District Survey 2020:
Highlights of Family & Student Survey Results

Needham Public Schools
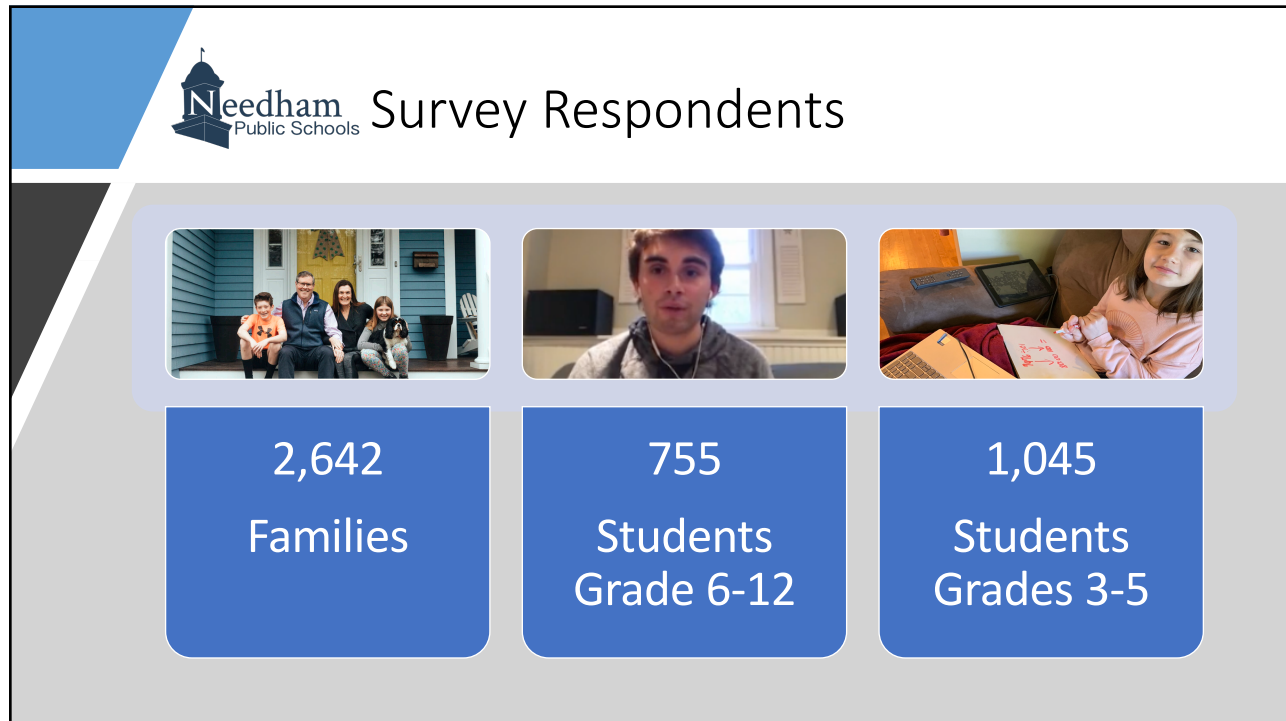
Survey administered June 13 – June 26, 2020

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Purpose of District Survey

- District Survey conducted biannually since 2001
- Gather feedback from families and students on their learning experiences; this year with a focus on Remote Learning
- **Use survey findings to inform decisions and make improvements as we prepare for next school year**
- Identify areas of strength and areas that need attention
- Compare results by subgroups with a lens on our framework for equity (Portrait of A Needham Graduate) – analysis to continue through summer

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Survey Respondents

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| 2,642 Families | 755 Students Grade 6-12 | 1,045 Students Grades 3-5 |

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2020 Topline Family Survey Results

- Data on **Family situation** in terms of access to remote learning, as well as concerns & supports during the period of remote learning
- Parent/guardian **perceptions of student engagement**, i.e., how attentive and invested their children are in remote learning
- **Feedback on School resources** in terms of instructional staff, programs, services, supports
- Comments on **what worked well/challenges with remote learning** & **suggestions for next year**
- Comparison to 2018 Survey Results on 13 items (snapshot of remote vs in-school experience; indicates **impact of the health crisis**)
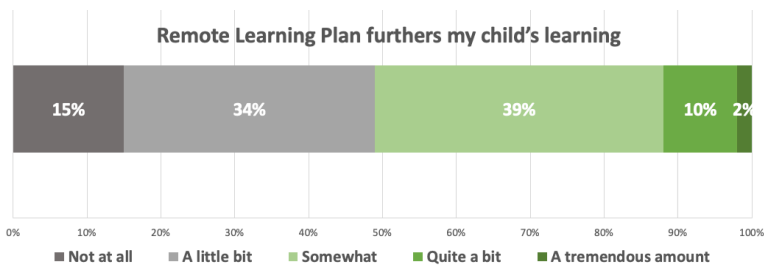
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Respondent FAMILIES from All Schools

SCHOOL	# Parent/Guardian Respondents *	RESPONSE RATES
Broadmeadow	268	49%
Eliot	201	49%
Mitchell	243	50%
Newman	309	44%
Sunita Williams	277	53%
High Rock	230	46%
Pollard	381	43%
High School	724	44%
TOTAL #	2,642	46%

* In the 2018 District Survey, we received 1,940 responses from Parents/Guardians - a 34% Response Rate.

