



# K-12 Education Issues Arising from COVID-19

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# BACKGROUND ON EPIC



- The **Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC)** at Michigan State University is an independent, non-partisan research center that operates as the strategic research partner to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and works to provide evidence to education policymakers and stakeholders across Michigan.
- EPIC is devoted to **research with consequence** and the idea that rigorous evidence can improve education policy and practice and, ultimately, students' lives.
- EPIC conducts **original research** using a variety of methods to **produce new insights** that decision-makers can use to create and implement policy.

# OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS RESEARCHERS

## Research with Consequence

- As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt education across the country, educators in every school, district, and state have been working tirelessly to **provide students with high quality learning experiences** and plan for the upcoming school year in the midst of great uncertainty.
- We believe it critical for those of us engaged in research to throw our efforts behind helping educators with this daunting task. At EPIC, that means doing what we can in Michigan to help policymakers and practitioners use the **best available evidence to make the most informed choices possible**.

# OVERVIEW FOR TODAY'S SESSION

1. **What are the greatest concerns about the provision of K12 education during the pandemic?**
2. What are states doing in relation to K12 education during the pandemic?
3. What did Michigan districts do last spring?
4. What did Michigan districts plan to do this fall?

# LEARNING CONCERNS

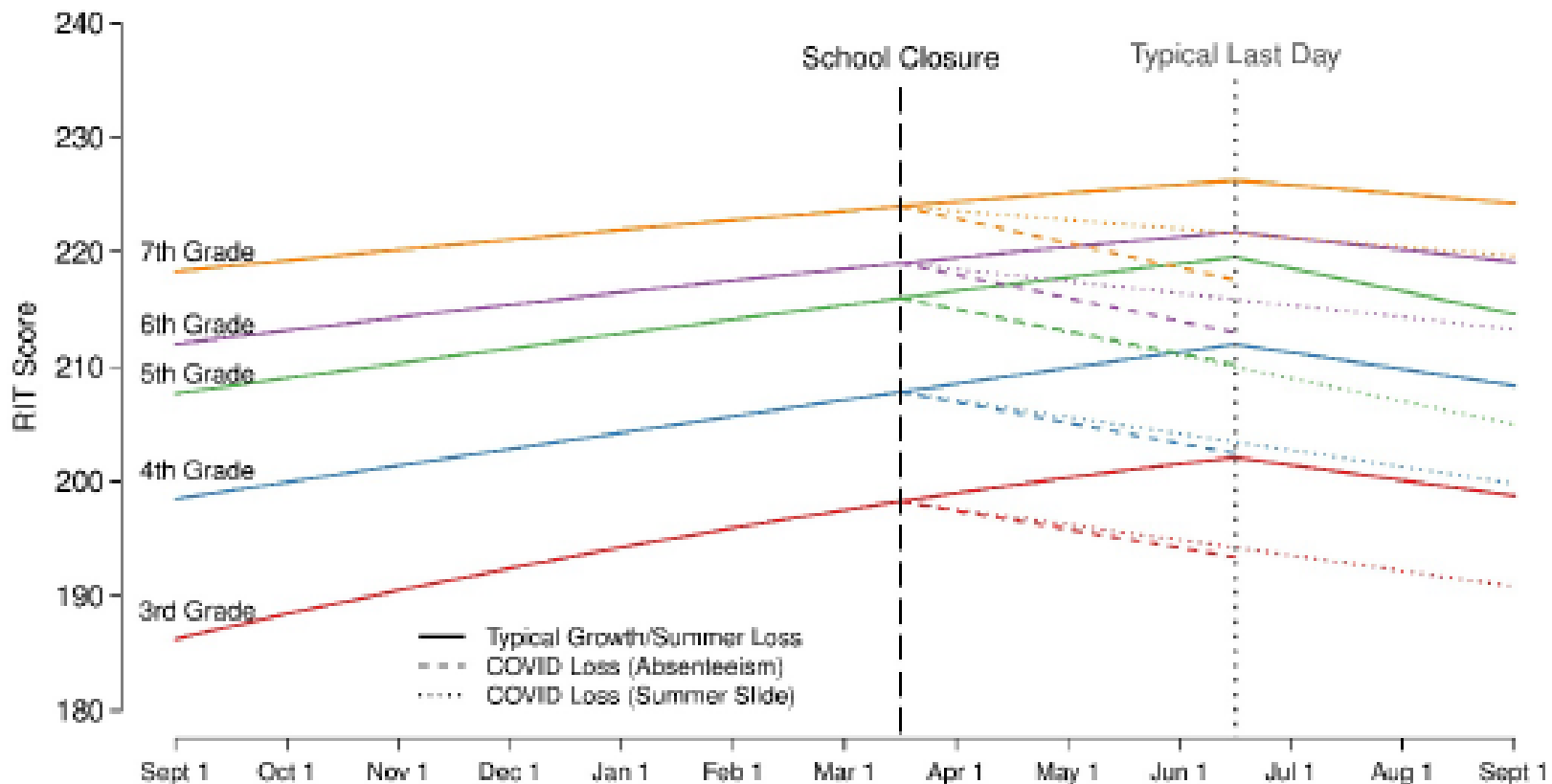
## Policy and research conversations have surfaced several concerns with pandemic learning

- The pandemic is likely to widen disparities in K-12 education.
- Technology is a key educational resource for families learning from a distance. If students lack access to internet or electronic devices, distance learning can be restricted.
- All educators, but in particular teachers of students with disabilities, homeless students, and English Learners need guidance to support their students.
- As educators work to teach their students during the pandemic, it will be critical to also address students' nutritional, socio-emotional, and mental health needs.
- Districts and schools will need more money, not less, to provide a high-quality K-12 education to students, and especially to students in traditionally underserved districts.

