

EDUCATION AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 SURVEY SPRING 2022

REPORT OF FINDINGS



Overview

This report prepared for the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) is based on the last of four surveys distributed during the COVID-19 pandemic in Spring 2022. The survey sought to capture the experiences and perceptions of parents of K-12 students as they began to look toward pandemic recovery.

Methods

This is report 4 of 4 being released on ASCA's parent voices during COVID-19 surveys. A total of 5,596 parents responded to ASCA's fourth survey, the Education and the Impact of COVID-19 Survey, conducted from May to July 2022. We are using pseudonyms to represent parent voices.

Key Findings

32% of parents reported that their student received outside or private social, emotional, and mental health support since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

29% of parents reported that their student was struggling to attend, or enjoy, school.

21% of parents reported hiring a private tutor or outside educational services for their student since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

42%

of parents who reported hiring a private tutor or outside educational services for their student estimated their student's overall academic performance to be a "B" level.

53%

of parents who had a student receiving outside social/emotional/mental health support rated their overall mental health as "Fair."

Demographics: Parents and Caregivers

Location

- 29%** An Alberta county or rural community with under 20,000 residents
- 7%** An Alberta municipality with 20,000-49,999 residents
- 16%** An Alberta municipality with 50,000-99,999 residents
- 7%** An Alberta municipality with 100,000-249,999 residents
- 41%** An Alberta municipality with over 250,000 residents

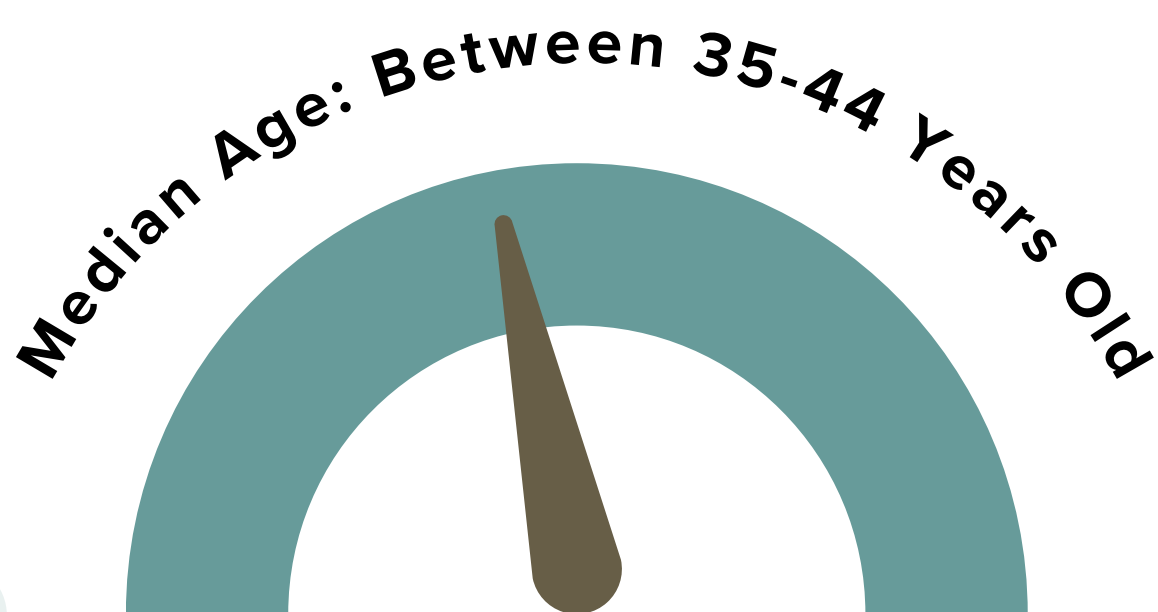


**Average Household Income:
\$100,000 - \$124,999**



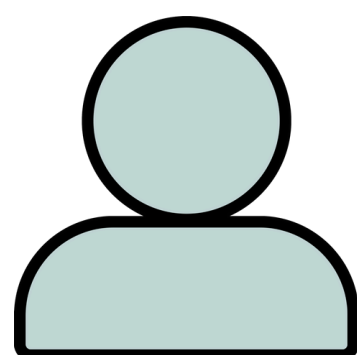
Employment Status

- 55%** Employed Full-Time
- 23%** Employed Part-Time
- 13%** Not Employed
- 8%** Prefer Not to Say

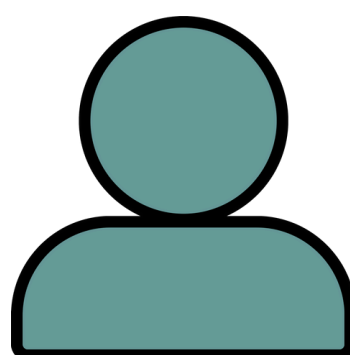


How Do You Identify?