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Who are the 2,642 Family Respondents?

- Almost all (98.5%) have access to Technology from home
  (92% have reliable *high-speed* internet)

- All grade levels (between 7% to 9% per grade level within total respondents, except Seniors/Post grads and Pre-K/K at 3% representation)

- 425 have children receiving special education services
  (18% of respondents compared with 17.3% of the district population)

- 100 have children receiving English Language Learner services
  (surveys provided in Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Chinese)

- Mix by gender and race generally comparable to school populations

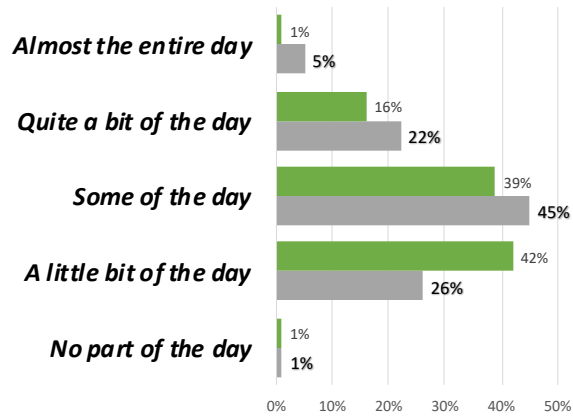**Remote Learning Plan furthers my child's learning**

15%	34%	39%	10%	2%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Not at all   ■ A little bit   ■ Somewhat   ■ Quite a bit   ■ A tremendous amount

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How much of the day do your children spend learning remotely or completing schoolwork?

Families with children in elementary level	Families with children in secondary level

Percent respondents by portion of the day:

Almost the entire day — 1% / 5%

Quite a bit of the day — 16% / 22%

Some of the day — 39% / 45%

A little bit of the day — 42% / 26%

No part of the day — 1% / 1%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%

Percent respondents by estimated hours per day:

7 to 12 hours per day =
3% families in PreK-5; 9% families in gr 6-12

4 to 6 hours per day =
19% families in PreK-5; 36% families in gr 6-12

More than 2 but less than 4 hours per day =
26% families in PreK-5; 44% families in gr 6-12

Between 1 and 2 hours per day =
48% families in PreK-5; 9% families in gr 6-12

Less than an hour per day =
4% families in PreK-5; 1% families in gr 6-12

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2,642 Family Respondents

*Most helpful communications: Superintendent emails 86.7% and School emails 86.4% of respondents (all other channels between 5%-12% of respondents)

Survey items with highest favorable ratings
– Areas of Strength –

87.1%   School values diversity of children's backgrounds (90% in 2018)

83.9%   My child feels a sense of belonging at school (90% in 2018)

80.8%   Communication effective during period of remote learning* (89% in 2018)

80.7%   Teachers support my child during period of remote learning

74.5%   My child not stressed/overwhelmed by remote learning (84% in 2018 not stressed in school)

71.1%   Extra support for my child available when needed (93% in 2018)

(For each item, % of responses in the top 3 measures on a 5-point scale are shown)

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2,642 Family Respondents

Survey items with lowest favorable ratings
- Areas Needing Attention -

67.6%   My child is well prepared for next academic year (91% in 2018)
62.9%   Family able to support child's learning at home (93% in 2018)
61.9%   Family able to motivate child to try hard on schoolwork (89% in 2018)
59.1%   School's system of providing feedback to my child is fair (91% in 2018)
54.0%   My child is comfortable asking teachers for help (80% in 2018)
52.8%   Family able to ensure child's learning needs are met (78% in 2018)
50.3%   Concerned about my child's social & emotional wellbeing
48.5%   My child seems interested in activities or assignments (84% in 2018)
41.8%   Concerned about my child's academic growth
41.5%   My child's schoolwork is challenging
38.9%   My child is motivated by the remote learning experience (87% in 2018 re: motivated in school)

(For each item, % of responses in the top 3 measures on a 5-point scale are shown)

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Supports for a *sub-set* of Families:
% reporting child's needs were adequately met during period of remote learning

Programs/Services	# Parent/Guardian Respondents (out of 2,642 total)	% Favorable response 2020	% Favorable response 2018
Nutrition Services	188	**70%**	81%
Nursing	146	**59%**	96%
Guidance	938	**70%**	86%
Special Education	524	**69%**	-
Library/Media	789	**63%**	94%
Technology (devices & technical support)	851	**74%**	-
Extra-curricular activities (clubs, musical groups, teams)	1006	**49%**	85%

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Open-Ended Family Comments:
representative quotes of most frequently cited themes

- ## What Worked Well…

  *"Things improved greatly when kids were required to attend the **Zoom sessions**. The sessions made it seem more like a real class."*

