

# COVID Impacts: Challenges & Opportunities

STATE LEADERSHIP AND  
GOVERNANCE

**NASBE**

National Association of  
State Boards of Education

# Goals

Examine	Examine some of the ways the education landscape has shifted due to the global pandemic.
Explore	Explore opportunities to lead through the period of post-pandemic recovery.
Identify	Identify some of the challenges educators are likely to face in upcoming months/years.
Find	Find strategies to establish and support an aggressive, results-driven policy agenda.

# State Boards of Education

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

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# What Role do State Boards Play?

- Each state board has a unique context of state governance and authority, the vast majority have influential positions or hold **direct policy authority over statewide learning standards, graduation requirements, accountability and assessment programs, and accreditation and teacher preparation standards.**
- Because their members' terms last from four to nine years, state boards serve as the **stable center of state education governance**, capable of steering statewide education agenda to fruition even in the midst of leadership transitions.
- As citizen leaders, boards are uniquely positioned to **engage multiple voices** in policymaking.
- Board members serve with little or no personal compensation for their service, allowing them to **challenge the status quo impartially** and to focus solely on whether policies are in the best interests of students.
- State boards often **set the vision for public education** in their states and steadfastly shepherd policies to advance that vision.

# State Boards of Education

75% of state board of education members are appointed by the governor

- Several states have designated seats for specific stakeholders (classroom teacher, district administrator business, community colleges, etc.)
- Other states appoint members by geographic regions.

**8 state boards are fully elected by partisan or non-partisan ballot.**

- Of the 6 states with partisan boards of education, 4 have a Republican majority and 2 a Democratic majority. However, most issues on board agendas do not result in a party-line vote.
- 2 state board has all members elected by non-partisan ballot.

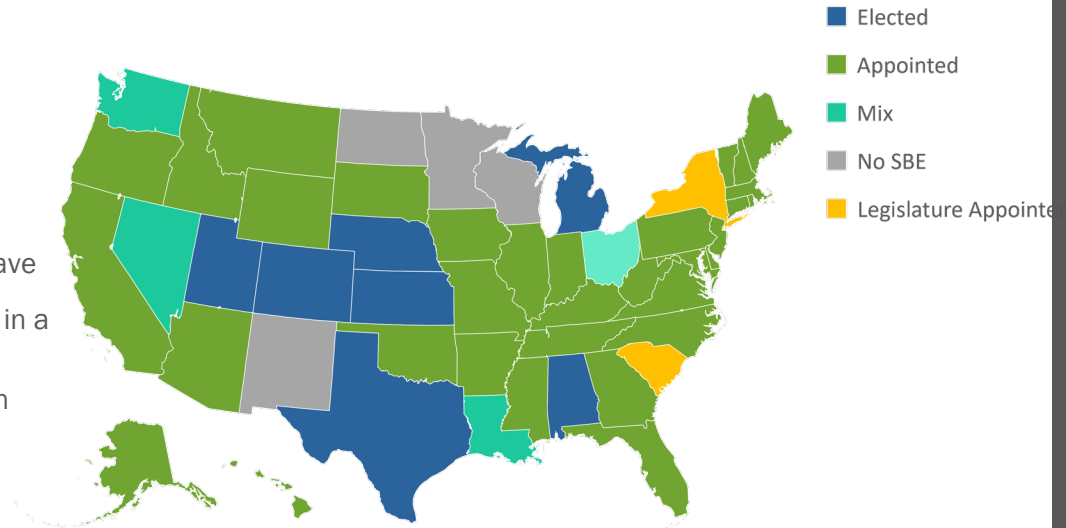
2 state boards are appointed by the state legislature

4 states do not have state boards of education.

**20 state boards appoint the chief state school officer**

- 5 additional state boards make a recommendation to the governor.
- 13 governors appoint the chief state school officer, and 9 of these governors also appoint the board
- 12 chief state school officers are elected.

