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Survey of School Teachers' Views on Online Learning and Student Mental Wellbeing amid Covid-19 Related School Adaptations

Hong Kong Survey Report

Jan 2021

Research Objective

To collect the views of Hong Kong teachers on conducting online teaching and the current overall learning experience of students amid the pandemic and to identify potential problems with online learning and student mental health during school suspensions and Covid-19 related adaptations.

Key Findings

- School children in Hong Kong are facing an increased risk of inequality in their education experience. This is shown by divergent opinions from teachers on the quality of the learning experience and learning outcomes for students amidst a year of online learning. In addition, an observable inconsistency among teachers in their preferred approaches to grading students may also result in unfair differences in grade results between students from different schools.
- Most teachers (68%) were unprepared for the shift to online learning with little or no experience teaching virtual classes when the school suspensions began and teaching methods have still not been perfected. More than a third (37%) report that when supporting learning online they are less able to identify and support the diverse learning needs of students and that students have had more difficulty focusing (44%) in class for virtual lessons.
- The majority of teachers in our survey said their school has pressing concerns on student mental health but insufficient resources to address them. More than half of surveyed teachers considered student stress (57%), anxiety (51%), depression (50%), and special education needs (64%) to be a serious concern but cited a lack of availability of mental health professionals in the community (47%) or resources and training for school staff (49%) as a barrier to providing the necessary support.

Methodology and Limitations

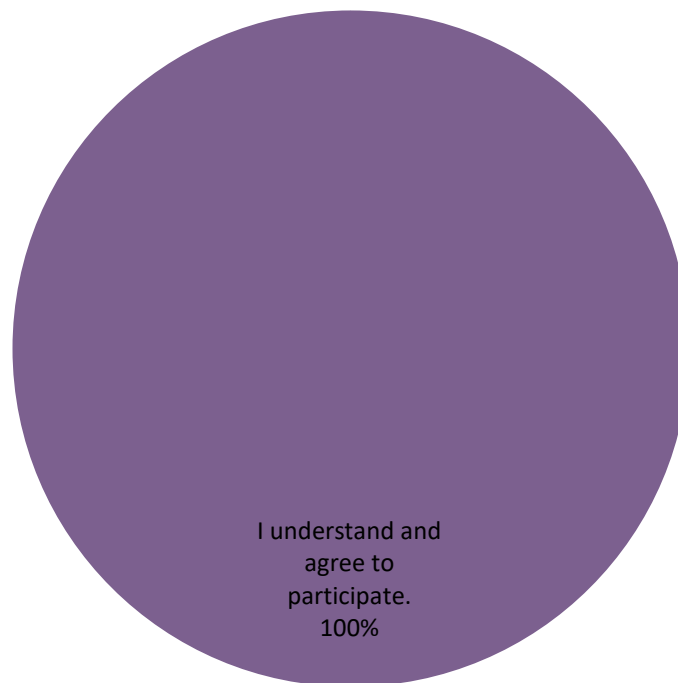
This quantitative study includes data from a survey which collected 139 valid responses from persons identifying as either primary or secondary school teachers in Hong Kong between September 21st and December 10th, 2020. The majority of responses were collected between October 26th and November 16th. Responses were collected via an online self-administered survey using a 2-stage non-probability sampling method with snowball referral. In the first stage a convenience sample of 3 groups of teachers were selected including: teacher's known to Save the Children Hong Kong staff, teachers who are members in a Facebook group for Hong Kong teachers, and teachers who are members in a teacher professional practice support network. In the second stage a voluntary sample was collected from each group, and respondents were encouraged to refer other teachers to complete the survey. The sample is comprised of 67% from the teacher professional practice support network, 23% from snowball referrals, 8% from teachers known to Save the Children Hong Kong staff, and 1% from the Facebook group for Hong Kong teachers. The characteristics of the composition of these teacher groups are not known and so the population of each group relative to the sample collected from that group in the second stage is irrelevant.

The sample has two notable risks of bias beyond the self-selection bias inherent to voluntary samples. The first evident bias is the higher representation of teachers from government schools in the sample (25%) relative to the portion of government schools among the school population in Hong Kong (10%) and a lower portion of teachers from aided schools (41%) relative to the portion of aided

schools in Hong Kong school population (80%). Teachers from private schools are also slightly over-represented in the sample (23%). The second notable risk of bias is that respondents were not asked to identify which school they are employed by in the interest of privacy, and so the sample may be biased by containing responses from multiple teachers who are employed by the same school and therefore have common experiences. This systemic selection bias was anticipated and accepted by the researchers as the sample is not intended to be representative of the study population. This sampling method was chosen in order to constrain the costs of the study and to offer only a highlight of outstanding sentiments, common experiences and perspectives among teachers and sub-groups of teachers contained in the sample.

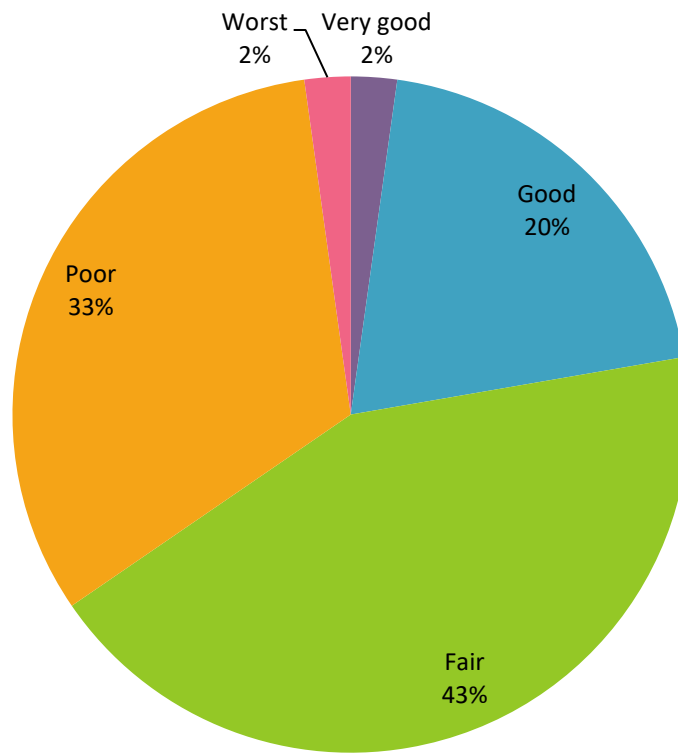
Survey Results

Collected information will help us understand the needs of children and how we can further make suggestions to the government and other stakeholders on how to support the well-being and learning of children and young people. The survey will require about 5 minutes for completion. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and no incentive or rewards will be given after completion. Please rest assured that all information and responses will be kept in strict confidence and will only be used for research purposes, while no personal data is collected. Do you agree to participate in this survey?