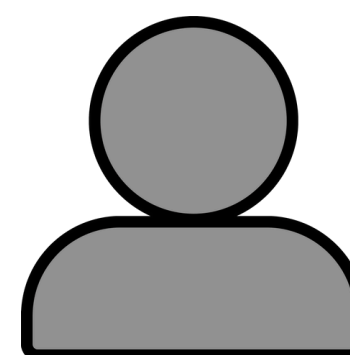
86% Female



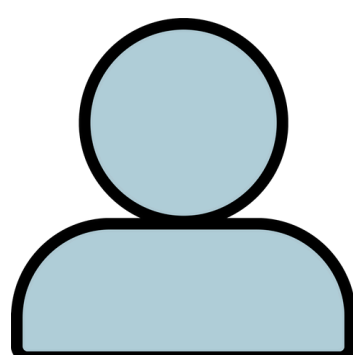
11% Male



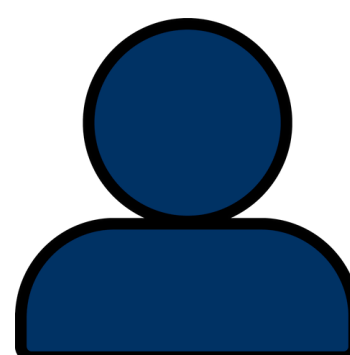
2% Prefer Not To Say



0.1% Transgender

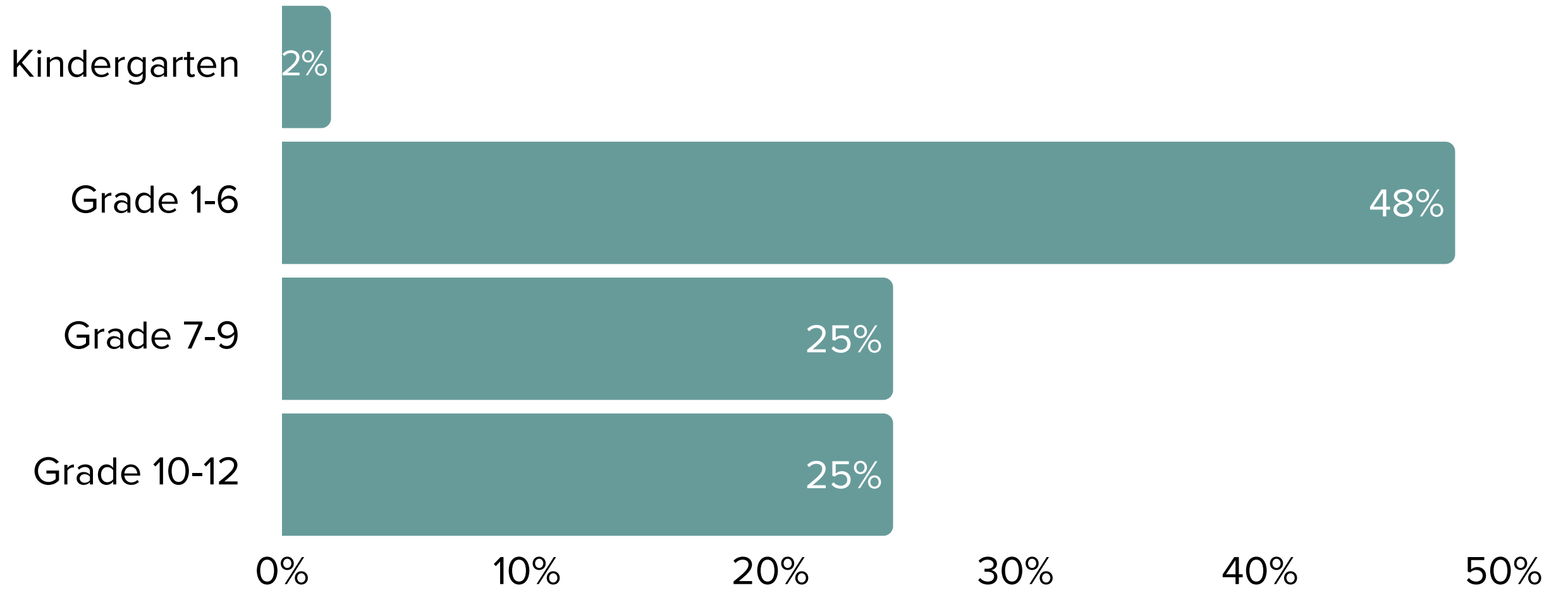


0.3% Not Listed

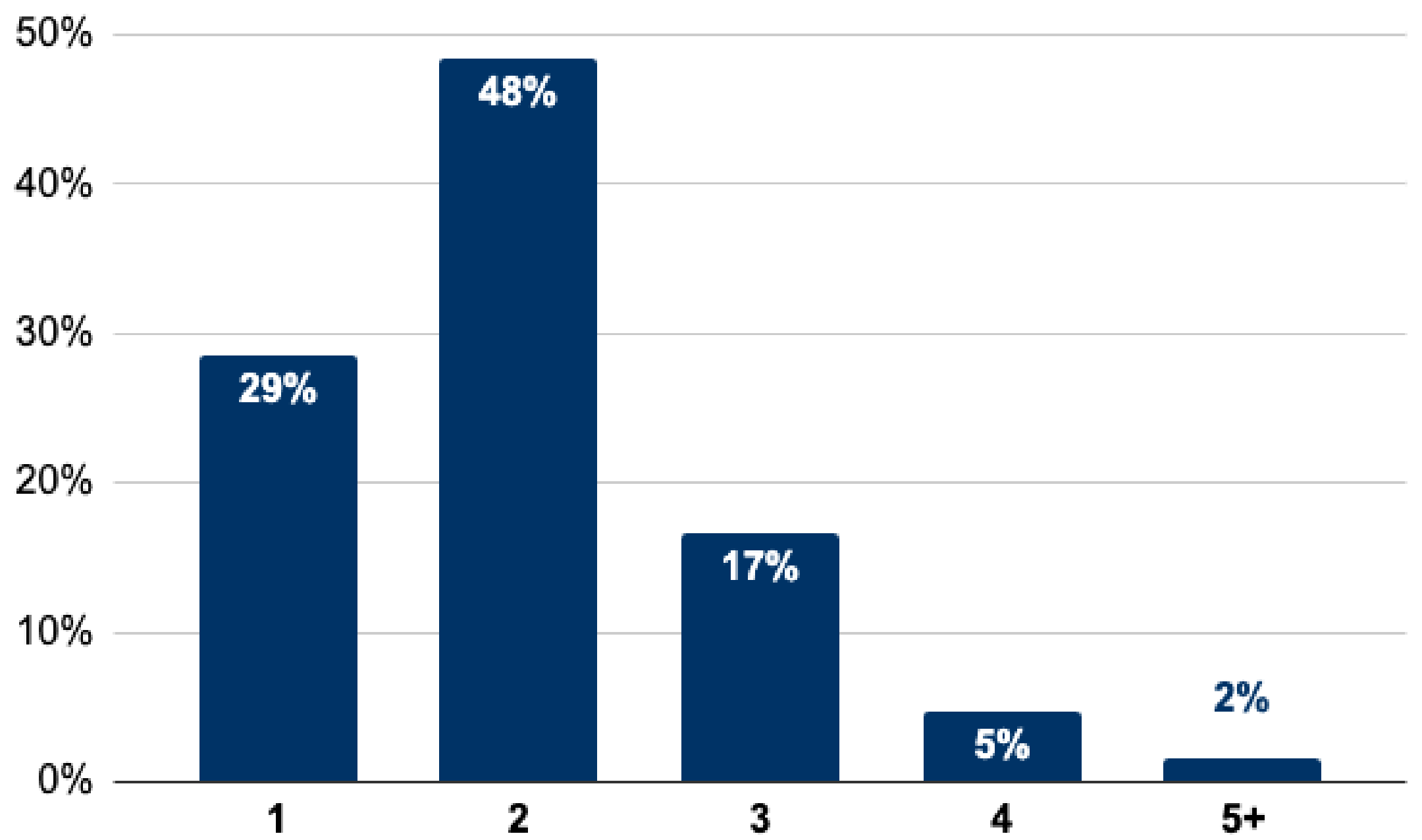


Demographics: Students

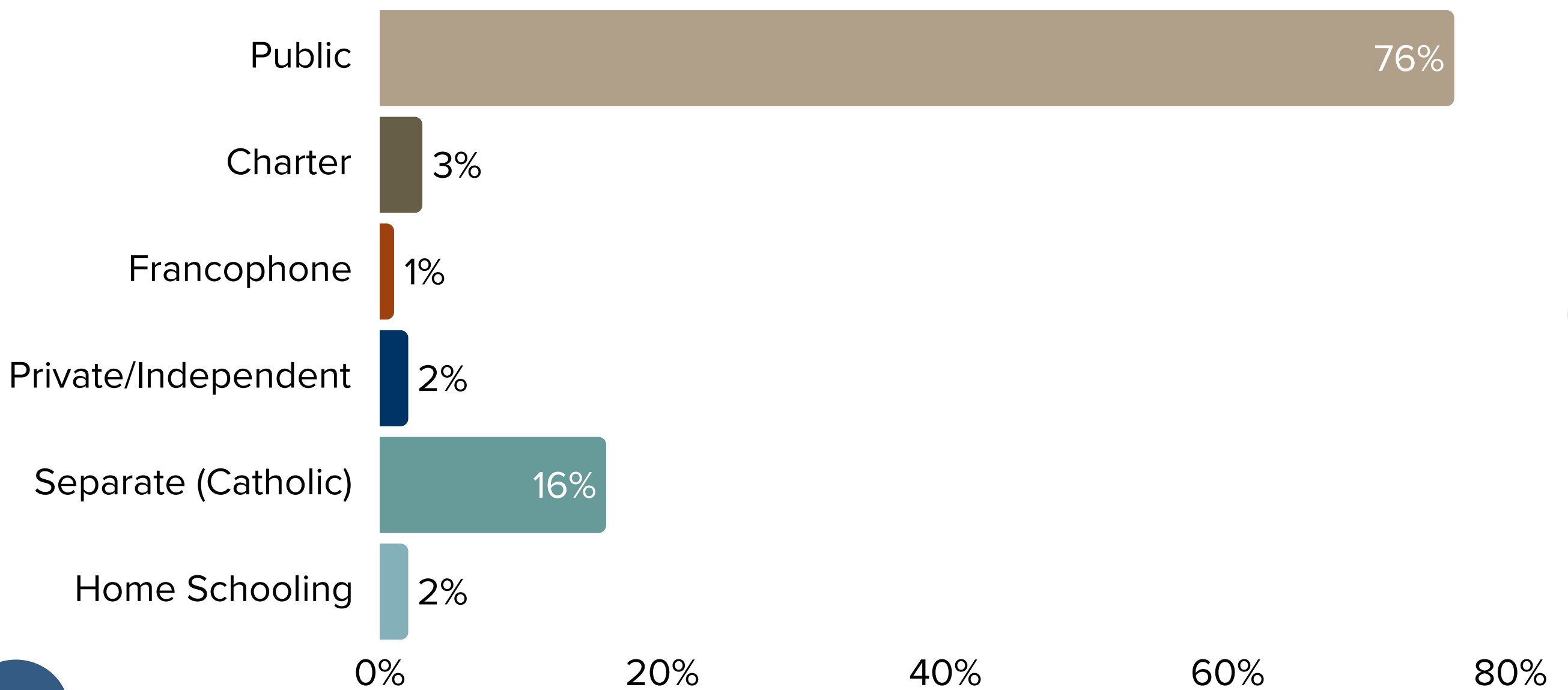
Child's Grade Level



Number of K-12 children in your household that you are the primary caregiver for



School Type



School Delivery Methods and Academics

	Yes	No	Unsure
Is the school council at your child's school an Alberta School Councils' Association Member?	46%	4%	50%
Are you actively engaged with the school council at your student's school?	36%	64%	



"I find it complicated to access the support. Always need a referral."

-Mitchell



"We are in a rural school, resources are heavily limited and depleted because of our location and size. Our children suffer because there is nothing for our children."

-Zoe

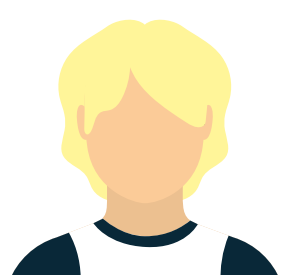


"Our staff keeps getting smaller and class sizes are getting larger (multiple split-classes) because of budget cuts."

-Paula

"Teachers do not seem to have the time to assess and address individual student learning gaps. They are doing their best but there is no time or resources."

