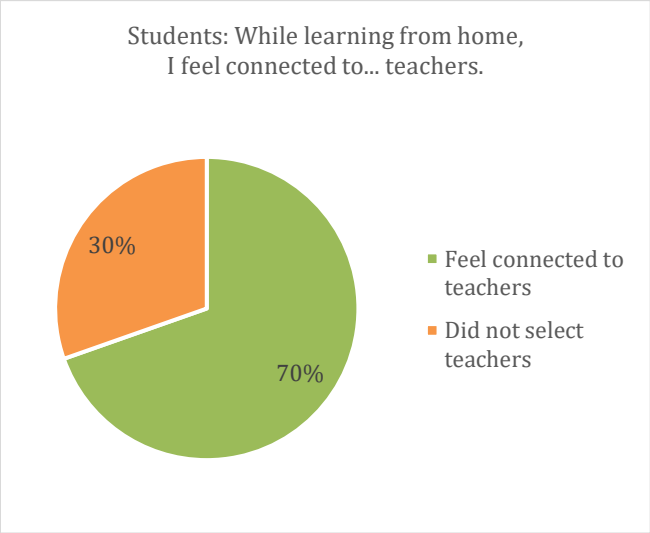


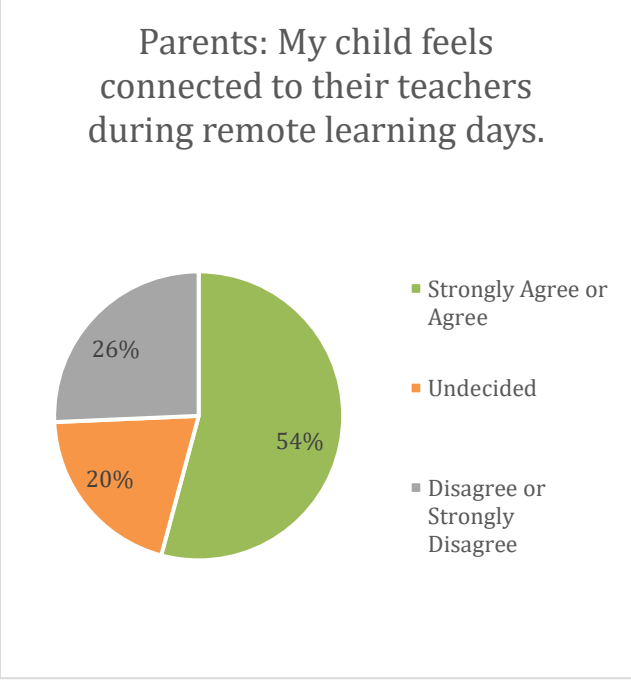
- Connections –

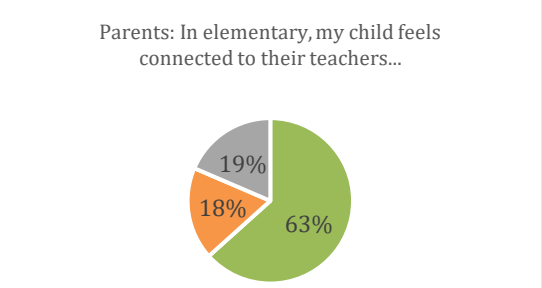
Students and parents report that students feel connected to teachers, with some differences noted between elementary and middle school experiences.