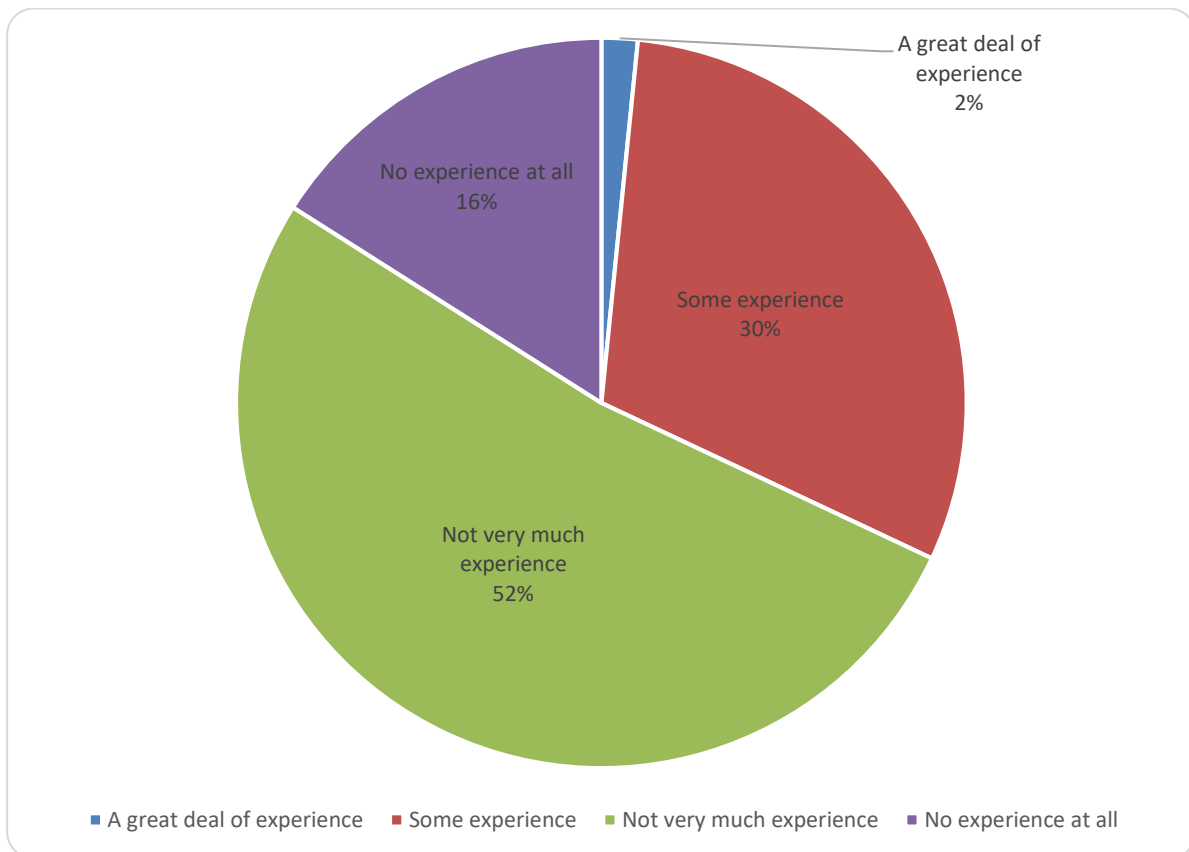
Value	Percent	Count
I understand and agree to participate.	100.0%	139
	Totals	139

1. How would you describe the overall online learning experience of students during coronavirus-related school suspensions?



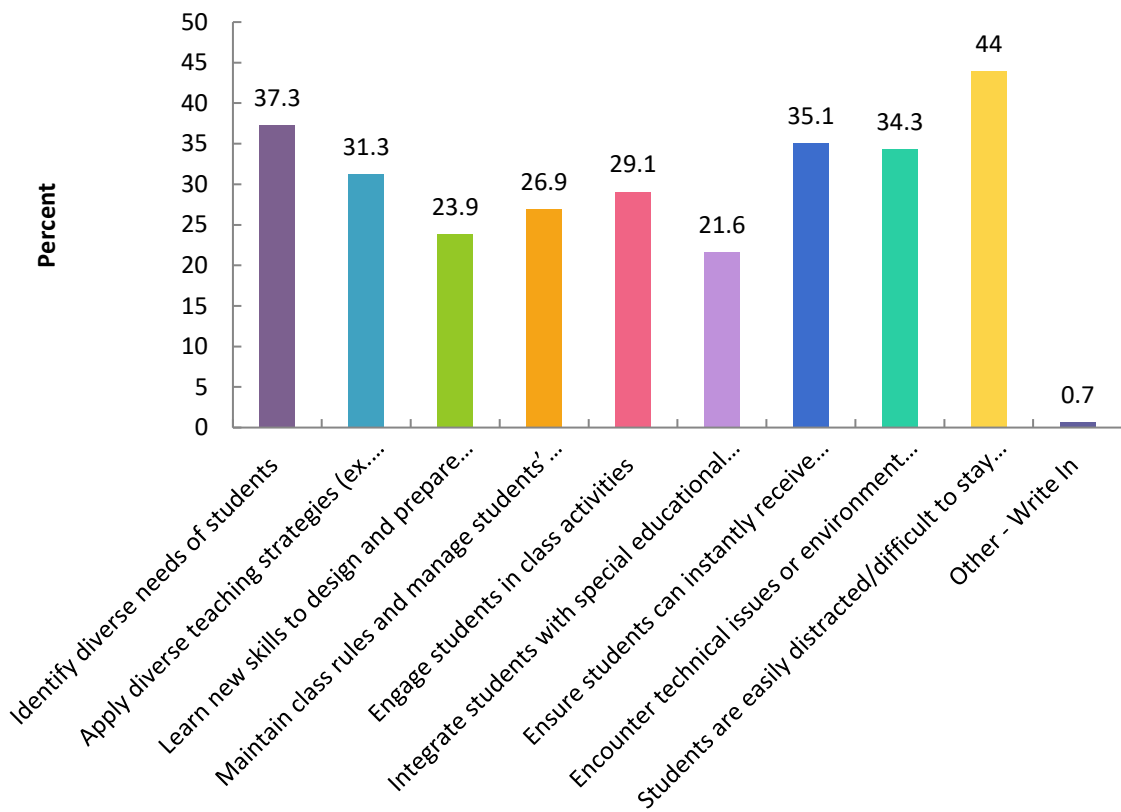
Value	Percent	Count
Very good	2.2%	3
Good	20.1%	28
Fair	43.2%	60
Poor	32.4%	45
Worst	2.2%	3
	Totals	139

2. Before the coronavirus outbreak, how much experience did you personally have with e-learning?



Value	Percent	Count
A great deal of experience	1.6%	2
Some experience	30.4%	38
Not very much experience	52.0%	65
No experience at all	16.0%	20
	Totals	125

3. Which of the following(s) are difficulties in teaching on digital platforms? (select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Count
Identify diverse needs of students	37.3%	50
Apply diverse teaching strategies (ex. demonstrations and discussions)	31.3%	42
Learn new skills to design and prepare teaching materials	23.9%	32
Maintain class rules and manage students' discipline in class	26.9%	36
Engage students in class activities	29.1%	39
Integrate students with special educational needs into class	21.6%	29

Ensure students can instantly receive guidance from teacher	35.1%	47
Encounter technical issues or environment factors (such as background noise)	34.3%	46
Students are easily distracted/difficult to stay focus	44.0%	59
Other - Write In	0.7%	1