  *"I can't say enough good things about her **Teachers** and the lessons, **support**, and feedback they have offered her at all hours of the day."*

  *"**Consistent class schedule**. He had a sense of where he was supposed to be and what he was supposed to be doing."*

  *"Having the option to complete her schoolwork on her own time and at a time when it is convenient for our family. Both parents work so we really needed that **flexibility**."*

  *The scheduled class meetings and **live learning sessions with his class and teachers** worked well for my son.*

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Summary of Open-Ended Family Comments:
WHAT WORKED WELL DURING REMOTE LEARNING
(1,876 respondents)

KEY THEMES	# of iterations	KEY THEMES	# of iterations
Technology (device provided; benefits of Google Classroom, Zoom, Seesaw, learning apps, PowerSchool, videos)	391	**Weekly or daily expectations/ assignments**	158
Teacher access/support (classroom teaching and/or 1:1 with teacher, guidance, coach, counselor, specialist, special education support)	280	**Family support** (parents provide students with learning supports, tutors, dedicated study space, additional class outside school, etc.)	106
Schedule (consistent, flexible, good pace, like starting school later)	241	**Structure** (routines and requirements for in class, for small groups, independent work, projects, Advisory, Morning Meeting, etc.)	71
Group learning/Social connection (online version of the classroom experience)	193	**Curriculum** (history, English, literacy, math, science, multidisciplinary, project-based, music, etc.)	58
Student efficacy (success in being independent learners and resilient through this health emergency)	167	**Other** (less stress, free time, communication, resources, safe at home, etc.)	74

226 open-ended comments indicated "nothing worked well"

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Open-Ended Family Comments:
representative quotes of most frequently cited themes

- Challenges for your child…

    *"Before the spring, my kids were self-motivated A students. Since the pandemic, my children have become completely disengaged and not interested in learning; **they are depressed and scared by world events. They rarely see or connect with friends**."*

    *"**Motivating when classes are pass/fail is next to impossible**. Teachers need to set expectations higher. Teachers need to provide instruction on new material in addition to website links."*

    *"**Both parents continue to work full time & cannot help with learning**. It is heartbreaking."*

    *"My son **struggles with organization**, so getting a week's worth of work on a Monday is difficult for him to budget time accordingly. He was consistently late handing in assignments."*

    *"It has been **extremely challenging for my child to do the work independently**. She really only thrived with actual face to face interactive learning."*

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Summary of Open-Ended Family Comments:
CHALLENGES FOR YOUR CHILD DURING REMOTE LEARNING
(2,014 respondents)

KEY THEMES	# of iterations	KEY THEMES	# of iterations
Social Isolation (missing their friends, teachers, classmates, clubs, teams; not feeling part of school community)	364	**Issue with Schedule or Work Expectations/Completion**	138
Staying Focused/Motivated (feeling distracted, fatigued, disinterested; struggling to engage/participate in learning activities)	357	**Technology Issues** (problems with devices, internet, learning platforms, apps)	133
Decreased Support (needing more help from their teachers on assignments, practicing skills, learning new material)	259	**Limited Live Instruction** (feeling they want or need more time with teachers and classmates for interactive learning)	132
Not Learning/Not Challenged (perceiving that content is at the wrong level, too easy, repetitive, or boring; lacking opportunities for growth)	211	**Not Knowing Progress: Grades/Feedback Needed** (lack of communication re: quality of work / value of efforts)	79
Not Able To Work Independently (child too young or lacking the skills to do what's expected with no adult support at home)	175	**Limited Special Education/ Student Support Services**	56
Time Management / Workload (perceiving they have too much schoolwork to do or they have too little schoolwork to fill the day)	139	**Other** (Screen Time, Executive Function skills, Mental Health, Access to Resources, College Preparedness, Self Care, etc.)	216

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2020 Topline Student Survey Results

- **Student efficacy**: How much students believe they can succeed in their learning
- **Student engagement**: How attentive and invested students feel about their learning
- **Student views on diversity and equity** in the Needham Public Schools
- Comments on what **worked well/challenges with remote learning** & **suggestions for next year**
- Comparison to 2018 Survey Results (snapshot of remote vs in-school experience for students on 10 survey items for gr 3-5 and 11 survey items for gr 6-12)

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Respondent STUDENTS from All Schools

SCHOOL	# Student Respondents (grades **3-12**) *	RESPONSE RATES
Broadmeadow	222	78%
Eliot	174	84%
Mitchell	172	65%
Newman	163	55%
Sunita Williams	195	74%
High Rock	105	21%
Pollard	272	31%
High School	250	15%
TOTAL #	**1,800 ***	**41% ***

* Total includes 119 Elementary and 128 Secondary level students who did not identify their grade/school

** 2018 District Survey had 2,982 student respondents which was a 69% Response Rate

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Who are the 1,800 Student Respondents?