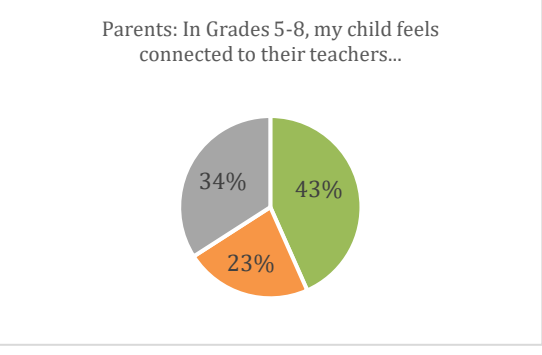
One of the District's primary goals early on has been to establish connections with students and to support their social and emotional well-being in this unprecedented time which can feel overwhelming and anxiety-provoking. Overall, students and parents report that students feel connected to teachers. Seventy percent (70%) of students identified that they feel connected to teachers while learning from home. A majority of parents report the same. However, there are some differences noted in parent responses between parents of our elementary and our 5-8 students' experiences, with more parents reporting their child's sense of connection at the elementary level. The district continues to build upon the experiences that have been put in place, especially for synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences. Qualitative data indicate that students, parents and teachers value opportunities to connect; yet, some teachers report that students are not always choosing to connect or engage in these opportunities. We have worked to clarify expectations and to further support these connections.