-Naomi



"More school clubs and after school activities."

-Jordan

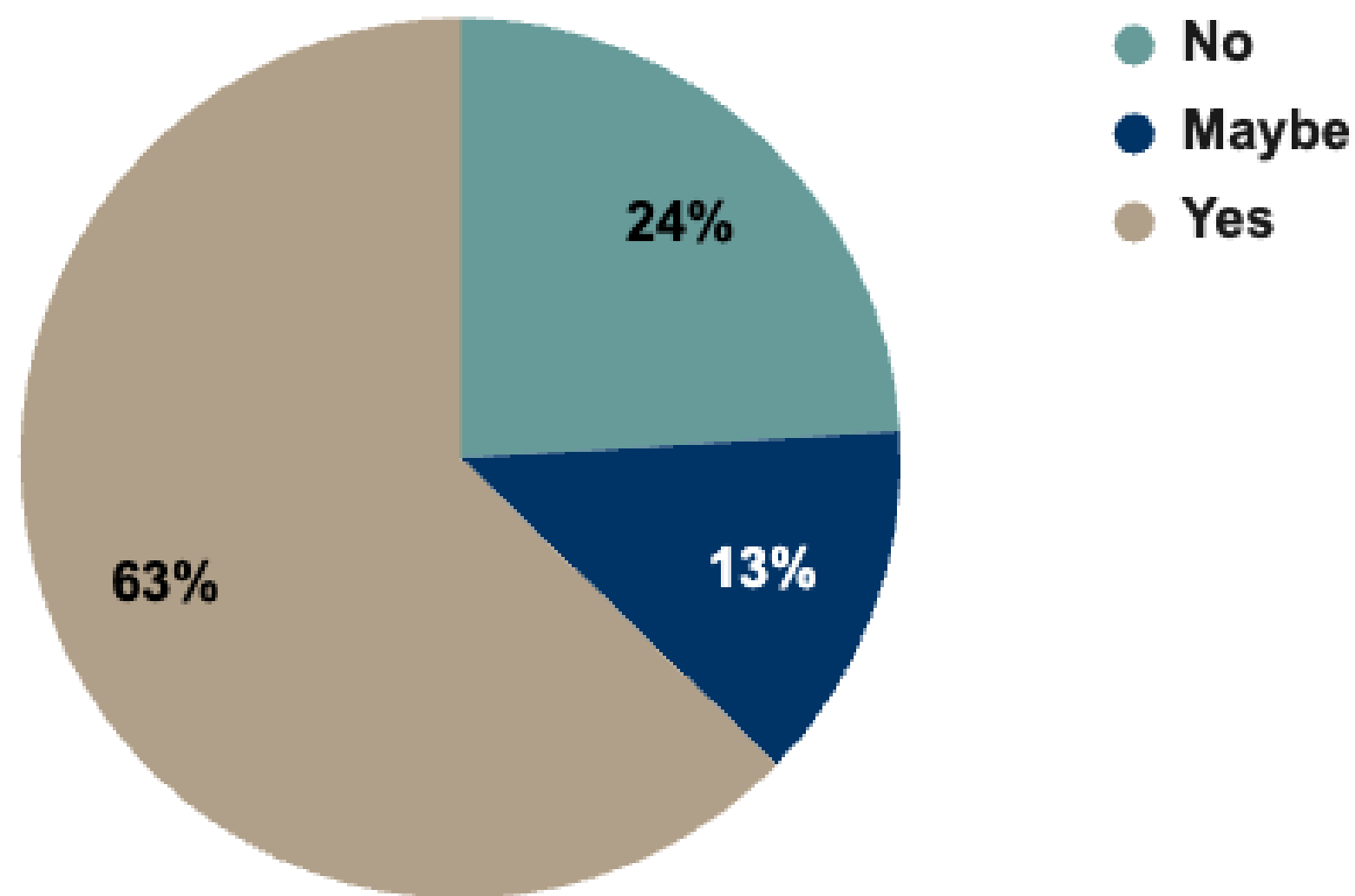
"Please DO NOT close schools again."

