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Keeping up with the ed beat

How news habits, racial identity, and a public health crisis
have shaped parents' experience with education news

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Introduction

Even before COVID-19 upended the American education system, staying informed about schools—policies, learning practices, and generally navigating the terrain—was tough for many American parents, and utterly bewildering for some.

But since the winter of 2020, these informational challenges increased by orders of magnitude. Parents and guardians suddenly faced a new set of information needs: How do I navigate the virtual learning environment? How do I keep my child healthy and safe in school? How are the decisions being made by leaders near and far going to impact my child's education?

This study, which combines findings from two nationally representative surveys of American parents fielded in the spring of 2020 and August of 2021, finds that interest in education news increased substantially over the course of the 15-month period. Across a wide range of issues in the news, parents are more interested in following news about education than about any other topic surveyed. This is true especially for parents of color, who are more likely than White parents to have had to deal with virtual education over the past year, as well as a school system they experience as inhospitable and insensitive to their needs.

That interest takes on a very specific form: Parents with children in school are most attuned to information that meets their practical information needs. They are concerned about their children's physical well-being even more than they are interested in the policy decisions that impact health and safety. They want to know how their children will be able to continue learning, even more than they want to know about the substance of curriculum and classroom practices. For a growing number of parents—especially Black and Hispanic parents—information about how school systems will continue to provide for their children's nutritional needs is a top priority.

These findings suggest that national debates about school politics, while not absent from the minds of parents, are a secondary concern. Indeed, a clear through-line of this study is the importance of local news and local information when it comes to schools. Parent interest in local education information increased between 2020 and 2021, while interest in national trends hardly budged. Parents feel more knowledgeable about local education issues than they do about national ones. And, when it comes to sources, parents view local organizations—especially TV stations and newspapers—as doing the best job.

The surveys, which together included a total of more than 4,300 completions across two waves of data collection, found that parents widely perceive education coverage to be overly focused on exposing problems, but not focused enough on offering solutions.

Other concerns about how the media cover schools, particularly with a lack of attention to inequality and the tendency to reinforce stereotypes—were much more concerning to Hispanic and Black parents than to White parents.

Among the findings:

- Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, parent interest in news about schools and education increased, even surpassing public health as a topic of interest. This is especially the case among parents of color: Fully 83% of Black parents and 77% of Hispanic parents agree that education is a ‘very important’ topic to follow, compared to 63% of White parents (see **Figure 1**).
- Beyond interest in school news generally, nearly all American parents are paying at least some attention to news about the impact of COVID-19 on education, with nine in ten parents saying they have been following this topic at least fairly closely (see **Figure 2**).
- While interest in education news has increased among parents, this is especially the case for information about schools their children attend, where half (54%) of parents say they’ve grown even more interested over the past year in news and information (see **Figure 3**).
- Across a variety of education-related topics, parents are most interested in seeking information about how to keep their child learning. But as the COVID-19 pandemic lingers on, even more practical issues have increased as information-seeking priorities: By August of 2021, one-third of parents indicated that information about how to ensure their child receives meals is ‘very important,’ an eight-point increase over 2020 levels (**Figure 4**). Twice as many Black and Hispanic parents as White parents registered this as a critical topic they are following.
- Parents use both traditional sources and their networks to seek information about schools and education. Six-in-ten get at least some education news from local TV, a similar share as those who get education news from social media, especially from Facebook (see **Table 1**). At the same time, nearly three-quarters of parents say they get at least some school news directly from their friends and family (see **Table 2**). Black parents stand out for their high rates of education news consumption across a range of platforms, especially TV and ethnic media outlets.
- Informal sources of education news have been more useful than traditional media outlets to parents during the pandemic. To be sure, 44% say that both media and

non-media sources have been equally useful in meeting their information needs. But among the rest, parents favor non-media sources by nearly two-to-one. (see **Figure 10**).

- Despite following education news at higher rates, parents of color are less likely to report feeling very knowledgeable about what's going on in education. It is a knowledge gap that widened slightly even between 2020 and 2021 (see **Figure 5**).
- A slight majority of American parents (60%) say the news media cover schools and education at least somewhat well (see **Figure 7**) but give especially high marks to local TV stations and local newspapers for their coverage (see **Table 4**). Black parents are most likely to give these and some other sources favorable ratings.
- Parents are concerned about negativity in school news: Fully two-thirds agree that the news media tends to report on the problems without offering much by way of solutions (see **Figure 8**). While parents from all racial and ethnic groups studied here report this as a problem, the complaint is especially concentrated among White parents. Other concerns take more precedence for parents of color: Black and Hispanic parents are more likely than White parents to express concern about media stereotypes in education coverage, as well as the news media's avoidance of issues related to inequality in schools (see **Figure 9**).
- Parents want journalists to continue to prioritize coverage of student health and safety (a high priority for 67% of parents), even over topics related to politics and school decision-making (52%; see **Figure 12**).

Throughout this report, skipped and refused questions, as well as questions answered with a 'not applicable' or 'don't know' response, are excluded. Interactive data visualizations are available on [Tableau Public](#).

This study of American parents and their experiences with education news was supported by the [William and Flora Hewlett Foundation](#). It is the first in a series of studies exploring broadly the relationship between parents and their education information needs, with an emphasis on the experiences and attitudes of parents of color. A second study evaluates how local media have covered education and schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, exploring the themes that dominant the news, the voices that are featured on the air and on the page, and the extent to which news outlets serve audiences with solutions-based reporting or breaking news. Together, these studies offer insights into two sides of the coin: how parents are engaging with education news, and the performance of the press in a time of crisis.

The two survey waves that provide the data for this report were fielded in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago, utilizing their AmeriSpeak panel. The first wave, fielded in May and June of 2020, consisted of survey interviews with 2,653 American parents who had at least one child in school. The second wave consisted of follow-up survey interviews with 1,685 parents who participated in the first wave. It was fielded in August of 2021. To gain deeper insights into the education news habits of parents of color, the survey contained oversamples of Black and Hispanic parents. More details on the methodology of this report can be found in the **Methodology** section on page 37.

Chapter 1: Interest in education news has grown, focused on student safety and learning

Interest in education news has increased

Few social institutions are as personally relevant to American parents as the public education system. The impact extends well beyond child learning: Schools are where children are socialized, stratified, and prepared for citizenship. American schools have also been the site of crisis after crisis in recent years—the achievement gap, gun violence, funding cuts, and starting in 2020, a pandemic that upended learning for children across the country.

Amid these compounded challenges, two surveys conducted in May-June of 2020 and then again in August of 2021 show that staying informed is a priority for most American parents of children in primary and secondary schools, even while many find that navigating this system is complex.

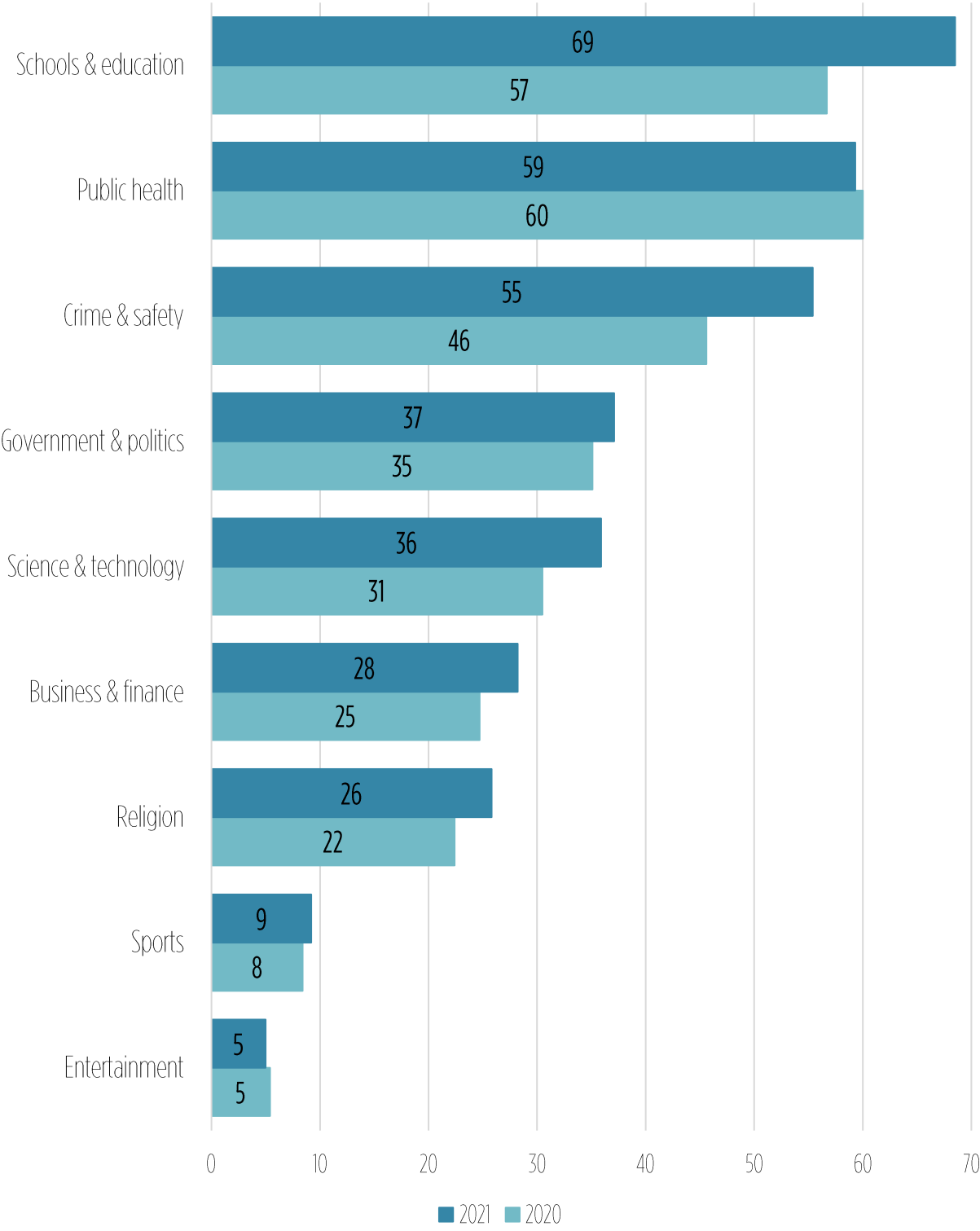
Between 2020 to 2021, parental interest in education as a news topic increased, after being high to begin with (see **Figure 1**).

When asked in 2020 about which news topics were most important to stay informed about, two clearly rose to the top: public health and schools, viewed as ‘very important’ by a majority of parents, at 60% and 57%, respectively. Fielded at a time when the COVID-19 crisis had closed most schools, but before the 2020 presidential race had reached a fever pitch, these topics were viewed with nearly twice the urgency of government and politics.

But by August 2021, schools and education emerged as the leading issue for parents when it came to staying informed, with fully 69% saying it was ‘very important.’ (Public health ranked second.)

Figure 1 Interest in education news has increased

% of parents who think it's very important to stay informed about...

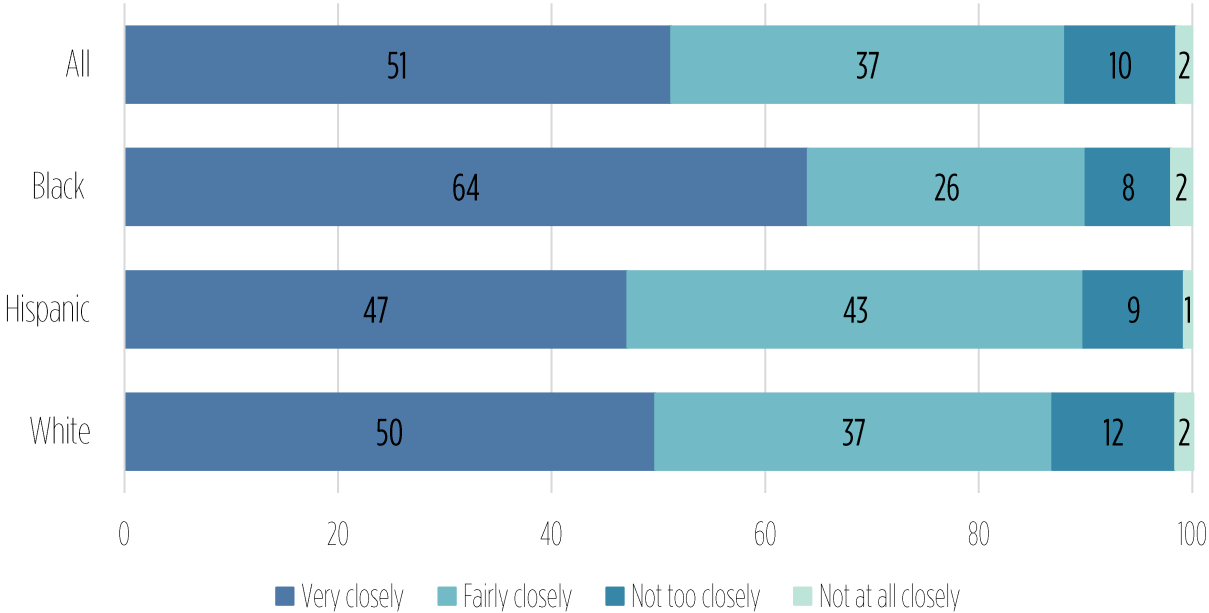


The COVID-19 pandemic introduced a whole new set of information-seeking priorities and challenges for parents of children who are navigating the school system. When asked to share the most confusing aspect of parenting a young learner in a pandemic, one parent shared a simple, but common theme: “conflicting info about what is safe.” Another parent conveyed the struggle of “getting everything set up for in-home learning.”

When asked in August 2021, nearly nine-in-ten parents said they had been following the impact of COVID-19 on schools and education at least fairly closely, with 51% following it very closely. This is the case especially among Black parents, who were especially likely to say that their child’s school was closed to in-person learning during the previous school year. Among this group, two-thirds (64%) report following the impact of COVID-19 on the school system ‘very closely,’ compared to roughly half of Hispanic and White parents (see **Figure 2**).¹

Figure 2 Black parents especially tuned in to news about COVID-19 & schools

% of parents who have followed the impact of COVID-19 on schools over the past year...



¹ Throughout this report, the authors use the term ‘Hispanic.’ The NORC AmeriSpeak panel uses a self-reported measure to categorize survey participants in this way. For more discussion of identity, labels, and terminology related to Americans who trace their roots to Spanish-speaking Latin America and Spain, see this report by the [Pew Research Center](#).

Events and circumstances shape the public's news priorities. Looking back at a 2014 American Press Institute [survey](#), both education and health ranked roughly in the middle of the public's list of topics they keep up with the most.² It was a time when other things were occupying the attention of Americans— fallout from the Edward Snowden NSA leak, natural disasters around the globe, and the still-halting economic recovery.

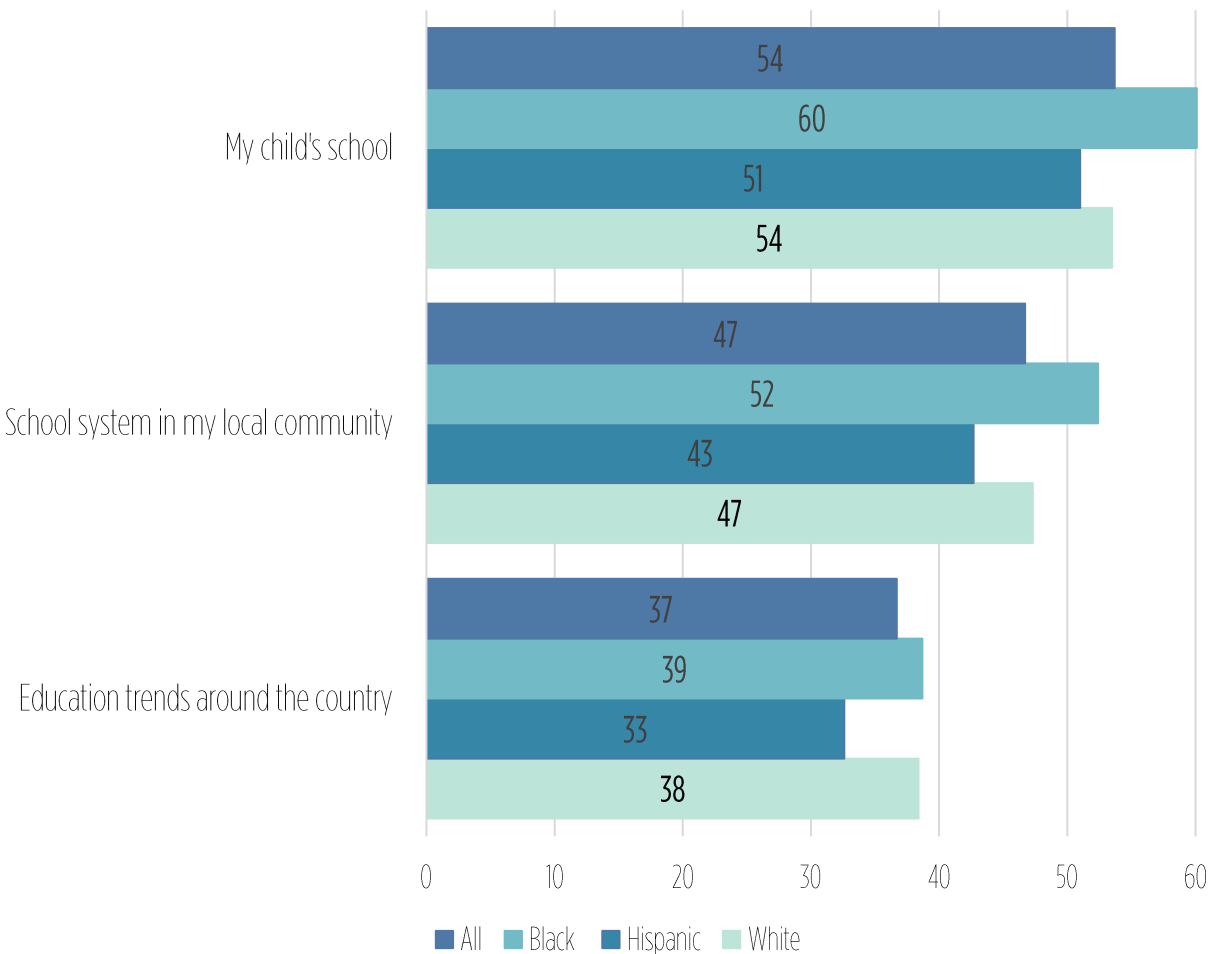
Today, the education system is at the forefront of parents' minds with an intensity perhaps not seen since the 2012 school shooting in Sandy Hook, Connecticut. Keeping up with the news about schools has clearly moved from a peripheral concern to an immediate one. For parents of color, the stakes are especially high in the COVID-19 era. The survey data in this report underscore long-standing inequities, including an income disparity, an education gap, and local school systems that they tend to rate more poorly overall compared with White parents.