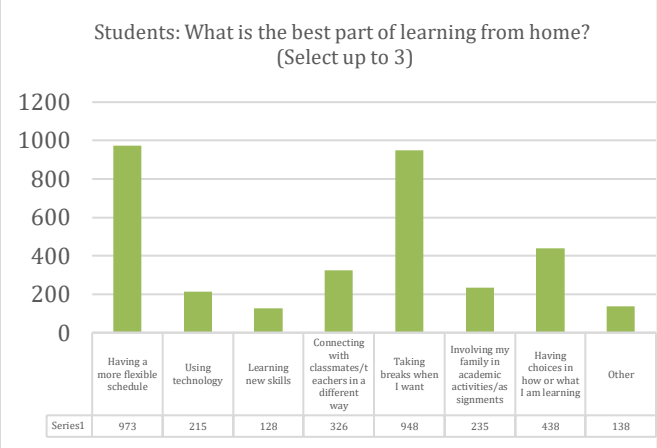


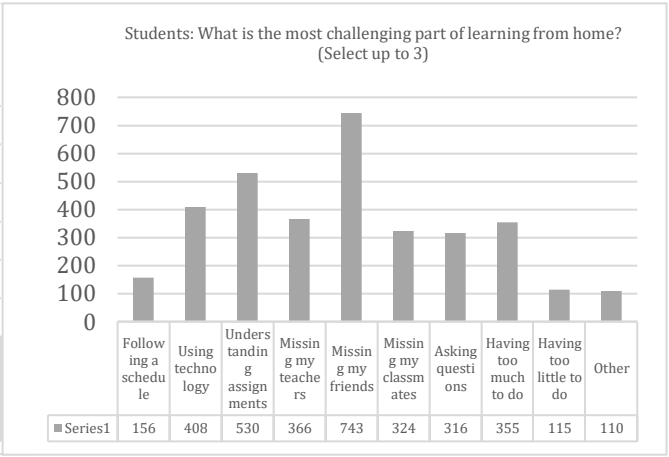


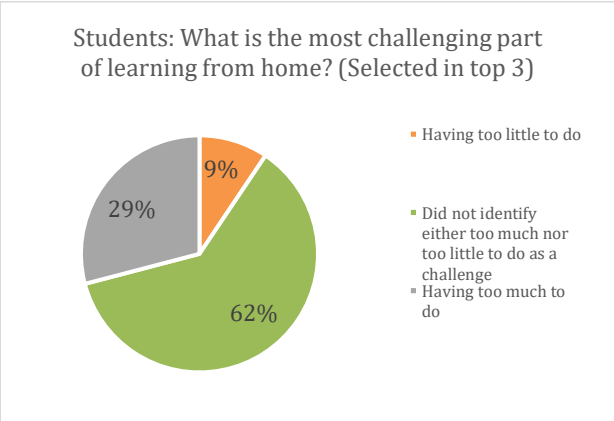


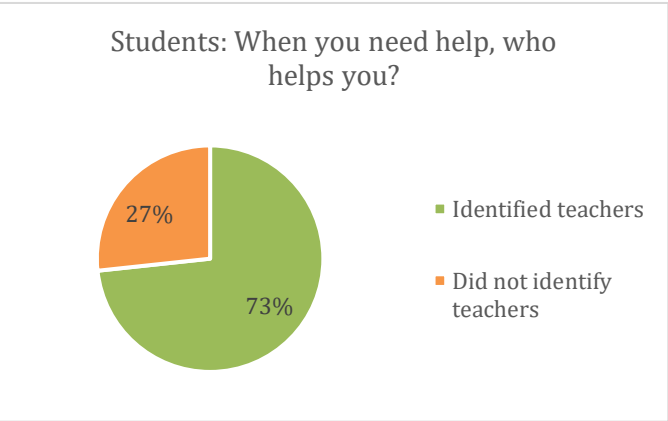
- Meaningful and Manageable –

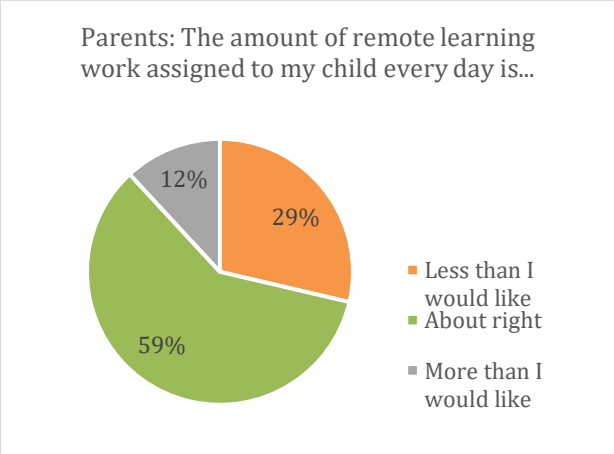
The majority of students and parents report the work assigned is manageable, while some differences are noted between parents and students as well as among parent responses for elementary and 5-8 grade level students. Areas of success and challenge vary more significantly among respondents, highlighting the various experiences within this unique and new learning environment; yet, students consistently identify teachers as helpers when needed and parents largely report that the *learning expectations were effectively communicated*, that their *child was able to use their school device effectively*, and that the *work assigned was meaningful*. Although the majority of parents report that the amount of work is *just right*, some differences are noted among parent responses for elementary and 5-8 students. Expectations for workload within Remote Learning have been clarified.