4. Which best describes the amount of time you were able to spend on each of the following during school suspensions?

	Much more than before	Somewhat more than before	About the same as before	Somewhat less than before	Much less than before	Responses
Academic instruction Count Row %	10 7.5%	57 42.5%	44 32.8%	21 15.7%	2 1.5%	134
Preparing lesson plans and teaching materials Count Row %	18 13.7%	52 39.7%	41 31.3%	20 15.3%	0 0.0%	131
Social-emotional support for students Count Row %	3 2.3%	32 24.4%	62 47.3%	29 22.1%	5 3.8%	131
Student after class consultation Count Row %	8 6.1%	38 28.8%	49 37.1%	31 23.5%	6 4.5%	132
Provide in-class academic support Count Row %	10 7.6%	38 29.0%	42 32.1%	37 28.2%	4 3.1%	131
Professional development and/or school-based planning on curriculum adjustment Count Row %	9 6.9%	33 25.2%	58 44.3%	29 22.1%	2 1.5%	131
Parent/guardian outreach Count Row %	6 4.6%	24 18.5%	55 42.3%	40 30.8%	5 3.8%	130
Grading/providing feedback Count Row %	9 6.9%	33 25.2%	61 46.6%	26 20.0%	2 1.5%	131

Count Row %	6.9%	25.2%	46.6%	19.8%	1.5%	
Totals Total Responses						134

5. Compared to attending online classes, which best describes current status of each of the following since school has officially resumed?

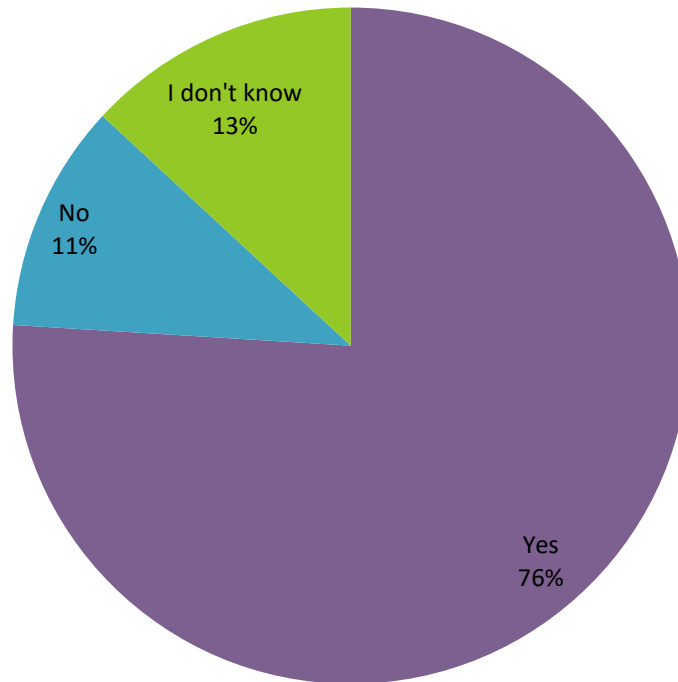
	Much better than during school suspension	Somewhat better than during school suspension	About the same as during school suspension	Somewhat worse than during school suspension	Much worse than during school suspension	Responses
Class participation Count Row %	9 7.3%	36 29.0%	44 35.5%	28 22.6%	7 5.6%	124
Student mental and physical health Count Row %	3 2.5%	32 27.1%	46 39.0%	34 28.8%	3 2.5%	118
Learning progress Count Row %	6 4.9%	37 30.1%	38 30.9%	37 30.1%	5 4.1%	123
Students attentiveness in class Count Row %	7 5.7%	14 11.5%	53 43.4%	39 32.0%	9 7.4%	122
Learning quality and outcomes Count Row %	5 4.0%	27 21.8%	42 33.9%	45 36.3%	5 4.0%	124
Assignment completion rate Count Row %	7 5.7%	22 18.0%	60 49.2%	30 24.6%	3 2.5%	122
Totals Total Responses						124

6. After the school suspension ended, many schools have utilized both online learning and in-classroom teaching (hybrid learning). Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Responses
Allows flexibility for students to choose the mode of learning suitable for them Count Row %	9 7.4%	32 26.2%	55 45.1%	19 15.6%	5 4.1%	2 1.6%	122
Allows teachers to better cope with and make academic arrangements amidst the uncertain pandemic situation Count Row %	13 10.7%	38 31.4%	44 36.4%	17 14.0%	5 4.1%	4 3.3%	121
Burdens parents with supporting students' online learning Count Row %	10 8.2%	37 30.3%	45 36.9%	24 19.7%	4 3.3%	2 1.6%	122
Allows a smooth transition to complete this academic year's remaining learning materials Count Row %	6 5.0%	43 35.5%	42 34.7%	23 19.0%	6 5.0%	1 0.8%	121

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Responses
Allows students to benefit from self-directed learning Count Row %	8 6.6%	39 32.3%	38 31.4%	33 27.3%	3 2.5%	0 0.0%	121
Makes it easier to identify students in need of 1:1 support Count Row %	8 6.7%	38 31.7%	39 32.5%	25 20.8%	7 5.8%	3 2.5%	120
I don't know Count Row %	0 0.0%	8 7.0%	40 35.1%	20 17.5%	12 10.5%	34 29.8%	114
Hybrid learning was not implemented in my school Count Row %	3 2.6%	21 17.9%	37 31.6%	24 20.5%	17 14.5%	15 12.8%	117
Totals Total Responses							122

7. The EDB has disbursed the Community Care Fund and implemented the Assistance Program to subsidize students to purchase electronic devices to facilitate learning. Did your school adopt the 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) policy for e-learning?

