



PUBLIC POLL FINDINGS AND METHODOLOGY

Two-thirds of teachers prefer to teach remotely this fall

NPR/Ipsos poll shows widespread concern for in-person teaching, enforcing social distancing

Topline Findings

Washington, DC, August 6, 2020 – A new NPR/Ipsos poll finds that two-thirds of K-12 teachers prefer fall classes be primarily remote, and even more are concerned about returning to in-person teaching. If schools were to reopen and implement social distancing guidelines, a strong majority of teachers say they would likely have difficulty enforcing the measures among their students, and half predict issues with funding for sufficient masks and cleaning supplies.

Detailed Findings

1. By a nearly two-to-one margin, K-12 teachers prefer to teach fall classes primarily remotely rather than in-person. More than eight in ten are concerned about returning to the classroom this fall.
 - More K-12 teachers prefer to teach fall classes primarily remotely, utilizing distance learning (66%), rather than primarily in-person, in the classroom (34%).
 - Younger teachers more likely to prefer remote teaching, with 74% of those ages 18-34 saying this compared to 62% of those ages 35-54, and 58% of those ages 55 and older.
 - Eighty-two percent of K-12 teachers are concerned about returning to in-person teaching this fall. Around three-quarters are concerned about accessing sufficient personal protective equipment and cleaning materials (78%), risking their own health (77%), and connecting to students while wearing a mask (73%).
2. Though distance learning is preferred, there are widespread concerns about learning gaps and efficacy with virtual learning.
 - Teachers are concerned about many aspects of distance learning, including it causing students to fall behind (84%), creating gaps in opportunities for students (84%), and being an effective way for students to learn (81%).
 - More than eight in ten (83%) are also concerned about connecting with students they've never met this fall if they are remote teaching.
3. Ultimately, teachers feel a great deal of uncertainty right now. Eighty-three percent are concerned about their school changing their coronavirus plans after the year starts, and 72% are concerned about not knowing how or where they will be teaching this fall.
 - Just 11% say their school district's plan for how to start the school year during the pandemic is finalized and clear. Eighty-four percent of teachers say the plans are still in development, with 40% saying they are clear so far and 44% saying they are unclear.
 - Forty percent of K-12 teachers feel they have a voice in how their school district responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, with just 8% strongly agreeing this is the case.
 - Currently, fewer than one in five teachers (16%) say they would not return to teaching if their school reopened in the fall, similar to findings from [another Ipsos poll of teachers](#) conducted in May.





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4. If schools reopened this fall, most teachers say they are likely to struggle with enforcing the rules.
 - Eighty-four percent of teachers say they are likely to have difficulty enforcing social distancing among their students. Elementary (88%) and middle (87%) school teachers are more likely to say this than high school teachers (78%).
 - Just over half of teachers (55%) say it is likely that their school district would have enough funding to provide teachers with masks and cleaning supplies.
5. Even though most teachers feel prepared to teach online this fall if they had to, less than half say their school district has provided them with sufficient training.
 - Most teachers feel more prepared to teach online this fall if they had to (81%) and think their school district's online or distance learning effort is headed in the right direction (70%).
 - Nevertheless, more than half agree that they cannot properly do their job since starting to teach online (55%), and just 39% think their school district trained them well for online learning.
 - Similar to their assessment of the previous school year, 37% say their school district has provided sufficient training for the upcoming school year.

These are the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between July 21-24, 2020 on behalf of NPR. For this survey, a sample of 505 teachers of grades K-12 age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 5.0 percentage points for all respondents.

For full results, please refer to the following annotated questionnaire:



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Full Annotated Questionnaire

1. Which of the following comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right? Given everything we know now, would you prefer that fall classes be...

	Total (N=505)
Primarily remote, distance learning	66%
Primarily in-person, in the classroom	34%

2. If your school was to reopen and implement social distancing guidelines in the fall, how likely are the following?

Total Likely Summary

	Total	May 18-21, 2020 (N=505)
I would have difficulty enforcing social distancing among my students	84%	87%
My school district would have enough funding to provide teachers with masks and cleaning supplies	55%	-
I would not return to teaching	16%	18%

- a. I would have difficulty enforcing social distancing among my students

	Total	May 18-21, 2020
Very likely	49%	48%
Somewhat likely	35%	39%
Not very likely	10%	8%
Not at all likely	6%	3%
Don't know	*	2%
<i>Likely (Net)</i>	84%	87%
<i>Not likely (Net)</i>	16%	11%

- b. I would not return to teaching

	Total	May 18-21, 2020
Very likely	6%	6%
Somewhat likely	10%	13%
Not very likely	25%	26%
Not at all likely	53%	43%
Don't know	6%	12%
<i>Likely (Net)</i>	16%	18%
<i>Not likely (Net)</i>	78%	69%