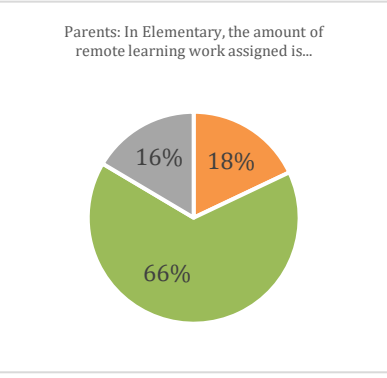


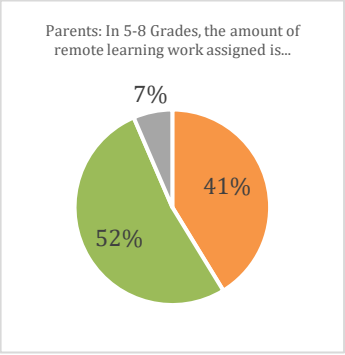




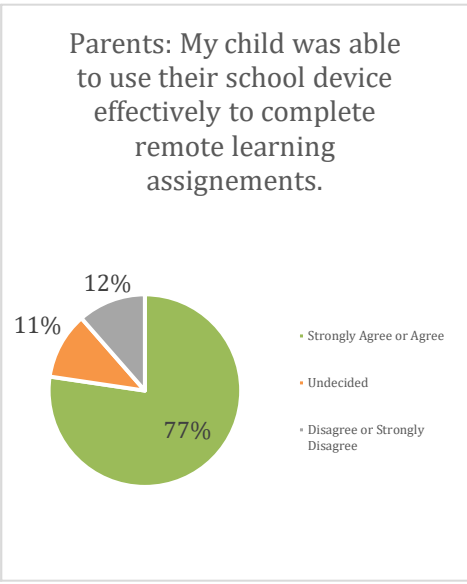


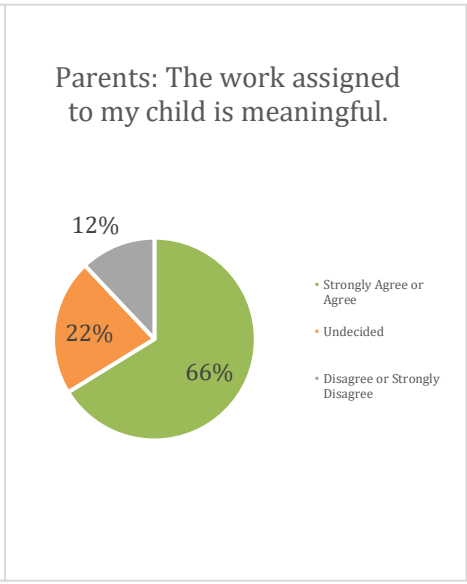


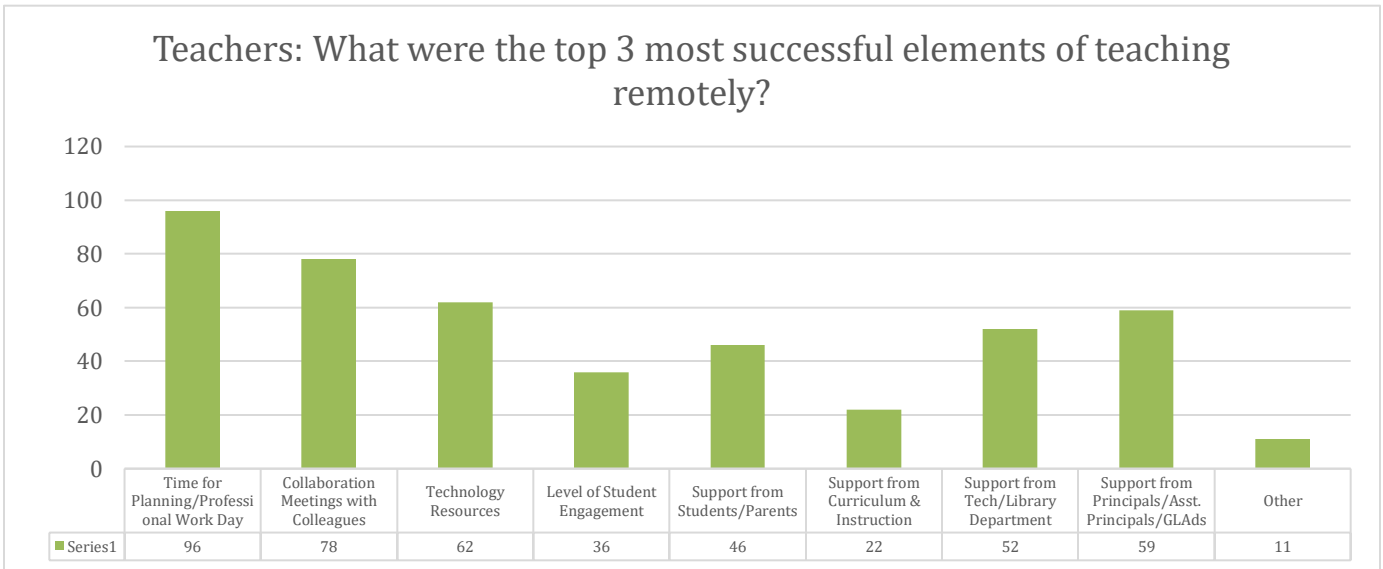


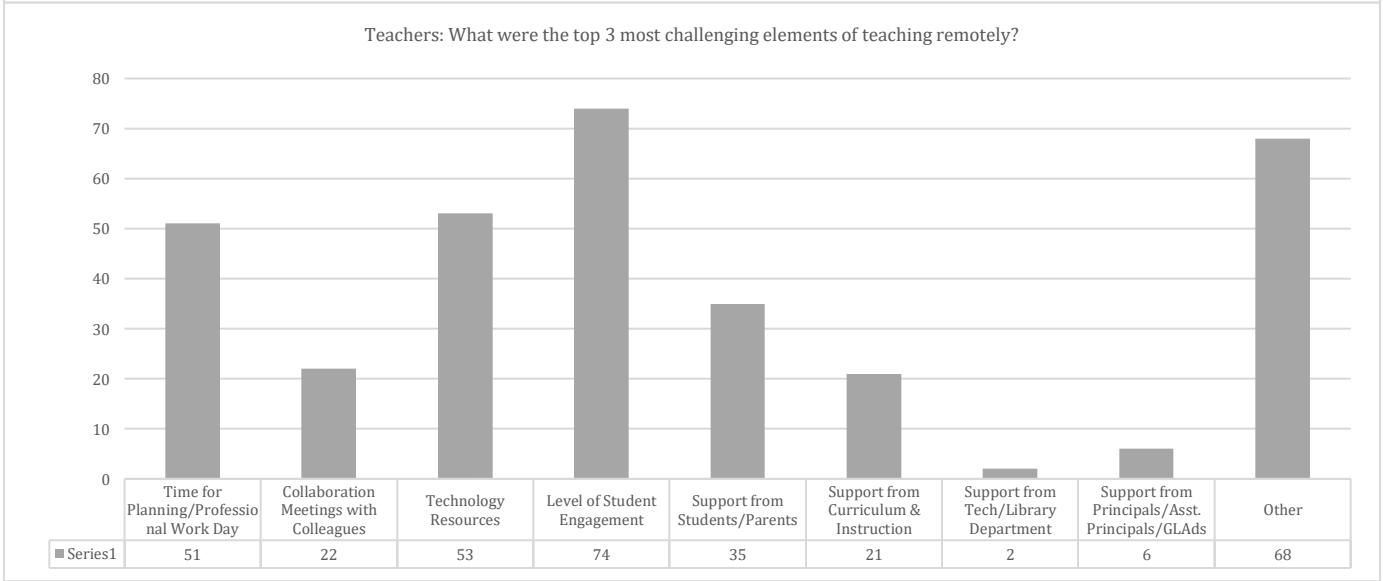


Parents: The Remote Learning expectations were effectively communicated to my child.
12%
15%
73%
Strongly Agree or Agree
Undecided