# PROJECTED LEARNING LOSS FROM MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2020

National projections using NWEA data suggest substantial learning loss in light of the pandemic

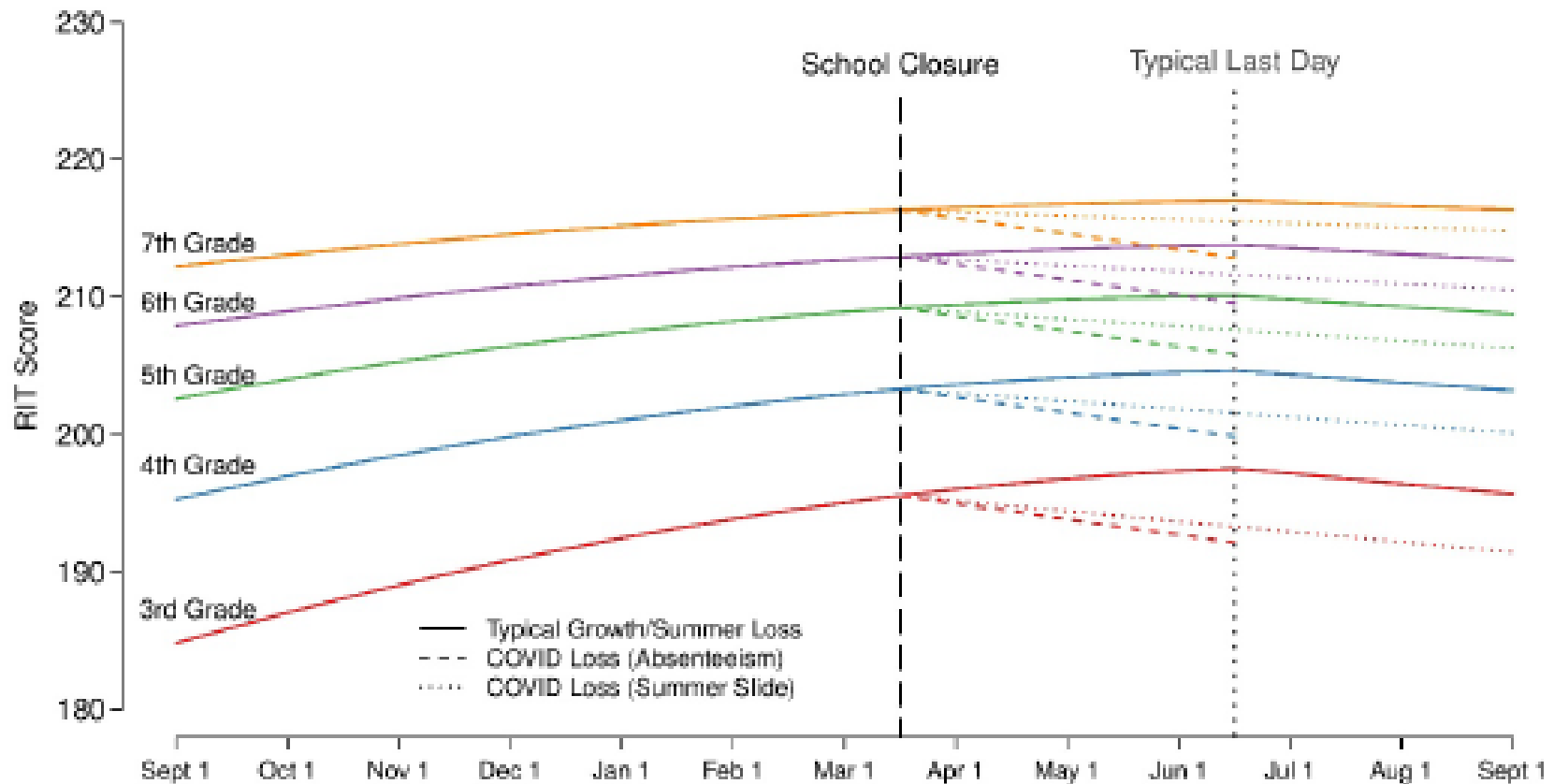
(A) Mathematics Projections



# PROJECTED LEARNING LOSS FROM MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2020

National projections using NWEA data suggest substantial learning loss in light of the pandemic

## (B) Reading Projections



Kuhfeld et al. (2020). *Projecting the Potential Impact of COVID-19 School Closures on Academic Achievement*. (EdWorking Paper: 20-226). Annenberg Institute, Brown University.

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# DATA SOURCES

**EPIC used a combination of public and collected data**

## New Data Collected by EPIC Researchers

### State database of legislation

- EPIC and IPPSR created database of key state legislation related to K12 education during the pandemic

### Continuity of Learning (COL) Plans

- EPIC coded and constructed a database of the content of all 813 COL plans submitted in spring 2020

### Educator Surveys

- EPIC surveyed K-8 teachers & principals in May-June 2020

### Extended Continuity of Learning (ECOL) Plans

- EPIC coded instructional modality and constructed a database of the content of all 831 ECOL plans submitted in August 2020

## District Characteristics from Outside Sources

### State Education Data

- Sector & Locale of District
- Student demographic composition (percent economically disadvantaged, underrepresented minority)
- Average student achievement (M-STEP ELA)

### U.S. Census Data

- Percent of households with broadband internet subscriptions

# STATE DIRECTIVES RELATED TO K12 EDUCATION IN FALL 2020

## Most states leave decisions to local control

- Nearly all states (N=47) deferred to local districts on school reopening for fall 2020
- Few states have provided detailed guidance about school and district operations, e.g., required hours of instruction, graduation requirements, promotion and retention decisions, attendance, and grading.
- Some states have made cuts to their K-12 education budgets (notably Colorado, Georgia, Missouri, and Mississippi), but more states are using the CARES funds to either fill those cuts (i.e., Colorado) or supplement K-12 education budgets (i.e., Arizona, Florida).



