

Lessons Learned during Virtual Education in Spring 2020

Families would like more social engagement for their children, more touchpoints with the teacher, and fewer portals/log-ins

DME Family Engagement Survey

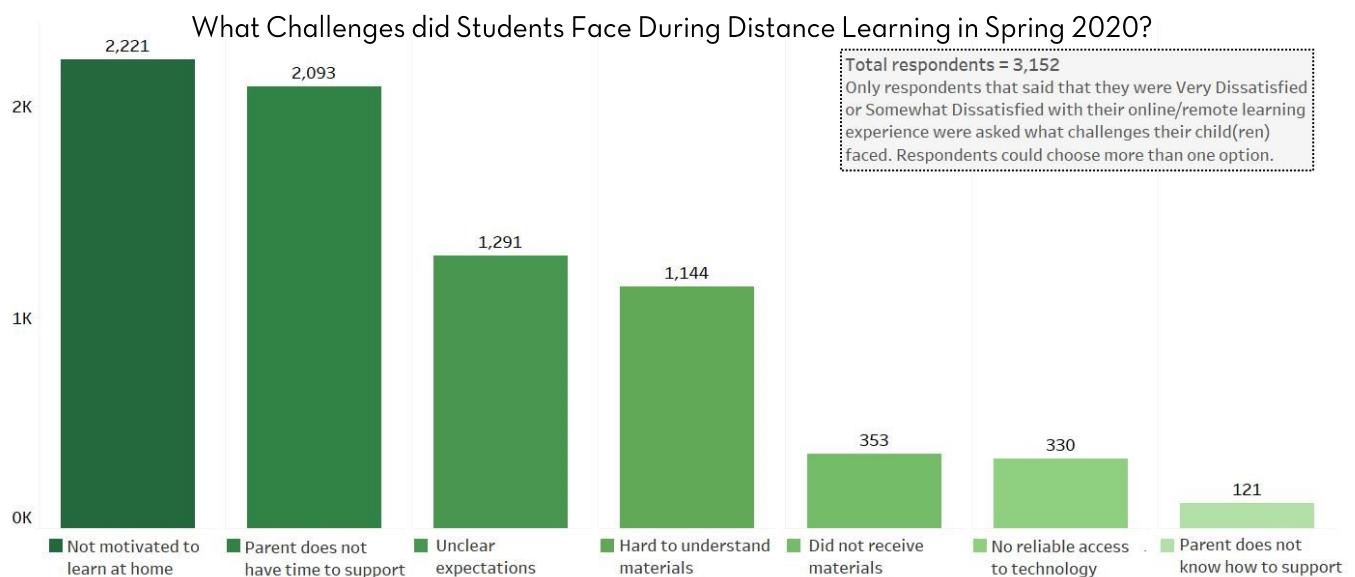
In June 2020, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) surveyed public school families online to assess their children’s virtual learning and to gauge preferences for reopening schools for SY2020-21. More than 15,000 families with students in DCPS and public charter schools completed the survey, totaling over 25,000 students. Families needed to have access to the internet through either a phone or other device to complete the survey so the results may not reflect the experiences of all students; nevertheless, the survey responses provide important insights and lessons for the upcoming school year.

Approximately 60% of families surveyed reported being satisfied with their virtual learning experience since schools closed in March. Satisfaction varied by grade band and by ward, with greater satisfaction reported from families of middle school and high school students and from families in Wards 7 and 8.

Virtual Learning Challenges at Home

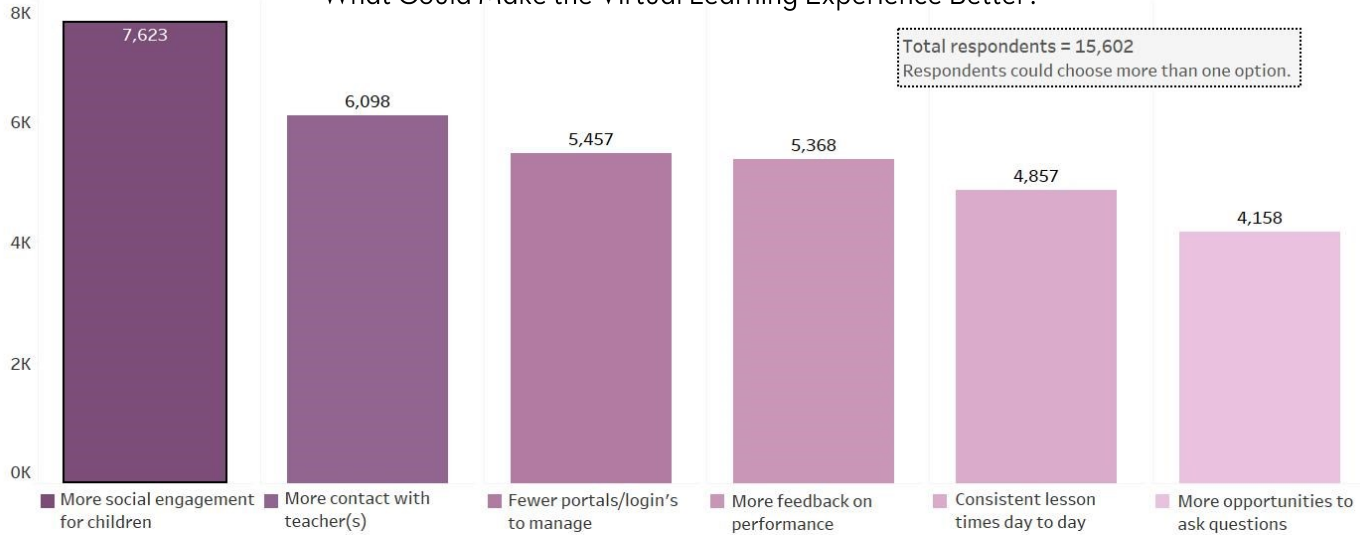
For respondents that were Somewhat Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied, the survey asked what challenges their child(ren) faced during virtual learning. Of the 3,152 families that were dissatisfied with virtual learning,

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Source: DC Schools Family Survey, June 2020

What Could Make the Virtual Learning Experience Better?



over 2,200 (70%) reported that their child (ren) were not motivated to engage in learning at home. Nearly 2,100 (67%) of the parents/guardians said that they did not have enough time to facilitate or support learning at home for their child(ren).

The next two challenges most selected by dissatisfied families were that the school's expectations were unclear (1,291 parents/guardians, or 41% of responses) and that the materials provided were difficult to understand (1,144 parents/guardians, or 36% of responses), both factors that are more within the school's control.

Areas for Improvement

Regardless of whether a family was satisfied with their virtual learning, all respondents were asked how the experience could be improved. Nearly half (7,623 of 15,602) of families said they would like more social engagement for their child(ren). More

contact with the teacher(s), fewer portals and log-ins, and more feedback on performance were the next most selected responses, at 6,098, 5,457, and 5,368 respectively.

Educator and Student Recommendations

During a series of 16 focus groups conducted by the DME in April–June 2020 representing 133 participants, educators and students also suggested areas of improvement for virtual learning.

Educators suggested a budget to purchase technology supplies as well as a range of professional development opportunities. Students would like additional supports outside of academics, including college and career support. Both teachers and students would like enhanced communication and the opportunity to engage in the decision-making, as well a higher priority on personal wellness.

Summary Survey Results available [here](#).

Feedback: Email Edsight.DME@dc.gov