Disagree or Strongly Disagree


Parents: My child was able to use their school device effectively to complete remote learning assignements.
12%
11%
77%
Strongly Agree or Agree
Undecided
Disagree or Strongly Disagree

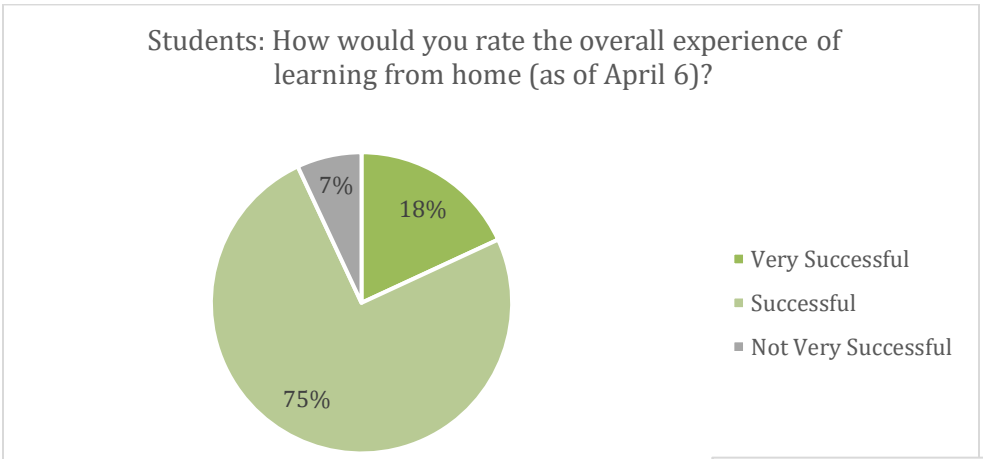

Parents: The work assigned to my child is meaningful.
12%
22%
66%
Strongly Agree or Agree
Undecided
Disagree or Strongly Disagree