-David

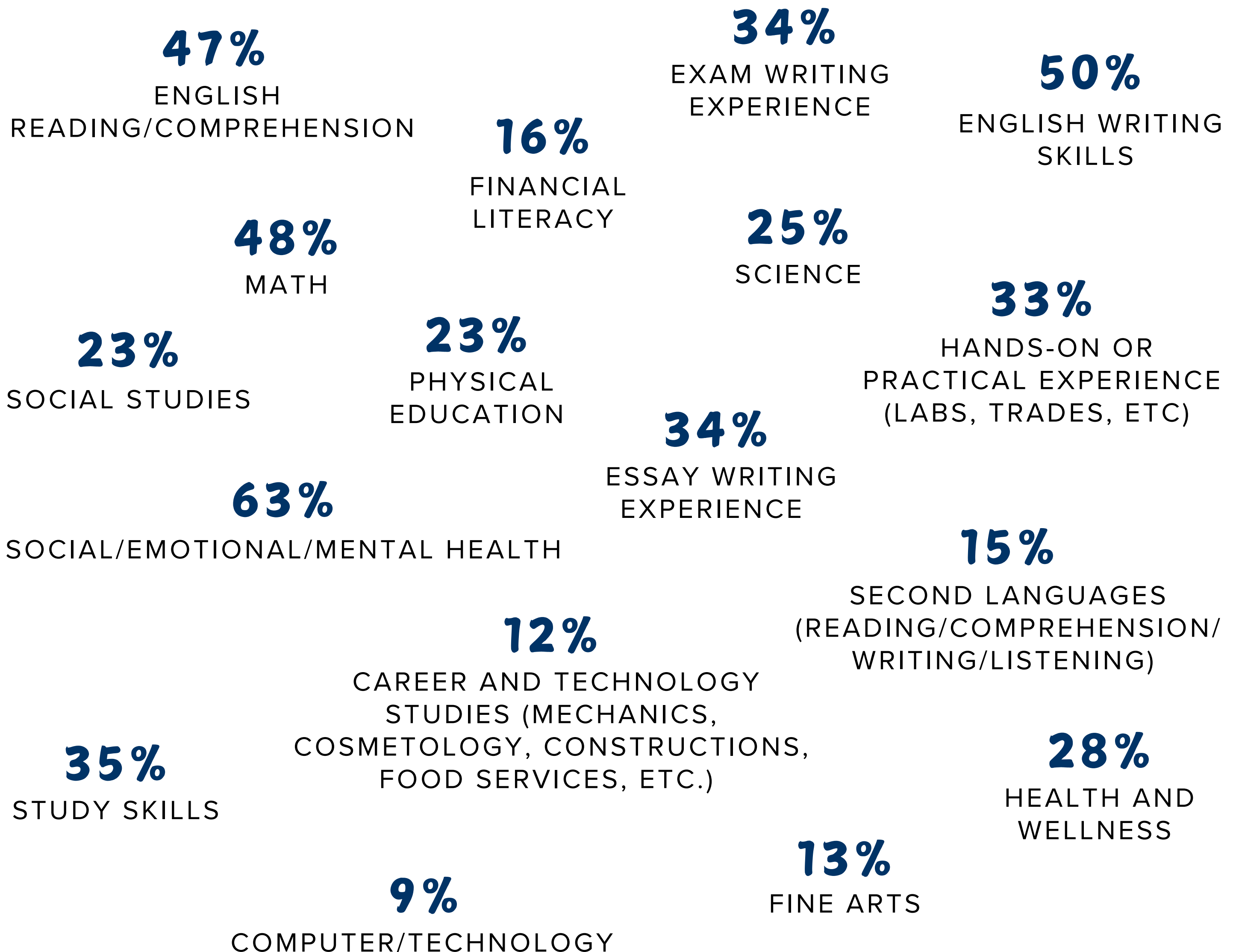


Educational Concerns

Do you feel your student is missing skills, knowledge, or support (academic, social/emotional/mental health) resulting from learning disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?



If Yes, or Maybe - in which area(s)/subject(s) do you feel your student is missing skills, knowledge, or support (academic, social/emotional/mental health) resulting from learning disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?



Educational Concern Solutions

The percentage of parents who believed the following supports would help address areas and subjects of concern are outlined below.