# MICHIGAN DIRECTIVES RELATED TO K12 EDUCATION IN FALL 2020

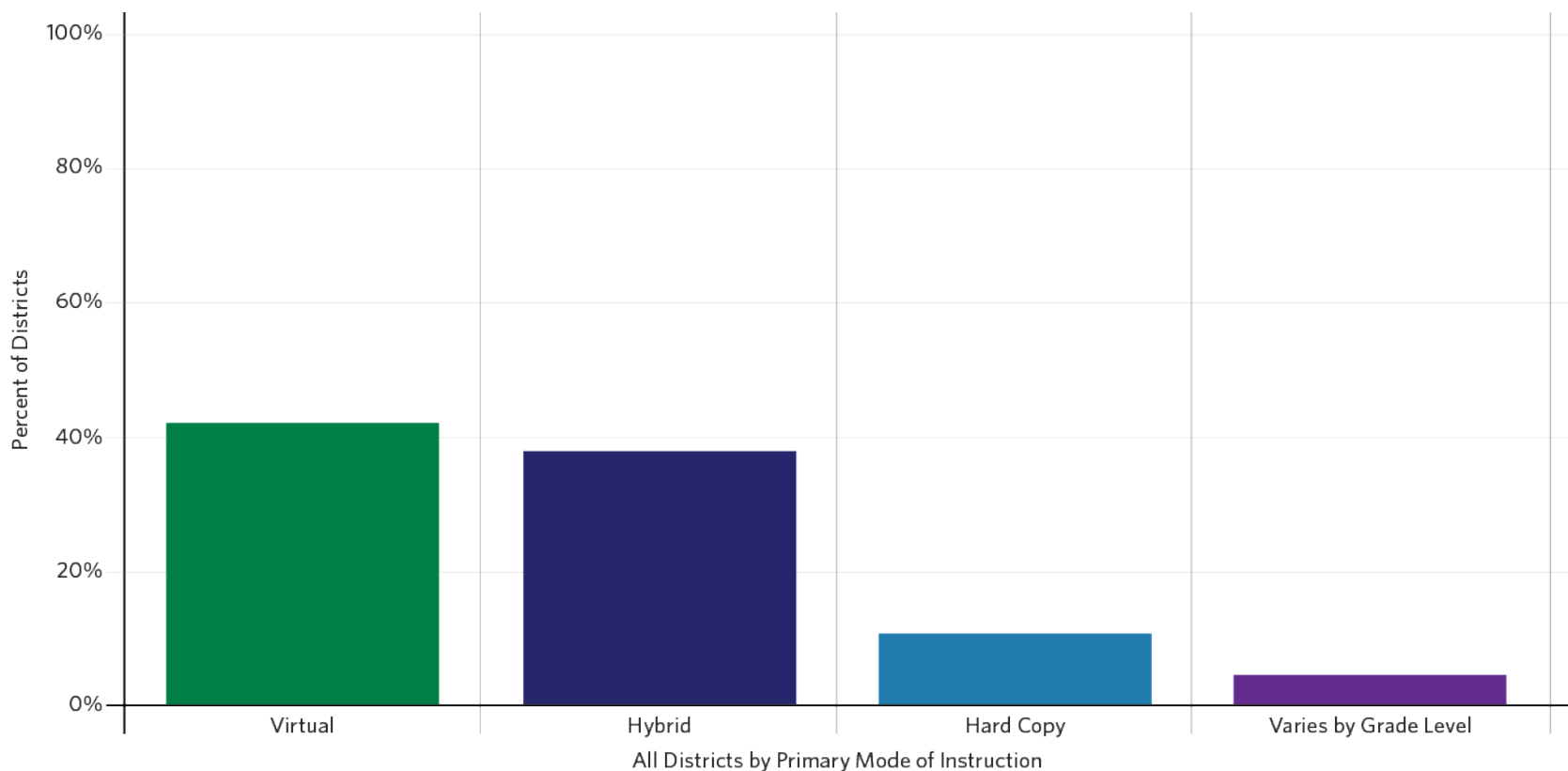
- Michigan's Return to Learn Roadmap is one of the most comprehensive sets of guidance, largely providing suggestions not requirements.
- Michigan has provided legislation about attendance, instructional hours, and benchmark assessments
  - HB 5912 waived instructional hours for the 2020-2021 academic year and attendance requirements for funding have been waived if two-way interactions occurs between each student and their teacher once a month.
  - HB 5913 required the administration of benchmark assessments within the first 9 weeks and determined a new method of funding based on count days.
- Michigan's K-12 education budget was level funded.

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# PRIMARY MODE OF INSTRUCTION