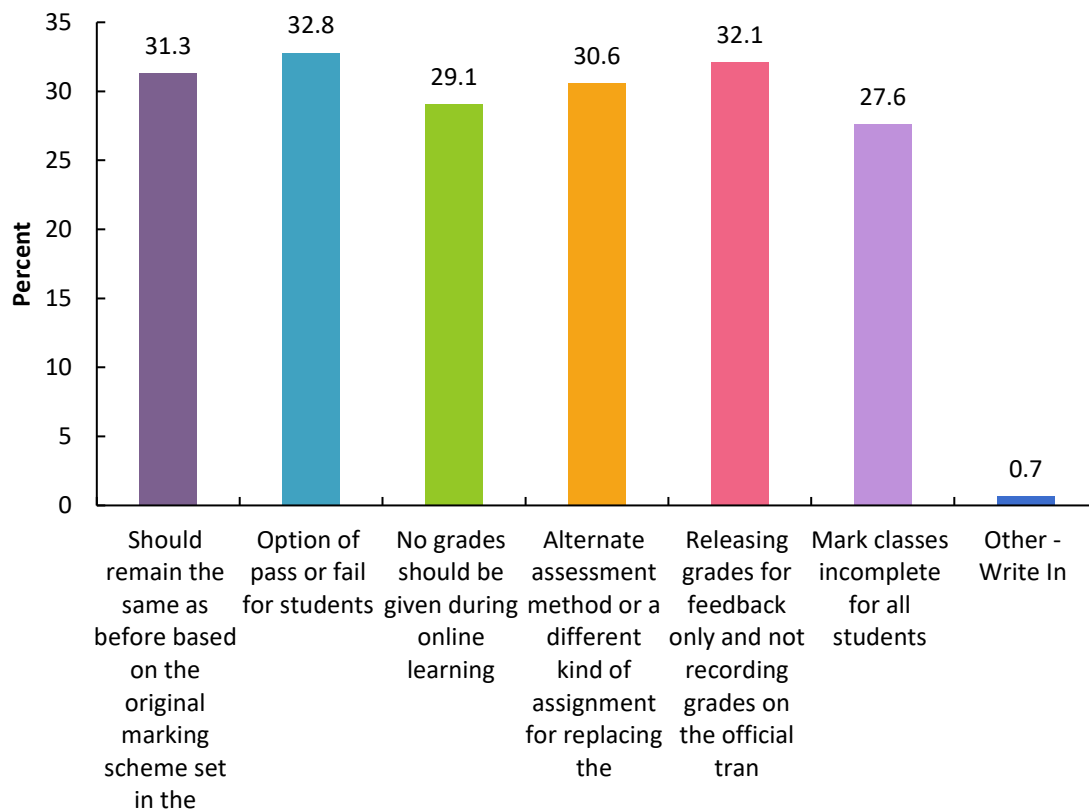


Value	Percent	Count
Yes	75.9%	104
No	10.9%	15
I don't know	13.1%	18
	Totals	137

8. If no, why not?

Response ID	Response
72	沒有計劃
75	不需每人一機帶回校上課
77	暫時未有需要
95	d
97	They provided iPads to each student
263	我也不知道
297	不知道
299	N/A

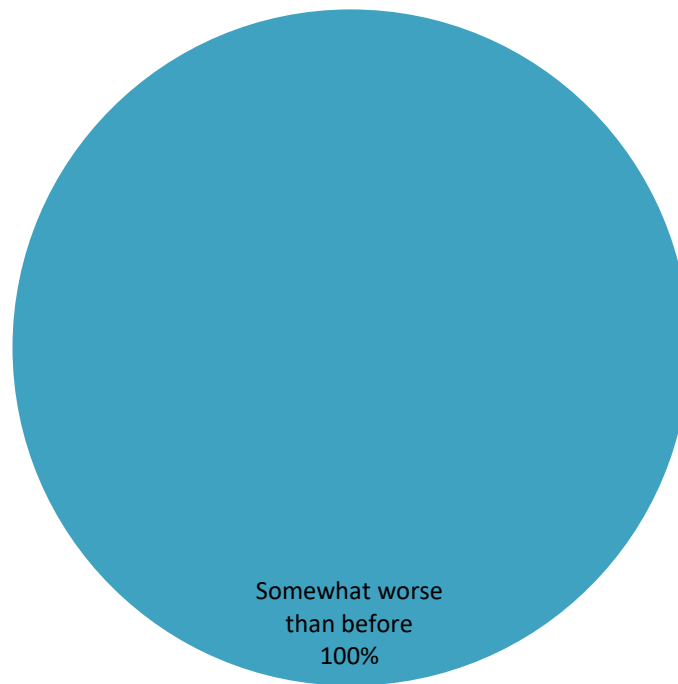
9. For fairness in evaluating learning outcomes, which of the following do you think schools should consider when awarding grades for 2019-20 school year? (select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Count
Should remain the same as before based on the original marking scheme set in the syllabus	31.3%	42
Option of pass or fail for students	32.8%	44
No grades should be given during online learning	29.1%	39
Alternate assessment method or a different kind of assignment for replacing the original course syllabus	30.6%	41
Releasing grades for feedback only and not recording grades on the official transcript	32.1%	43

Mark classes incomplete for all students	27.6%	37
Other - Write In	0.7%	1

10. If you have read this question, please select "somewhat worse than before" below (for verification purposes)



Value	Percent	Count
Somewhat worse than before	100.0%	139
	Totals	139

11. What do you consider are potential barriers to student mental health support provision?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Responses
Insufficient resources for school-based mental health professionals or services Count Row %	9 6.8%	50 37.9%	49 37.1%	18 13.6%	4 3.0%	2 1.5%	132
Lack of adequate training for staff in dealing with children's mental illness Count Row %	13 10.0%	51 39.2%	46 35.4%	15 11.5%	4 3.1%	1 0.8%	130
Insufficient number of community-based mental health professionals Count Row %	19 14.4%	43 32.6%	48 36.4%	17 12.9%	1 0.8%	4 3.0%	132
Lack of referral options that provide mental health consultation Count Row %	11 8.3%	50 37.9%	45 34.1%	21 15.9%	3 2.3%	2 1.5%	132

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Responses
Addressing mental illness is not considered a role/priority of the school Count Row %	7 5.3%	28 21.4%	53 40.5%	32 24.4%	9 6.9%	2 1.5%	131
Difficulty identifying children with mental illness Count Row %	6 4.5%	47 35.6%	48 36.4%	26 19.7%	4 3.0%	1 0.8%	132
Stigma leading to low acceptance of mental health support Count Row %	11 8.4%	32 24.4%	60 45.8%	22 16.8%	4 3.1%	2 1.5%	131
Lack of coordination between the school and the parents Count Row %	8 6.2%	26 20.0%	62 47.7%	26 20.0%	5 3.8%	3 2.3%	130
Language and cultural barriers with culturally diverse students Count Row %	9 6.8%	35 26.5%	53 40.2%	25 18.9%	7 5.3%	3 2.3%	132
Totals Total Responses							132

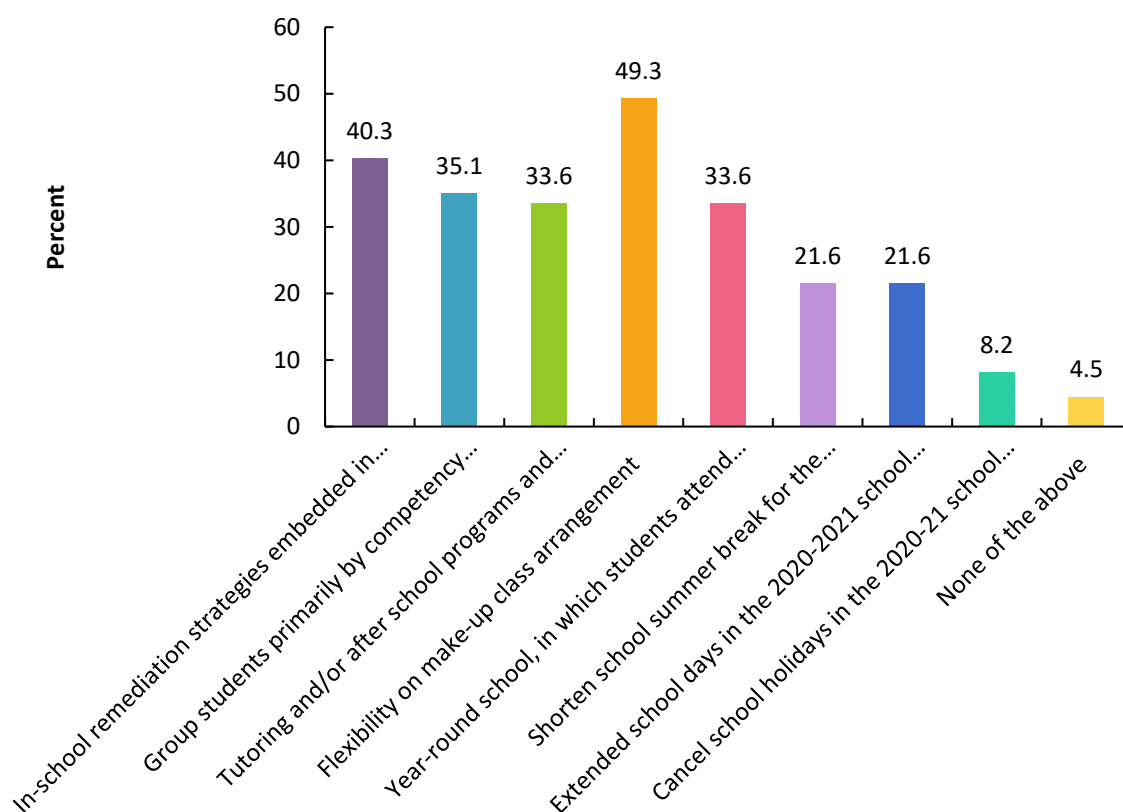
12. Please rank the top 3 options in order of priority. How can teachers, schools, and the EDB do more to support student mental wellbeing?