Parents report that their own interest in following education news has increased over the course of the pandemic, across all racial and ethnic groups studied. When asked in August 2021, large shares indicated that their interest in school news—including both national and local education trends—had increased over the course of the previous year. As shown in **Figure 3**, fully half (54%) reported interest in information about their child's school had increased. Similarly, 47% said the same of information about their child's school district. While interest in national education trends increased as well, it was a smaller share of parents who said so—about one-in-three.

² The 2014 study, also fielded by NORC, was a survey of American adults, not American parents of school-aged children. What's more, the survey question itself is different from the one found in this report; it asks about news *attention*, while our question asks about news *priorities*. Still, there are few survey questions on record that ask about interest and attention to school and education news. As such, the 2014 API question offers a useful touchpoint.

Figure 3 Interest in local education news has increased the most

% of parents who whose interest in news about the following topics has increased...



Parents are most interested in following a few topics: student safety and learning

American parents who have children in school are not interested in following just news about education in general. When pressed for specificity, most say they are concerned about a small group of education-related topics revolving around student health and safety, even as the politics of education lurked in the background as a topic of interest.

To some extent, parent interest in different dimensions of education news has evolved, even as a series of school-related challenges and crises shifted the news agenda between 2020 and late 2021. To measure these shifts, four different survey questions were asked: one to document which education-related topics parents followed in the year prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic; a second question documenting which topics they found most important in the spring of 2020, the period when schools were shutting down for

the first time; a third question getting directly at which COVID-specific education themes parents viewed as important in the spring of 2020; and finally, a fourth question in August of 2021 which re-asked the same question about COVID-specific education themes of interest. (Two additional questions were also asked in the August 2021 survey, focused on looking ahead to the future; these results are discussed in **Chapter 4** on page 31).

In the year leading up to the spring of 2020, before COVID-19 disrupted nearly every facet of education in the country, parents recalled following several different education-related topics in the news, but foremost among them was student safety, a topic followed by 60% of parents. While we cannot know what parents had in mind related to safety at that time, it is possible responses were influenced both by concerns over gun violence in schools, or bullying, as well as the then-emerging threat of the new pandemic. Other commonly followed topics at the time included news about upcoming school events (53%) and student academic performance (50%). Interest in curriculum—a topic that would eventually dominate the national news agenda in 2021—was followed by 43% of parents in the year leading up to the COVID-19 crisis, making it one of the more commonly followed education topics, though it did not rank at the top of the list.

Safety was an issue slightly more likely to be followed by Black and Hispanic parents than White parents. Black parents were more likely than White parents to say they followed school nutrition, teacher performance, and the achievement gap. Fully 40% of Black parents said they had been following news about racism in schools, compared to just 14% of White parents.

Parents were then asked to select the education issues they follow in the news that were most important as of the spring of 2020. School safety led, with 44% saying it was the most important issue in education news today, followed by academic performance at 30%. Curriculum ranked as the No. 3 topic of importance by 26% of parents.

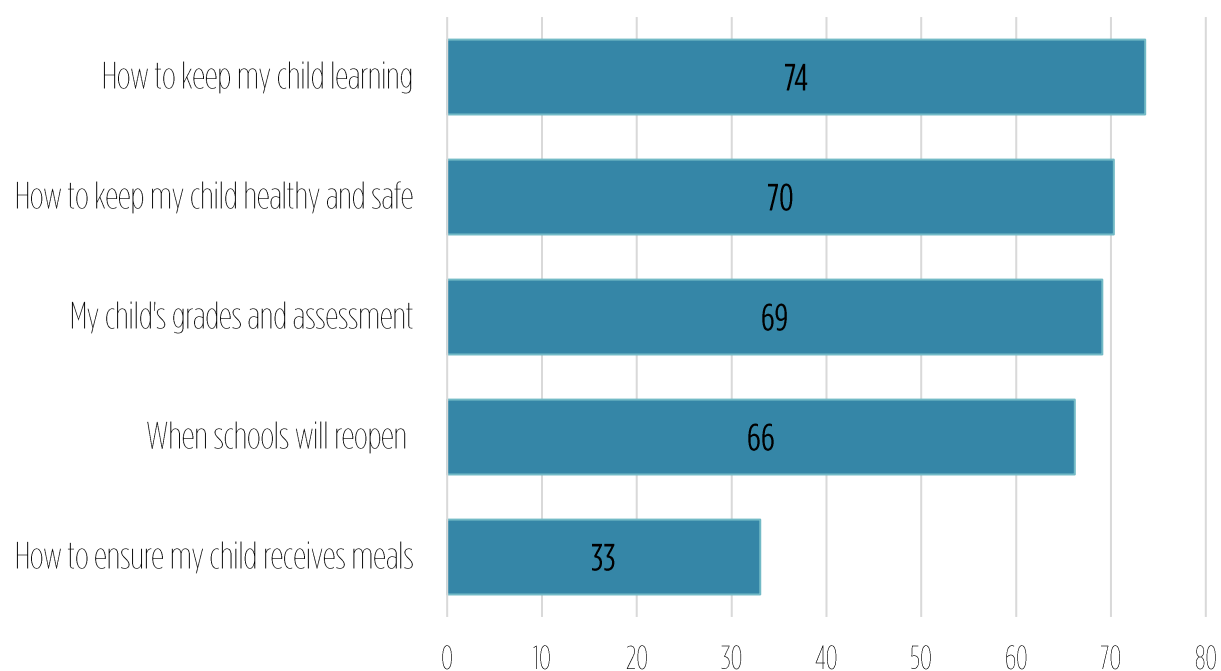
Drilling down more specifically on which COVID-related education topics were most important to parents during the spring of 2020, almost three-quarters indicated information to help keep their child learning was ‘very important’ (see **Figure 4**). “Is my child learning enough?” one parent asked in response to an open-ended question in the survey. “How can I teach her what I don’t know.” Another parent wondered “what my child’s experience will be like in the coming years.” Still another simply asked, “where do I possibly begin with this?”

This was followed closely by information needs related to child health and safety.

Information about when schools would reopen—this was a period when most schools around the country were shuttered—as well as information about their children’s grades and assessment were also viewed as important topics.

Figure 4 Parents want information about how to keep their child learning

Regarding COVID-19, % of parents who think the following topics are very important...



These information priorities remained consistent between spring of 2020 when parents were first surveyed, and August 2021 when they were surveyed again. One item seemed to become more important over the course of the pandemic, though: information that would help ensure their child gets meals. In 2020, just 26% of parents ranked this as ‘very important.’ By August of 2021, 33% of parents did so. The racial and ethnic gap on this matter is striking: By 2021, twice as many Black parents (57%) and Hispanic parents (48%) as White parents (26%) identified this as a ‘very important’ education topic to follow.

Whether due to capacity, bandwidth, interest, or other factors, parents by and large are following just a handful of education issues in the news. Survey participants were asked which statement best describes how much news they get about schools and education in general. Some parents (36%) graze far and wide, getting news about a wide range of education-related topics. But most parents (64%) say they follow just a few. Black parents

were more likely than Hispanic or White parents to say they get news on many school-related issues, at 47%.

In sum, over a two-year span, parents indicated that their education information needs are grounded in the acute. They are concerned about their children's physical well-being, even more so than the policy decisions that impact health and safety; they want to know how their children will be able to continue learning even more than they want to know about the substance of curriculum and classroom practices.

Parents keep up with education news mostly for personal rather than civic reasons

One likely reason that parents are most focused on practical, day-to-day topics about school is because their primary interest in education news relates to their children's lives.

The biggest reason why parents follow education news is that it's related to their child's activities (52% strongly agree). While general curiosity about the topic is also a motivator, somewhat fewer (37% of parents) strongly agree that is why they follow education news. On the other end of things, parents are least likely to indicate that they follow education news because it is important for their jobs (22%), or because they want to be able to talk intelligently about the issue with others (20%).

While parents across all racial and ethnic groups studied prioritize information-seeking about their child's activities, Black parents surpass other groups with their interest in a range of motivators: They are more likely than others to indicate that curiosity about education trends, a sense of civic obligation, the enjoyment of talking with others about the topic, and the ability of education news to help them make decisions about everyday life, are strong reasons why they are motivated to stay up on education news.

An education news knowledge gap has widened between racial and ethnic groups

Parents of school children today feel more knowledgeable about what's going on in local education issues than in national ones, but overall, they feel more knowledgeable across the board today than they did at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. In August 2021, one-third of parents (35%) said they know a lot about what's going on locally in their school systems, up from 23% in spring of 2020. Nationally, just 15% say they know a lot about what's going on, but that too is up marginally from 11% last spring.

But looking closer at local education, self-reported knowledge gaps appear between racial and ethnic groups and seem to have widened over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. In spring of 2020, 28% of White parents felt very knowledgeable about local education trends, similar to that of Black parents (24%). This was the case not just generally, but also specifically: On topics including accessing school resources to help their children's

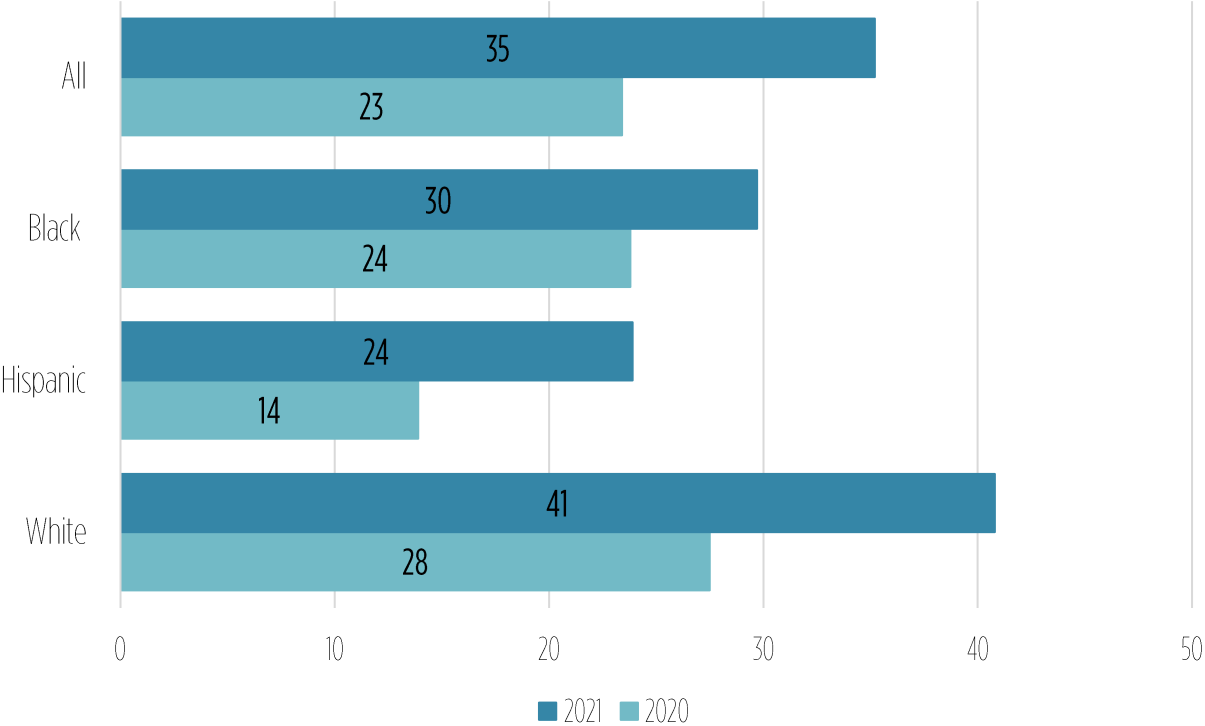
learning, information about what is taught in the classroom, the instruction style at their children’s school, and testing practices, solid majorities of parents indicated they were at least somewhat familiar.

A year later, when parents were re-interviewed, knowledge levels had increased for all groups, but especially among White parents. In the August 2021 survey, 41% of White parents said they felt knowledgeable about local education trends, whereas among Black parents, the share increased only marginally to 30% (see **Figure 5**). Hispanic parents were least likely to say they felt knowledgeable about local education issues.

This finding is especially striking given that White parents are less likely than other groups to seek news and information about education and suggests that other factors may be at play. It is possible that the information needs of parents of color are not being adequately met by the news media. In addition, it is possible that other informal sources of school information, through personal networks, are serving White parents more effectively than they are serving parents of color.

Figure 5 Knowledge gaps have widened over local education news

% of parents who say they know a lot about what's going on in their local K-12 system...



Chapter 2: Parents stick to a few sources for education news, relying on both traditional media and networks

Local TV and social media are top sources for education news

Americans by and large are getting most of their news these days from a combination of traditional, digital, and informal sources. Parents of children in K-12 education are no exception. Nearly half get news, regardless of topic, ‘often’ from a website or app. One-third frequently turn to local TV. A similar, if slightly smaller share, routinely get news from social media, especially Facebook. Older legacy news sources such as newspapers and radio are turned to less frequently.

When it comes to news about schools and education, source preferences look similar in many ways—though not in every way—to general news habits among parents. Measured in both 2020 and 2021, these preferences have stayed largely unchanged throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than any other source for education news, parents turn to local TV—whether it’s a live broadcast or on the station’s website. As shown in **Table 1**, roughly six-in-ten parents say they get ‘some’ or ‘a great deal’ of education news in this way. Social media ranks high as well. When it comes to how parents use social media for consuming education news, Facebook is the leading platform, with 66% of parents getting school news there; YouTube and Instagram are a distant second and third.

Notably, while American parents (and the public at large) are using local newspapers less and less, this medium—whether in print or online—is a common source of school news. More than half of all parents say they use a local paper at least ‘somewhat’ to access information about education, perhaps a reflection of the newspaper industry’s long tradition of offering in-depth beat coverage of the education system, particularly at the community level.

National news outlets such as the major broadcast networks, magazines and other publications, or national newspapers like the Wall Street Journal or The New York Times offer education coverage but are often focused on broader trends and policy. Given parents’ interest in information about their local schools and school systems, the data here show that parents lean less heavily on national outlets for education news.

Table 1 Local TV, social media top sources of education news

<i>% of parents who get at least some news about education from the following sources</i>				
	All	Black	Hispanic	White
A local TV station, including its website	62	77	59	59
Social media, such as Facebook or Twitter	58	68	61	55
A local newspaper, including its website	51	60	45	51
A national TV network, including its website	48	64	53	43
A radio station, local or national, including its website	45	57	41	43
A national or international newspaper, including its website	34	49	34	29
A general-interest online-only news website such as BuzzFeed, Yahoo! News, or Huffington Post	34	51	34	28
A magazine, including its website	23	38	26	18
A media organization that focuses on education, such as Education Week or Chalkbeat	22	41	25	15
A news publication, broadcast or website aimed at a specific population, such as African Americans, Hispanic Americans, or Asian Americans	22	52	32	10
A podcast, local or national	20	19	23	15
A news publication, broadcast, or website in a language other than English	19	32	32	11

Other types of news media offer sophisticated education coverage but appeal to a narrower audience. These include specialty publications, such as the trade press, which cover education exclusively and deeply; think of Education Week, or the digital nonprofit Chalkbeat, which now has bureaus in multiple U.S. cities. About one-in-five parents turn to these sources at least sometimes. Another example is a news outlet that is geared toward specific ethnic or racial groups. Here too, about 20% rely somewhat on ethnic media for education news, a similar share as turns to news outlets that publish or broadcast in a language other than English.

Across the board, Black parents were more likely to report using individual news sources at higher rates than Hispanic or White parents, though several sources stand out. More than half (52%) of Black parents say they turn to ethnic media sources at least somewhat for education news, compared to 32% of Hispanic parents and 10% of White parents. In addition, 77% of Black parents turn to local TV for this topic, versus 59% of both Hispanic and White parents. This finding in particular is consistent with other research showing that in general, Black Americans [prefer getting their news](#) from TV.

News organizations staffed by professional journalists are not the only sources of education news for American parents. The survey data finds that vast majorities of parents receive email and voice messages or calls from their child's school, and that about two-thirds receive texts. Other research has shown that informal networks and non-journalistic entities operate in the same networks as newspapers and broadcasters in providing information about public affairs to local communities.³

Among these journalism-adjacent sources, family and friends rise to the top as a frequent source of education news for American parents. As shown in **Table 2**, nearly three-quarters say they get 'some' or 'a great deal' of school and education news from people they know personally. Following interpersonal networks, governmental and school-related sources rank second among all non-journalistic sources asked about in the survey. About half of all parents get at least some school news from education agencies at the local or state level, similar to the share who get at least some school news from groups like the parent teacher association. Religious sources of information, such as churches,

³ See Sue Robinson's 2018 book *Networked News, Racial Divides: How Power and Privilege Shape Public Discourse in Networked Communities* for analysis of how these networked information flows work in the context of education policy. The Pew Research Center's 2015 study, 'Local News in a Digital Age' and more recently, Kjerstin Thorson and colleagues' 2020 study 'Platform Civics: Facebook in the Local Information Infrastructure' offer case studies that demonstrate the phenomenon across politics and other community topics.

temples, or mosques, play a role, as do other local civic organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club. But reliance on these sources tends to be minimal.

Table 2 Parents rely on their networks for school news

<i>% of parents who get at least some news about education from the following sources</i>				
	All	Black	Hispanic	White
Family, friends, and acquaintances	73	80	64	74
Parent groups such as a parent teacher association	47	59	45	45
Government agencies (e.g., state department of education)	47	63	50	42
Religious leader or congregation	26	45	30	21
Local community center, such as Boys & Girls Club	16	34	19	10

As with professional news outlets, informal and non-journalistic sources of news are widely used by parents of color, especially Black parents. Black parents (63%) are more likely than Hispanic (50%) and White parents (42%) to at least sometimes turn to government sources of information about schools and education. In addition, religious congregations and clergy are an important source of school information among Black parents, with 45% turning to them at least sometimes (compared to 30% of Hispanic parents and 21% of White parents).