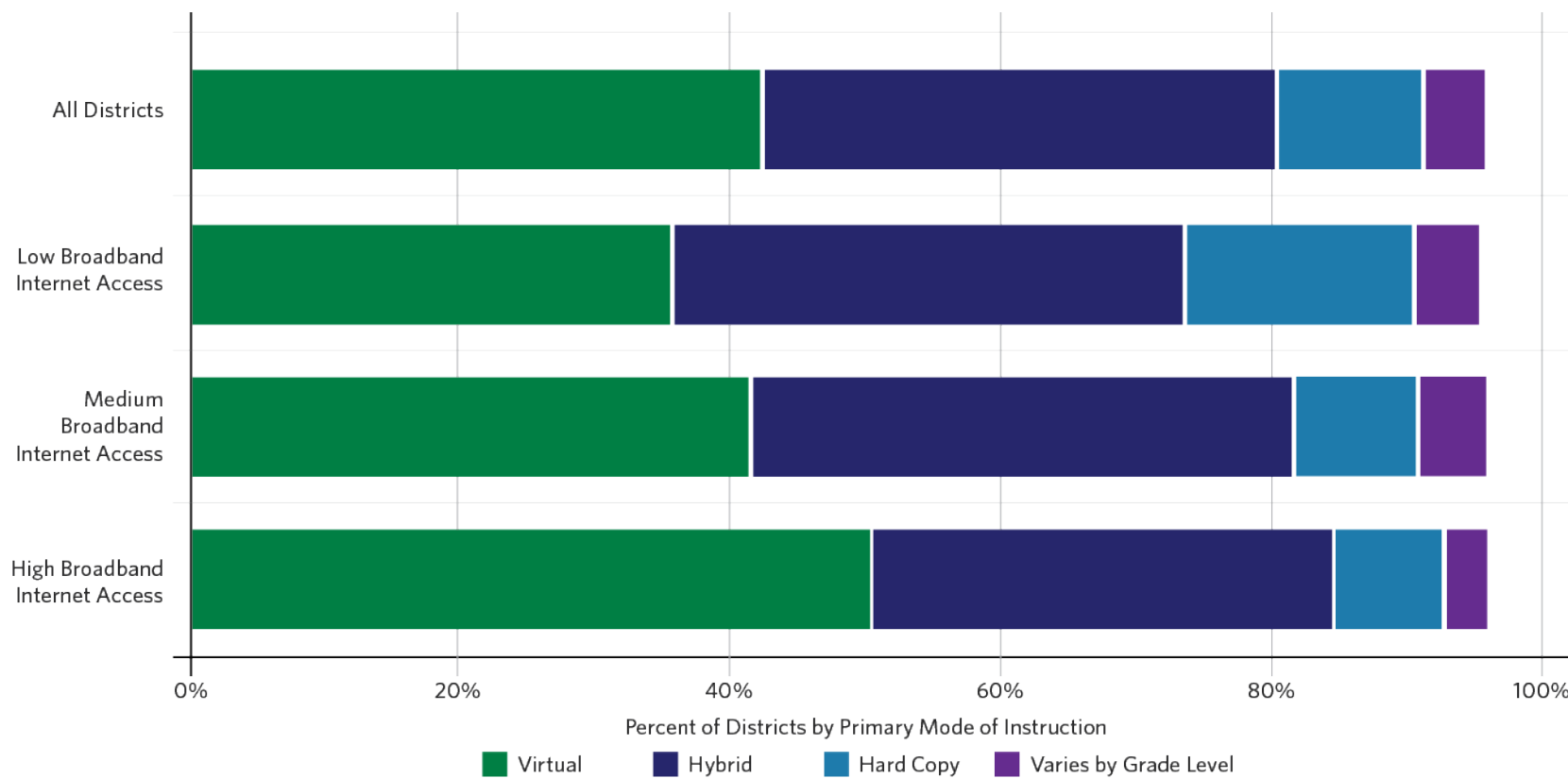
Most districts planned on using virtual instruction entirely or in part to educate students in spring 2020



*Hybrid* in spring 2020 was defined as a mix of **online** and **hard copy** instruction and instructional materials.

# PRIMARY MODE OF INSTRUCTION

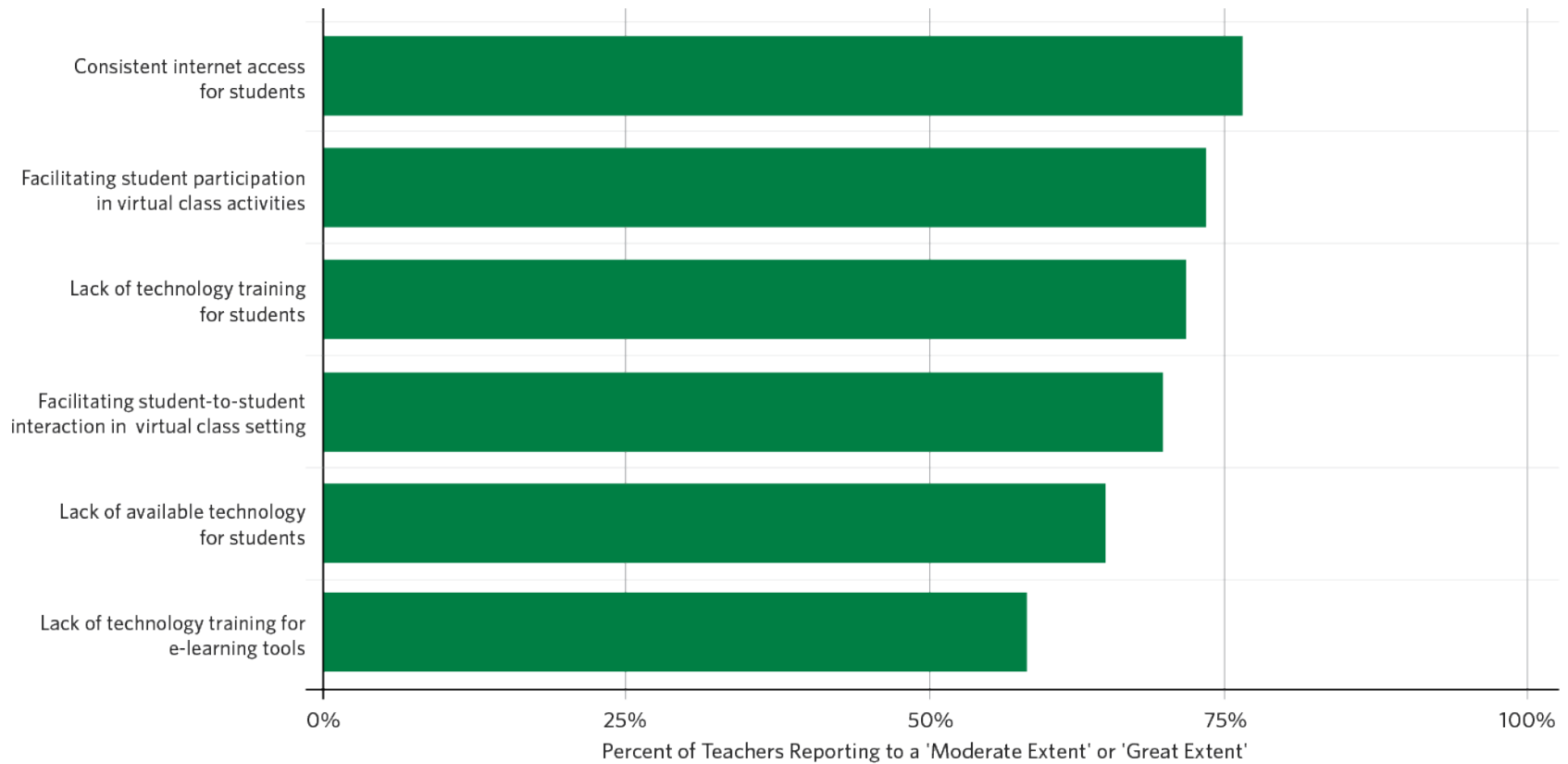
The planned use of virtual instruction varied by broadband internet access