- Almost all students (98.5%) have access to Technology from home
- Majority of students find it easy to use technology at home
- 80 Students receive special education services
- 172 are English Language Learners
- 49 are Boston resident students
- Double the number of female versus male respondents in secondary level; gender for elementary level generally comparable to schools
- Mix by race generally comparable to schools

Easy to use technology at home

	Not easy at all	A little bit easy	Somewhat easy	Quite easy	Extremely easy
Grades 6-12	1.%	6.4%	17.2%	52.3%	22.5%
Grades 3-5	1.%	12.8%	25.6%	39.6%	20.2%

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How much of the day do students perceive they spend learning remotely or completing schoolwork?

Grade 3-5 Students | Grade 6-12 Students

Percent respondents by portion of the day:

	Grade 3-5	Grade 6-12
Almost the entire day	3%	7%
Quite a bit of the day	15%	38%
Some of the day	54%	41%
A little bit of the day	28%	12%
No part of the day	0%	1%

Percent of Grade 6-12 Students by estimated hours per day:
* estimated hours not asked of Grade 3-5 students

7 to 12 hours per day = 11%

4 to 6 hours per day = 45%

More than 2 but less than 4 hours per day = 29%

Between 1 and 2 hours per day = 14%

Less than an hour per day = 1%

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Survey items with highest favorable ratings
– Areas of Strength –

1,045 Student Respondents Grades 3 to 5

98.9% **Teacher wants me to do well**

98.6% I'm able to get online & find my schoolwork

97.8% Adults show me respect

97.6% I come prepared to learn in online classes

96.8% I put effort into my schoolwork

95.4% Students show me respect (90% in 2018)

95.3% I can complete all the work teacher asks me to do at home (95% in 2018 for work in class)

94.9% **Teacher seems excited to be teaching online** (90% in 2018 for teaching in school)

(For each item, % of responses in the top 3 measures on a 5-point scale are shown)

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1,045 Student Respondents in Grades 3 to 5

Survey items with lowest favorable ratings
- Areas Needing Attention -

79.6% Ease of doing schoolwork from home

79.6% Excited about participating in online classes (86% in 2018 re: excited about participating in school)

78.4% Interested in online classes (85% in 2018 re: interested in school)

77.9% Students can talk with each other about different races or cultures

75.1% Comfortable sharing thoughts about different races or cultures

59.7% Chance to do more challenging work

59.3% School books and videos include people like me

44.7% **Adult at home helps me**

(For each item, % of responses in the top 3 measures on a 5-point scale are shown)

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Survey items with highest favorable ratings
– Areas of Strength –

755 Student Respondents in Grades 6 to 12

95.1%	**Adults show me respect** (90.0% *Students show me respect*; 88% in 2018)
94.0%	Adults treat people from different races, cultural backgrounds, identities fairly (90.7% *Students treat people fairly*)
92.0%	Easy to use remote learning tools school provides (e.g., device, Google Classroom, Zoom, etc.)
91.3%	I come prepared to learn in online classes
90.8%	Teachers support me during remote learning
90.8%	Feel like I belong at my school (86% in 2018)
90.6%	I put effort into my schoolwork
90.3%	Easy to get extra support when needed (91% in 2018 for getting extra support in school)
89.1%	**Teacher seems excited to be teaching online** (86% in 2018 for teaching in school)

(For each item, % of responses in the top 3 measures on a 5-point scale are shown)

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755 Student Respondents in Grades 6 to 12

Survey items with lowest favorable ratings
- Areas Needing Attention -

73.0%	Teachers' expectations of me during this period of remote learning (95% in 2018 re: Teachers' expectations of you in school)
73.0%	Feedback during this period of remote learning
70.1%	Not stressed/overwhelmed by remote learning (54% in 2018 re: Not stressed/overwhelmed by school)
57.9%	Interested in remote learning (76% in 2018 re: interested in school)
56.3%	Opportunity to do more challenging work
54.1%	Remote learning is challenging
51.1%	Eager to participate in online classes (71% in 2018 re: eager to participate in school)
41.2%	Adult at home helps me