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- c. My school district would have enough funding to provide teachers with masks and cleaning supplies

	Total
Very likely	24%
Somewhat likely	31%
Not very likely	21%
Not at all likely	20%
Don't know	4%
<i>Likely (Net)</i>	<i>55%</i>
<i>Not likely (Net)</i>	<i>41%</i>

3. How much do you trust each of the following to look out for the best interests of you and your students?

Total Trust Summary

	Total
Your principal/other administrators in your school	86%
Your local teachers' union	71%
Your state teachers' unions	68%
National teachers' unions	62%
Your state's governor	56%
Your state Department of Education leadership	52%
The U.S. Department of Education leadership	29%

- a. Your principal/other administrators in your school

	Total
A great deal	47%
A fair amount	39%
Not very much	10%
None at all	3%
Don't know	1%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>86%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>13%</i>

- b. Your local teachers' union

	Total
A great deal	30%
A fair amount	41%
Not very much	12%
None at all	6%
Don't know	10%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>71%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>18%</i>

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c. Your state teachers' unions

	Total
A great deal	25%
A fair amount	44%
Not very much	15%
None at all	8%
Don't know	8%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>68%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>23%</i>

d. Your state Department of Education leadership

	Total
A great deal	11%
A fair amount	41%
Not very much	32%
None at all	12%
Don't know	4%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>52%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>44%</i>

e. National teachers' unions

	Total
A great deal	19%
A fair amount	43%
Not very much	18%
None at all	9%
Don't know	10%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>62%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>28%</i>

f. The U.S. Department of Education leadership

	Total
A great deal	6%
A fair amount	23%
Not very much	27%
None at all	40%
Don't know	4%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>29%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>67%</i>

g. Your state's governor

	Total
A great deal	16%
A fair amount	40%
Not very much	25%
None at all	17%
Don't know	2%
<i>A great deal/Fair amount (Net)</i>	<i>56%</i>
<i>Not very much/None at all (Net)</i>	<i>42%</i>

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4. How concerned, if at all, are you with returning to in-person teaching this fall?

	Total
Very concerned	49%
Somewhat concerned	33%
Not very concerned	12%
Not concerned at all	6%
Don't know	*
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>82%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>17%</i>

5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Total Agree Summary

	Total	May 18-21, 2020	Jan 11-17, 2019
I feel more prepared to teach online this fall, if I had to	81%	-	-
I think my school district's online or distance learning effort is headed in the right direction ¹	70%	N=472 73%	-
If I could pick a career all over again, I would still decide to be a teacher	70%	77%	73%
I cannot properly do my job from home while also taking care of my own child(ren)	N=244 57%	-	-
I cannot properly do my job since starting to teach remotely ¹	55%	N=472 62%	-
I was satisfied with my school's distance learning curriculum last spring	53%	-	-
I feel comfortable sending my own child or children to school this fall	N=219 43%	-	-
I have a voice in how my school district responds to the COVID-19 pandemic	40%	-	-
My school district trained me well for online or distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic ¹	39%	N=472 42%	-
My school district has provided sufficient training or preparation for the upcoming school year	37%	-	-

¹ In poll conducted May 18-21, only teachers who said their school district had developed an alternative teaching arrangement, like distance learning or virtual classes, were asked this question.

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- a. My school district trained me well for online or distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total	May 18-21, 2020 (N=472)
Strongly agree	8%	11%
Somewhat agree	31%	32%
Somewhat disagree	34%	34%
Strongly disagree	25%	22%
Don't know	2%	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>42%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>55%</i>

- b. My school district has provided sufficient training or preparation for the upcoming school year

	Total
Strongly agree	9%
Somewhat agree	28%
Somewhat disagree	35%
Strongly disagree	26%
Don't know	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>37%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>60%</i>

- c. I cannot properly do my job since starting to teach remotely

	Total	May 18-21, 2020 (N=472)
Strongly agree	13%	20%
Somewhat agree	42%	43%
Somewhat disagree	27%	27%
Strongly disagree	15%	8%
Don't know	3%	3%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>62%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>42%</i>	<i>35%</i>

- d. **[IF CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD]** I cannot properly do my job from home while also taking care of my own child(ren)

	Total (N=244)
Strongly agree	21%
Somewhat agree	35%
Somewhat disagree	24%
Strongly disagree	18%
Don't know	1%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>57%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>42%</i>

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- e. **[IF CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD AGES 4-17]** I feel comfortable sending my own child or children to school this fall

	Total (N=219)
Strongly agree	16%
Somewhat agree	27%
Somewhat disagree	29%
Strongly disagree	27%
Don't know	1%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>43%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>56%</i>

- f. I think my school district's online or distance learning effort is headed in the right direction

