

Initial findings and trends that we saw on the data are listed below. This is not an exhaustive analysis, and the Department of Education will continue to review and collect information and feedback as we navigate the 2020-2021 school year in the midst of a global pandemic.

Staff and students want to be back in the building, and plan to return. Concerns about the health and safety of the staff and students is also high.

71% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they would send their child back for in-person instruction; 82% also agreed/strongly agreed that their child was eager to return.

88% of school and district leaders agreed/strongly agreed that they would return to in-person learning.

79-80% of educators and school personnel agreed/strongly agreed that they would return to in-person instruction.

59% of parents are concerned about the health and safety of their child returning to school. While educators and student support personnel agree/strongly agree with the statement that they have concerns about their own health, at 72% and 77%, respectively, their greater concern is for students, with 82% of educators and 80% of student support personnel agreeing/strongly agreeing with being concerned about students' health and well-being with in-person instruction.

While 60% of school and district leaders were concerned about their safety, they were more concerned about the health and safety of their students and staff, 74% and 79%, respectively.

There are concerns about the abilities of staff and students to ensure that the requirements for health and safety can be implemented.

60% of parents believe the schools can implement the requirements for health and safety, but when asked about students' ability to adhere to specific measures, those who agreed/strongly agreed were much lower. The percentage of parents/guardians who agreed/strongly agreed that students will be able to:

avoid congregating:	34%
avoid physical contact:	35%
maintain social distancing:	35%
wear masks:	38%

Educators had greater concerns about students' ability to maintain the required measures for health and safety. The percentage of educators who agreed/strongly agreed that students will be able to:

avoid congregating: 17%
avoid physical contact: 14%
maintain social distancing: 15%
wear masks: 22%

School and district leadership has greater confidence in staff's ability to implement the requirements for health and safety:

avoid congregating: 54%
avoid physical contact: 57%
maintain social distancing: 48%
wear masks: 62%

Additional concerns about physical and emotional well-being emerged.

The Student Support personnel, including, for example, school counselors, specialists, nurses, drivers, administrative assistants, OT/PT providers, noted great concerns about their ability to maintain social distancing, with only 26% agreeing or strongly agreeing that staff would be able to keep safe distance. These same staff noted that only 29% believed they would have access to the PPE needed to ensure their health and safety. 48% of school and district leaders agreed/strongly agreed with their access to needed PPE.

Both the support personnel and leadership also had concerns about the access to a social emotional curriculum to support staff and students as they return to school. Only 26% of the student support staff and 39% of leaders agreed/strongly agreed that there was a curriculum available for social emotional learning for students.

While 42% of parents agreed/strongly agreed that their child's overall remote learning experience was positive, there were strong concerns about the overall success of the emergency learning of the spring. Only 32% agreed/strongly agreed that their child was motivated, and 36% agreed/strongly agreed that their child made progress.

Next steps that the Department has taken or will take:

1. The Department of Education's Maine School Safety Center has ordered PPE for schools, and is working with MEMA and the National Guard to expedite delivery of masks, gloves, gowns, hand sanitizer and other needed items.
2. The Department is developing a toolkit of instructional videos, print materials and tips for educators and families to use as we teach and reinforce the required safety protocols for school. Positive reinforcement, modeling, and direct instruction will help with understanding, compliance, and with increasing the safety and decreasing the fear during this time.

3. Commissioner Makin and Deputy Commissioner Chuhta will again meet with and hear from educators at an MEA town hall in August.
4. Commissioner Makin and Deputy Commissioner Chuhta, along with other DOE specialists, will host a family forum in August. Details are forthcoming.
5. The Department of Education will be launching a high quality, free social emotional learning curriculum for schools to access and use in supporting their school community. The curriculum is fully accessible for implementation in person or remotely.
6. Commissioner Makin and Deputy Commissioner Chuhta will continue to meet daily with CDC, weekly with superintendents, and every other week with the leadership of statewide education organizations to review questions and concerns and provide resources and support to our school communities.
7. Maine Department of Education specialists have been leading ongoing professional development and support to educators as they prepare to offer high-quality learning opportunities for students, regardless of the instructional model. This will continue throughout the year.
8. In September, a free online bank of highly engaging, project-based learning modules, developed by and for our amazing Maine teachers, will be available to enhance, not replace, the lesson plans of teachers.
9. Our Special Education specialists continue to work with families and educators to offer support, resources and guidance as they all look for ways to assess needs and develop creative and effective plans to support students.

We will continue to review the data, engage with our colleagues, families and students, and provide the most updated information and resources available, as we all work to navigate this difficult and unconventional school year.