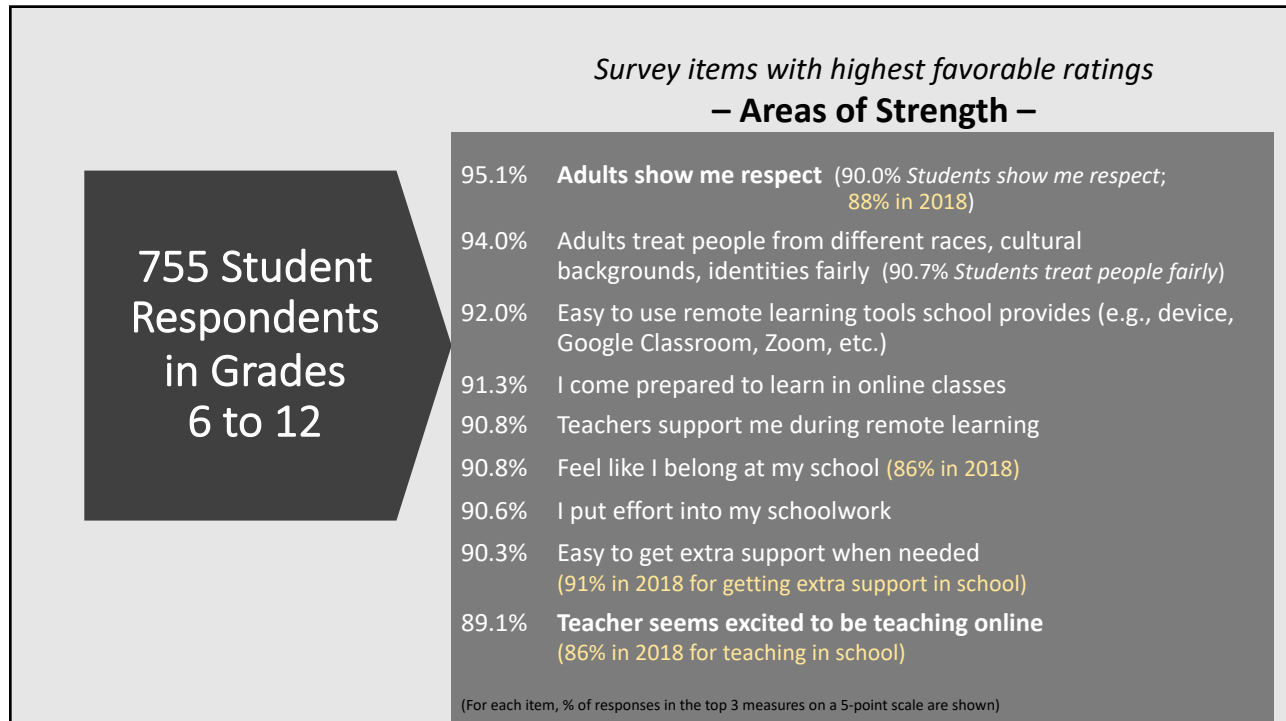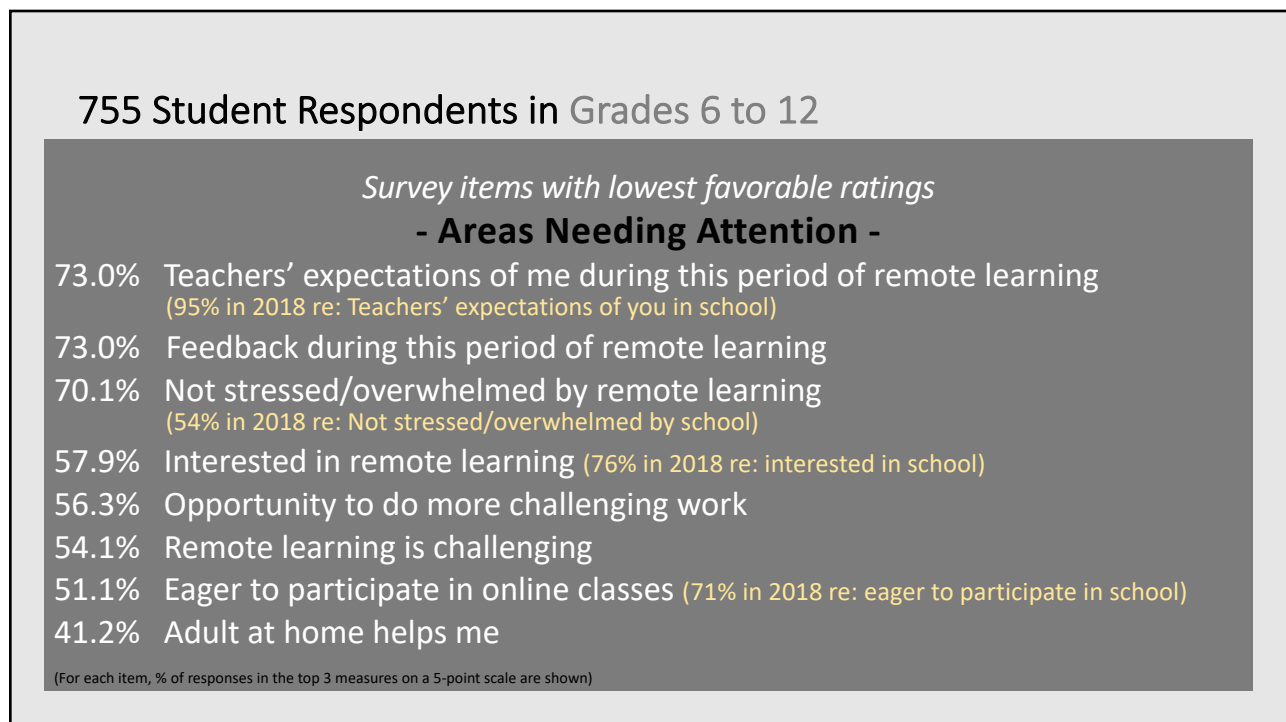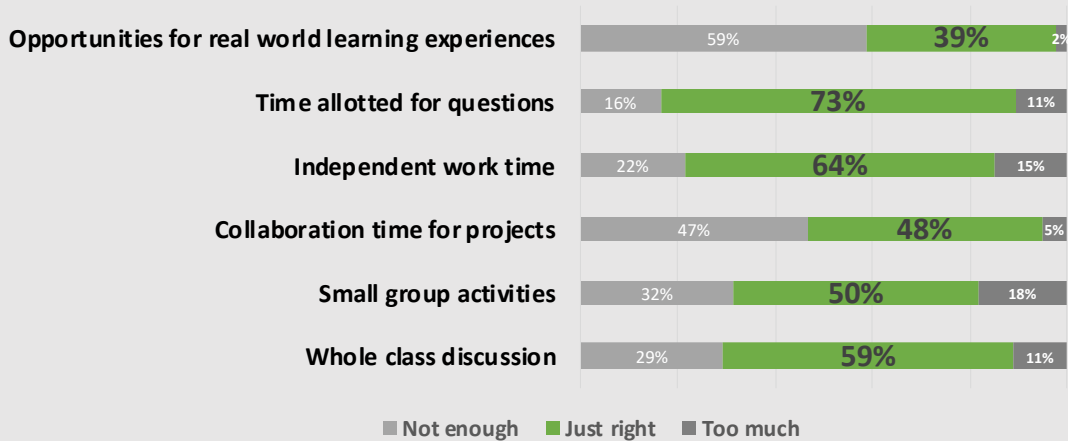(For each item, % of responses in the top 3 measures on a 5-point scale are shown)