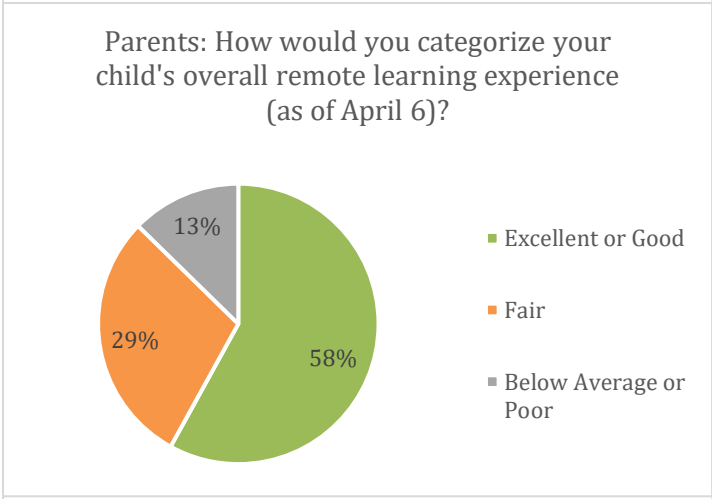

Teachers: What were the top 3 most successful elements of teaching remotely?
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
Time for Planning/Professional Work Day
Collaboration Meetings with Colleagues
Technology Resources
Level of Student Engagement
Support from Students/Parents
Support from Curriculum & Instruction
Support from Tech/Library Department
Support from Principals/Asst. Principals/GLAds
Other
Series1
96
78
62
36
46
22
52
59
11

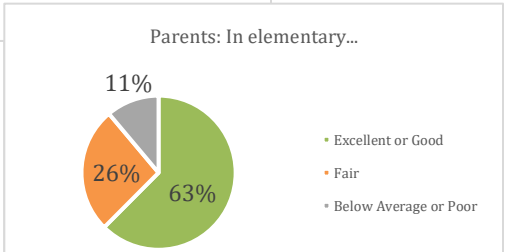

Teachers: What were the top 3 most challenging elements of teaching remotely?
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Time for Planning/Professional Work Day
Collaboration Meetings with Colleagues
Technology Resources
Level of Student Engagement
Support from Students/Parents
Support from Curriculum & Instruction
Support from Tech/Library Department
Support from Principals/Asst. Principals/GLAds
Other
Series1
51
22
53
74
35
21
2
6
68

