20,000 STUDENTS WEIGHED IN:
LEARNING & WELL-BEING
DURING COVID-19

A DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS & IMPLICATIONS
TUESDAY AUGUST 11TH 2020 | 9:30 am PT / 12:30 pm ET

Dr. Kent McGuire | Dr. Shelly Reggiani | Michael McCarthy | Erica Mazzeo
Dr. Jen de Forest | Jimmy Simpson, Jr.
www.youthtruthsurvey.org
@Youth_Truth
#StudentsWeighIn
OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Kent McGuire
Program Director, Education
William and Flora Hewlett foundation
WHO ARE WE LISTENING TO?

20,437 students
166 schools
9 states
LEARNING FROM THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Six Areas of Insight

- COVID Effect
- Learning
- Motivation
- Obstacles to Learning
- Relationships with Teachers
- Belonging & Friendship
the COVID EFFECT
THE COVID-19 EFFECT

“How much has the COVID-19 outbreak affected you?”

46% Moderately or Significantly

9% Not at all
18% A Little Bit
27% Somewhat
27% Moderately
19% Significantly
Students who felt more personally affected by COVID-19 reported less positive learning experiences and less positive well-being.
THE COVID-19 EFFECT

- Elementary: 39%
- Middle: 44%
- High School: 51%
experience of

LEARNING
Half of students said their teachers gave them assignments that really helped them learn.
Students who thrived were self-motivated. They preferred outcomes-based assignments, setting their own pace, and having control over their time.
Half of students said their teachers gave them assignments that really helped them learn. **Only 39% said they learned a lot every day.**
“I LEARN A LOT ALMOST EVERY DAY”
"I LEARN A LOT ALMOST EVERY DAY"
experience of MOTIVATION
Learning and motivation are connected.
LEARNING & MOTIVATION MOVE TOGETHER

Graph showing the percentage of students who learn a lot and are motivated to do school work from 5th to 12th grade. The graph indicates a decreasing trend in both categories as students progress through high school.
Students who typically get lower grades rate their **learning experience** and **motivation** less positively than those who typically get higher grades.
DIFFERENCE BY SELF-REPORTED GRADES

Learn a lot

- 45% A Students
- 11% D Students

Motivation

- 50% A Students
- 13% D Students
experience of

OBSTACLES TO LEARNING
OBSTACLES TO LEARNING

- Distractions at home: 64%
- Feeling depressed, stressed, or anxious: 50%
- Lack of adult to help: 30%
FEELING DEPRESSED, STRESSED, OR ANXIOUS BY GENDER IDENTITY

- Male: 38%
- Female: 57%
- Identifies another way: 70%
English Language Learners faced different obstacles.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS’ OBSTACLES

- Distractions: 53% (ELL), 68% (Non-ELL)
- Lack of adult to help: 43% (ELL), 26% (Non-ELL)
- My own health: 40% (ELL), 24% (Non-ELL)
- Feeling depressed, stressed, or anxious: 40% (ELL), 54% (Non-ELL)

_YouthTruth_  
A NATIONAL NONPROFIT
Black and Latinx Students also reported carrying a heavier “obstacle load” than their white and Asian classmates.
OBSTACLE LOAD BY RACE/ETHNICITY

- Hispanic/Latinx: 3.3
- Black or African American: 3.1
- Asian: 2.5
- White: 2.5
Students described logistical barriers and responsibilities at home that impeded learning.
View this video online:

youthtruthsurvey.org/students-weigh-in
RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS
RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS IMPROVED FOR SOME

More than half – 54% – of students reported that there was an adult at school they could talk to when feeling upset, depressed, or having problems.
RELATIONSHIPS NOW VERSUS USUAL
Student-teacher relationships were reshaped in positive ways as teachers took a more personalized approach.
View this video online:

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experience of

BELONGING & FRIENDSHIP
While relationships with teachers improved for some while learning at home, students across the board reported a diminished sense of belonging in their school community.
“I FEEL LIKE A PART OF MY SCHOOL’S COMMUNITY”
The ability to connect with friends received the lowest average rating of all items in the survey.
71% of students significantly affected by COVID-19 connected with friends less than usual
Profound **sadness** was frequently expressed about being separated from school, friends ("**my people**"), and **activities** that connected to students’ happiness and identities.
View this video online:

youthtruthsurvey.org/students-weigh-in
PANEL DISCUSSION
LEADING THROUGH LISTENING

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Let’s keep the conversation alive...

@Youth_Truth
#StudentsWeighIn

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...with **student voices** at the center.
THANK YOU.
ABOUT YOUTHTRUTH

YouthTruth is a national nonprofit of the Center for Effective Philanthropy that harnesses student and stakeholder perceptions to help educators and education funders accelerate improvements. Through validated survey instruments and tailored professional development, YouthTruth partners with schools, districts, states, and educational organizations to enhance learning for all students. To learn more, visit youthtruthsurvey.org or email hello@youthtruthsurvey.org.