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Learning Experience for Students in Grades 6-12:
In thinking about the majority of your online classes, how is the balance for:

	Not enough	Just right	Too much
Opportunities for real world learning experiences	59%	39%	2%
Time allotted for questions	16%	73%	11%
Independent work time	22%	64%	15%
Collaboration time for projects	47%	48%	5%
Small group activities	32%	50%	18%
Whole class discussion	29%	59%	11%

■ Not enough ■ Just right ■ Too much

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Open-Ended STUDENT Comments:
representative quotes of most frequently cited themes

• **LIKE MOST ABOUT LEARNING FROM HOME…**

*"I like the ability to **sleep in** and **work at my own pace**."*

*"I like that **I get to plan when I do assignments** for the week."*

*"I like that I can reach out to my friends or teachers if I need help, but I can also **work independently and do my own thing**."*

• **CHALLENGES WITH LEARNING FROM HOME…**

*"I get lonely, **miss going to school**, talking to friends, & walking around to talk to my teachers."*

*"It's really **hard to stay focused and motivated** when it's just through a computer."*

*"Although the teachers have been doing a really good job, it's not the same at all. Its really **challenging and not very enjoyable to learn new material on your own**."*

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Summary of Open-Ended STUDENT Comments: LIKE MOST ABOUT REMOTE LEARNING
(940 respondents in Grade 3-5 and 654 respondents Grade 6-12)