Item	Overall Rank	Score	Total Respondents
Be more proactive in referring students to counselors and social workers for mental health support (ex. check-in call to students)	1	178	85
Provide useful tips to help school personnel and parents early identify students with emotional difficulties and seek timely support, as well as to enhance students' resilience against adversity	2	159	84
Include mental health and wellbeing content to the curriculum	3	146	71
Add activities that support mental wellbeing to the class timetable or recess or homeroom time	4	133	63
Host parent talks to provide information about caring for child / youth mental wellbeing	5	127	67
Others	6	50	24

13. Please indicate your level of agreement, with reference to the statement: “Better supporting students with _____ is a pressing concern in my school.”

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Responses
Special Educational Needs (SEN) Count Row %	21 17.8%	55 46.6%	31 26.3%	8 6.8%	2 1.7%	1 0.8%	118
High levels of stress Count Row %	27 23.5%	38 33.0%	38 33.0%	9 7.8%	3 2.6%	0 0.0%	115
Anxiety Disorders (such as Compulsive Disorders) Count Row %	22 18.3%	39 32.5%	36 30.0%	19 15.8%	3 2.5%	1 0.8%	120
Depressive Disorders Count Row %	30 25.4%	33 28.0%	25 21.2%	19 16.1%	7 5.9%	4 3.4%	118
Substance use Disorder (misuse of alcohol and illicit drugs) Count Row %	19 16.2%	36 30.8%	30 25.6%	18 15.4%	9 7.7%	5 4.3%	117
Eating Disorders Count Row %	15 12.7%	26 22.0%	42 35.6%	23 19.5%	8 6.8%	4 3.4%	118
Mental Disorders Count Row %	24 20.7%	30 25.9%	34 29.3%	18 15.5%	5 4.3%	5 4.3%	116
Totals Total Responses							120

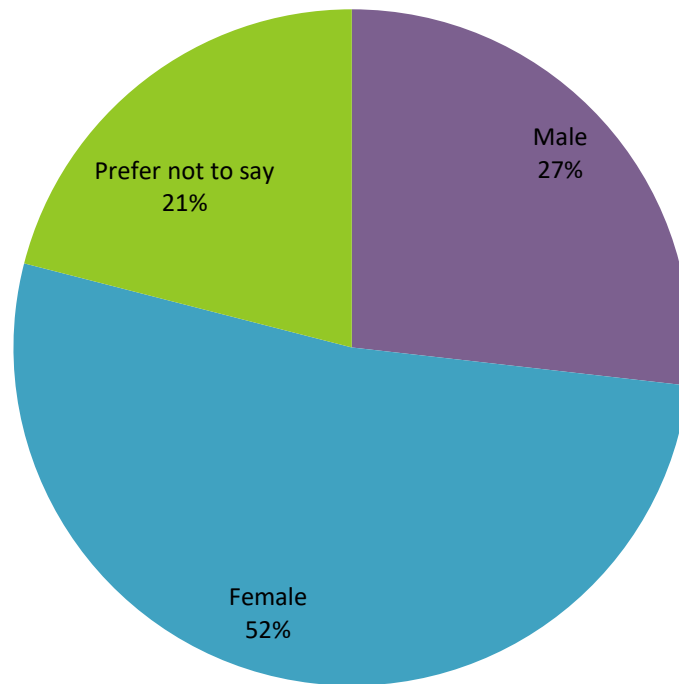
14. Which of the following do you think your school or the EDB should consider to address potential learning loss when students return to schools? (select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Count
In-school remediation strategies embedded in the regular school day	40.3%	54
Group students primarily by competency level, rather than by previous grade level or age, to better meet students' needs	35.1%	47
Tutoring and/or after school programs and make-up lessons	33.6%	45
Flexibility on make-up class arrangement	49.3%	66
Year-round school, in which students attend the same number of school days as they traditionally would	33.6%	45
Shorten school summer break for the academic year of 2020-21	21.6%	29

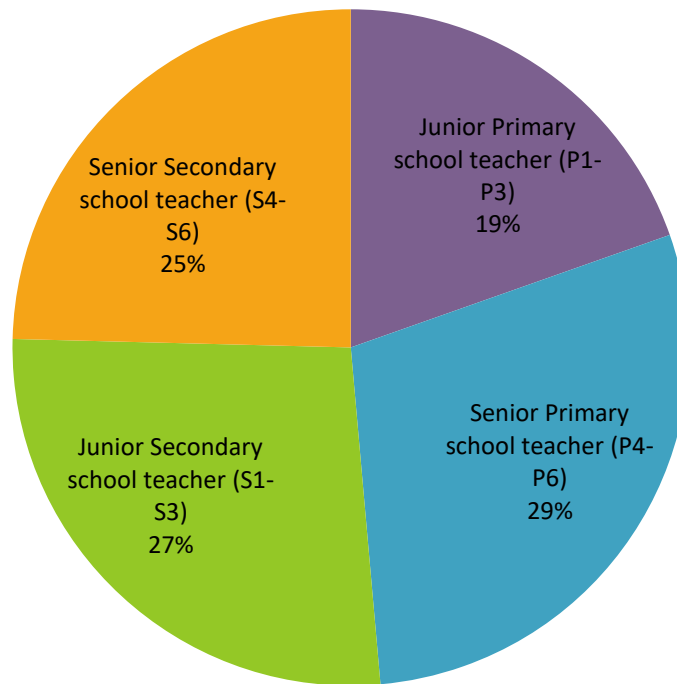
Extended school days in the 2020-2021 school year	21.6%	29
Cancel school holidays in the 2020-21 school year	8.2%	11
None of the above	4.5%	6