Half of parents seek education news, while the other half stumbles into it

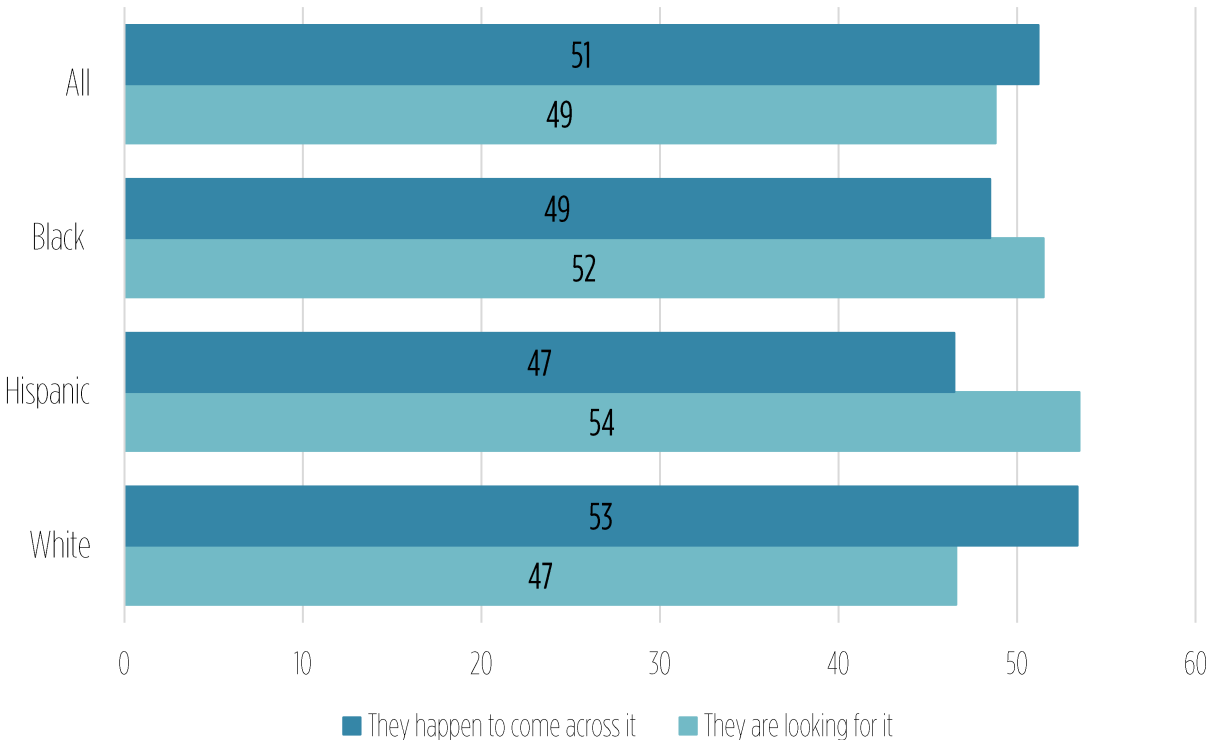
Parents, especially in the COVID-19 era, have their hands full when it comes to managing the young students in their households. It would be tempting to assume that their news-seeking habits follow a single pattern—scattered, semi-attentive, and cursory. The data suggests this describes a substantial share of American parents; however, it is not the case for all by any means.

Parents were asked whether they get news about schools because they were looking for it or because they happened to come across it. Here, parents were divided, with little

variation across racial and ethnic groups. About half (49%) said they look for school news, and the other half (51%) said they happened to come across it (see **Figure 6**).

Figure 6 Some encounter, others seek news about education

% of parents who mostly get school news because...



And for the many parents who use social media to get education news, recalling the original source of the information they see is rare. Just 17% say they are very likely to remember the source of the education news they saw on social media. About half (51%) say they are somewhat likely to recall it. The rest, about one-third of parents, say they are not very likely or not likely at all to recall the source. Black parents are somewhat more likely than others to say they are at least somewhat likely to recall the source of the education news they saw on social media, at 76%, compared to 70% of Hispanic parents and 65% of White parents.

Most parents don't graze very far when it comes to the number of sources they use. A majority—64%—say they get education news from just a few sources, while 36% say they use many different sources to stay informed. Almost half of Black parents (47%) say that they use many different news sources for education news. Just 37% of Hispanic parents and 34% of White parents read, watch, or listen widely.

Coverage priorities, lack of time cited as barriers to staying informed

Across all parents surveyed, 41% indicated that they do not encounter any barriers to staying informed about schools and education. Among the remaining 59% of parents who do encounter barriers, the top barriers include a mixture of reasons related to news coverage itself, as well as their ability to keep abreast of it (see **Table 3**).

The most cited reason that parents find it difficult to stay informed about education news is that their regular sources of news don't cover education (29% of those who find it difficult to stay informed about education news), followed by feeling too busy to keep up with the news (19%). Beyond that, 16% indicated their chief obstacle is that the topics they are most interested in receive little attention.

Table 3 Lack of coverage is the primary obstacle to staying informed

<i>% of parents who say it's difficult to stay informed about education for the following reasons</i>				
	All	Black	Hispanic	White
The sources I regularly get news from do not cover a lot of education news	29	27	28	30
I'm too busy to keep up with education news	19	9	15	21
The education topics I am most interested in are not covered often	16	17	17	16
I often disagree with the news I see about education	11	8	10	12
I do not see people like me represented positively in education news	8	16	7	6

Overall, Hispanic parents are slightly more likely than Black or White parents to indicate that they have difficulty staying informed about education news. This is partly due to their greater likelihood to indicate that language barriers represent a hardship. White parents are slightly more likely than other groups to indicate that their busy lifestyles made it difficult to stay informed. Black parents are slightly more likely to indicate that negative media representations of 'people like me' present a barrier to staying informed about education news.

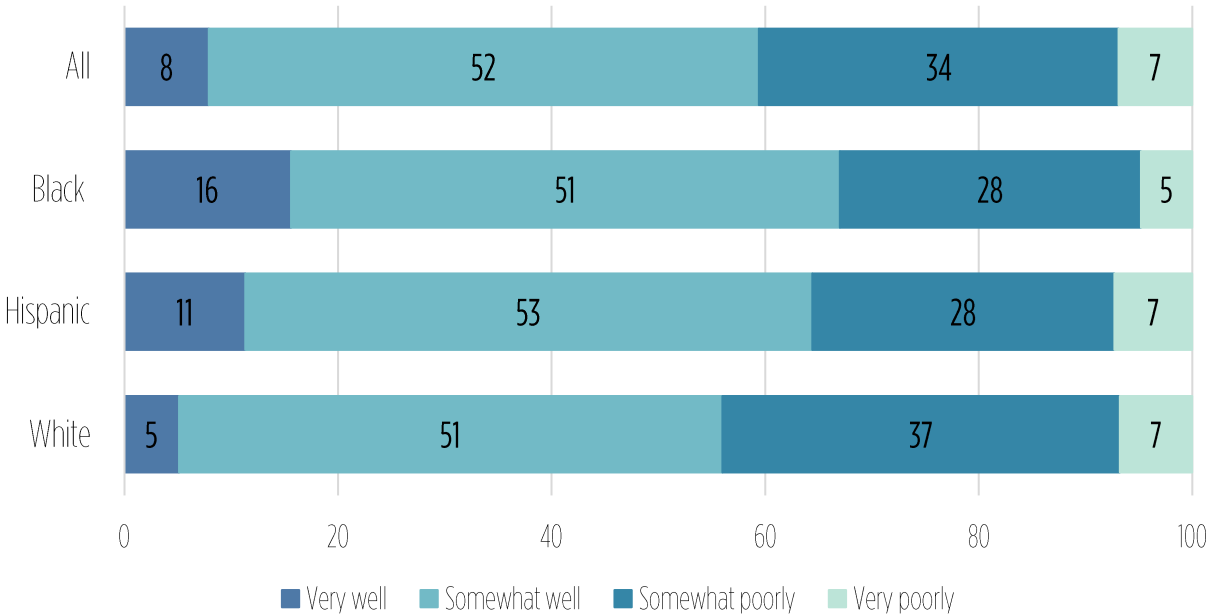
Chapter 3: Slim majority approves of education news coverage, give poor marks for negativity and emphasis on problems

Six-in-ten parents approve of how the media covers education, highest among Black parents

Parents are divided in their views about the quality of education reporting. However, more approve of the education news they see than disapprove. Six-in-ten American parents believe the news media covers schools and education ‘somewhat’ or ‘very’ well. Black parents are among the most likely to approve of coverage, with two-thirds agreeing the media cover education at least somewhat well. Among Hispanic (64%) and White (56%) parents, slightly fewer share that view.

Figure 7 Majority approve of media coverage of education

% of parents who say news media cover schools and education...



When looking at quality and amount of news consumed across different sources, local outlets emerge as key players for parents of K-12 students. Across 12 different news sources, parents rated local TV stations and local newspapers as the two sources that do the best job providing education news. Nearly two-thirds of respondents rated these sources as ‘good’ or ‘excellent,’ while fewer than 10% rated these sources as ‘poor.’ These

local news sources also rank among parents' most frequently used sources, with at least half of parents getting some or a great deal of news from these sources.

Table 4 Local TV, newspapers garner highest ratings for school coverage

<i>% of parents who use each source for education news and rate the job it does as 'good' or 'excellent'</i>				
	All	Black	Hispanic	White
A local TV station, including its website	66	72	58	68
A local newspaper, including its website	63	68	50	67
A media organization that focuses on education, such as Education Week or Chalkbeat	61	65	52	63
A radio station, local or national, including its website	59	63	54	60
A news publication, broadcast or website in a language other than English	53	62	51	51
A news publication, broadcast or website aimed at a specific population, such as African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, or Asian Americans	52	63	48	48
A national TV network, including its website	52	70	50	48
A podcast, local or national	52	60	50	51
Social media, such as Facebook or Twitter	52	67	51	48
A national or international newspaper, including its website	51	63	46	49
A magazine, including its website	44	55	39	41
A general-interest online-only news website such as BuzzFeed, Yahoo! News, or Huffington Post	42	59	42	36

Some of the most poorly rated sources for education and school news are social media, magazines, and general-interest online-only news websites (e.g., BuzzFeed or Huffington Post), with about half or fewer of all parents rating these sources as ‘good’ or ‘excellent.’ National sources of education news were also rated somewhat poorly compared to local news sources, perhaps a reflection of parents’ keenly local interests when it comes to education news. Despite the perceived lack of quality in coverage, parents indicated that social media and national TV networks were two of their most frequently used sources of education news. For some parents, the convenience of social media’s wide coverage and frequent updates may outweigh the quality of coverage.

Racial and ethnic differences in news outlet ratings generally mirror other patterns in the data—Black parents tend to be more enthusiastic than other groups about a range of education news sources. Nevertheless, White parents are particularly positive about local newspaper and local TV coverage of education, as well as specialty publications focused on the education beat—matching Black parents in their ratings of these sources. Hispanic parents tend to lag other groups in their ratings of various sources, especially legacy sources such as television on and print.

Among more informal sources of education news, friends, families, and acquaintances are viewed favorably by parents. Among parents who rely at least somewhat on their interpersonal networks, about two-thirds indicated that they provide ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ news and information about schools and education. This was especially true among Black and White parents, though among Hispanic parents, somewhat fewer (56%) agreed.

Similarly, parent groups, such as parent-teacher associations, were viewed as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ sources of education news by those who reported getting at least some education news from these groups. As with interpersonal networks, Hispanic parents were somewhat less likely than Black or White parents to view these associations favorably.

Other non-journalistic sources asked about—government agencies, religious institutions, and other types of local community groups—were viewed slightly less favorably by parents in general. Among parents who use these agencies and organizations as a source of information, about half reported that these groups were doing an ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ job providing news about schools and education. Except for government agencies, which were viewed more favorably by Black parents than others, little variance was observed across racial and ethnic groups.

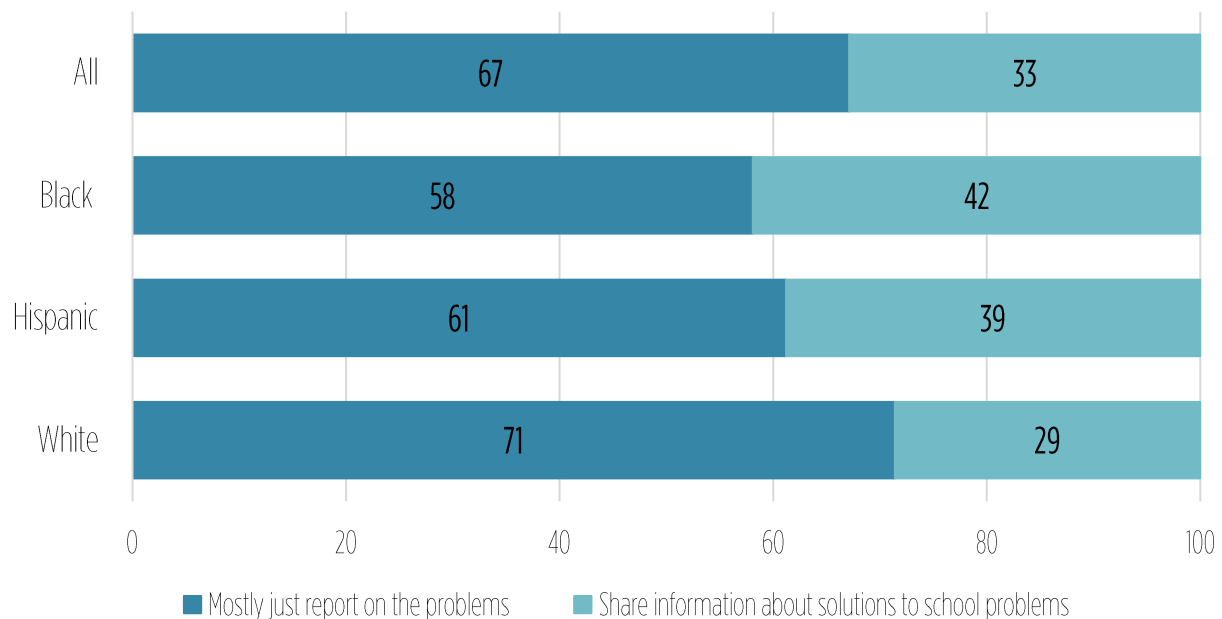
White parents most likely to see negativity in education coverage; Black and Hispanic parents concerned about lack of attention to inequality in school news

Exposing problems has long been a valued norm in American journalism, and research has documented the media's tendency to operate with a 'negativity bias' in [the case of COVID-19](#) coverage, among other topics.

The findings in this study of American parents indicate that the news media's emphasis on negative news is reflected in perceptions of education coverage writ large. When asked about media coverage of their local school system, fully two-thirds of American parents agreed with the statement that 'the news media mostly report on the problems without sharing information on how to solve those problems.' This view is shared more widely by White parents (71%) than Black (58%) or Hispanic (61%) parents (see **Figure 8**).

Figure 8 Most parents see negativity in news coverage of education

% of parents who say the news media...



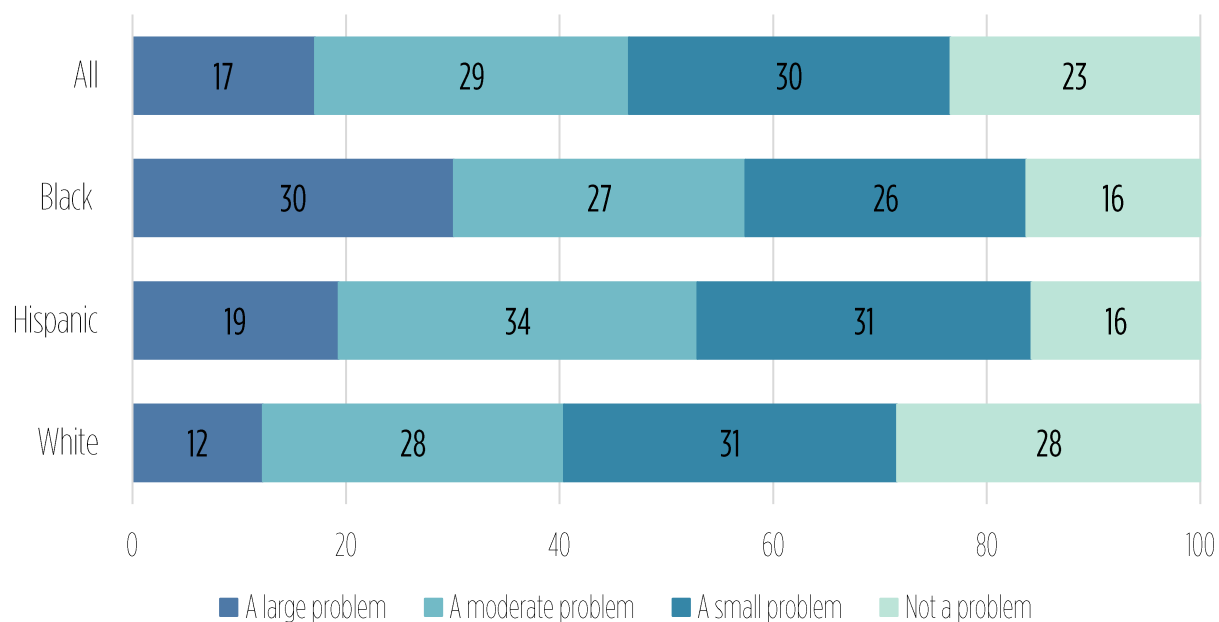
In addition, parents were presented with a range of potential weaknesses in education news coverage and were asked to rate how big of a problem each of these issues was. Of all the issues asked about, the idea that news media's education coverage 'only focuses on the negative news' rose to the top, with 59% of parents sharing the view that it is a 'moderate' or 'large' problem. The only other concern that approached the 'negativity'

complaint was the perceived lack of education coverage altogether, an issue that 52% of parents agreed is a 'moderate' or 'large' problem with education news today.

The concerns over negativity in education coverage, however, appear to be heavily driven by the attitudes of White parents. Parents of color are more attuned to issues of racism and inequality in education coverage. For instance, 57% of Black parents and 53% of Hispanic parents view the media's avoidance of topics related to inequality as a 'moderate' or 'large' problem in education news, a view shared by 40% of White parents (see **Figure 9**). Likewise, the perception that the news media present stereotypes about children of color in schools is viewed as a problem by 58% of Black parents and 51% of Hispanic parents, but just 37% of White parents.

Figure 9 A racial gap in concern about coverage of inequality

% of parents who say media avoidance of school inequality is...