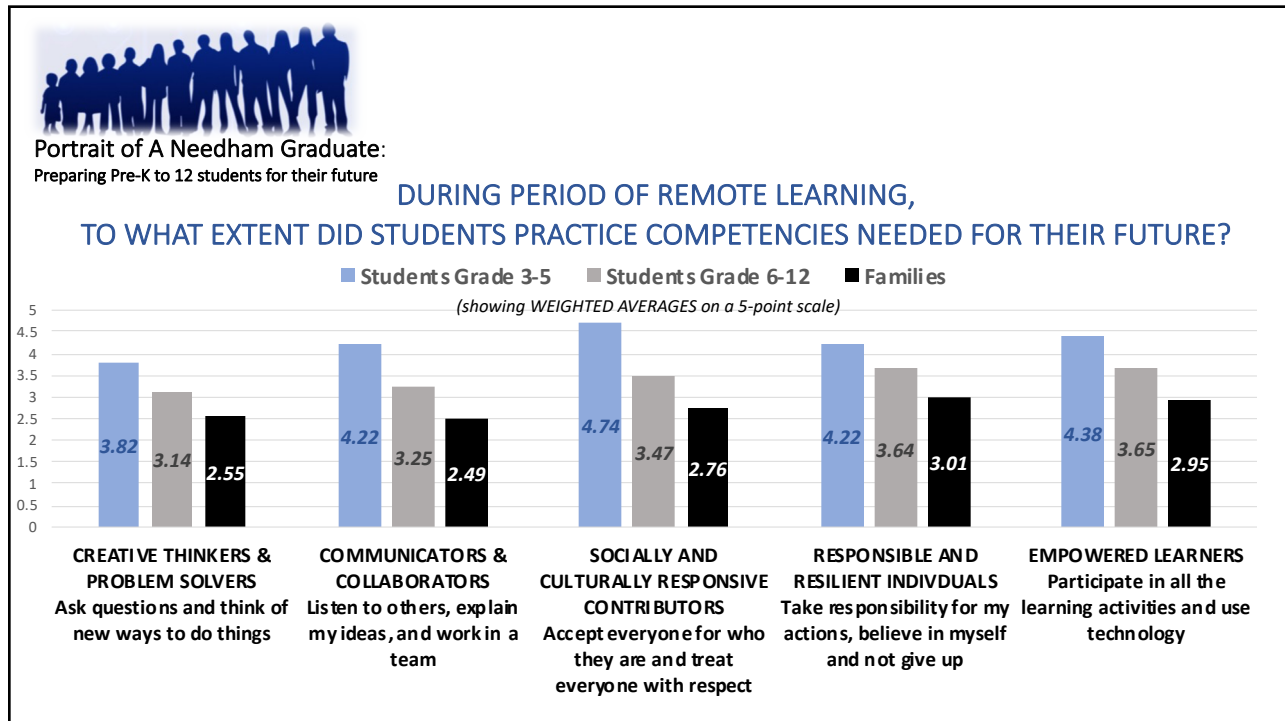| KEY THEMES Grade 3-5	# of iterations	KEY THEMES Grade 6-12	# of iterations
Flexible Schedule (students like pacing their own work, being able to finish fast/early, and sleeping later)	349	**Flexible Schedule** (students like getting all work at the beginning of the week, pacing their own work, and sleeping later)	264
Schoolwork / Curriculum (students enjoy work because they like a specific subject, it's fun, easy, different, and/or involves technology)	215	**Independence** (students enjoy freedoms like choosing work to complete, planning their day, following their own routines, giving themselves breaks, exploring other interests)	133
Space To Work (comfortable being able to relax at home without distractions while doing their schoolwork)	124	**Space To Work** (comfortable being able to relax at home while doing their schoolwork)	49
Independence (students enjoy freedoms like working on their own, giving themselves breaks and playtime, exploring other interests)	113	**Technology** (benefits of Zoom, Google Classroom, quick online access to resources and assignments)	38
Other (Family Time and Support, Teacher Support, Less Worry, Feeling Safe)	94	**Other** (Less Stress, No Grades, Easy or Less Work, Teacher Support, Working with Classmates/Friends etc.)	114

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Summary of Open-Ended STUDENT Comments: CHALLENGES WITH REMOTE LEARNING
(942 respondents in Grade 3-5 and 660 respondents Grade 6-12)

KEY THEMES Grade 3-5	# of iterations	KEY THEMES Grade 6-12	# of iterations
Missing School (missing their teachers, classrooms, in-school routines, special school programs, recess)	204	**Staying Focused/Motivated** (feeling distracted, bored; struggling to engage/participate)	157
Missing Friends (not being able to see or play with friends or classmates)	197	**Managing/Completing Work Independently**	116
Needing Help with Learning or from the Teacher (not understanding directions on assignments; not able to problem solve; not getting questions answered live/real time)	189	**Decreased Teacher Support** (needing more help to show work-in-progress and problems; getting questions answered live/real time)	110
Technology (technical issues with devices or learning apps; too much screen time; disliking Zoom)	105	**Not Learning / Not Challenged** (perceiving that lesson is repetitive, not new, too easy)	64
Homework (finding work too easy; too little work; too much work; not liking certain subjects or differences from classroom work)	97	**Technology Issues** (technical issues with devices or learning apps; too much screen time; disliking Zoom)	61
Other (Boredom, Distractions, Family issues, Stress, Schedule/Routine)	114	**Other** (Social Isolation, Workload, Communication struggles with teachers/peers, Schedule inconveniences, Stress, etc.)	138

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Portrait of A Needham Graduate:
Preparing Pre-K to 12 students for their future

**DURING PERIOD OF REMOTE LEARNING,
TO WHAT EXTENT DID STUDENTS PRACTICE COMPETENCIES NEEDED FOR THEIR FUTURE?**

■ Students Grade 3-5   ■ Students Grade 6-12   ■ Families

(showing WEIGHTED AVERAGES on a 5-point scale)

	CREATIVE THINKERS & PROBLEM SOLVERS	COMMUNICATORS & COLLABORATORS	SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CONTRIBUTORS	RESPONSIBLE AND RESILIENT INDIVDUALS	EMPOWERED LEARNERS
Students Grade 3-5	3.82	4.22	4.74	4.22	4.38
Students Grade 6-12	3.14	3.25	3.47	3.64	3.65
Families	2.55	2.49	2.76	3.01	2.95

CREATIVE THINKERS & PROBLEM SOLVERS
Ask questions and think of new ways to do things

COMMUNICATORS & COLLABORATORS
Listen to others, explain my ideas, and work in a team

SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CONTRIBUTORS
Accept everyone for who they are and treat everyone with respect

RESPONSIBLE AND RESILIENT INDIVDUALS
Take responsibility for my actions, believe in myself and not give up

EMPOWERED LEARNERS
Participate in all the learning activities and use technology

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In Summary

Although remote learning was challenging for most, families and students shared positive examples of effective approaches (e.g., how staff supported students, organized and provided educational materials; how students practiced being empowered learners and resilient individuals through this health crisis). The switch to remote learning also led to expanded use of technology-based learning management tools and flexibility to accommodate families' diverse schedules. As we move forward, we recognize that the district must address areas of remote learning that still need attention.