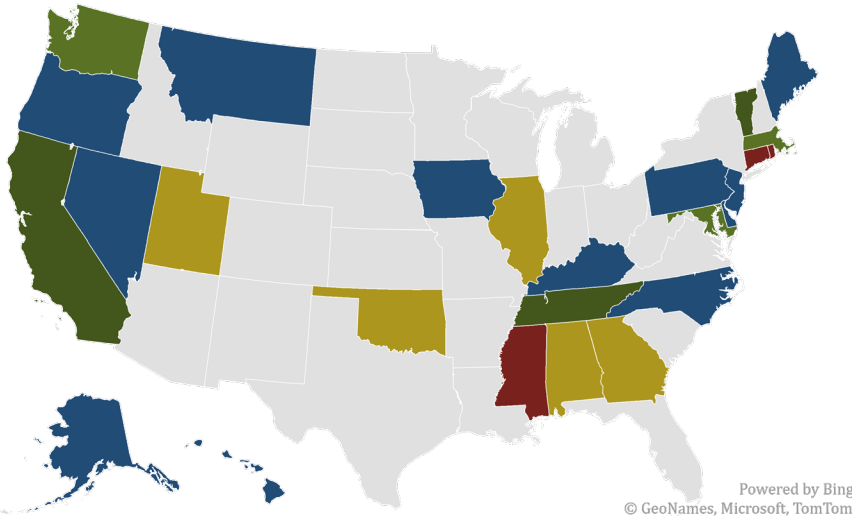
## State Board Member Selection Method



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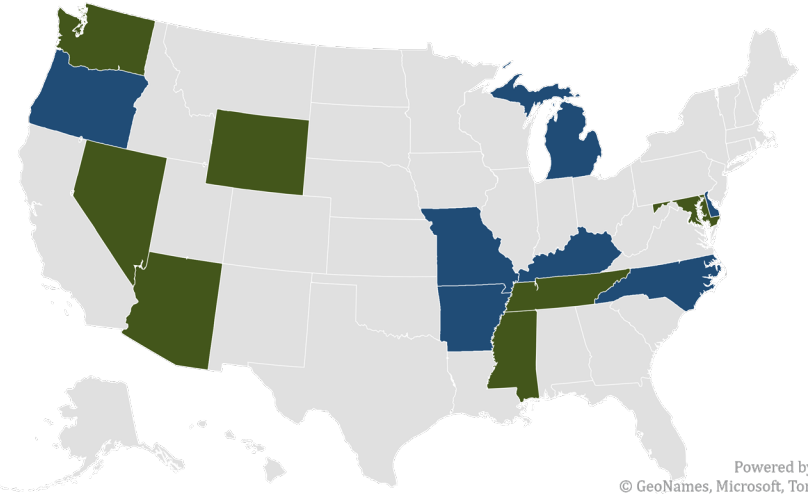
# Student & Teacher Voice on State Boards

Student Voice



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Teacher Voice



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- Voting Member
- Non-Voting Member & Advisory Council
- Non-Voting Member
- Advisory Council

- Voting Member
- Non-Voting Member

**In DC and WA, student member's vote is recorded but not counted.**

*DC, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands have non-voting student members.*

# COVID Impact & Lessons Learned

LEARNING RECOVERY, DIGITAL  
DIVIDE, EDUCATOR WORKFORCE

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# A Year Like No Other

- Redefining School
- Spotlight on Existing Inequities in Education
- Significant Federal Investment in Education

*“It was abundantly clear on March 11, 2020, that what happened next would be a path with no footprints.”*

*– Indiana State Board of Education*

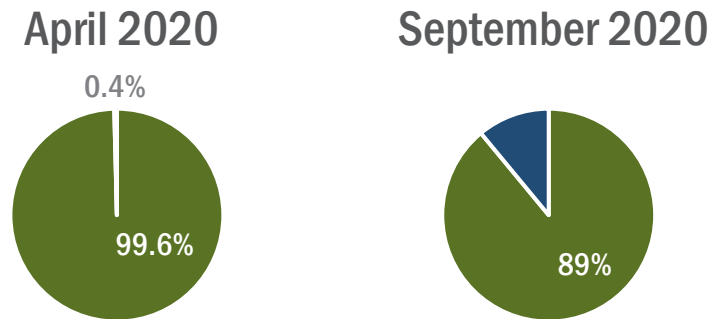
# Looking Back to Move Forward

## 2020 State Board of Education Pandemic Priorities

- Digital Divide
- Safe & Healthy Students and Staff
- Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs of Students
- Nutrition for Students in Need
- Meeting Specific Student Needs

# COVID: Scope of impact

In September 2020, 89 percent of adults with children under 18 reported that classes for their children were affected in some way by the pandemic. By comparison, in April 2020 nearly all adults reported that their children's classes were affected by the pandemic (99.6 percent).