54% SMALLER CLASS SIZES

55% ONE-ON-ONE DURING SCHOOL HOURS

16% ONE-ON-ONE AFTER SCHOOL

64% ADDITIONAL TEACHING/SUPPORT IN CLASSROOM

24% ONLINE RESOURCES/MATERIALS

24% PRIVATE TUTORING/SUPPORT

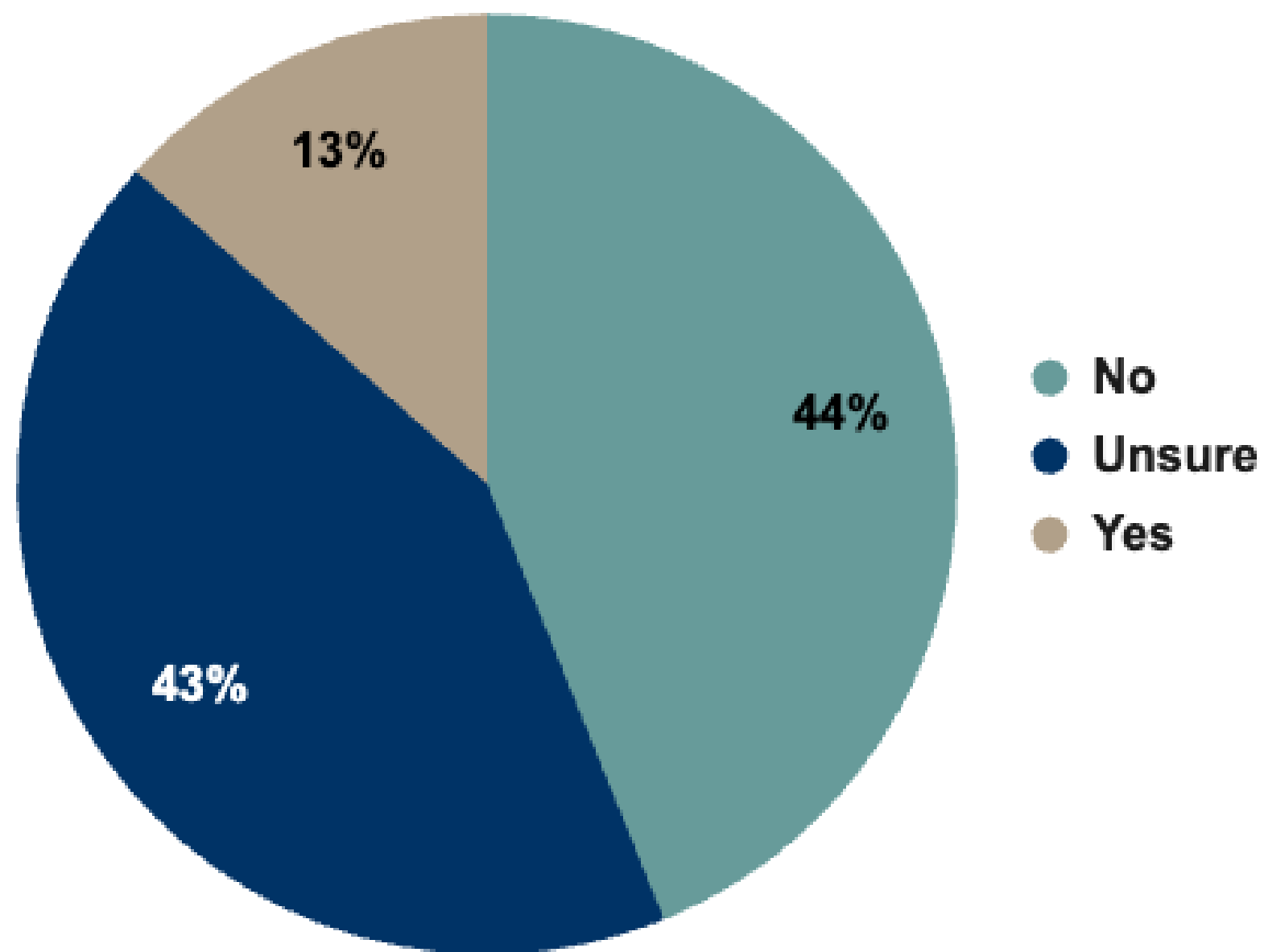
33% RESOURCES/MATERIALS SENT HOME WITH STUDENTS

20% TARGET EXAM PREP

51% SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

School and School Division Abilities

Do you believe your school or school division has the tools, resources and/or people in place that will identify your student's missing skills, knowledge, or support?



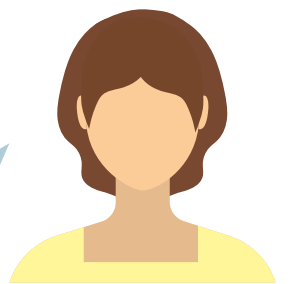
"I feel like with all the funding cuts and the changes to our current school that there will be less supports available to my kiddos in this upcoming school year."