	Total	May 18-21, 2020 (N=472)
Strongly agree	17%	21%
Somewhat agree	54%	52%
Somewhat disagree	17%	18%
Strongly disagree	6%	4%
Don't know	7%	5%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>22%</i>

- g. If I could pick a career all over again, I would still decide to be a teacher

	Total	May 18-21, 2020	Jan 11-17, 2019
Strongly agree	46%	47%	45%
Somewhat agree	25%	30%	28%
Somewhat disagree	16%	13%	14%
Strongly disagree	7%	5%	6%
Don't know	6%	4%	7%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>77%</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>20%</i>

- h. I have a voice in how my school district responds to the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total
Strongly agree	8%
Somewhat agree	32%
Somewhat disagree	32%
Strongly disagree	27%
Don't know	1%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>58%</i>

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i. I feel more prepared to teach online this fall, if I had to

	Total
Strongly agree	30%
Somewhat agree	51%
Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	7%
Don't know	1%
Agree (Net)	81%
Disagree (Net)	18%

j. I was satisfied with my school's distance learning curriculum last spring

	Total
Strongly agree	13%
Somewhat agree	41%
Somewhat disagree	28%
Strongly disagree	16%
Don't know	2%
Agree (Net)	53%
Disagree (Net)	44%

6. How concerned, if at all, are you regarding each of the following?

Total Concerned Summary

	Total
Ongoing changes to guidance and regulations due to COVID-19	90%
Students falling behind due to distance learning	84%
Online or distance learning creating gaps in opportunities for my students	84%
Connecting with students you've never met this fall, if you are remote teaching	83%
Your school changing their coronavirus plans after the school year starts	83%
Online or distance learning being an effective way for students to learn	81%
Accessing sufficient personal protective equipment and cleaning materials for teaching in person	78%
Risking your own health by returning to school	77%
Connecting with students you've never met this fall, if we are all wearing masks	73%
Not knowing how or where you will be teaching this fall	72%
Layoffs, furloughs or pay cuts happening in your district	65%
Having to use online resources for teaching this fall	61%

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- a. Connecting with students you've never met this fall, if you are remote teaching

	Total
Very concerned	47%
Somewhat concerned	36%
Not very concerned	11%
Not concerned at all	5%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>83%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>16%</i>

- b. Connecting with students you've never met this fall, if we are all wearing masks

	Total
Very concerned	34%
Somewhat concerned	39%
Not very concerned	19%
Not concerned at all	6%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>25%</i>

- c. Students falling behind due to distance learning

	Total
Very concerned	51%
Somewhat concerned	33%
Not very concerned	12%
Not concerned at all	2%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>84%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>15%</i>

- d. Online or distance learning creating gaps in opportunities for my students

	Total
Very concerned	46%
Somewhat concerned	38%
Not very concerned	12%
Not concerned at all	4%
Don't know	*
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>84%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>16%</i>

- e. Having to use online resources for teaching this fall

	Total
Very concerned	20%
Somewhat concerned	42%
Not very concerned	27%
Not concerned at all	11%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>61%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>38%</i>

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f. Ongoing changes to guidance and regulations due to COVID-19

	Total
Very concerned	44%
Somewhat concerned	46%
Not very concerned	8%
Not concerned at all	1%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>90%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>9%</i>

g. Not knowing how or where you will be teaching this fall

	Total
Very concerned	40%
Somewhat concerned	32%
Not very concerned	15%
Not concerned at all	12%
Don't know	*
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>72%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>28%</i>

h. Accessing sufficient personal protective equipment and cleaning materials for teaching in person

	Total
Very concerned	41%
Somewhat concerned	37%
Not very concerned	16%
Not concerned at all	6%
Don't know	*
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>78%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>22%</i>

i. Your school changing their coronavirus plans after the school year starts

	Total
Very concerned	39%
Somewhat concerned	44%
Not very concerned	12%
Not concerned at all	4%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>83%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>16%</i>

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j. Risking your own health by returning to school

	Total
Very concerned	49%
Somewhat concerned	28%
Not very concerned	17%
Not concerned at all	5%
Don't know	*
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>77%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>23%</i>

k. Layoffs, furloughs or pay cuts happening in your district

	Total
Very concerned	28%
Somewhat concerned	36%
Not very concerned	24%
Not concerned at all	11%
Don't know	1%
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>65%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>34%</i>

l. Online or distance learning being an effective way for students to learn

	Total
Very concerned	35%
Somewhat concerned	46%
Not very concerned	14%
Not concerned at all	5%
Don't know	*
<i>Concerned (Net)</i>	<i>81%</i>
<i>Not concerned (Net)</i>	<i>19%</i>

7. To the best of your knowledge, is your school district's plan for how to start the school year during the coronavirus pandemic...

