

Education Survey for the 2020-2021 School Year

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted traditional education for the 2020-2021 school year and led to diverse responses by local schools throughout Texas. A survey was developed and administered to understand the educational options available to children in DFPS Conservatorship, which options children in DFPS Conservatorship are participating in this school year, and the ease of access to education when internet and electronic devices are required. The information collected will allow DFPS to ensure resources are used in a way that supports those school aged children who are experiencing barriers to their educational needs.

Method

DFPS created a list of children who were in DFPS conservatorship, both TMC and PMC, on September 21, 2020 using the PP_26 report from the DFPS data warehouse. Originally, the list contained 32,585 children. The list was reduced by several factors over the course of the analysis period to ensure the children on the list were still in DFPS conservatorship with an open case and were school aged (born before 9/01/2015). The final list included 17,042 children requiring a survey.

To respond to the survey for the children, DFPS personnel, including CBC staff where applicable, reached out to the child's placements to supplement knowledge already obtained from their prior interactions with the children and their placements. **99.9%* of the 17,042 children had staff complete surveys, 100% of children with a PMC legal status who required a survey are included.** In totality just over 19,768 surveys were completed. Surveys were matched up to the identified children based on Person Identifier number (PID) and a unique survey ID number. Surveys for children not on the original list were excluded, as were instances when multiple surveys were completed on the same child. The data was cleaned to make reporting of results clearer.

A limitation of the survey data is that the responses are all self-report and based on the caseworker or placements understanding of the child's current educational setting, mode of instruction, and access to technology.

Key Findings

The survey tool had 17,040 unduplicated responses with 16,848 children whom required answers to all survey question (after Q7 and Q9 provided additional filters). The survey tool provides an overview of how school aged children in DFPS conservatorship are receiving education during the 2020-2021 school year.

- Most children were given the option to attend school in person or receive virtual instruction from the school.

*the two missing surveys are in region 6B, prior to the list run on October 5, 2020, the children had a legal status of DFPS Responsibility Terminated as the current legal status, when the final list ran on 10/5/20, they showed as TMC, 100% of PMC children who are currently in school are included.

- Over half of the children in DFPS conservatorship are currently attending school in-person. With an additional 40% more participating in virtual instruction.
- In-Person learning is expected to be the primary form of education for 70% of school aged children in DFPS conservatorship by October 2020. With more returning to in-person instruction throughout the fall.
- About 20% of children are expected to remain in an alternative format to in-person instruction for this current academic year.
- Nearly all school aged children in DFPS conservatorship have access to the Internet.
- Most children have access to an electronic device to access virtual learning currently, there will be a greater need for devices if they are needed in the future. 30% of children with a PMC legal status own a personal electronic device.
- While most children who require special education are receiving needed services or accommodations, there are children and families who are waiting for needed assessments, ARD meetings, or assistance with securing needed services.
- Tutoring was a common response to needed supports, some improvement in internet access, and access to more electronic devices that are currently being shared.

Next Steps and follow up

DFPS will be utilizing the regional educational specialist as well as primary caseworkers assigned to children's cases to follow up on any issues or concerns identified in the survey responses. 1018 survey responses had a request for follow up by an education specialist. Other priority follow-ups include children currently participating in school with paper packets only, virtual learners with barriers to accessing technology, and children who are not receiving needed special education services.

Information on the placement or caregiver's name, the name of the child's school, and the school district if the child attends a public school was collected to ensure any needed follow up could be completed by the regional educational specialist or the primary caseworker.

Legal status of children with Survey Responses

Legal Status	Count	%
PMC	7093	42%
TMC	9869	58%
Total	16962	100%

Grade child is enrolled in or should be enrolled in school

Children with a PMC legal status were more likely to be in middle school or high school compared to children with a TMC legal status, who are more likely to be in elementary school.

Grade	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
Kinder	1734	10.3%	452	6.4%	1282	13.1%
1st	1669	9.9%	482	6.8%	1187	12.1%
2nd	1515	9.0%	492	7.0%	1023	10.4%
3rd	1321	7.8%	446	6.3%	875	8.9%
4th	1216	7.2%	463	6.6%	753	7.7%
5th	1272	7.5%	526	7.5%	746	7.6%
6th	1234	7.3%	520	7.4%	714	7.3%
7th	1174	7.0%	519	7.4%	655	6.7%
8th	1282	7.6%	594	8.4%	688	7.0%
9th	1506	8.9%	778	11.0%	728	7.4%
10th	1462	8.7%	835	11.9%	627	6.4%
11th	896	5.3%	559	7.9%	337	3.4%
12th	514	3.1%	350	5.0%	164	1.7%
GED	53	0.3%	27	0.4%	26	0.3%
Total	16848	100.0%	7043	100.0%	9805	100.0%

Type of School

Children in DFPS conservatorship attend a variety of different types of schools. About **90% of all children in DFPS conservatorship attend a public school**. When looking only at children in PMC 85% of these children are enrolled in a public school followed by charter or private schools.