On COVID and schools, parents view media coverage as at least somewhat useful, though more view informal sources of news as more useful than professional media

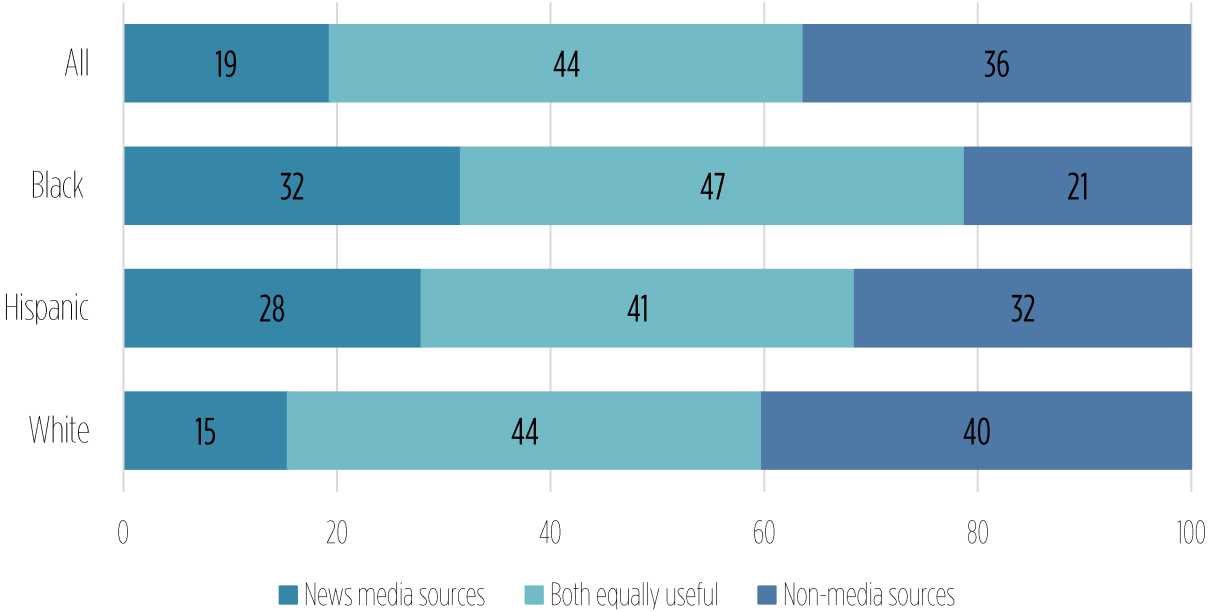
Parents give decent marks to the news media for their coverage of COVID-19 and schools. Yet it is also clear that non-journalistic sources of information are more valuable to parents on balance.

Most parents agree that news media coverage of the impact of COVID-19 on local schools has been at least somewhat useful. Nearly half (45%) say media coverage has been ‘somewhat useful’ and 25% say it has been ‘very useful.’ These generally positive ratings obscure a stark divide across race and ethnicity. Nearly half of Black parents (49%) say the coverage is ‘very useful.’ Just 32% of Hispanic and 18% of White parents agree.

Yet in the same August 2021 survey, parents were asked to consider what has been the most useful source of news about the impact of the coronavirus on schools and education. A plurality, 44%, say both news media and non-media sources have been equally useful (see **Figure 10**). But among the rest, fully 36% say non-media sources have been more helpful, and just 19% say news media sources have been more helpful. Once again, Black parents view the news media’s role more favorably but non-journalistic sources less favorably. White parents tend to view non-journalistic sources most favorably—nearly twice as favorably as do Black parents (40% vs. 21%), and Hispanic parents fall toward the middle.

Figure 10 Racial and ethnic differences emerge in perceptions of media usefulness

% of parents saying each source has been the most useful for info about COVID & schools...



When parents consider what counts as ‘useful’ news about education, what do they mean? Survey respondents were asked in the spring of 2020 to recall, in their own words, an education story they recently encountered that helped them decide about everyday life

for their family. Here, the most common response was a story broadly about the impact of COVID-19 on schools (73% of responses).

Many parents recalled a story that helped them prepare to become instructors themselves; this was a time when most schools across the country had shut down and parents were learning how to juggle learning technology and remote instruction.

One parent recalled a recent story about “different online classes and courses that are free that my child can use during the closing of schools.”

Others recalled news about nutrition options during a period of COVID-19 school closures, including one parent who mentioned a story about “meal services schools are offering during the shutdown.”

To summarize, when it comes to getting news about education through channels outside the news media, Black parents and, to some extent, Hispanic parents, are more likely than White parents to use a variety of pathways—from government sources, to houses of worship. Yet, for Hispanic parents in particular, many of these sources are not rated as favorably. And overall, as indicated above, White parents are most likely to view non-media sources of school information as ‘useful.’

While these surveys did not probe directly into the reasons for these disparities, the data does offer some clues. One reason might be technological: many agencies, institutions and community groups utilize email for their outreach. Yet Black and Hispanic parents are less likely than White parents to use email frequently, and in fact prefer other communication channels over email.

Another issue speaks directly to the racial climate in schools: parents of all racial and ethnic groups studied are equally likely to say they’ve contacted school officials directly for information about their child’s learning. But Black and Hispanic parents are less likely than White parents to rate the quality of school-related information highly. These same parents are most likely to indicate that racism is a problem in their schools. Hispanic parents in particular were least likely to say that—before the arrival of COVID-19—they felt welcomed in their child’s school environment.

In short, the survey data suggests that a variety of systemic factors may advantage White parents when it comes to the utility of informal and networked school-related information.

Chapter 4: Most parents want factual, concise, and solutions-emphasis education news

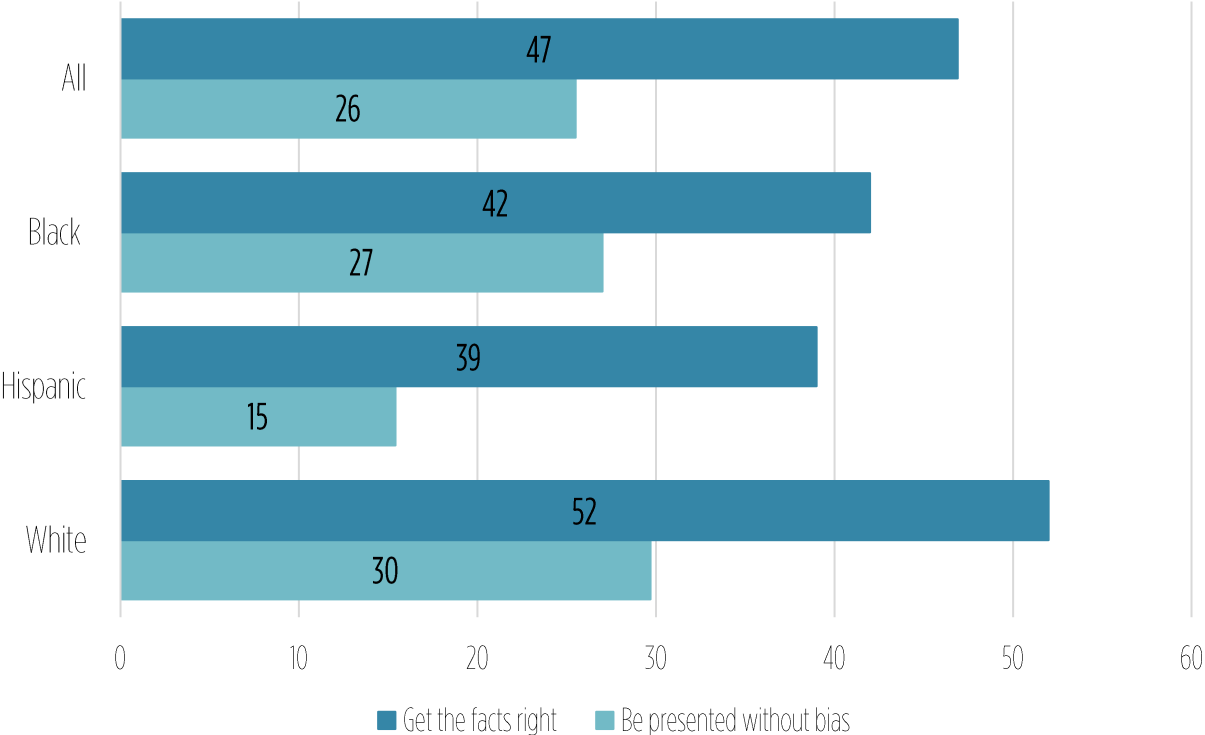
White parents emphasize ‘just the facts,’ while parents of color want education news that is useful, reflects ‘people like me’

When it comes to parent priorities for education coverage, their expressed interests mirror broader trends in public aspirations for the news media.

As shown in **Figure 11**, when asked what is most important to you when it comes to education news, a plurality of parents (47%) prioritized getting the facts right, the leading response by a significant margin. On its heels are issues that hint at Americans’ concerns related to bias and fairness, and that cut to the heart of the public’s broader trust issues with the American press. About a quarter emphasized the importance of the news being presented without bias, similar to the share who value the importance of education coverage giving adequate attention to all sides of an issue.

Figure 11 Accuracy a top priority for parents

% of parents who say it is most important for education news to...



Lower on the priority list are issues related to the quality of content production and presentation, the importance of representation of ‘people like me,’ and the clear distinction between opinion and factual news in education coverage.

The education coverage priorities of parents, however, are driven by the preference of White parents. The call for fact-based, bias-free, and attention to ‘all sides’ of an issue is more important to White parents than to Black or Hispanic parents. By contrast, several items ranked higher on the agenda for parents of color than for White parents, including the importance of giving attention to the most important education issues, being useful in one’s daily life, and the inclusion of ‘my community and people like me’ in education coverage.

When asked another way about parent priorities for education coverage, parents emphasized the practical dimensions of education coverage. Fully half (50%) say it is ‘very important’ that education coverage be concise and get to the point. A similar share (44%) emphasized the importance of news outlets presenting expert sources and data. Somewhat fewer parents (37%) believe it is very important that the reporting be in-depth, though Black parents were more likely than other groups to emphasize this dimension. And finally, just 8% say it is very important that education coverage be entertaining.

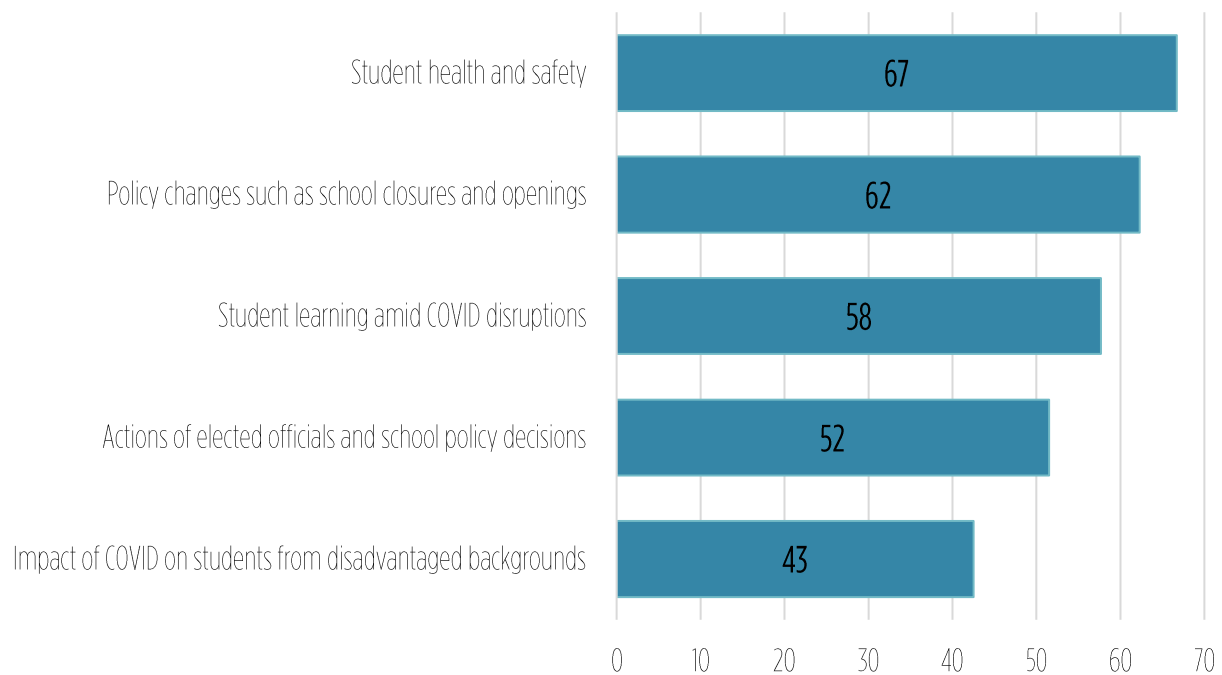
Looking ahead: On COVID and schools, two-thirds of parents view coverage of student health and safety as ‘very important’

Looking ahead to the future, parents were asked in August 2021 about how important it is that journalists continue to focus on a range of different COVID-related school topics.

Student health and safety again continued to lead. Fully two-thirds (67%) of parents said student health and safety were ‘very important’ for journalists to continue to focus on, as illustrated in **Figure 12**. Following closely on the heels was policy changes such as school closures and openings (62%). Notably, even though debates about race, curriculum, and masking had begun to percolate in local school boards around the country, the ‘actions of elected officials in making school policy decisions’ was ranked as ‘very important’ for journalists to continue to follow by just half of parents (52%).

Figure 12 Parents want journalists to continue focusing on student health, safety

Regarding COVID-19, % of parents who think it is important for journalists to focus on...



Across most of the topics asked about, Black parents were somewhat more likely than others to assign a high degree of urgency to these journalistic agenda items.

Parents were also asked to share in their own words what kinds of stories they'd like to see more of in the news media. The most frequent response given related to the quality of teaching, a theme that came through in 15% of these open-ended responses.

For some, this comes down to recognition of the work that educators do: "Great teachers being recognized," indicated one parent. Another wanted news providers to elevate "highly effective teaching strategies," especially regarding special education.

In addition, many parents expressed an interest in seeing more coverage that focuses attention on the student experience (14%).

Others pointed to the need for more stories on school budgets and resources (13%).

A parent indicated they'd like to see coverage about "ways to increase funding for public schools to provide high-quality education to all students." Another wanted news providers to explore "different funding sources to increase money for repairs/maintenance and teacher salary."

While not the top issue mentioned, more attention to school politics and social issues emerged as a frequent theme, too, at 10% of all responses.

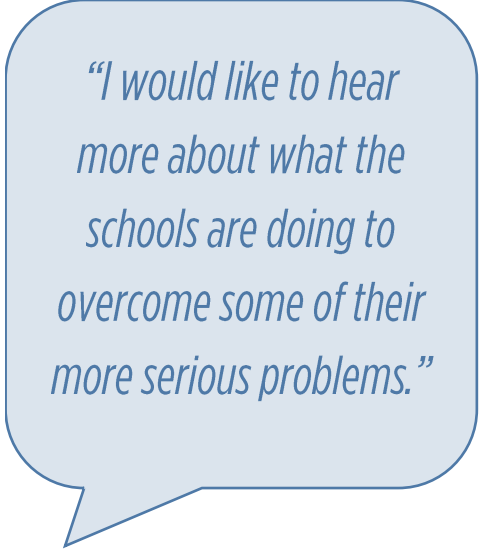
One parent wanted the press to expose "How Socialists are indoctrinating our country's youth in order to remake our country the way they want it."

While some parents expressed an interest in seeing more attention to the impact of COVID-19 on schools, this was not one of the top themes.

Still, this theme was often interwoven with interest in news that connected the pandemic to children's learning experience. One parent asked that the press "focus on studies of how online learning is affecting children. How many schools are taking a virtual classroom, with the presence of a teacher, live and online for a good part of the day."

What's clear across the range of these responses, is that parents are curious. They have specific and often constructive information needs. For many, their children and their children's schools are in a state of duress after nearly two years of learning during a pandemic.

To be sure, parents have complaints about how the press has handled this moment, but they also have ideas and hopes for a media system that can meet the moment.



"I would like to hear more about what the schools are doing to overcome some of their more serious problems."

Conclusion

The impact of COVID-19 on the American K-12 education system gave rise to a set of acute information needs for parents of young learners. The findings in this study indicate that these parents are heavily focused on using both news media and non-media sources to meet those information needs. This is especially true for parents of color, who are disproportionately disadvantaged in the educational system, and whose children are more likely to face headwinds that do not exist for White families.

What's more, parents are especially attuned to news and information that addresses issues of immediate concern: the health and safety of children in schools, as well as the intense challenges related to child learning in a disrupted educational environment brought on by the pandemic.

Together, these and other findings offer a set of suggestions for how information providers, especially in the news industry, can better serve parents:

- **Education reporting is a service:** There are many different audiences for education news of course, but parents in particular say they would like to see more solutions-focused reporting in education coverage, and less emphasis on negative news. To be sure, parents have a wide range of education information needs, and news providers should not abandon breaking news or investigative reporting. But parents today are faced with a bewildering set of circumstances in navigating their children through the education system, and journalists have a unique opportunity to serve as a guide. [The Solutions Journalism Network](#) offers powerful resources on this front.
- **Be an advocate:** White parents are more likely than other parents to say they find non-media information sources to be 'useful' when it comes to education news. At the same time, parents of color—especially Hispanic parents—are less likely to say that school systems are meeting their information needs. The findings suggest that White parents have access to more powerful information networks, leaving parents of color especially reliant on traditional news media sources for their education news needs. While schools, civic institutions and parents need to address these inequities, news organizations should leverage their resources, status, and access on behalf of parents who are more likely to be left in the dark.
- **Adapt to a diverse set of information needs:** The findings in this study reveal significant differences across racial and ethnic categories when it comes to education news-seeking behaviors and attitudes. But these findings only scratch

the surface. When we consider the role that family income, gender, parental education attainment, urbanicity, and other factors might play, it is even clearer that there is no singular audience for education news. News providers have the opportunity to be more effective when they learn about and respond to a range of technology use preferences, cultural differences, and information priorities.

- **Local matters:** Parents are tuned in to local education news over and above national trends. They rely most heavily on local sources to stay informed—especially local TV and local newspapers. Hispanic and Black parents also depend upon news organizations exist to serve their communities, and many of these news providers [are local](#) in their focus. The call for funders, advocates, and policy makers to help rebuild and sustain an inclusive local news sector is not a new one. But the findings in this report add an additional layer of urgency to this call.

Methodology

This study is based on data collected from two survey waves, fielded by NORC's AmeriSpeak® Panel. The first wave, fielded in May and June of 2020, consisted of interviews with 2,653 American parents who had at least one child in school. The margin of error for this survey was +/- 2.6 percentage points. The second wave consisted of follow-up interviews with 1,685 parents who participated in the first wave. It was fielded in August of 2021. The margin of error for this survey was +/- 3.16 percentage points.

This research was done to survey parents of children who are currently attending grades K-12 about their children's school, about schools in their community and the nation, and about sources they turn to for news about education.

This study was offered in English and Spanish, and interviews were conducted by web and phone.

In order to gain deeper insights into the education news habits of parents of color, the survey contained oversamples of Black and Hispanic parents. Because this survey is based on a nationally representative sample, parents of other racial and ethnic groups are also included in all of the totals, including parents who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. While the Asian American population is larger in size than these other groups, a [range of factors](#), including the small size of the Asian American population proportion overall, as well as the unique language and cultural diversity represented in the Asian American population, individual statistics for this group cannot be reported separately.