*Hybrid* in spring 2020 was defined as a mix of **online** and **hard copy** instruction and instructional materials.

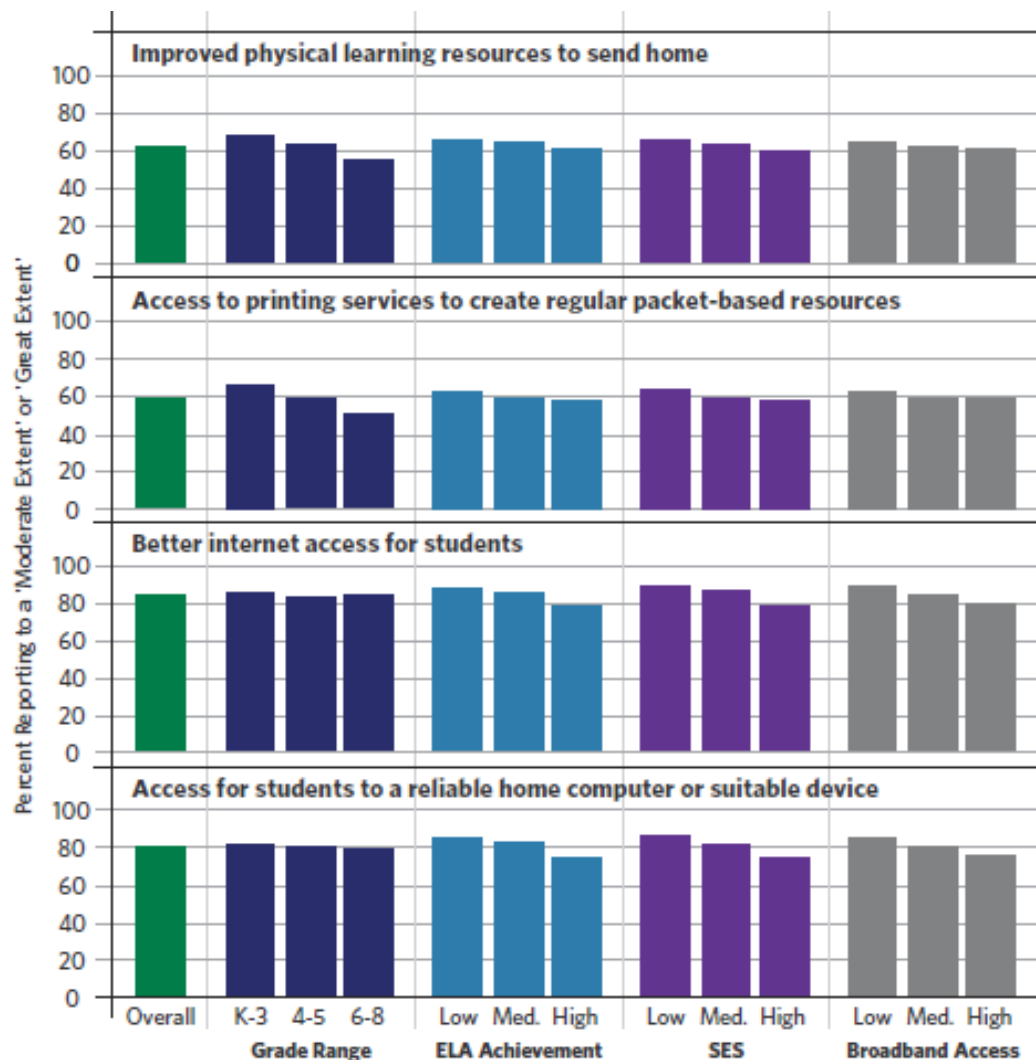
# CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS

Teachers reported substantial challenges with technology and virtual instruction when transitioning to remote learning



# SUPPORT TO FACILITATE REMOTE INSTRUCTION

% of Teachers Reporting Support Would be Helpful, Spring 2020





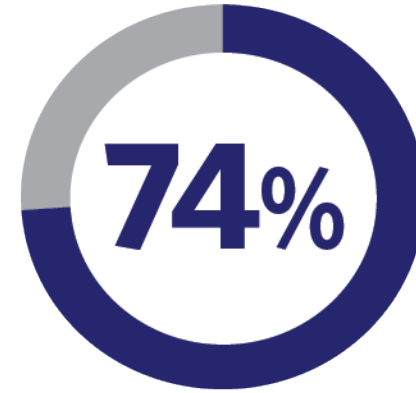
# SUPPORT TO FACILITATE REMOTE INSTRUCTION

Teachers wanted more support to facilitate  
their delivery of remote instruction