13. What type of school is the child currently enrolled in/anticipated to be enrolled in?

School Type	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
Public school	14793	88%	5988	85%	8797	90%
Charter School	1247	7%	665	9%	582	6%
Private School	151	0.9%	60	0.9%	91	0.9%
Online Charter School	103	0.6%	48	0.7%	55	0.6%
Home school- not enrolled in public or private school	112	0.7%	55	0.8%	57	0.6%
GED Program	54	0.3%	25	0.4%	29	0.3%
Other *	388	2%	198	3%	190	2%
Total	16848	100.0%	7039	100.0%	9801	100.0%

*other category included a variety of Academies (i.e. Challenge Academy or KIPP Academy), Alternative School, Academic Behavior School/ school for autism, Home Bound (which is a program through public schools), schools affiliated with RTC's, Jails, TJJD, or behavior hospitals.

Educational Options provided by schools

Across the state of Texas, local schools offered a variety of educational options for caregivers to choose to meet government orders, public health safety guidelines, TEA and local school policies. In the survey, caseworkers were asked to select all the options available to the child by the local school. **A large portion of schools offered In Person instruction and virtual instruction.**

16. For the 2020-2021 school year, what educational options were offered by the child's school? [check all that apply]

Education Options	Count of option	% of Children with option
In Person	12156	72%
Virtual	11876	70%
Hybrid	1760	10%
Paper Packets	1123	7%
Other*	578	3%

*Other options included Homebound school programs for medically fragile children, homeschool, GED, Online self-paced programs or online charter schools. A large majority of "other" selections offered more detail about how the child will transition from virtual to in-person, or in-person instruction at their placement.

Educational options children are currently participating in

At the completion of this survey, **53% of all children requiring a survey and who are school aged, are currently receiving In-Person Instruction from their local school and 40% of the children are receiving virtual instruction.** About 2% of all children are receiving some In-Person instruction and some virtual instruction. A small number of children, 140, are participating in school with paper packets provided by the school with no in-person or virtual instruction.

For children in which the "Other" option was chosen, caseworkers were able to provide additional comments. The comments indicate that some of these children are in hospital settings, on runaway, home bound due to medical or behavioral reasons and receiving instruction at home, between placements and have a plan for enrollment, or attending school on the campus of the RTC or shelter, therefore receiving In-Person instruction or virtual school in group setting.

17. As of today, which educational option is the child participating in?

Participation Choice	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
In-Person instruction	8914	53%	3484	49%	5422	55%
Virtual instruction	6796	40%	3017	43%	3779	39%
Hybrid instruction (some days in person and some days virtual on a regular basis)	404	2%	198	3%	206	2%
Paper Packets provided by the school for at home instruction (No virtual and No in-person option available)	140	1%	60	1%	80	1%
Other	594	4%	280	4%	314	3%
Total	16848	100%	7039	100%	9801	100%

Paper Packets and children with a PMC legal status

There are 140 children, whom caseworkers identified were participating in instruction through paper packets provided by the school with no other instruction. 60 of these children have a PMC legal status.

For the children with a PMC legal status and who are receiving paper packets:

- 38% (23) of the children have a transition plan to return to in-person instruction when it is available at the local school. 30% (18 children) are expected to return by October of 2020. For, 48% (29) of the children, the placement or caregiver does not expect them to return to the school campus for in-person instruction this academic year.
- 82% of these children have internet access in their placement and 70% have access to an electronic device.
- 43 of them require special education services and they are receiving those services and most of them are receiving the needed services to meet their needs.

Transitioning to In-Person instruction

For children, in which the caseworker indicated the child is currently participating in Virtual instruction, Hybrid instruction, or paper packets questions about the caregiver's plan to transition the child back to in-person instruction and the month in which the caregiver anticipates the child will return to in person instruction was asked.

As of today, does **the placement** have a plan for the child to transition to in-person learning?