15. Gender



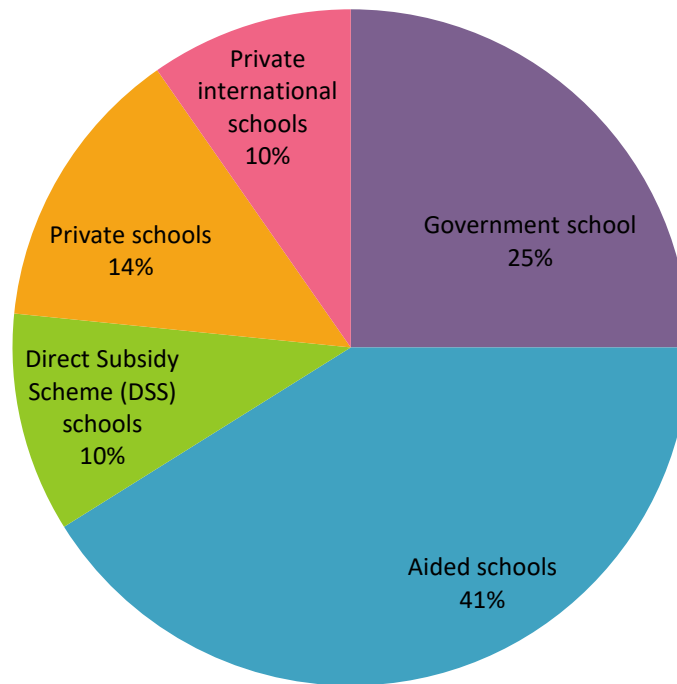
Value	Percent	Count
Male	26.8%	37
Female	52.2%	72
Prefer not to say	21.0%	29
	Totals	138

16. Which of the following best describes your status?



Value	Percent	Count
Junior Primary school teacher (P1-P3)	19.6%	27
Senior Primary school teacher (P4-P6)	29.0%	40
Junior Secondary school teacher (S1-S3)	26.8%	37
Senior Secondary school teacher (S4-S6)	24.6%	34
	Totals	138

17. Which type of school are you teaching?



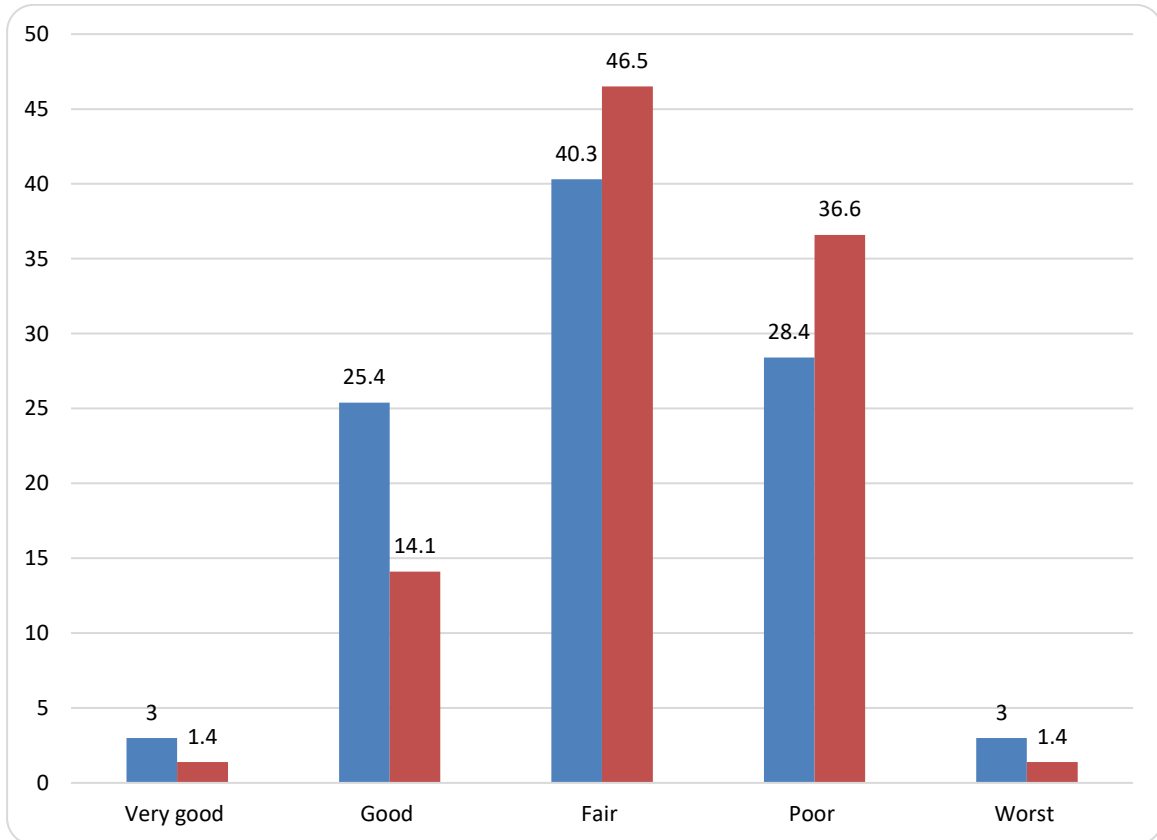
Value	Percent	Count
Government school	25.0%	31
Aided schools	41.1%	51
Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools	10.5%	13
Private schools	13.7%	17
Private international schools	9.7%	12
	Totals	124

Appendix

Cross-tabulation graphs by themes

Future of e-learning

2. How would you describe the overall online learning experience of students during coronavirus-related school suspensions? (segmented by primary and secondary school teachers)



Segment	Value	Percent	Count	% of Total
Primary School	Very good	3%	2	1.4%
	Good	25.4%	17	12.3%
	Fair	40.3%	27	19.6%
	Poor	28.4%	19	13.8%
	Worst	3%	2	1.4%

Secondary	Very good	1.4%	1	0.7%
	Good	14.1%	10	7.2%
	Fair	46.5%	33	23.9%
	Poor	36.6%	26	18.8%
	Worst	1.4%	1	0.7%