Sampling

A sample of parents of at least one child in grades K-12 was selected from NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel for this study. Survey respondents who indicated they are the parent or guardian of any children who live in their household and are now enrolled in elementary, middle, or high school meet the screening criteria.

The sample for a specific study is selected from the AmeriSpeak Panel using sampling strata based on age, race/Hispanic ethnicity, education, and gender (48 sampling strata in total). The size of the selected sample per sampling stratum is determined by the population distribution for each stratum. In addition, sample selection takes into account expected differential survey completion rates by demographic groups, so that the set of panel members with a completed interview for a study is a representative sample of the target population. If panel household has one more than one active adult panel member, only one adult in the household is eligible for selection (random within-household

sampling). Panelists selected for an AmeriSpeak study earlier in the business week are not eligible for sample selection until the following business week.

For the second survey wave, a sample containing all parents who completed the Parent Access 2020 survey and who indicated they had a child in grades K-11 was selected from NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel for this study.

Fielding

For the first survey wave, a sub-sample AmeriSpeak web-mode panelists were invited to the survey on May 15, 2020, in a soft-launch. The initial data from the soft launch was reviewed, and the remainder of sampled AmeriSpeak panelists were invited to the survey on May 19 and May 20, 2020.

In total, NORC collected 2,653 interviews in the first survey wave, 2,612 by web mode, and 41 by phone mode.

For the second wave, a sub-sample of AmeriSpeak web-mode panelists were invited to the survey on July 26, 2021, in a softlaunch. The initial data from the soft launch was reviewed, and the remainder of sampled AmeriSpeak panelists were invited to the survey on July 28, 2021.

In total, NORC collected 1,684 interviews in the second survey wave, 1,663 by web mode, and 21 by phone mode.

Survey completion rate

For the first survey wave, the screening and main interview stages of data collection were conducted during a single survey session for the respondents. There was a screening stage to identify qualified and eligible panelists. These are the eligible respondents qualified to participate in the second stage, which is the main study interview.

Respondents who answered the screener, regardless of eligibility, are considered a screener complete. Respondents who were determined to be eligible for the study, based on the screener, then completed the survey are considered a survey complete.

The screener completion rate was 33.8%. The incidence rate was 75.1%. Among those cases that qualified for the main study interview, the interview completion rate was 95.6%.

For the second wave, the interview stage of data collection was conducted during a single survey session for the respondents. The incidence rate was 100.0%. Among those cases that qualified for the main study interview, the interview completion rate was 68.4%.

Statistical weighting

Statistical weights for the study eligible respondents were calculated using *panel base sampling weights* to start.

Panel base sampling weights for all sampled housing units are computed as the inverse of probability of selection from the NORC National Frame (the sampling frame that is used to sample housing units for AmeriSpeak) or address-based sample. The sample design and recruitment protocol for the AmeriSpeak Panel involves subsampling of initial non-respondent housing units. These subsampled non-respondent housing units are selected for an in-person follow-up. The subsample of housing units that are selected for the nonresponse follow-up (NRFU) have their panel base sampling weights inflated by the inverse of the subsampling rate. The base sampling weights are further adjusted to account for unknown eligibility and nonresponse among eligible housing units. The household-level nonresponse adjusted weights are then post-stratified to external counts for number of households obtained from the Current Population Survey. Then, these household-level post-stratified weights are assigned to each eligible adult in every recruited household. Furthermore, a person-level nonresponse adjustment accounts for nonresponding adults within a recruited household.

Finally, panel weights are raked to external population totals associated with age, sex, education, race/Hispanic ethnicity, housing tenure, telephone status, and Census Division. The external population totals are obtained from the Current Population Survey. The weights adjusted to the external population totals are the *final panel weights*.

Panel weighting variables & the variable categories

Age: 18-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-64, and 65+

Gender: Male and Female

Census Division: New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, West North Central, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific

Race/Ethnicity: Non-Hispanic White, Non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, and Non-Hispanic Other

Education: Less than High School, High School/GED, Some College, and BA and Above

Housing Tenure: Home Owner and Other

Household phone status: Cell Phone-only, Dual User, and Landline-only/Phoneless

Study-specific base sampling weights are derived using a combination of the final panel weight and the probability of selection associated with the sampled panel member. Since not all sampled panel members respond to the survey interview, an adjustment is needed to account for and adjust for survey non-respondents. This adjustment decreases potential nonresponse bias associated with sampled panel members who did not complete the survey interview for the study. Thus, the *nonresponse adjusted survey weights* for the study are adjusted via a raking ratio method to parents of children who are currently attending grades K-11 population totals associated with the following topline socio-demographic characteristics: age, sex, education, race/Hispanic ethnicity, and Census Division, and the following socio-demographic interactions: age × gender, age × race/ethnicity, and race/ethnicity × gender.

Study-specific post-stratification weighting variables & the variable categories

Age: 18-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-64, and 65+

Gender: Male and Female

Census Division: New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, West North Central, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific

Race/Ethnicity: Non-Hispanic White, Non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, and Non-Hispanic

Other Education: Less than High School, High School/GED, Some College, and BA and Above

Age × Gender: 18-34 Male, 18-34 Female, 35-49 Male, 35-49 Female, 50-64 Male, 50-64 Female, 65+ Male, and 65+ Female

Age × Race/Ethnicity: 18-34 Non-Hispanic White, 18-34 All Other, 35-49 Non-Hispanic White, 35-49 All Other, 50-64 Non-Hispanic White, 50-64 All Other, 65+ Non-Hispanic White, and 65+ All Other

Race/Ethnicity × Gender: Non-Hispanic White Male, Non-Hispanic White Female, All Other Male, and All Other Female

The weights adjusted to the external population totals are the *final study weights*.

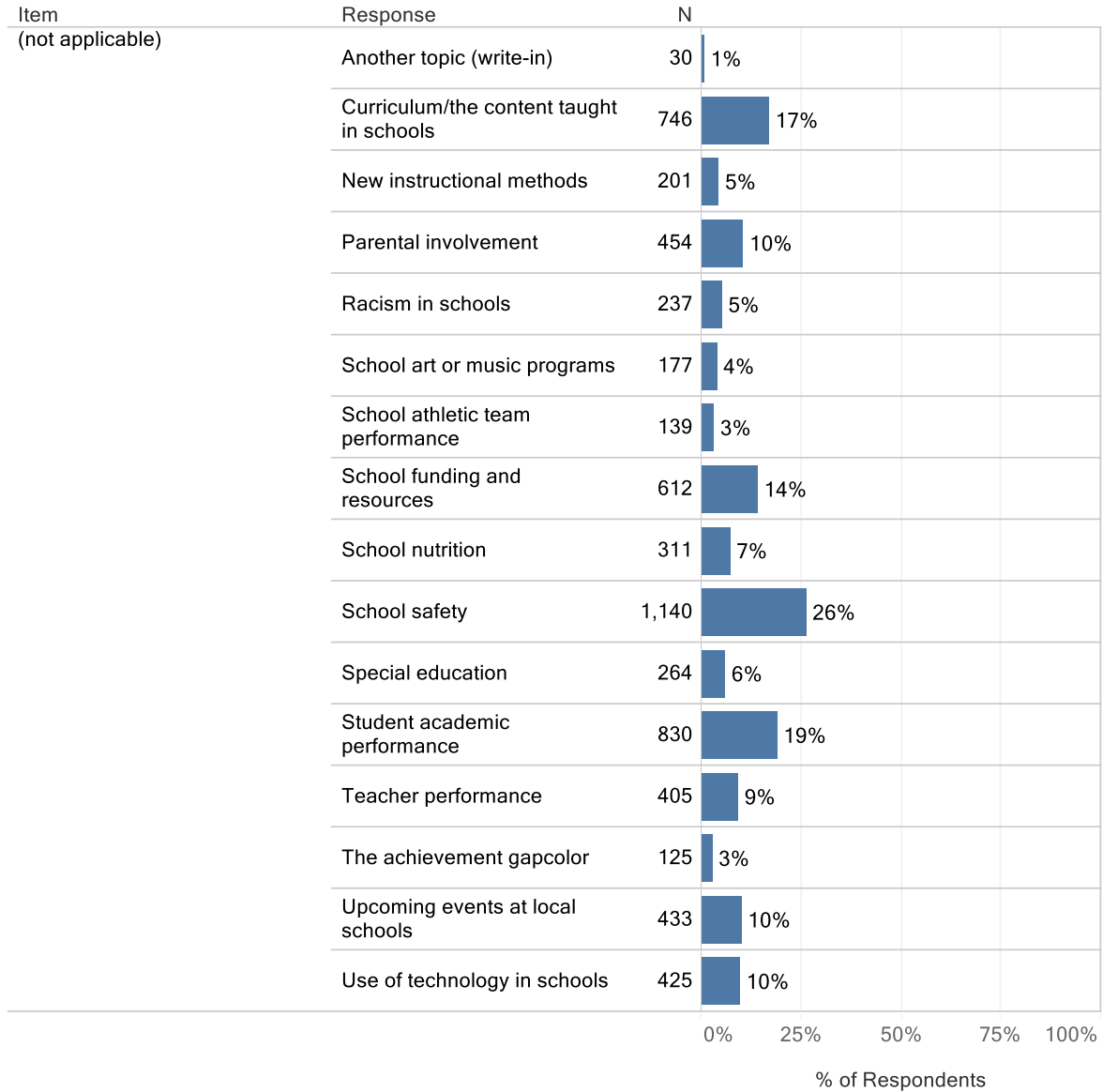
Population totals for parents of at least one child in grades K-11 for the Parent Access to Local School Info W2 2021 survey were obtained using the screener nonresponse adjusted weight for all eligible respondents from the screener question(s) in the Parent Access to Local School Info 2020 survey.

At the final stage of weighting, any extreme weights were trimmed based on a criterion of minimizing the mean squared error associated with key survey estimates, and then weights re-raked to the same population totals.

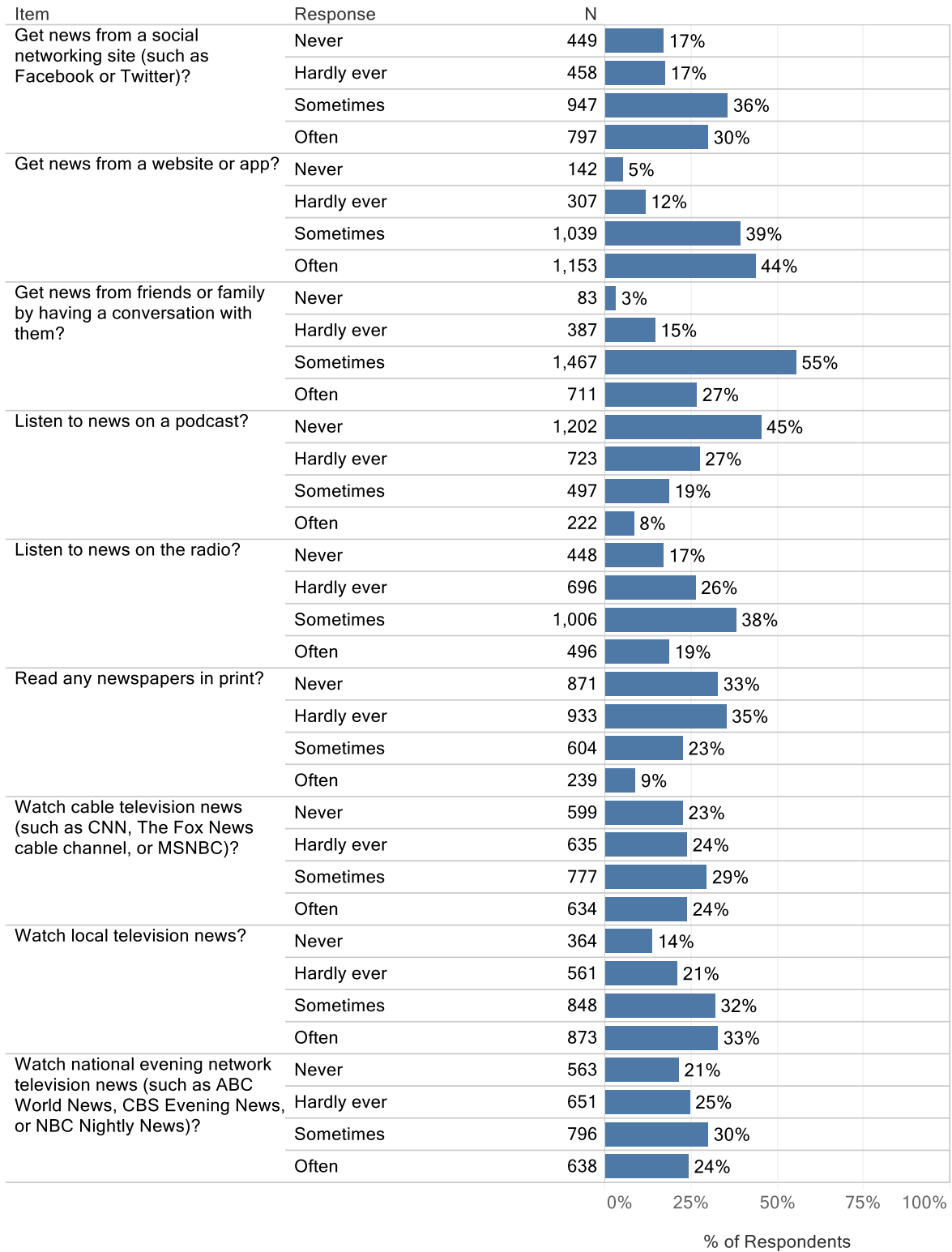
Raking and re-raking is done during the weighting process such that the weighted demographic distribution of the survey completes resemble the demographic distribution in the target population. The assumption is that the key survey items are related to the demographics. Therefore, by aligning the survey respondent demographics with the target population, the key survey items should also be in closer alignment with the target population.

Appendix: Topline results

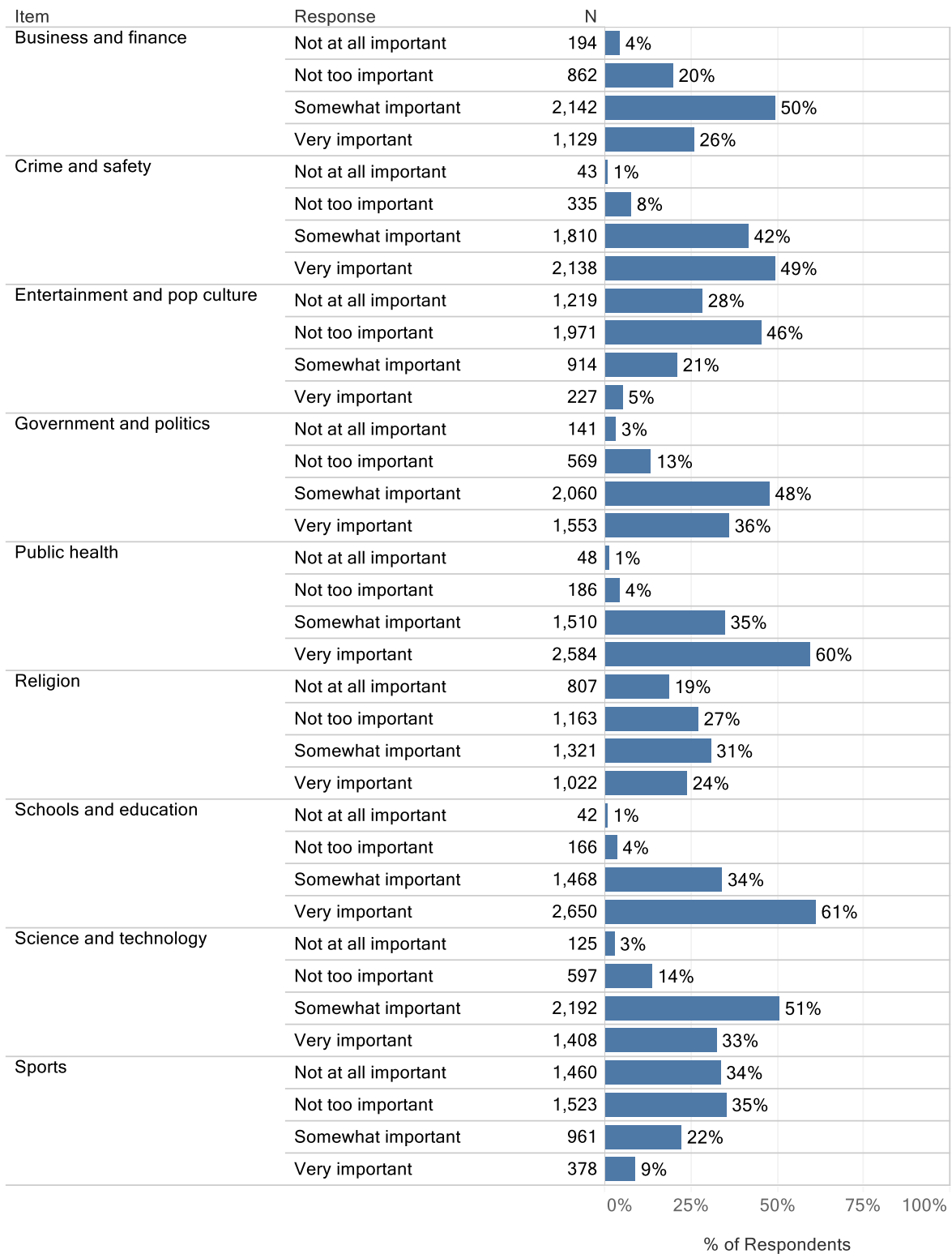
Question: "Among the local education-related topics you follow, which do you think are generally most important?"