Caregiver's plan to transition child back to school	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
The placement will be following the local school's plan to return to in-person learning	3915	53%	1786	55%	2129	52%
The caregiver will make an independent assessment based on the child's needs and the level of COVID-19 spread in the community. This may mean the child does not return as soon as the school district allows for in-person return	2168	30%	942	29%	1226	30%
The caregiver has decided to change from virtual learning to in-person learning, and the local school allows for in-person learning	405	6%	173	5%	232	6%
The caregiver has not yet made a decision	852	12%	374	11%	478	12%
Total	7340	100%	3275	100%	4065	100%

18. What month does the caregiver anticipate the child returning to in person instruction?

Month of Anticipated Return	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
Not at all in this academic year	1625	22%	712	22%	913	23%
20-Sep	557	8%	273	8%	284	7%
20-Oct	3054	42%	1285	39%	1769	44%
20-Nov	666	9%	317	10%	349	9%
20-Dec	208	3%	102	3%	106	3%
21-Jan	1159	16%	549	17%	610	15%
21-Feb	31	0.4%	22	0.7%	9	0.2%
21-Mar	16	0.2%	5	0.2%	11	0.3%
21-Apr	8	0.1%	7	0.2%	1	0.0%
21-May	16	0.2%	3	0.1%	13	0.3%
Total	7340	100%	3275	100%	4065	100%

Electronic devices and internet access

Questions about access to electronic devices and internet were asked for all school aged children who required a survey response regardless of their current participation choice to understand where there might be a need for access to internet or electronic devices currently or in the future if schools must unexpectedly close like in the spring of 2020.

Access to Electronic Devices

19. Which statement best describes the child's access to an electronic device for virtual instruction?

Best describes child's access to an electronic device ^	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
The child has a personal computer or tablet they do not share with other children.	4041	24%	1714	24%	2327	24%
The child's school provided a computer or tablet for each school aged child in the placement.	7921	47%	3396	48%	4525	46%
The child shares a personal computer or tablet with other school aged children.	2098	12%	831	12%	1267	13%
The child's school provided a computer or tablet the child shares with other school aged children.	1019	6%	480	7%	539	5%
The child uses a computer or tablet outside of the placement. (i.e. library, child care center, church)	262	2%	94	1%	168	2%
The child does not have access to a computer or tablet.	1507	9%	528	7%	979	10%
Total	16848	100%	7043	100%	9805	100%

^some of these children are currently receiving In-Person instruction

Access to Internet

20. Which statement best describes the child's access to internet?

Best describes child's access to internet [^]	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
The placement has internet.	15022	89%	6391	91%	8631	88%
The child's school provided internet access in the home (i.e. a hot spot).	815	5%	296	4%	519	5%
The school provides internet access outside of the home (i.e. internet bus or school parking lot).	94	1%	31	0%	63	1%
The child accesses the internet in their community (i.e. library, internet lab, childcare center).	211	1%	60	1%	151	2%
The child uses a computer or tablet outside of the placement. (i.e. library, child care center, church)	262	2%	94	1%	168	2%
The child does not have access to the internet	706	4%	265	4%	441	4%
Total	16848	100%	7043	100%	9805	100%

[^]some of these children are currently receiving In-Person instruction

Personal Devices

Children with a PMC legal status were more likely to own their own electronic device.

24. Does the child have their own personal tablet/ipad/computer (not owned by the placement or provided or provided by the school) that would move with them if they have a placement change.

own personal device	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
Yes	4716	28%	2073	29.5%	2643	27%
No	12120	72%	4962	70.5%	7158	73%
Total	16836		7035	100%	9801	100%

Special Education

Children with a PMC legal status are more likely to receive special education services or 504 accommodations. Most of the children with a PMC legal status are receiving the required special education services or modified services that are meeting their needs.

Caseworkers were able to provide additional information about special education services or 504 accommodations and comments indicate many children are currently awaiting an ARD, further assessment by the school, or ARD's have recently taken place and the school is working towards implementing services. Some caregivers feel that when the child is receiving in-person instruction the needs will be met, but services are not being provided in the virtual setting.