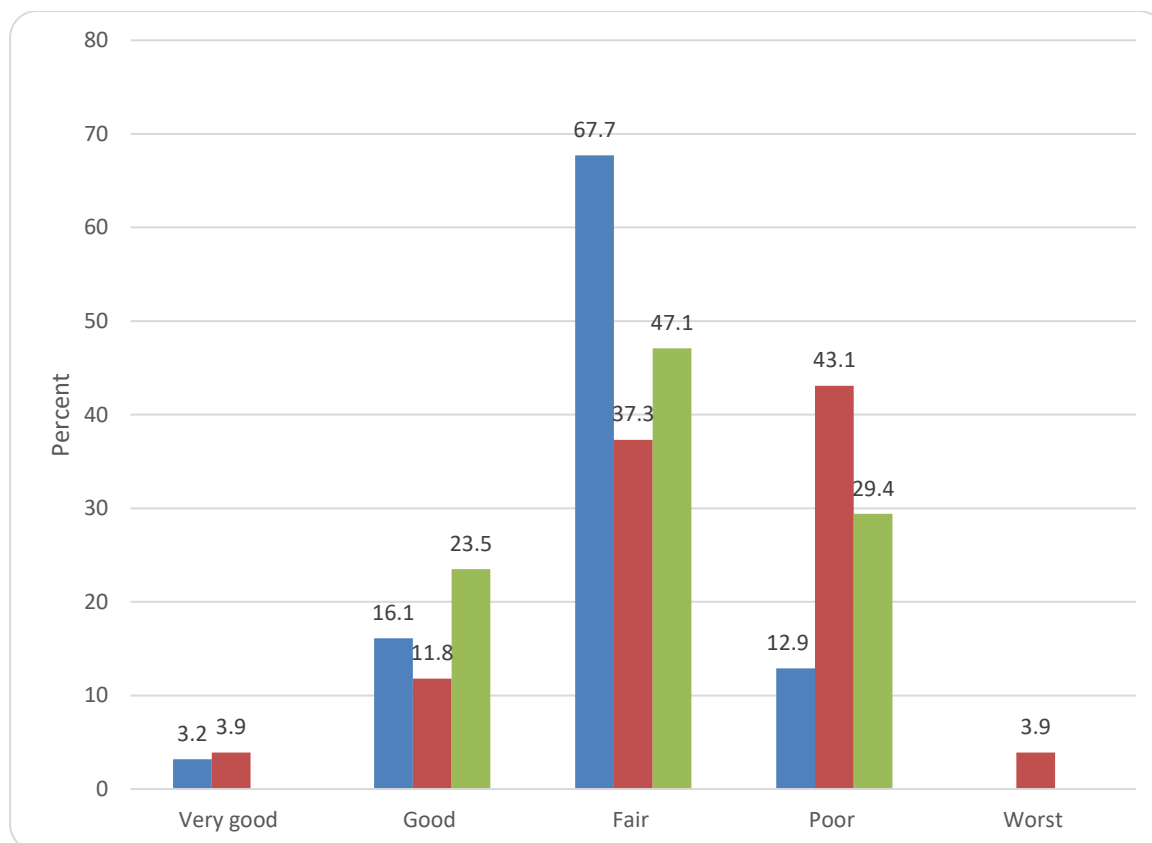
6. Compared to attending online classes, which best describes current status of each of the following since school has officially resumed? (segmented by primary and secondary school teachers)

	Much better than during school suspension	Somewhat better than during school suspension	About the same as during school suspension	Somewhat worse than during school suspension	Much worse than during school suspension	Responses
Class participation						
Primary School Count Row %	6 10.0%	14 23.3%	22 36.7%	17 28.3%	1 1.7%	60
Secondary Count Row %	3 4.7%	22 34.4%	22 34.4%	11 17.2%	6 9.4%	64
Student mental and physical health						
Primary School Count Row %	2 3.6%	18 32.1%	19 33.9%	17 30.4%	0 0.0%	56
Secondary Count Row %	1 1.6%	14 22.6%	27 43.5%	17 27.4%	3 4.8%	62
Learning progress						
Primary School Count Row %	3 5.1%	20 33.9%	16 27.1%	19 32.2%	1 1.7%	59
Secondary Count Row %	3 4.7%	17 26.6%	22 34.4%	18 28.1%	4 6.3%	64
Students attentiveness in class						
Primary School Count Row %	5 8.5%	9 15.3%	22 37.3%	21 35.6%	2 3.4%	59
Secondary Count	2 3.2%	5 7.9%	31 49.2%	18 28.6%	7 11.1%	63

Row %						
Learning quality and outcomes						
Primary School Count Row %	1 1.7%	16 26.7%	15 25.0%	26 43.3%	2 3.3%	60
Secondary Count Row %	4 6.3%	11 17.2%	27 42.2%	19 29.7%	3 4.7%	64
Assignment completion rate						
Primary School Count Row %	6 10.3%	9 15.5%	23 39.7%	20 34.5%	0 0.0%	58
Secondary Count Row %	1 1.6%	13 20.3%	37 57.8%	10 15.6%	3 4.7%	64

Inequality in e-learning

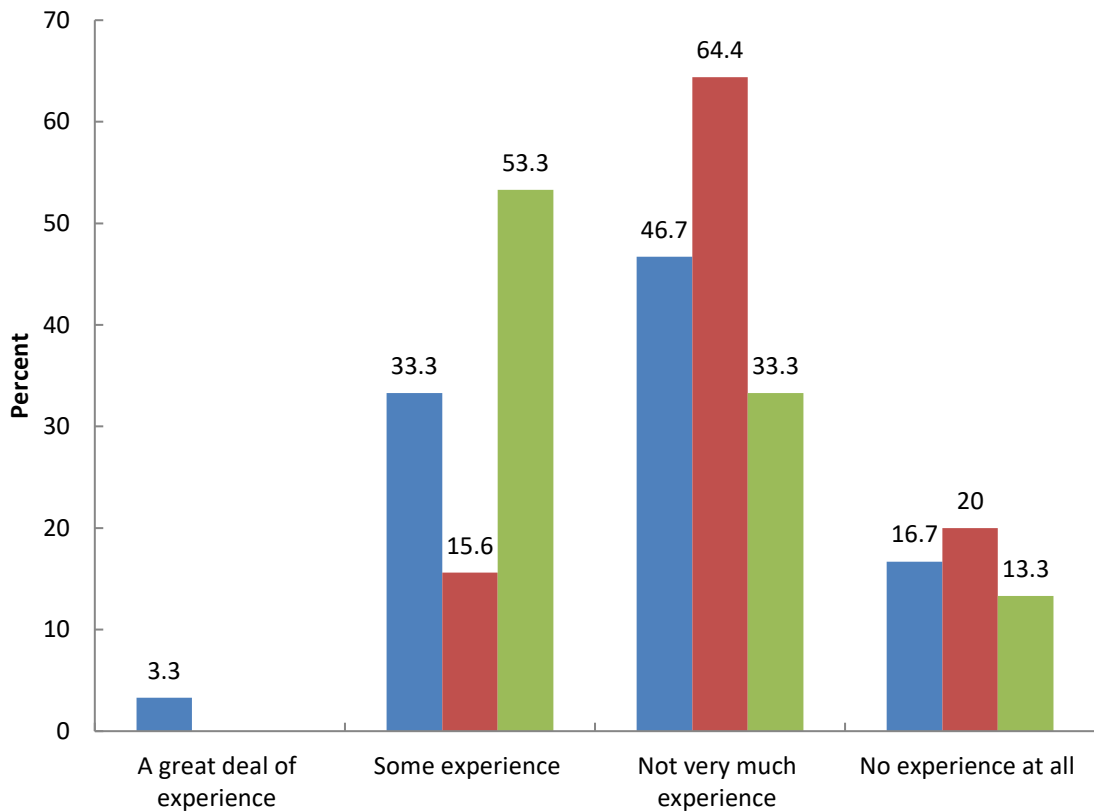
2. How would you describe the overall online learning experience of students during coronavirus-related school suspensions? (segmented by school type)



Segment	Value	Percent	Count	% of Total
Government School	Very good	3.2%	1	1%
	Good	16.1%	5	5.1%
	Fair	67.7%	21	21.2%
	Poor	12.9%	4	4%
	Worst	0%	0	0%
Aided school	Very good	3.9%	2	2%
	Good	11.8%	6	6.1%

	Fair	37.3%	19	19.2%
	Poor	43.1%	22	22.2%
	Worst	3.9%	2	2%
Private School	Very good	0%	0	0%
	Good	23.5%	4	4%
	Fair	47.1%	8	8.1%
	Poor	29.4%	5	5.1%
	Worst	0%	0	0%