*Data Source: National Center on Education Statistics, Condition of Education Spotlight.*

In 2020-21, public school enrollment fell by 3% compared to the previous year, marking the largest decline since the start of this century.

*Data Source: National Center on Education Statistics, Common Core Data, Public School Enrollment, 2020-21*

# How COVID is Reshaping Education: K-12

- **Kindergarten:** An NPR survey of 100 districts, showed steep declines in kindergarten enrollment in districts across the country in fall 2020, with **an average drop of 16% in kindergarten enrollments.**
  - The enrollment shift suggests a likely scenario of a “kinder bubble” in the coming year as more and older students enter school. Districts may see larger and more split-age classes for both first-grade and kindergarten cohorts, with many more students unfamiliar with in-person classroom routines.
- **Absenteeism:** An EveryDay Labs analysis of 450,000 students revealed a sevenfold increase in the number of students missing 50 percent or more of the school year during the pandemic.
  - Higher absenteeism rates were seen among younger students compared to older students—a reversal of past trends in which elementary students typically have better attendance than high schoolers
- **High School:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization warned that the pandemic had put **24 million children worldwide at risk of dropping out of school.**
  - The pandemic’s effects could erase gains the U.S. made in reducing its dropout rate, which fell from 9.3% in 2007 to 5.1% in 2019.

# COVID Interrupted Instruction

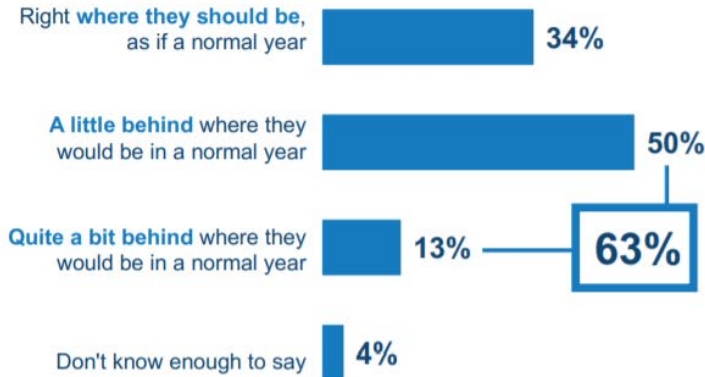
## Impact

Mid-year data on student achievement from Renaissance's Star Assessments for early literacy, reading, and mathematics revealed the following findings:

- Student growth in reading and math during the first half of the 2020-21 school year is close to typical or expected levels.
- Students are approximately 2 percentage points below pre-COVID expectations in reading **and six percentage points below for math.**
- Compared to fall assessment data, achievement impacts due to COVID-19 shrank for most grade levels in reading and math. However, late elementary and early middle schoolers are still **8-11** weeks behind in math, while middle school students are about 6-10 weeks behind in reading.

# COVID Impact: Parent Perceptions

As you think about how your child has done this school year, where do you think your child is academically?



Learning Mode

	In-Person	Hybrid	Remote
Right where they should be, as if a normal year	50%	28%	32%
A little behind where they would be in a normal year	42%	54%	50%
Quite a bit behind where they would be in a normal year	7%	15%	14%
Don't know enough to say	2%	3%	5%