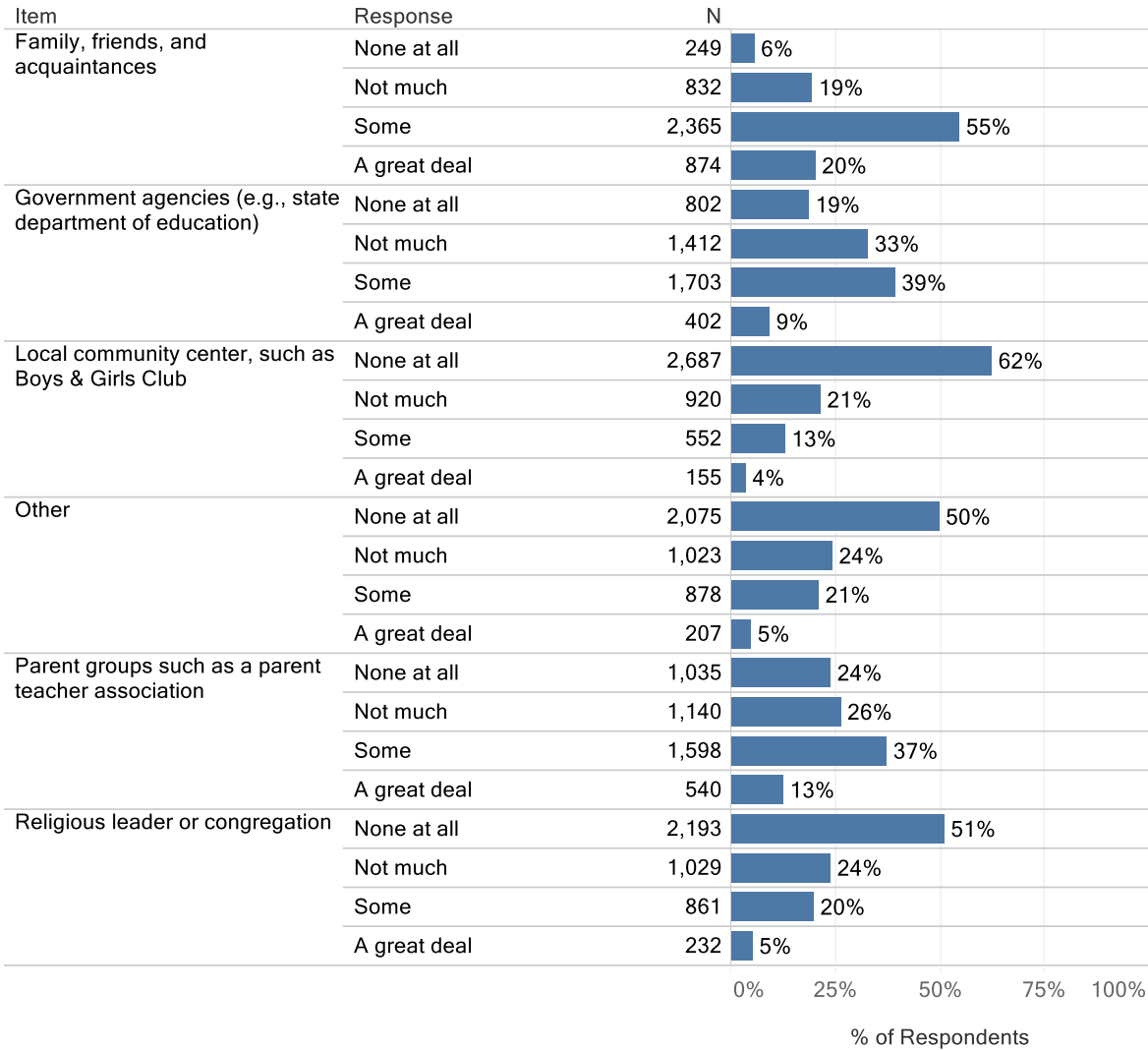
Question: "And how often do you..."



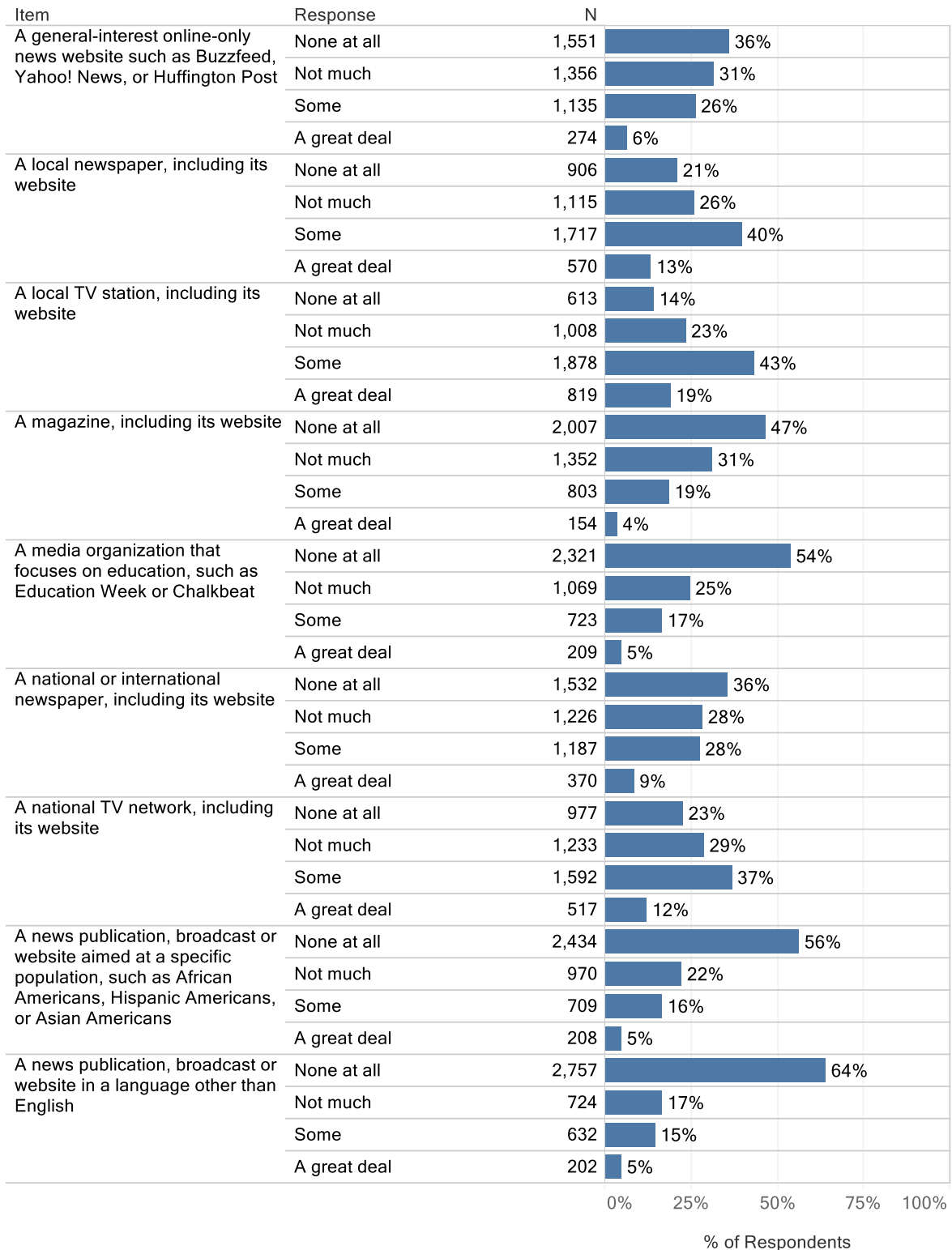
Question: "How important is it to you to stay informed about each of the following topics?"



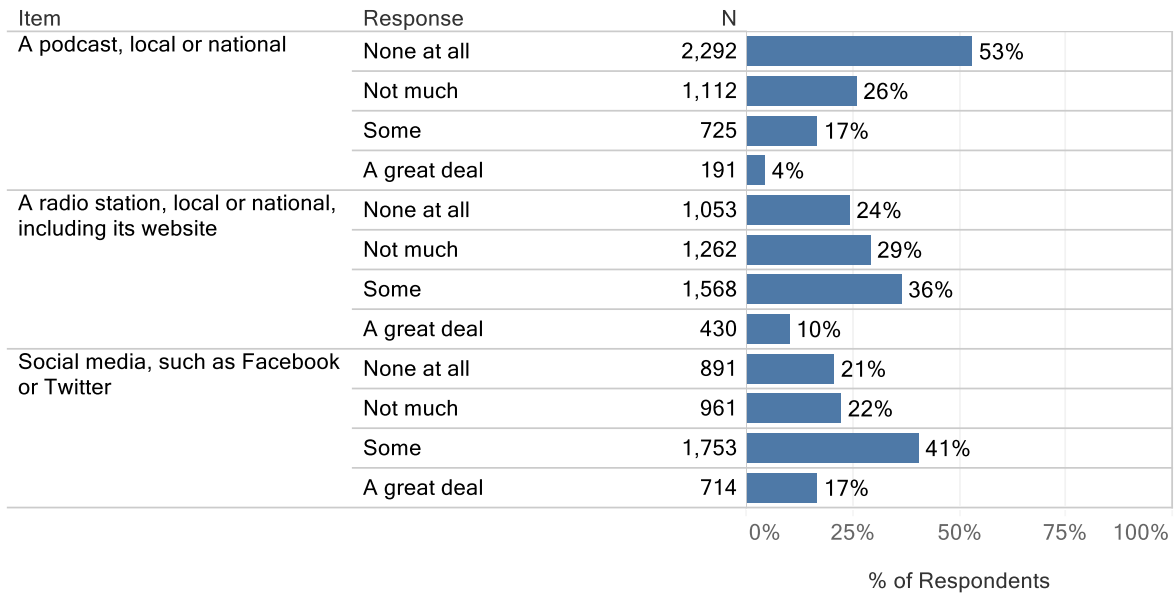
Question: "How much news and information about schools and education do you get from the following, whether in-person, online, over the phone, or in printed materials?"



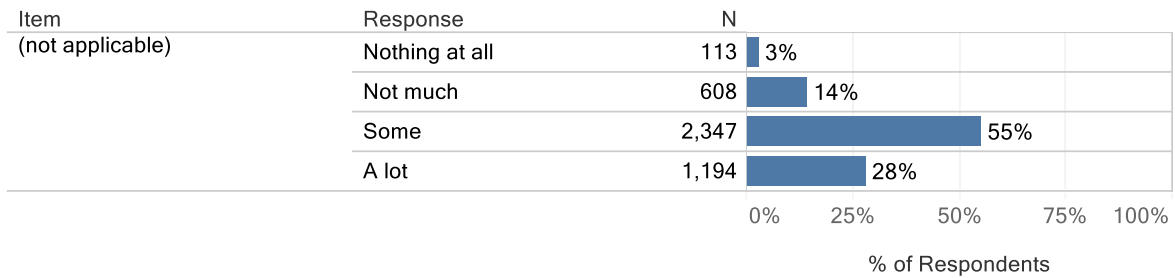
Question: "How much news and information about schools and education do you get from the following?" (Part 1 of 2)



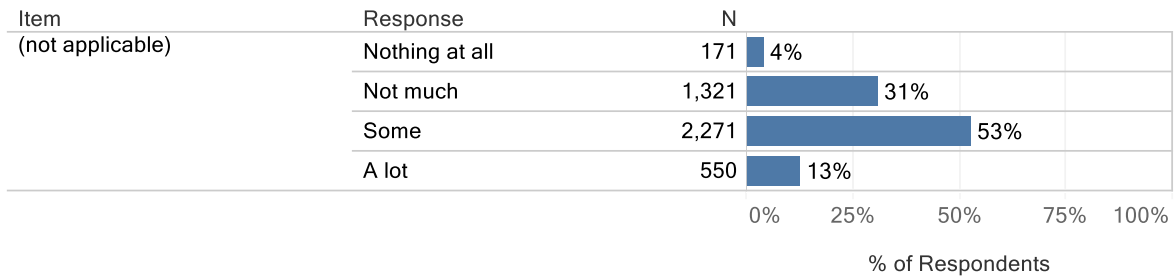
Question: "How much news and information about schools and education do you get from the following?" (Part 2 of 2)



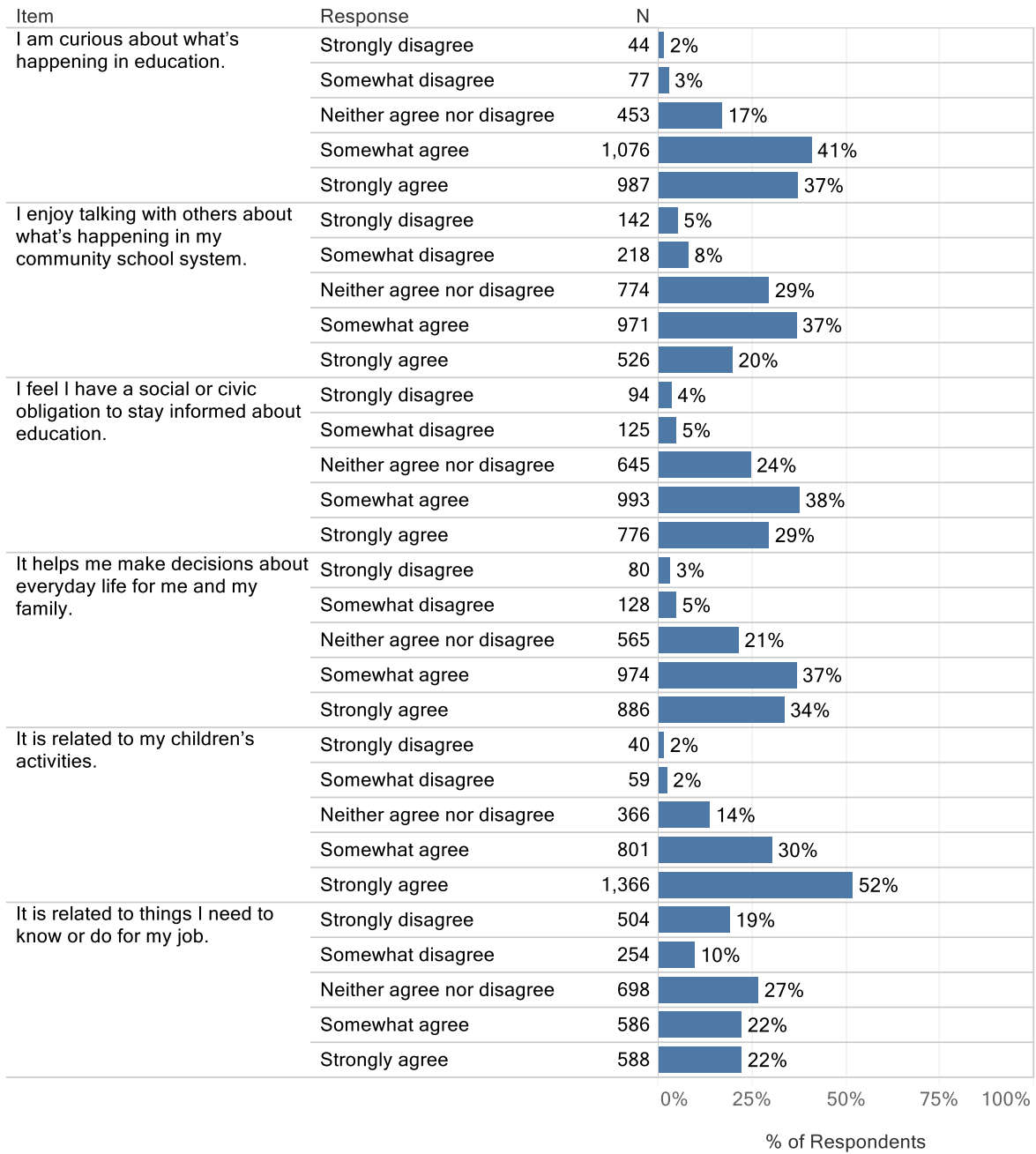
Question: "How much would you say you know about what's going on in your local K-12 school system?"



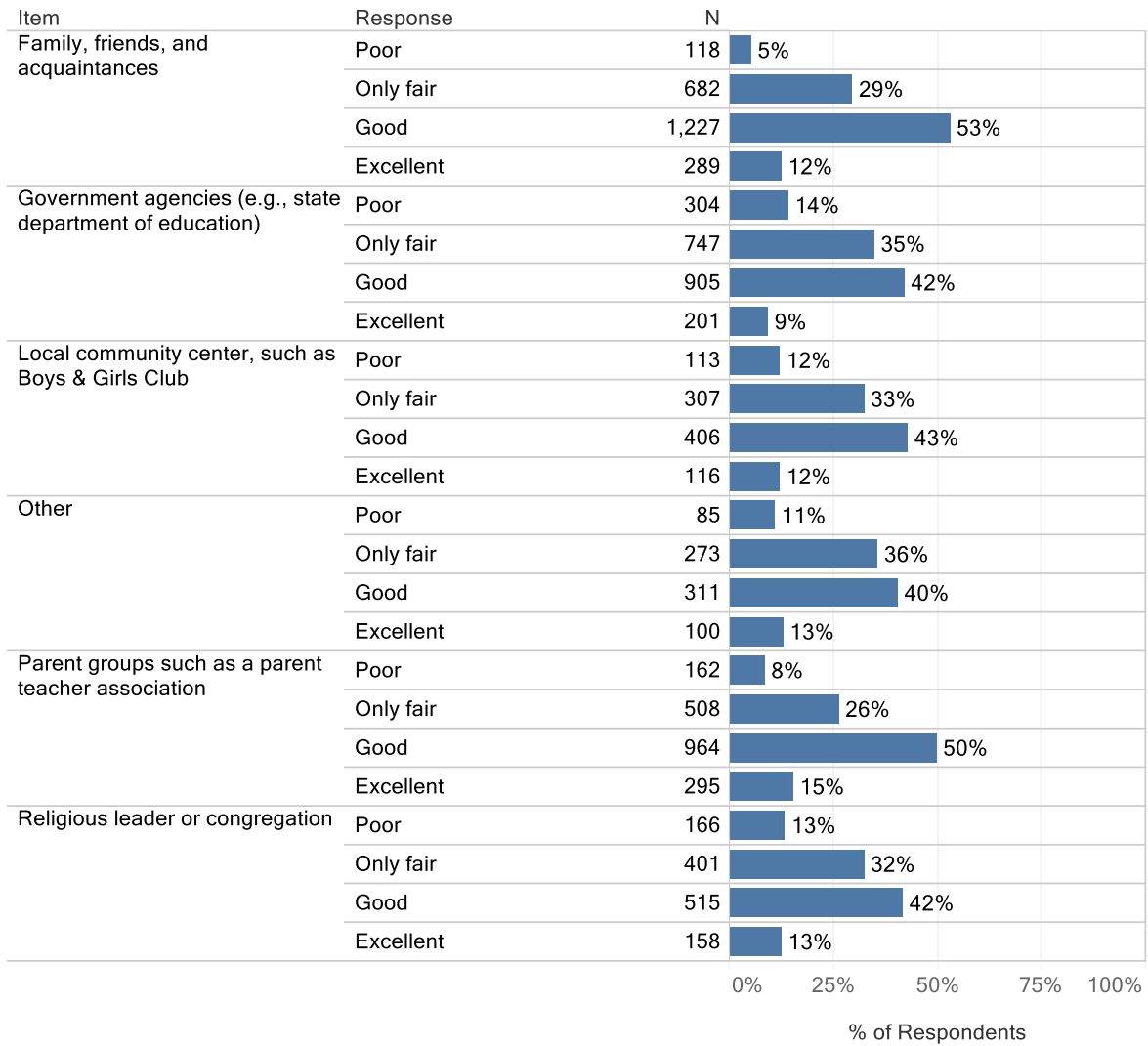
Question: "How much would you say you know about what's going on nationally in K-12 education?"