While planning for the 2020-2021 school year, we will seek opportunities to grow and we will prepare for both in-school and remote learning -- with a focus on health and safety, student engagement, student efficacy, as well as equity and inclusion in the Needham Public Schools.

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Open-Ended Family & Student Comments:
KEY SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT YEAR
(from 1709 Families, 406 Students grade 6-12, 940 Students grade 3-5)

Every suggestion has merit and will be considered whether it was mentioned once or many times by our stakeholders.

- REOPEN BUILDINGS – consider models for social distancing that fit a variety of family needs/preferences
- ADVANCE NOTICE – communicate fall plans as soon as possible so families can arrange childcare
- ASSESSMENTS – upon return to school, determine where each student is at academically & their health needs
- CHILDCARE FOR TEACHERS – staff need childcare in order to do their jobs and provide effective teaching
- COACHING FOR TEACHERS – observe/evaluate teachers & specialists on their remote learning practices
- COLLEGE PROCESS – support Juniors w/ COVID-related college requirements; continue with graduation parades
- COMMUNICATION – quick, clear, succinct; one point-of-entry to find information
- CONTINGENCY PLAN – prepare to pivot quickly between in-school and remote learning
- COVID WAIVER – families sign so district is not liable (waiver process like sports teams are using)
- CURRICULUM – focus on 4 core subjects if remote learning continues; re-establish scope & sequence; incorporate more challenging work; advance remote learning & in-school learning at same pace
- ENRICHMENTS – partner with companies for programming beyond curriculum (e.g., MasterClass)
- GRADING/EVALUATION – rubrics, grading, feedback, tutoring; not Pass/Fail; fix PowerSchool

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Open-Ended Family & Student Comments:
KEY SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT YEAR
(from 1709 Families, 406 Students grade 6-12, 940 Students grade 3-5)

- HEALTH & SAFETY – follow health protocols; balance health & academics; mask-free for students; disinfect and use FDA-approved air-cleaning devices in schools
- LATER START TIME – developmentally appropriate to start later and give students needed rest
- LEARNING BUDDIES – support younger students & Boston-resident students with buddies online & in school
- LIVE INTERACTION WITH TEACHERS – increase use of Zoom for an online version of classroom routines and lessons; live stream teaching from in-school & record teachers' lessons
- MEDICAL CONCERNS – families with medical issues should be able to continue with remote learning
- ONE-TO-ONE ONLINE MEETINGS – build relationships with teachers/counselors; opportunity for support and differentiated learning
- ONLINE LEARNING SCHOOLS – utilize well-established online schools (e.g., Khan Academy)
- ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS/TOOLS – staff, students, families need timely communication, info access, schedules
- PARENT PARTNERSHIP – provide same info to parent/student, expectations of parent role, parent-teacher meetings, TAs for working parents, remote "pod learning" w/4 students per house & parents rotating supervision
- PARENT SUPPORT – parents can teach children to wear masks; fundraise/ask for budget increase to cover costs
- REMOTE LEARNING OPTION – families can opt out of returning to school for health / social-emotional reasons

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Open-Ended Family & Student Comments:
KEY SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT YEAR
(from 1709 Families, 406 Students grade 6-12, 940 Students grade 3-5)

- RESOURCES OFFLINE – library books, textbook, worksheets, science equipment, art supplies, manipulatives, etc.
- SCHEDULE – resume typical school day or ramp up amount of time for online teaching & learning
- SCHOOL COMMUNITY – opportunities to come together: library visits, science demo, sports, afterschool, etc.
- SCREEN TIME – minimize as much as possible; avoid Zoom fatigue; avoid third-party videos
- SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT – address trauma with re-entry plan for mental health, orientation, mentors, small groups, opportunities to socialize, outreach from Advisors, yoga, expressive arts, etc.
- SPECIAL EDUCATION – provide same amount of time to students as designated on their IEPs
- STUDENT AND STAFF DIVERSITY – teach about cultures, genders, white privilege, racial equity, social justice, American history from more than one angle; hire diverse workforce
- STUDENT PLACEMENT – keep students with last year's classmates; NHS class sizes larger w/remote learning
- TEACHER TRAINING/PD – best practices for remote learning; designate certain teachers as well-suited for RL
- TECHNOLOGY – evaluate/integrate platforms; parental control; more devices if needed; tech training for students
- TRANSPORTATION – limit bus loads to half (bringing 1 group home and then next group)
- VACCINE – keep students at home until it's safe or there is a vaccine

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NEXT STEPS

- School-specific reports of survey results
- Analysis by sub-groups (grade, race, gender, special education, ELL)
- Action plans in response to areas needing attention
- **Incorporate suggestions into decision-making for school reopening in the fall**

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