3. Before the coronavirus outbreak, how much experience did you personally have with e-learning?
(segmented by school type)



Segment	Value	Percent	Count	% of Total
Government School	A great deal of experience	3.3%	1	1.1%
	Some experience	33.3%	10	11.1%
	Not very much experience	46.7%	14	15.6%
	No experience at all	16.7%	5	5.6%
Aided school	A great deal of experience	0%	0	0%
	Some experience	15.6%	7	7.8%

	Not very much experience	64.4%	29	32.2%
	No experience at all	20%	9	10%
Private School	A great deal of experience	0%	0	0%
	Some experience	53.3%	8	8.9%
	Not very much experience	33.3%	5	5.6%
	No experience at all	13.3%	2	2.2%

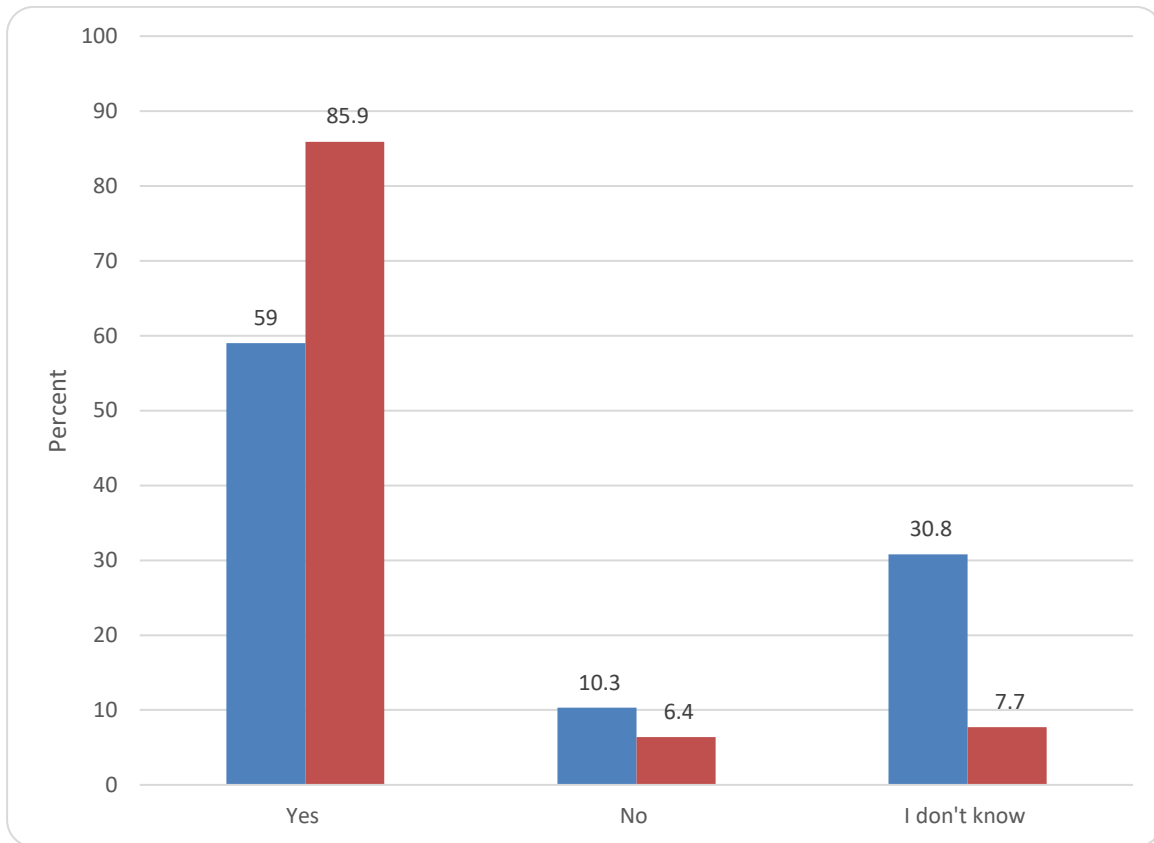
5. Which best describes the amount of time you were able to spend on each other following during school suspensions? (segmented by teachers using and not using hybrid learning)

	Much more than before	Somewhat more than before	About the same as before	Somewhat less than before	Much less than before	Responses
Academic instruction						
No hybrid learning in school/idk Count Row %	3 7.7%	11 28.2%	14 35.9%	11 28.2%	0 0.0%	39
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral Count Row %	4 5.1%	39 50.0%	27 34.6%	7 9.0%	1 1.3%	78
Preparing lesson plans and teaching materials						
No hybrid learning in school/idk Count Row %	5 12.8%	13 33.3%	9 23.1%	12 30.8%	0 0.0%	39
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral Count Row %	8 10.5%	32 42.1%	28 36.8%	8 10.5%	0 0.0%	76
	Much more than before	Somewhat more than before	About the same as before	Somewhat less than before	Much less than before	Responses
Social-emotional support for students						

No hybrid learning in school/idk	2 5.1%	5 12.8%	14 35.9%	16 41.0%	2 5.1%	39
Count						
Row %						
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	1 1.3%	21 27.6%	42 55.3%	11 14.5%	1 1.3%	76
Count						
Row %						
Student after class consultation						
No hybrid learning in school/idk	3 7.9%	9 23.7%	7 18.4%	18 47.4%	1 2.6%	38
Count						
Row %						
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	4 5.1%	20 25.6%	40 51.3%	11 14.1%	3 3.8%	78
Count						
Row %						
Provide in-class academic support						
No hybrid learning in school/idk	2 5.4%	13 35.1%	7 18.9%	14 37.8%	1 2.7%	37
Count						
Row %						
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	4 5.1%	18 23.1%	33 42.3%	22 28.2%	1 1.3%	78
Count						
Row %						
Professional development and/or school-based planning on curriculum adjustment						

No hybrid learning in school/idk	2 5.3%	13 34.2%	13 34.2%	10 26.3%	0 0.0%	38
Count						
Row %						
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	3 3.8%	16 20.5%	40 51.3%	18 23.1%	1 1.3%	78
Count						
Row %						
Parent/guardian outreach						
No hybrid learning in school/idk	2 5.3%	9 23.7%	13 34.2%	14 36.8%	0 0.0%	38
Count						
Row %						
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	2 2.6%	12 15.4%	36 46.2%	25 32.1%	3 3.8%	78
Count						
Row %						
Grading/providing feedback						
No hybrid learning in school/idk	2 5.3%	15 39.5%	10 26.3%	11 28.9%	0 0.0%	38
Count						
Row %						
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	5 6.4%	13 16.7%	44 56.4%	15 19.2%	1 1.3%	78
Count						
Row %						

8.The EDB has disbursed the Community Care Fund and implemented the Assistance Program to subsidize students to purchase electronic devices to facilitate learning. Did your school adopt the 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) policy for e-learning? (segmented by teachers using and not using hybrid learning)



Segment	Value	Percent	Count	% of Total
No hybrid learning in school/idk	Yes	59%	23	19.7%
	No	10.3%	4	3.4%
	I don't know	30.8%	12	10.3%
Hybrid learning in school/Neutral	Yes	85.9%	67	57.3%
	No	6.4%	5	4.3%
	I don't know	7.7%	6	5.1%