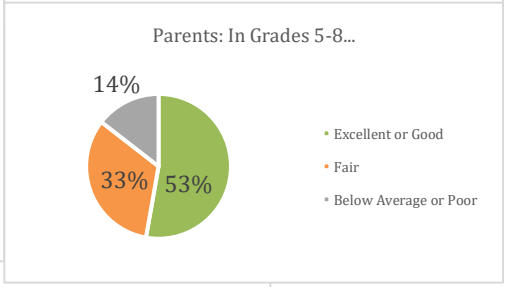
- Overall Experience –

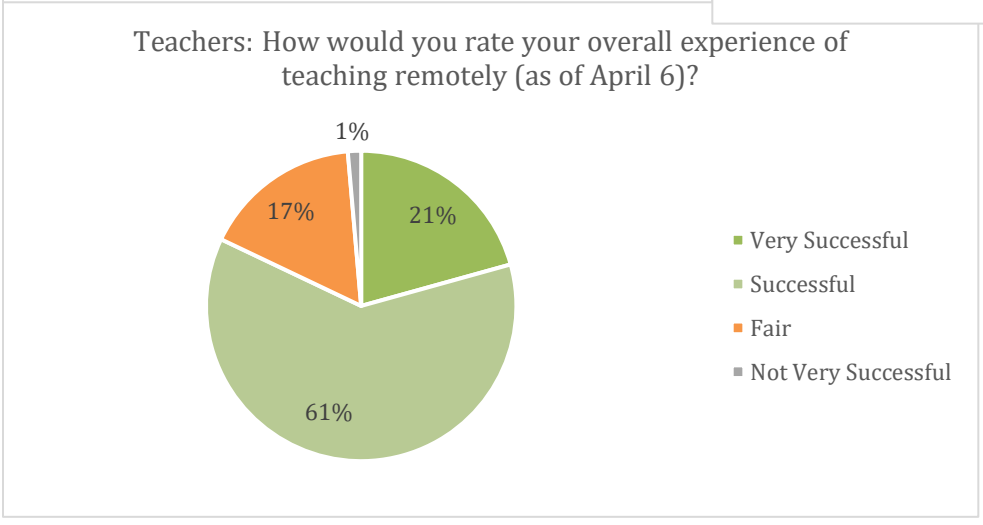
93% of students would rate their overall experience of learning from home as *Successful* or *Very Successful*. 58% of parents would categorize their child's overall remote learning experience as *Excellent* or *Good*, with another 29% categorizing it as *Fair* as of April 6. Among teachers, 82% would rate their overall experie3nce of teaching remotely to be Successful or Very Successful, with another 17% rating it Fair. Less than 15% of all respondents would rate Remote Learning as of April 6 as *Not Successful, Below Average* or *Poor*.











- Qualitative Themes from Parents –

Parents: What is working well?
(Listed below in order of prevalence.)

1. D39 has amazing teachers
2. Teachers are organized and have done an excellent job
3. Meaningful learning activities are being provided
2. Video conferencing and connections between teachers/students
3. District 39 quickly implemented an effective remote learning plan – Recognition of the success in the transition; a huge accomplishment of schools in making this happen
4. Communication and expectations for assignments were clear and easy to follow
5. Teachers are flexible in their assignments/expectations
6. New material is being presented and teachers are continuing with learning standards
7. Remote learning offers students much needed structure

Parents: What would you like to see changed or improved?
(Listed below in order of prevalence.)

1. Find a single, common streamlined place for parents to access assignments
2. Outline assignments at the start of the week to allow for better parent planning
3. Provide more student-to-student socialization opportunities
4. More synchronous connections and/or pre-recorded instruction/lessons
5. Increase differentiation/provide opportunities for enrichment (EC-4)
6. Understand the time constraints/limitations of working parents (EC-4)
7. Understand the constraints/limitations of younger students (EC-4)
8. Consider reducing non-core content subjects (specials) to ease family workload (EC-4)
9. Consideration of IEP/504 plans with respect to remote learning
10. Add long term projects/assignments to remote learning (5-8)
11. Printed materials – parents are divided

Planning Steps

We created the April monthly remote learning calendar with connection, balance and flexibility in mind as our foremost priorities. The calendar is color coded to show the expectations for the three types of school days that occur throughout the month:

- **Peach Days** – Peach Days afford students and families a break from remote learning due to local holidays or district-wide non-instructional days. No remote learning will take place during Peach Days.
- **Green Days** – Remote learning will take place on Green Days.
- **Grey Days** – Monday Grey Days afford students the opportunity to work independently on assigned work. Students may focus on longer project-based activities, wrap up unfinished work from the previous week, work independently on enrichment activities, or complete service learning projects. Our K-4 students will also be provided lessons and projects for Science and Social Studies on these Grey Days. While teachers will maintain office hours on Grey Days, there will not be synchronous (live) core instructional meetings scheduled on these days.