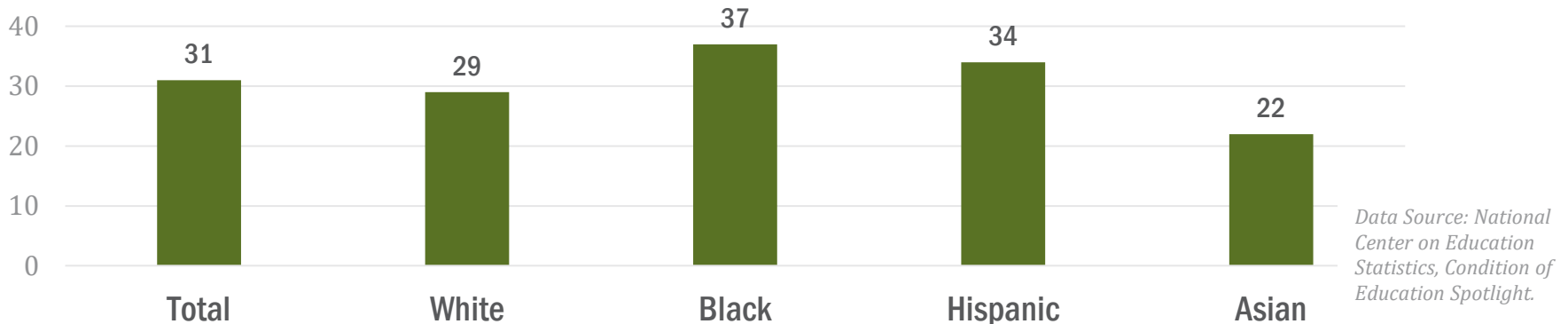
**52%** of parents are **Extremely/Very Confident** that their child will be well prepared for the next grade they start in Fall 2021

LEARNING HEROES: A Year into the Pandemic 12

# COVID Impact: Transition to Postsecondary Education

In August 2020, **31 percent** of adults 18 years old and over who had household members planning to take classes in fall 2020 from a postsecondary institution reported that **all plans to take classes in the fall had been canceled for at least one household member**.

- The two most frequently cited reasons were having coronavirus or having concerns about getting coronavirus (46 percent) and not being able to pay for classes/educational expenses because of changes to income from the pandemic (42 percent).



# Responding & Recovering: SBE Strategies

## Learning Recovery:

- Acceleration vs Remediation
- Engagement: Early & Often
- Integrating Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning
- Extended Day & Summer Learning
- Rethinking “Seat-Based” requirements

*“It’s time to redefine what ‘going back to normal’ means and use learnings from the pandemic to innovate and rethink the student learning experience.”*

# Digital Divide

15 to 16 million students do not have access to the technology necessary to learn from home during the pandemic. Up to 400,000 educators don't have adequate internet connectivity to teach from home.

The homework gap is a problem in every single state, but vulnerable student populations bear the greatest burden:

- 37% of rural students and 21% of urban students lack home internet access; and
- 35% of Native American students, 30% of Black students, and 26% of Latinx students have inadequate internet access at home, compared to only of 18% White students.

# Responding & Recovering: SBE Strategies

## Digital Divide

- **Framing 4-Prong Solutions: Connections, Devices, Profession Learning, and Curriculum**

*“When COVID-19 first disrupted the routines and traditions that constitute school, many teachers grappled for the first time with online instruction, often with little experience or support.*

*The experience of the past months has demonstrated that those who could transition seamlessly to online or hybrid models were already delivering authentic, project-based learning tied to students’ interests or experiences, real problems, and events—and leveraging technology to do it.*

***They provide examples of the way forward post-COVID.”***

# COVID Impact: Teachers & School Leaders

87% of teachers have been concerned about social-emotional health and 86% physical health for themselves and their families during the 2020-21 school year.

31% of teachers claim that their principal and school administrators were helpful in assisting them and their colleagues with the changes in work demands this year.

Financial health and job security for themselves and their family has been a concern for 72% of all teachers this school year

# Teachers & School Leaders: Perspectives

- **“The soaring unemployment rate because of the Covid-19 pandemic may improve teacher quality.”**
  - “Economic downturns temporarily change the supply of potential new teachers, which grows to include adults seeking a more stable source of employment because of a lack of opportunities in other professions. That is why we find that the cohorts of teachers hired during recessions have a large share of exceptionally strong performers. “

*Data Source: Education Next, How the Coronavirus Crisis May Improve Teacher Quality*

# Responding & Recovering: SBE Strategies

## Teachers & School Leaders

- Elevating the Teaching Profession
- Supporting First Year Teachers
- Diversifying the Teacher & School Leader Workforce
- Engaging Teachers in Crafting Solutions