**27% of DISTRICTS**  
included educator training and  
PD as part of their COL plans.

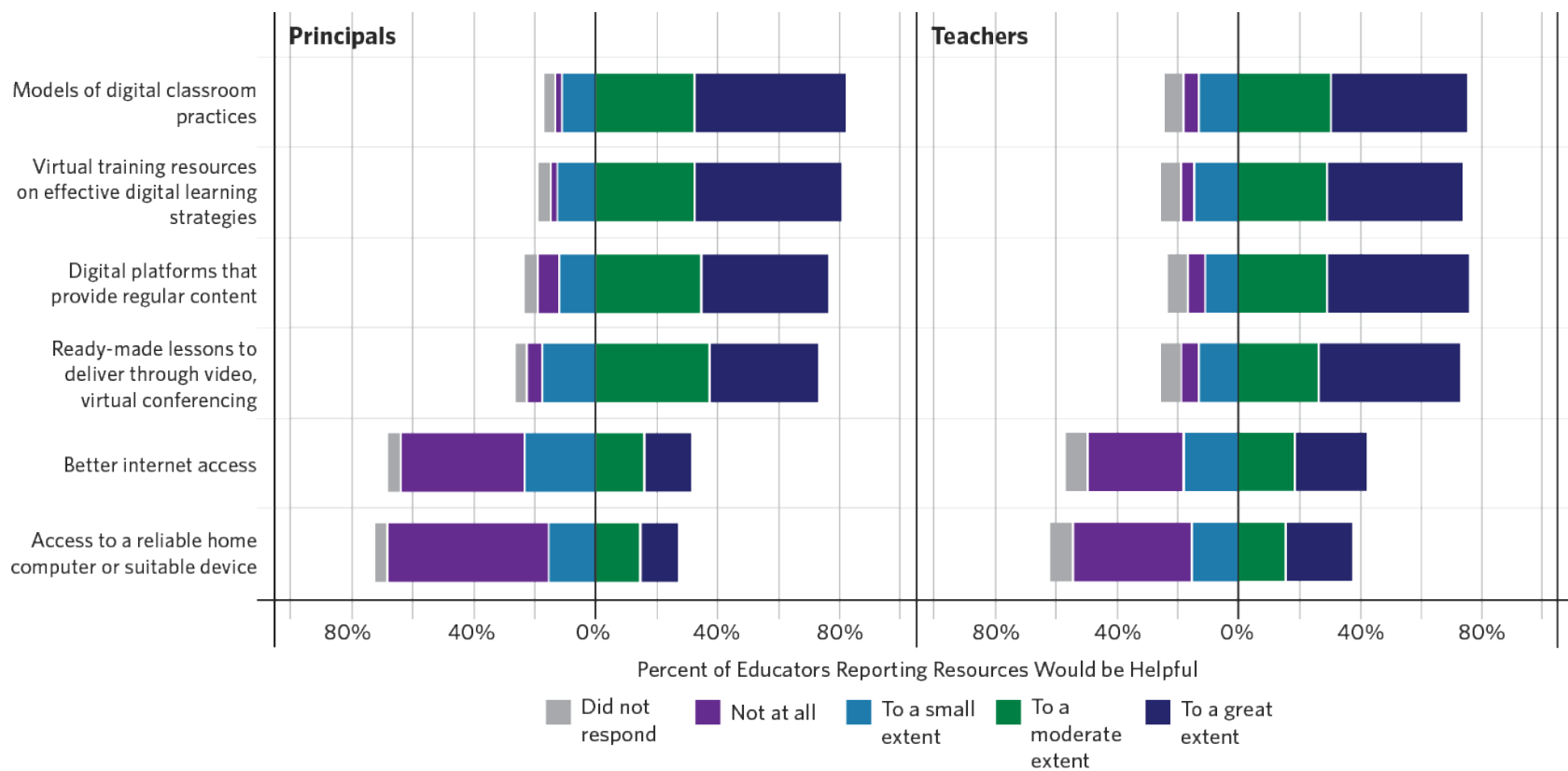
■ VS ■



**74% of TEACHERS**  
wanted more virtual training  
resources.

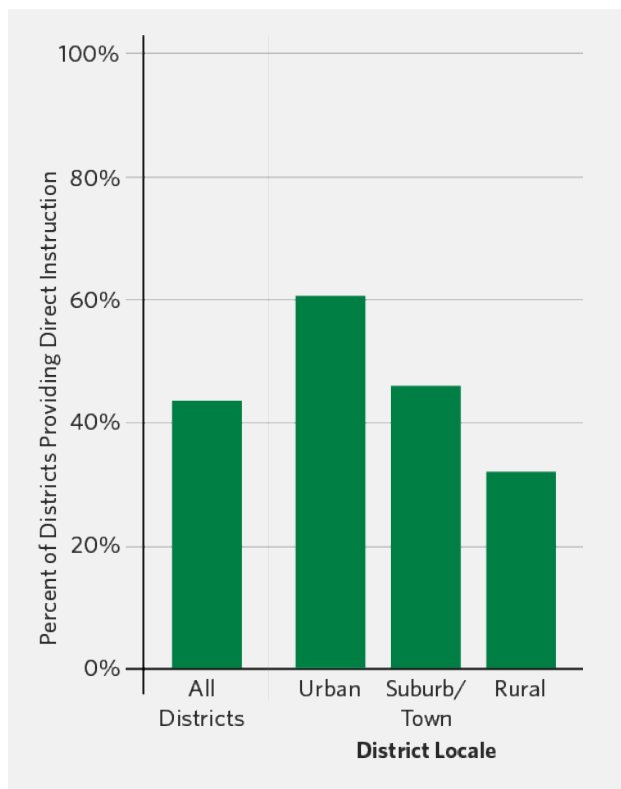
# RESOURCES TO HELP EDUCATORS PROVIDE REMOTE INSTRUCTION

Educators wanted virtual resources that provide content, training, strategies, and ready-made virtual lessons



# DISTRICTS PROVIDE DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Districts' plans for providing student instruction suggest less direct engagement than usual