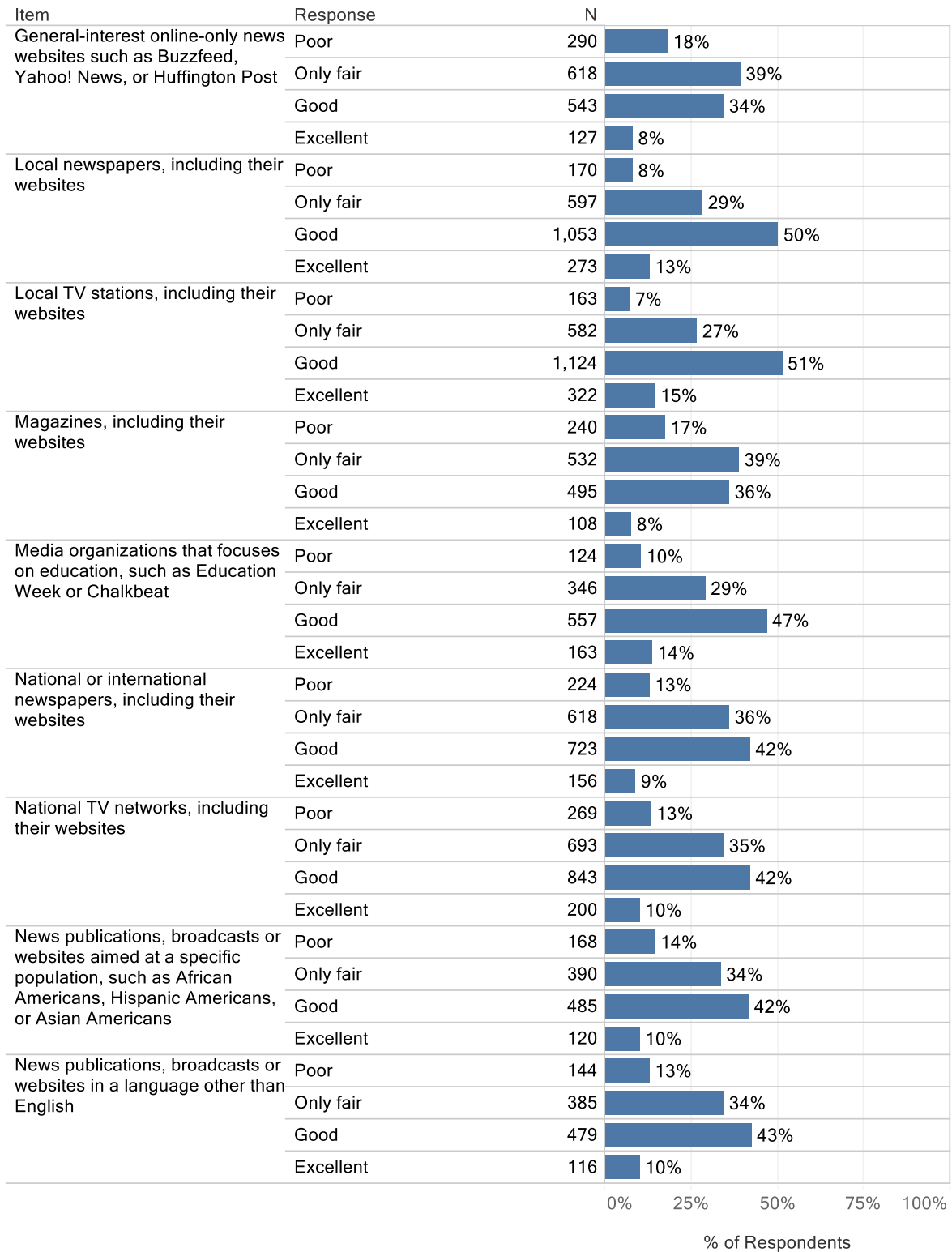
Question: "How strongly do you agree or disagree that each of the following is a reason you stay informed about schools and education?"



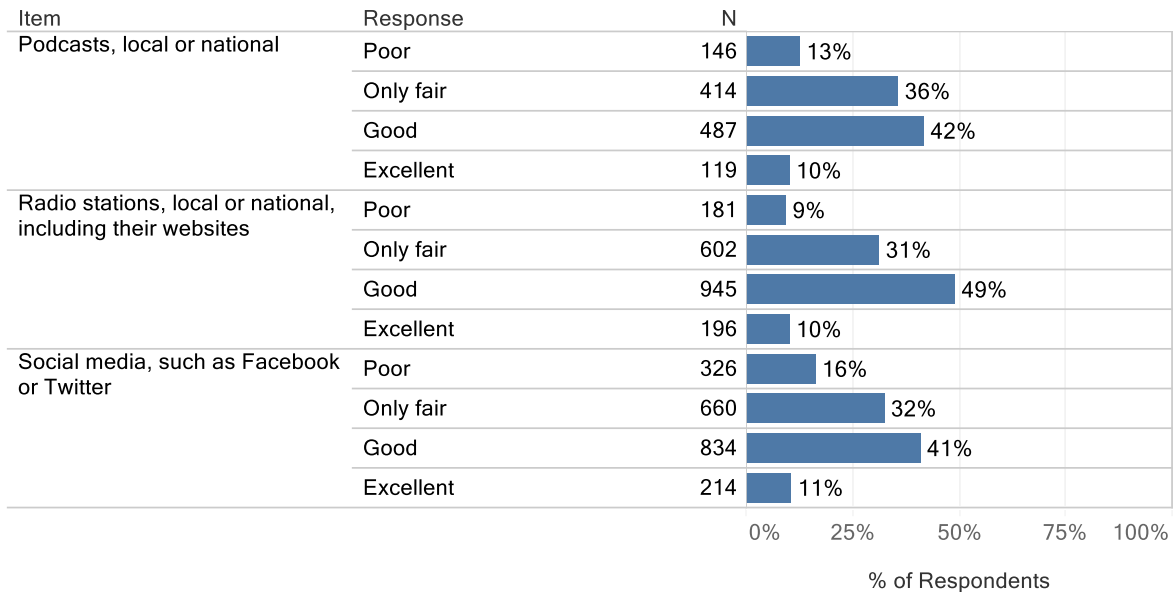
Question: "How would you rate the job each of the following is doing in providing news and information about schools and education, whether in-person, online, over the phone, or in printed materials?"



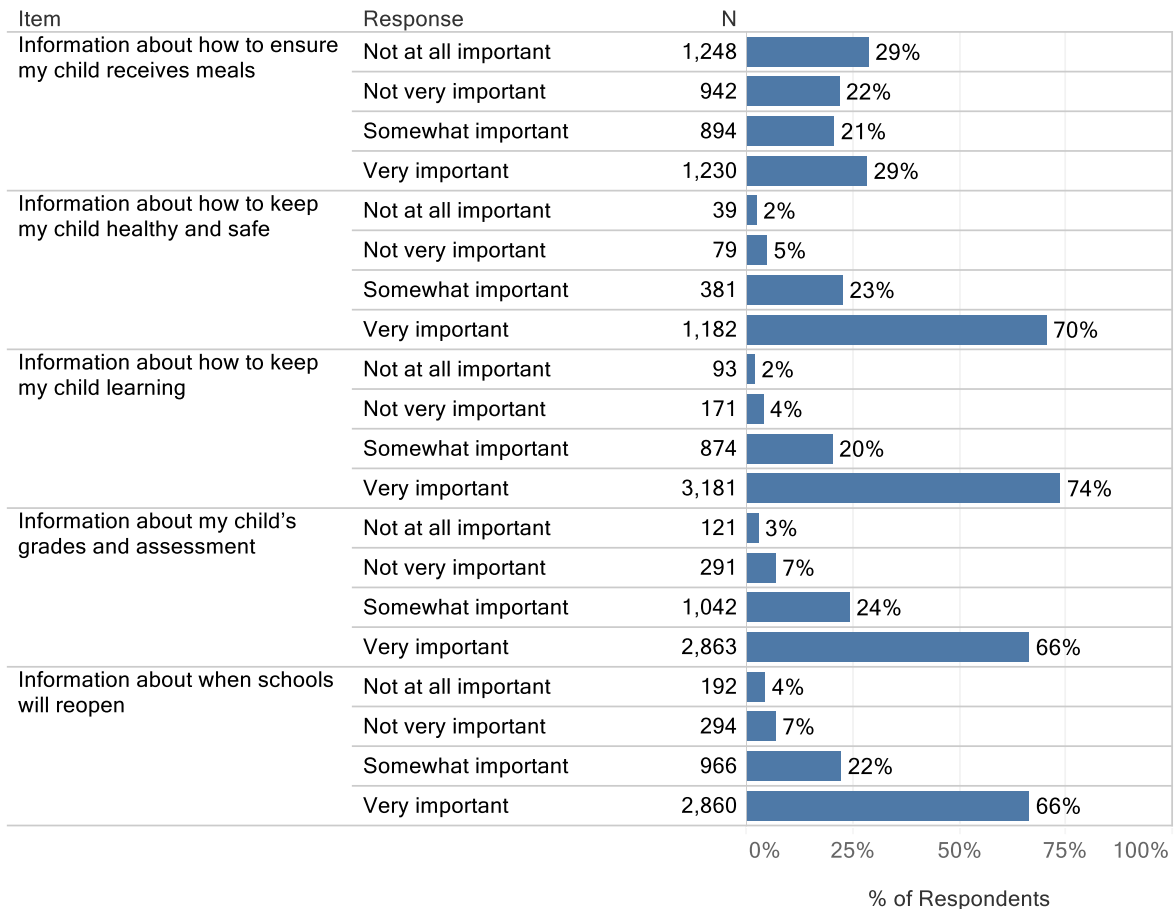
Question: "How would you rate the job each of the following is doing in providing news and information about schools and education?" (Part 1 of 2)



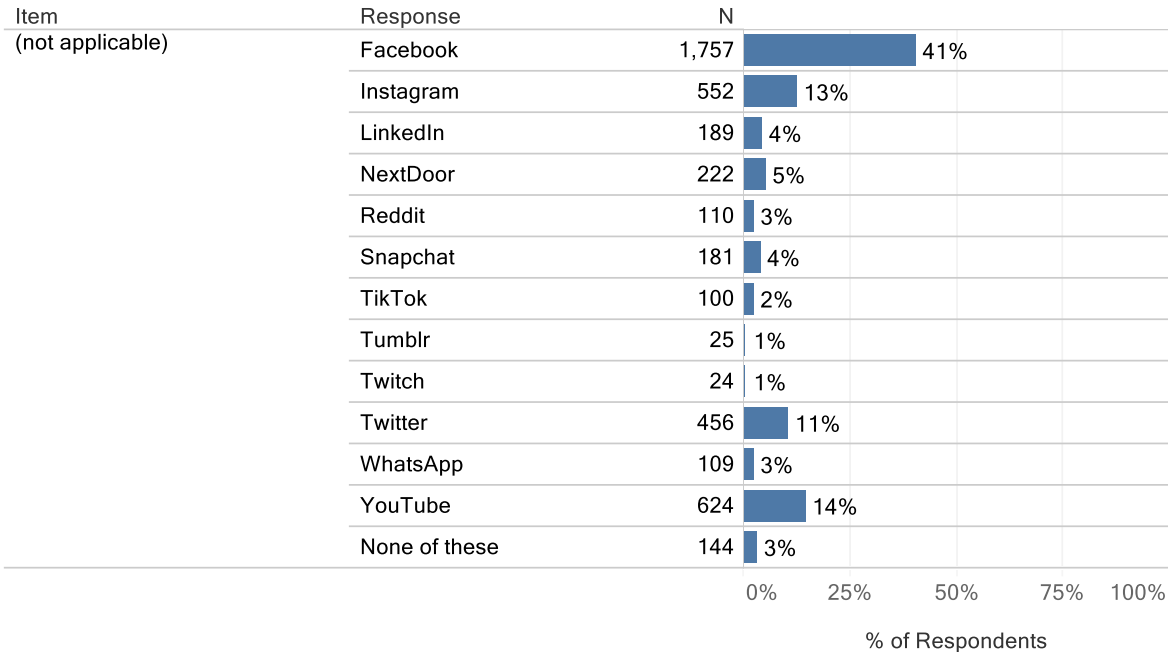
Question: "How would you rate the job each of the following is doing in providing news and information about schools and education?" (Part 2 of 2)



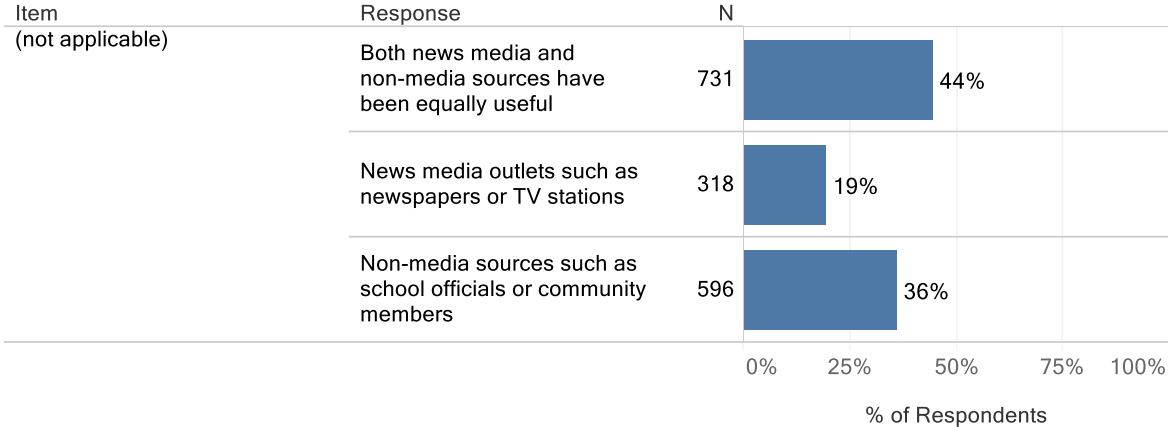
Question: "Now thinking specifically about the coronavirus outbreak, what are the most important school-related information topics for you right now?"



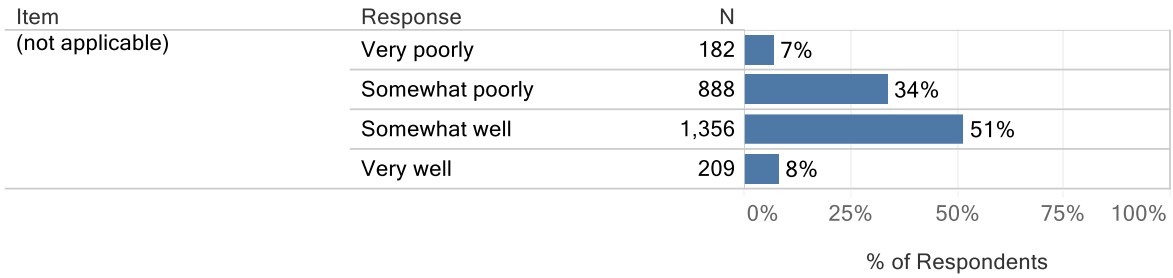
Question: "On which social media sites do you come across news and information about schools and education?"



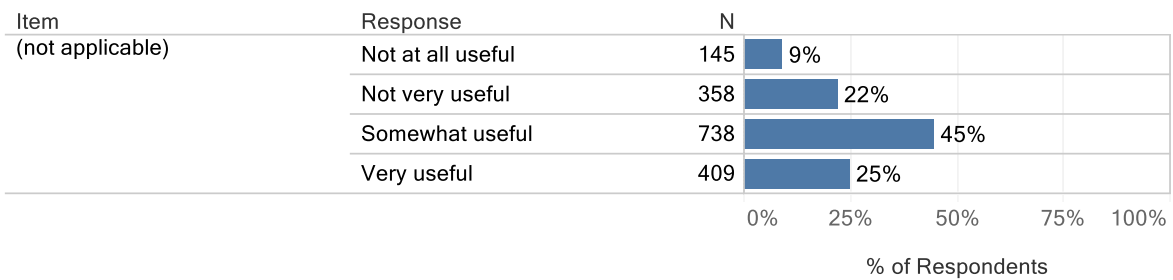
Question: "Over the past year, what has been the most useful source of news about the impact of the coronavirus on schools and education?"



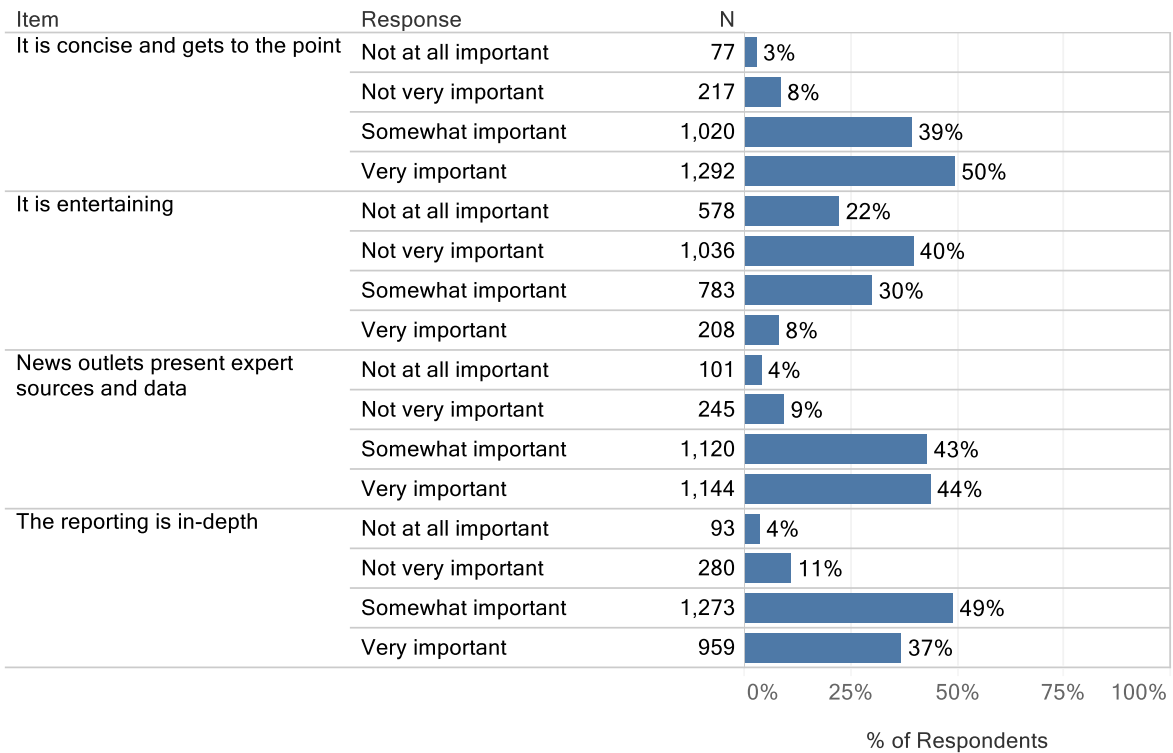
Question: "Overall, how well do you think news media cover schools and education?"