District 39 Remote Learning Calendar
April 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
30 Teacher Work Day	31 *Green* Remote Learning Day	1 *Green* Remote Learning Day	2 *Green* Remote Learning Day	3 *Green* Remote Learning Day
6 *Green* Remote Learning Day	7 *Green* Remote Learning Day	8 *Green* Remote Learning Day	9 *Green* Remote Learning Day	10 Holiday No School
13 Teacher Work Day	14 *Green* Remote Learning Day	15 *Green* Remote Learning Day	16 *Green* Remote Learning Day	17 *Green* Remote Learning Day
20 *Grey* Remote Learning Day	21 *Green* Remote Learning Day	22 *Green* Remote Learning Day	23 *Green* Remote Learning Day	24 *Green* Remote Learning Day
27 *Grey* Remote Learning Day	28 *Green* Remote Learning Day	29 *Green* Remote Learning Day	30 *Green* Remote Learning Day	1 *Green* Remote Learning Day

Peach Day: Non-Instructional Day

Green Day: Remote Learning Day

Grey Day: Remote Learning Day Without Scheduled Meetings; Student/Teacher Work Day

After reviewing all of the feedback, we identified several key themes present throughout the surveys:

Make Learning as Meaningful, Manageable and Connected as Possible

As a district, we continue to focus on providing meaningful and manageable remote learning experiences that nurture strong, positive connections between students and teachers and emphasize the most essential learning targets in each grade level or subject area. We were very pleased that most parents and students report that we are reaching these goals. The majority of our parents report that the amount of work assigned to their child is *about right* each day, that the work assigned is *meaningful*, and that their child is feeling *connected* to their teacher. Although we recognize that this is not the instructional environment any of us hope for, we celebrate the results which indicate that most parents categorize their child's overall remote learning experience as *Good* or *Excellent*, thus far. Similarly, the majority of students categorized their remote learning experience as *Successful* or *Very Successful.* Students like having flexible schedules and choice in their learning and, while they miss their teachers, friends and school in general, they appreciate the meaningful connections they are able to experience within their new remote learning environment.

This positive feedback is affirming to receive and a true testament to the hard work of our teachers and students, as well as the strong partnership and support from our parent community. We will continue to refine our practices to utilize best practices in instruction within a remote learning environment, and to focus on our goals of providing remote learning that is meaningful, manageable, connected and targeted.

Continue to Focus on Student Connections

Students and parents identified opportunities for student connections – both with teachers and other students – as one of the most important elements of remote learning. We value and appreciate these connections with and among students. We will continue to work toward increasing weekly structured opportunities to connect in synchronous ways, with flexibility and understanding that everyone's home life requires balancing multiple responsibilities.

While school devices are intended to be used for instructional purposes only, in these unprecedented times we are allowing students to use devices to connect with their friends, as time allows and as parents permit and supervise. We created a Guide for Helping Children Stay Connected to their Peers that we encourage you to review as a family if you chose to support these connections within your home.

Streamline and Organize Assignment Posting

When asked how District 39 could improve remote learning, many surveyed parents suggested that we consider ways to post student activities and plans in a consistent location and time. Our faculty and staff will look for ways to streamline their communications in predictable ways on a daily or weekly basis as part of our ongoing effort to improve remote learning experiences for families.

Review Expectations for the Instructional Day

Finding a healthy balance between home and work remains a key priority for our entire school community. The emotional health and well-being of all members of our community is critically important. We include Monday Grey Days within our remote learning calendar in order to afford our students (and supporting parents) ample time and flexibility to complete work together as schedules allow. Additionally, we remind all members of our community of our teachers' posted office hours (typically between 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.). We have further clarified expectations for synchronous and asynchronous learning, as well as for student workload.

Continue to Support the Work of Teachers by Providing:

- Adequate plan time, professional development, resources and collaboration opportunities
- Ongoing support from the Curriculum and Instruction Team, especially for Science, Social Studies and enrichment in k-4 and for grading, feedback, curriculum alignment and collaboration in 5-8
- Continuous guidance and support for special educators and related service providers
- Streamlining guidance and reference documents for easy reference to support teaching and learning
- Support for or guidance regarding non-attending/disengaged students
- Information and updates to keep everyone informed
- Recognition, flexibility, and understanding for all within these unprecedented times