-Destiny



"When returning to school in September 2020 and 2021, my child was identified as needing more help with reading and literacy skills. They were placed in an in-school reading group to help gain the missing skills."

-Claire



-Caleb

"Mental health is the most significant concern I have and there are basically no supports in place to help students. All of what I need to access comes out of pocket. The schools have no idea what students are dealing with in terms of their mental health, especially in high school."



"The class sizes have increased significantly and the classroom supports have decreased significantly with the reduced funding."

-Phil



Parent Quotes

Thanks to COVID-19 I found how many learning gaps my kids had attending the public school system prior to 2020. It is very disturbing that our schools will push kids forward without checking on their basic knowledge.

Teachers do a good job of assessing ongoing to see what has been delayed or missed.

Both my children are falling through the cracks due to a lack of staff/resources. There was special funding this year for reading skills, and the school had special instruction for children struggling with reading. My daughter is behind in reading both French and English and did not have access to this support.

I have been very frustrated to observe the unbalanced prioritization of the preservation of a few (with the extreme COVID measures) in exchange for the mental health suffering of many of our youth. From the elimination of all extracurricular activities, isolation, masking and extreme use of screens to interact with the world, our children have suffered. I would like to see equally extreme measures taken to return to them what has been taken.

With the financial constraints, the school board can hardly catch up with the growing population. The class size has been increasing every year. Teachers are exhausted.

Unfortunately, with the recent financial cuts to public education, our school will have to increase class sizes in order to meet the budget requirements for the 2022-23 school year. Without a financial investment in public education, our youngest students are going to be left behind due to how their education has been impacted (due to COVID and education cuts).

It comes down to money. If we had more funding, we could hire more people and get the proper help needed for our kids.

“I don't believe the funding is in place to support these programs/identification of skill loss. The class sizes were too large before COVID, and that hasn't changed. Mental health issues and absences leading to learning loss are all of great concern to me.”

When you have to stay home for every single symptom it makes sticking to a routine very hard. This is causing my son many issues with enjoying school overall.

The cancellation of all kid's activities has wreaked havoc on my child's mental health, which has led to educational problems. School authorities could not authorize anything for the kids because they were not allowed under Covid. The solution is to learn from this and to never let it happen again. Zoom is NOT a suitable alternative to a real French club or PE class.

I believe the teachers have ensured that the students have had an opportunity to keep up with the curriculum, but the social /well-being of this class is troubling. It is a large class and the behaviour problems have escalated, I believe due to Covid. This class needs to be split so teachers can teach and provide more guidance more effectively.

My child is bright and gets his work done on time. The teacher is just happy that his work is correct and submitted. There is no extra time put into my child as the teacher is too busy dealing with the students who are not completing work or logging in. I guess this is a drawback of being in full-time online school.

Please fund more EAs. Teachers have gone above and beyond the last few years, but without EAs, they can not be and do everything for everyone. Mental health matters, especially at a young age.

There needs to be consideration for the very young students just entering schools and their lack of social skills. They know very little facial expressions and how to behave in groups and with other kids. Funding needs to be in place to help them as well as older students.

Due to COVID several kids are struggling, to identify this would be difficult, especially as the kids get older. They don't share as much about what is going on. Most schools have one social worker for support, this is not enough to tackle these issues.

Teachers are so busy in the classroom already that I find the only way to identify shortcomings with my student is to monitor powerschool and assignments/tests that come home. It would be wonderful to have that additional tool/resource to not only identify student's missing skills but take to it one step further to help the student thrive. In my situation, I am always willing to work with teacher's for the success of my student.

Concluding Thoughts

The majority of parents and caregivers were unsure or did not believe in the ability of their school and school boards to identify their student's missing skills, knowledge, or support. Parents called for more resources and staff to help support their students moving forward and bridge the gaps in knowledge that widened during the pandemic. In the final iteration of the survey, parents and caregivers were looking toward the future and hoping to rebuild and return to a sense of normalcy that was lost during the pandemic. This last survey of four focused on better understanding parent perspectives and experiences with their children's education during the pandemic and highlighted the need for more support and resources to address barriers and concerns that pre-dated the pandemic and have since heightened. Schools and families can use these experiences to implement better strategies to address challenges impacting student success and work toward strengthening school community and resilience.



**Prepared by Samantha Mullin and Erica Fae Thomson
for the Alberta School Councils' Association**

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