**9% of plans** specified hours or lessons of direct instruction

- Average time: **11.3 hours** / week
- Average number: **5-6 lessons**/week

**16% of plans** specified expected time on independent learning and school work

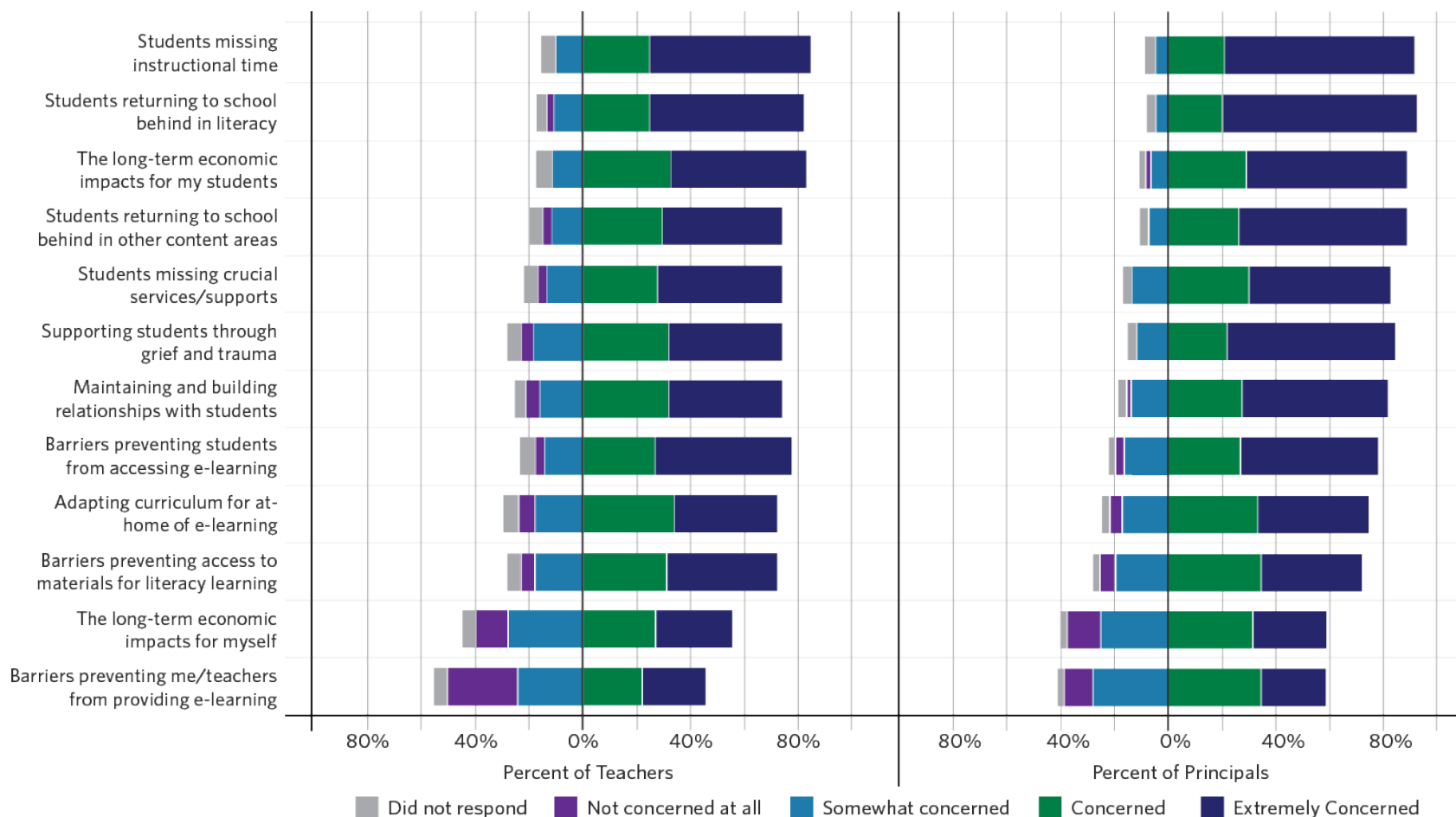
- Average time: **12.2 hours**/week

Younger students were provided with less instructional time/lessons.

Rural districts planned for fewer hours/lessons.

# EDUCATORS' CONCERNS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Educators expressed deep concern about the ways in which the suspension of face-to-face instruction would impact students' learning and well-being



# CONCERNS WITH THE CONTINUATION OF LEARNING FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF STUDENTS

## TEACHERS' Reported Challenges

**64%** reported challenges with continuing to provide supports and services to students with IEPs/504 plans

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**39%** reported challenges with continuing to provide supports and services to English Learners

**69%** reported challenges with continuing to provide access to literacy intervention services

## DISTRICT Plans Reported

**70%** noted accommodations for students with IEPs/504 plans

**26%** discussed accommodations for English Learners

**4%** addressed accommodations for students with "reading deficiencies" or IRIPs

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# DISTRICT RETURN TO LEARN PLANS

How did districts plan to offer instruction in fall 2020?

## Modes of Instruction Districts are Planning to Provide in Fall 2020

### Fully In-Person



Students attend in-person five days per week

### Fully Remote/Online



Students participate in remote or virtual instruction only

### Hybrid



Students attend in-person fewer than five days per week and participate in remote or virtual instruction on the remaining days

### Fully In-Person Option



Districts allow parents to choose between 100% in-person instruction and either hybrid or remote instruction

### Hybrid Option



Districts allow parents to choose between hybrid and fully remote instruction, but don't offer a fully in-person option

# DISTRICT RETURN TO LEARN PLANS

## How did districts plan to offer instruction in fall 2020?

	All Districts	LEA Districts	PSA Districts
<b>Total Number of Districts</b>	823	537	286
Districts in Phase 4 Regions	84%	79%	93%
Districts in Phase 5 Regions	16%	21%	7%
<b>Mode of Instruction</b>			
Fully in-person only	16%	18%	12%
Fully in-person option	43%	44%	40%
Hybrid only	10%	8%	13%
Hybrid option	17%	14%	22%
Fully remote only	12%	11%	12%
Not specified	3%	4%	1%



Notes: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Data reflect plans submitted by 8/19/2020/websites as of 8/21/2020. Source: Data collected from school districts' Return to School Plans and district websites through a collaboration between the Michigan Department of Education and the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative.