*“We need to create space and flexibility for educators’ creativity, curiosity, and innovation.”*

# Taking the Long View

**“Going back to normal without having learned and grown from the experience would be a tragedy.**

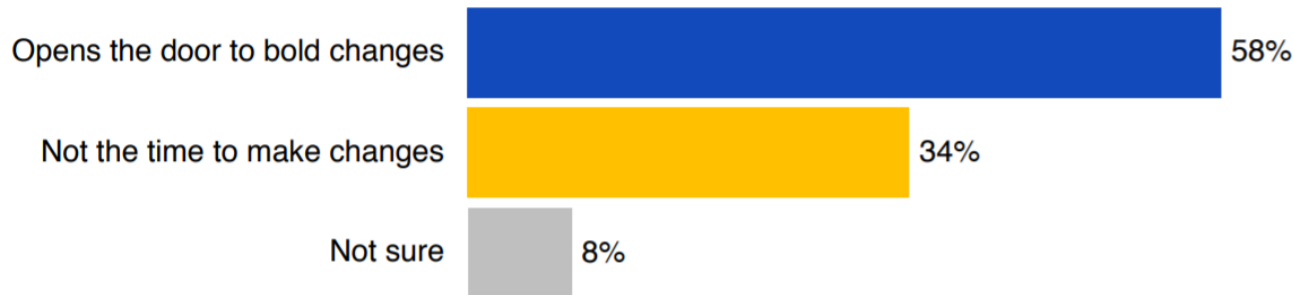
**State boards, working collaboratively, now have a chance to reimagine how to make our education system better”**

# On the Horizon: Parent Perspectives

## Majority Sees Opportunity for 'Bold Changes'



*Which of these two viewpoints are you more inclined to agree with: this major new influx in federal funds opens the door to making bold changes in public education; we should take advantage of this opportunity OR now is not the time to make major changes in public education; we should stick to funding existing programs and getting things back to normal.*



*Data Source: A National Survey of Parents For the Walton Family Foundation (April 2021)*

# On the Horizon: Parent Perspectives

## Most Parents See Nearly All These Steps Having an Impact



<i>How effective would each of the following be in terms of helping students in your state – extremely effective, very effective, somewhat effective, or not that effective:</i>	<i>% saying extremely or very effective</i>
Offering more college credit/work-based learning/apprenticeships	76%
Providing teachers w/ better instructional materials/digital resources	74
Providing special funding for students w/ greater learning needs	74
Expanding broadband access to underserved areas/upgrading tech	73
Providing tools/support to meet students' emotional/mental health needs	73
Developing tools to help teachers w/ student academic/mental health	71
Improving online learning by providing teachers w/ more training	70
Expanding high-quality tutoring programs	69
Expanding free pre-K and childcare options for all children	68
Offering summer school instruction to any child who wants it	66
Creating more pathways into teaching to draw more diverse workforce	66
Creating more school options, like charter schools, learning pods	65

*Data Source: A National Survey of Parents For the Walton Family Foundation (April 2021)*

# Education Leadership and Governance



- *Reframe*
- *Reflect*
- *Rethink*

# Reframe



*“Once in a lifetime chance to hit reset on our education system.”*  
– U.S. Secretary of Education

*“We need continued, improved alignments between higher education through dual credit, dual enrollment, and Advanced Placement. Industry certifications, internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities are important elements in this narrative of success.”*  
-Indiana State Board of Education

# Reflect

**“In God we trust, all others bring data.”**  
**— W Edwards Deming**

# The Opportunity: How can you catapult education towards equity and excellence?

## Rethink Questions to Ask

- Are the goals and strategies set before the pandemic still relevant?
- Who needs to be at the table as we reflect on our renewed vision and the priorities for our state?
- How do we define success so we know how to measure the impact of our investments in education?
- How can we foster innovation and bold thinking? Were there good ideas that were tabled in the past due to resource constraints? Were there local innovations that sprung up in schools and districts during the past year that we could bring to scale?

# Charting a Path Forward

- Engage Early & Often
- Rethink and Reimagine
- Lead with Data & Evidence
- Know your Authority & Influence
- Put Students at the Center of Every Conversation

*“We need to lead by listening.” California State Board of Education, Student Member*