	Total
Still in development and unclear	44%
Still in development, but clear so far	40%
Finalized, and clear	11%
No plan has been communicated to me	6%

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8. How well, if at all, do you understand how your school district intends for you to teach in the fall?
Select one.

	Total
Very well	15%
Somewhat well	36%
Not too well	31%
Not well at all	14%
Don't know	3%
<i>Well (Net)</i>	<i>51%</i>
<i>Not well (Net)</i>	<i>46%</i>

9. When it comes to returning to in-person teaching, how big of a **safety concern** are the following?
Please rank them in order from 1 to 4, with 1 meaning the item you see as the biggest safety concern and 4 meaning the item you see as the smallest safety concern.

Rank 1/2 Summary

	Total
The health of my family	75%
My own health	63%
The health of my students	40%
The health of my colleagues	22%

a. My own health

	Total
Rank 1	33%
Rank 2	30%
Rank 3	17%
Rank 4	20%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>63%</i>

b. The health of my family

	Total
Rank 1	44%
Rank 2	31%
Rank 3	14%
Rank 4	11%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>75%</i>

c. The health of my students

	Total
Rank 1	16%
Rank 2	24%
Rank 3	37%
Rank 4	23%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>40%</i>

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d. The health of my colleagues

	Total
Rank 1	7%
Rank 2	16%
Rank 3	32%
Rank 4	45%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>22%</i>

10. When it comes to returning to in-person teaching, how big of a **teaching concern** are the following? Please rank them in order from 1 to 4, with 1 meaning the item you see as the biggest teaching concern and 4 meaning the item you see as the smallest teaching concern.

Rank 1/2 Summary

	Total
Supporting my students' emotional and social well-being	63%
Enforcing new rules concerning masks and social distancing in the classroom	55%
Being able to effectively address students' learning losses	48%
Lacking sufficient funding and resources to teach during a pandemic	34%

a. Enforcing new rules concerning masks and social distancing in the classroom

	Total
Rank 1	32%
Rank 2	23%
Rank 3	25%
Rank 4	19%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>55%</i>

b. Supporting my students' emotional and social well-being

	Total
Rank 1	36%
Rank 2	27%
Rank 3	24%
Rank 4	13%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>63%</i>

c. Lacking sufficient funding and resources to teach during a pandemic

	Total
Rank 1	14%
Rank 2	20%
Rank 3	25%
Rank 4	41%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	<i>34%</i>

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d. Being able to effectively address students' learning losses

	Total
Rank 1	18%
Rank 2	29%
Rank 3	25%
Rank 4	27%
<i>Rank 1 or 2</i>	48%

11. How many years have you taught K-12 students?

	Total
1-9 years	45%
10-19 years	28%
20-29 years	19%
30-39 years	7%
40-49 years	2%
50-55 years	-
Mean	13.6

12. Do you primarily teach...

	Total
Elementary school students (Approximately kindergarten-5 th grade)	48%
Middle school students (Approximately 6 th -8 th grade)	12%
High school students (Approximately 9 th -12 th grade)	40%

13. Do you primarily teach...

	Total
Elementary/all subjects	33%
Science, technology, engineering or math	21%
English	11%
History, civics, or other social services	10%
Arts or music	4%
Foreign language	3%
Athletics or physical education	2%
Other	15%

14. Do you belong to a teachers' union?

	Total
Yes	46%
No	51%
Don't know	1%
Prefer not to say	1%



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15. Is the school where you do most of your teaching a Title 1 school?

	Total
Yes	49%
No	40%
Don't know	9%
Prefer not to say	2%

16. Do you or does someone in your household have a chronic health condition?

	Total
Yes, I do	21%
Yes, someone in my household does	28%
No	55%
Prefer not to say	2%





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About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between July 21-24, 2020, on behalf of NPR. For this survey, a sample of 505 teachers of grades K-12 age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. Partial findings from two Ipsos polls conducted May 18-21, 2020 and January 11-17, 2019, among roughly 500 teachers of grades K-12 18+, are included as well.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos' online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Amparo Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing a sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. For this poll, posthoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, race/ethnicity, union membership, and grade taught.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online non-probability polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 5.0 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=505, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-6.5 percentage points).

Additionally, both Ipsos polls conducted May 18-21, 2020, and January 11-17, 2019, have credibility intervals of plus or minus 5.0 percentage points for all respondents.

For more information on this news release, please contact:

Chris Jackson
Senior Vice President, US
Public Affairs
+1 202 420-2025
chris.jackson@ipsos.com

Mallory Newall
Director, US
Public Affairs
+1 202 420-2014
mallory.newall@ipsos.com

Kate Silverstein
Media Relations Specialist, US
Public Affairs
+1 718 755-8829
kate.silverstein@ipsos.com





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