# DISTRICT RETURN TO LEARN PLANS

## HOW MICHIGAN PLANS TO RETURN TO SCHOOL

BY THE COLORS: A QUICK LOOK

- 
- A map of Michigan divided into numerous small districts, each colored according to its return-to-school plan. The colors represent different levels of in-person, hybrid, or remote learning. The map shows a high density of green and blue districts, particularly in the central and southern parts of the state, while the northern part has fewer districts, many of which are grey (Not Specified).
- Fully In-Person
  - Fully In-Person Option
  - Hybrid Only
  - Hybrid Option
  - Fully Remote Only
  - Not Specified



[www.EPICedpolicy.org](http://www.EPICedpolicy.org)

# DISTRICT RETURN TO LEARN PLANS

## How did districts plan to offer instruction in fall 2020?

Mode of Instruction	Total Number of School Districts		Total Number of Students Enrolled		Economically Disadvantaged Students	
Fully in-person only	132	16%	135,615	9%	76,754	11%
Fully in-person option	351	43%	613,600	43%	302,153	42%
Hybrid only	82	10%	178,523	12%	92,263	13%
Hybrid option	137	17%	214,969	15%	100,312	14%
Fully remote only	96	12%	275,490	19%	145,720	20%
Not specified	25	3%	25,179	2%	9,945	1%

Notes: Columns may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Source: Data collected from school districts' Return to School Plans and district websites through a collaboration between the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC); Enrollment data from the Center for Educational Performance and Information, Student Count Report (2019-20, Statewide, accessed July 30, 2020). <https://www.mischooldata.org/DistrictSchoolProfiles2/StudentInformation/StudentCounts/StudentCount2.aspx>



# MOVING FORWARD

**Important lessons can be learned from Michigan's experience and from other states around the country**

- Equip all students with the necessary learning materials to allow them to fully engage in any kind of instructional modality.
- Continue to focus efforts on both instruction and student support services, particularly in lower-achieving, economically disadvantaged districts and for younger students.
- Build on current efforts to provide direct instruction and frequent contact between students and teachers.
- Expand access to high quality professional development and resources for educators.
- Keep equity of opportunity at the forefront when planning for high-quality instruction.



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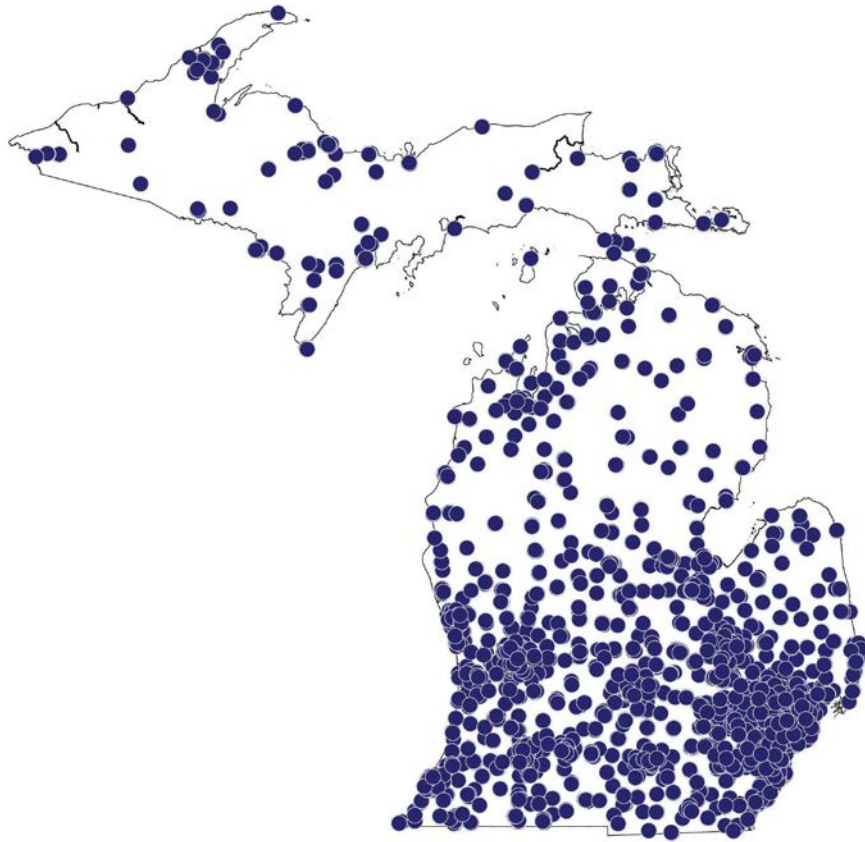
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**<https://epicedpolicy.org/covid-19-education-policy/>**

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# EDUCATOR SURVEY SAMPLE

The survey sample was generally representative of Michigan teachers and principals



## SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

**8,881 K-8 educators** from 752  
(**90%**) Michigan school districts

- **16%** of all eligible teachers
- **12%** of all eligible principals

The survey sample is representative of MI educators; slightly higher proportions of educators who are...

- Female;
- Hired within the last 5 years;
- Elementary-certified; or
- Endorsed in ELA

# CAVEATS

- We coded district's **initial** Continuity of Learning plans. Not their final plans, nor the actual implementation of those plans.
- Districts **learned and evolved** as the semester unfolded.
- Survey responses are **limited** by the questions asked and who answered them and when.
- We coded district's **August 2020** Extended Continuity of Learning plans. These plans changed and are continuing to change.
- We will **continue to work** with MDE and districts to understand instruction and learning during the pandemic.