22. Does the child receive special education services or 504 accommodations?

Special Education Services	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
No	12110	72%	4205	60%	7905	81%
Yes	4738	28%	2838	40%	1900	19%
Total	16848	100%	7043	100%	9805	100%

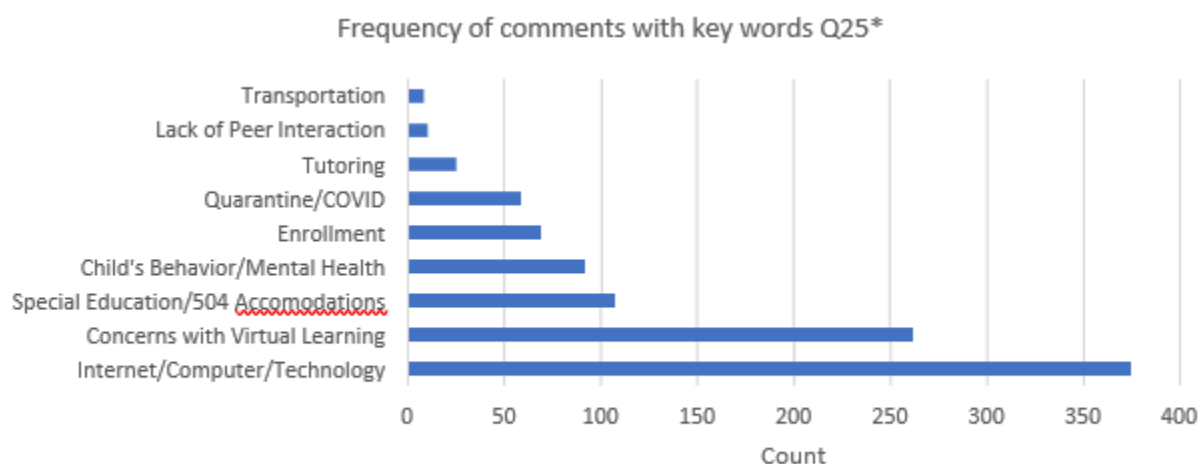
23. Is the school currently providing the special education services or 504 accommodations?

Receiving Special Education Services	State	%	PMC	% of PMC	TMC	% of TMC
Yes	3706	78%	2273	80%	1433	75%
No	151	3%	81	3%	70	4%
Partially - caregiver believes current accommodations are appropriate to meet child's needs.	436	9%	234	8%	202	11%
Partially - caregiver believes current accommodations are NOT appropriate to meet child's needs.	164	3%	94	3%	70	4%
Other	281	6%	156	5%	125	7%
Total	4738	100%	2838	100%	1900	100%

Barriers and Needed Supports

25. What barriers is the placement, caregiver, family, or child experiencing?

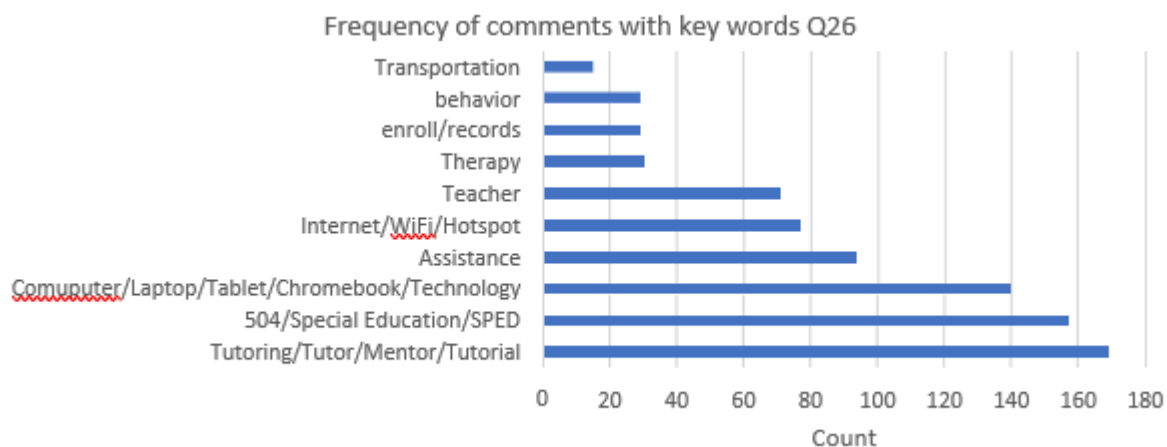
Caseworkers commented on the many challenges of virtual learning including difficulty focusing, lack of peer interaction, understanding the work assigned, children's needs for special education in the virtual setting, access to enough technology for all children in the placement, the difficulties of caregivers managing multiple children in a virtual setting, and the balance of school and work.



*one comment may have had more than one key word and could be counted more than once.

26. What additional supports does the placement, caregiver, or family need to support the child's education?

Some of the common additional supports mentioned in the comments were tutoring, academic assistance, and help with homework. Other common themes included assistance with technology, obtaining additional computers/tablets and internet access or improved internet access. Many comments mentioned the need for a child to have an ARD to be evaluated for special education services, a need for the 504 accommodations or special education services already in place.



*one comment may have had more than one key word and could be counted more than once.