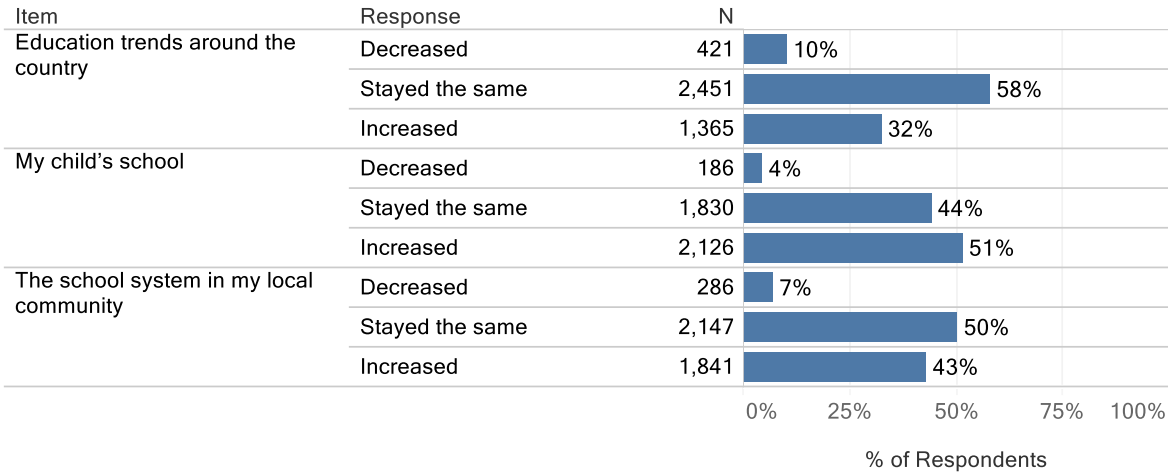
Question: "Thinking about how the news media has covered the impact of the coronavirus on local schools, how useful would you say it has been in your daily life?"



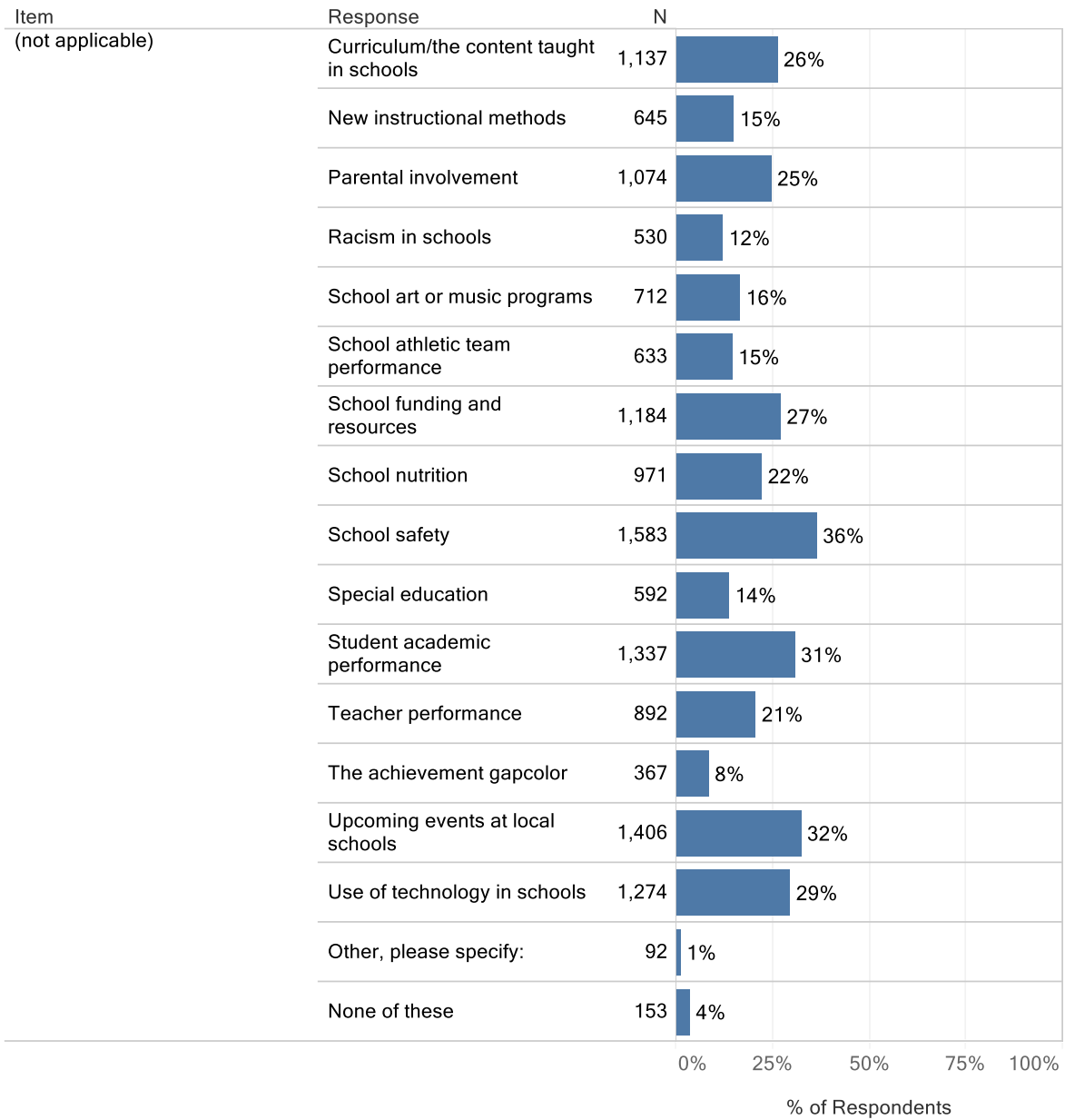
Question: "Thinking about the news you get about schools and education, how important is each of the following to you?"



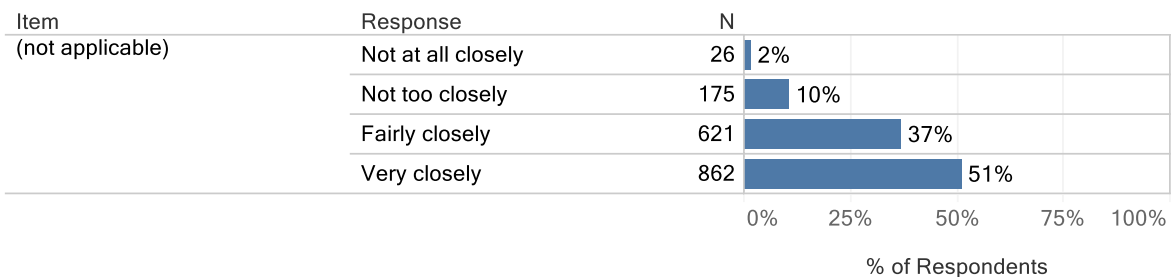
Question: "Thinking about the past year, how would you describe your level of interest in news about..."



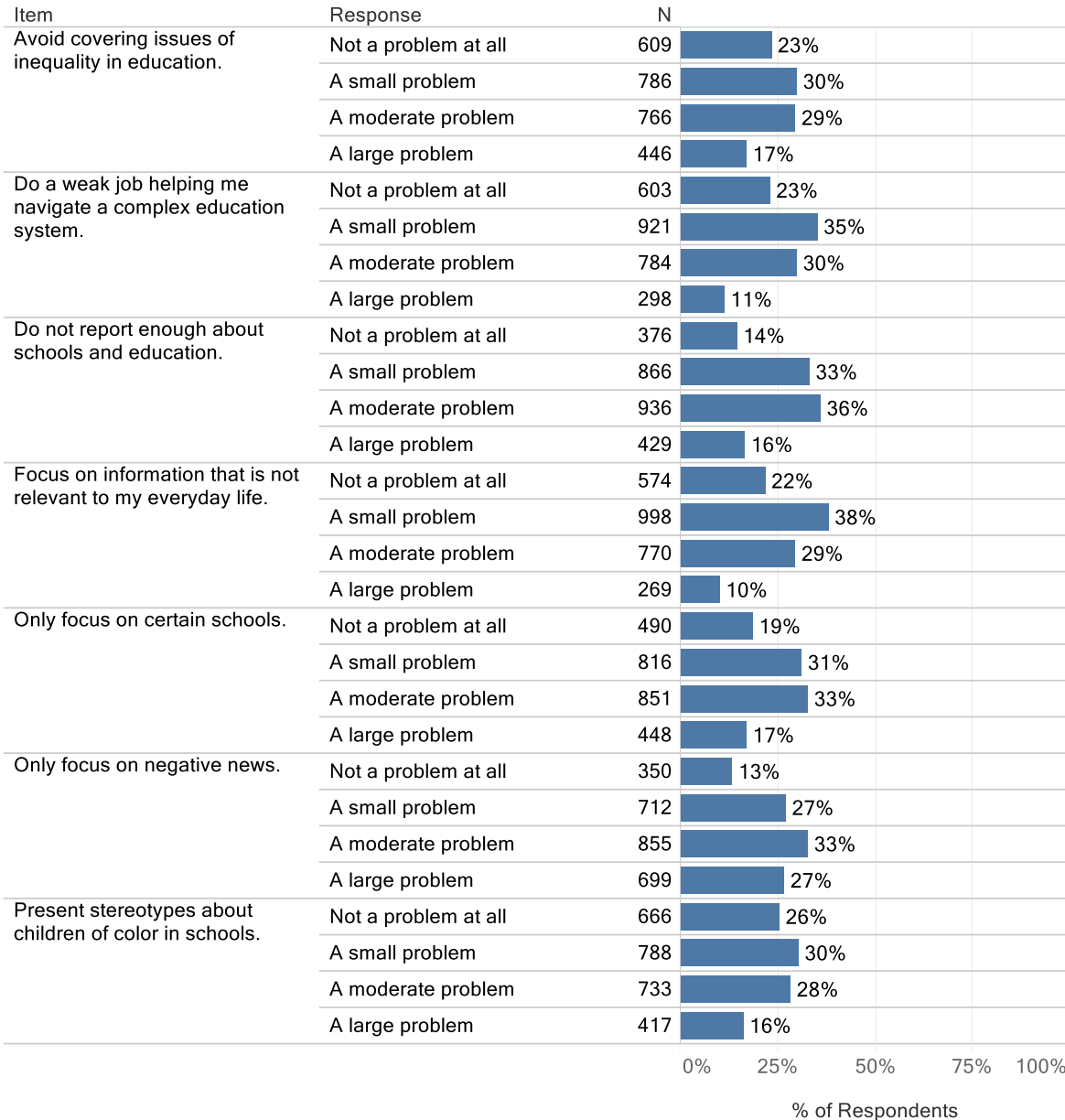
Question: "Thinking about your local school system, which, if any, of these education-related news topics have you followed in the past year?"



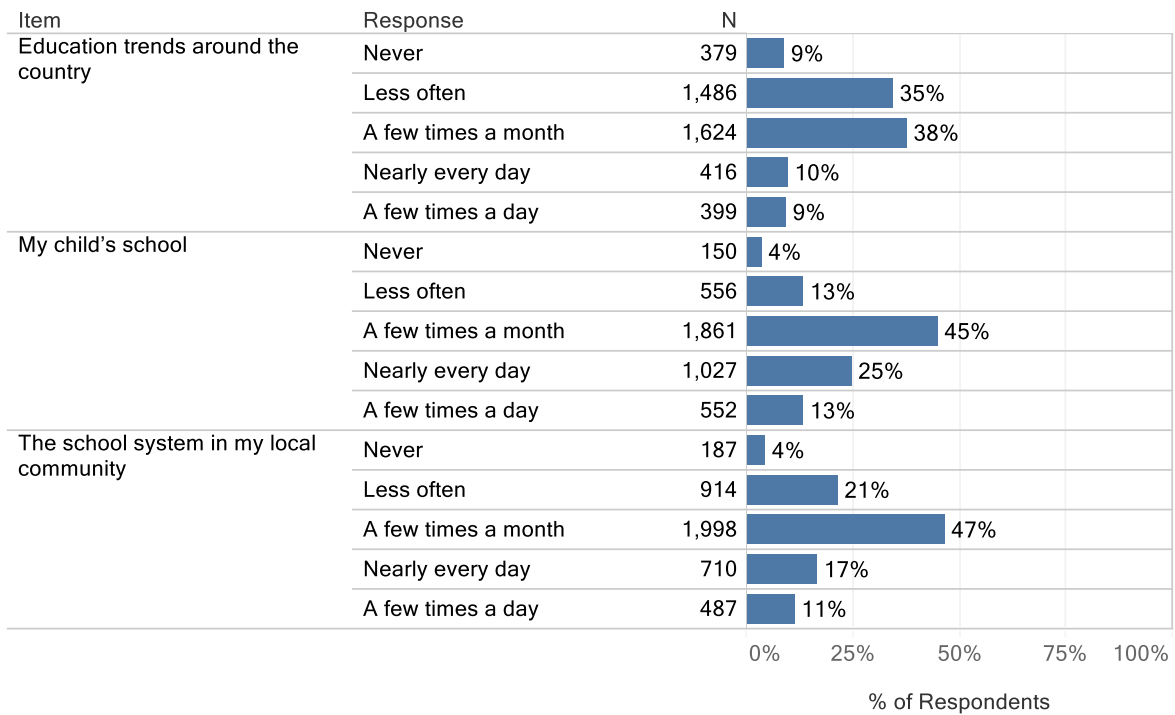
Question: "Thinking back over the past year, how closely, if at all, have you followed the coronavirus impact on schools and education?"



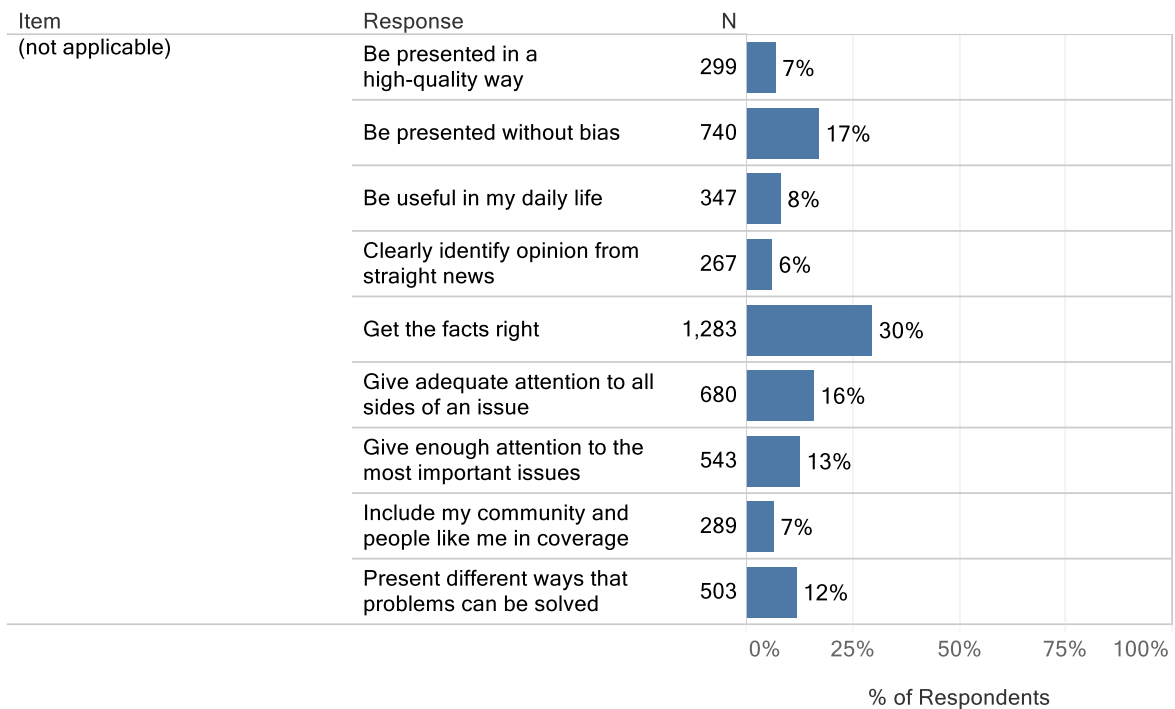
Question: "Thinking in general about education news today, how big of a problem do you think that each of the following is when it comes to news about schools and education? The news media..."



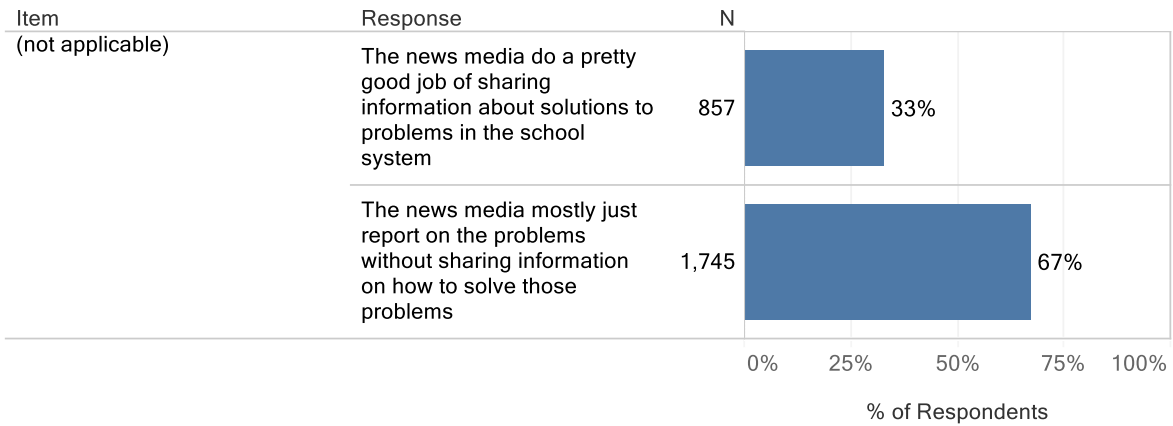
Question: "Thinking just about education news, how often do you read, watch, or listen to news about..."



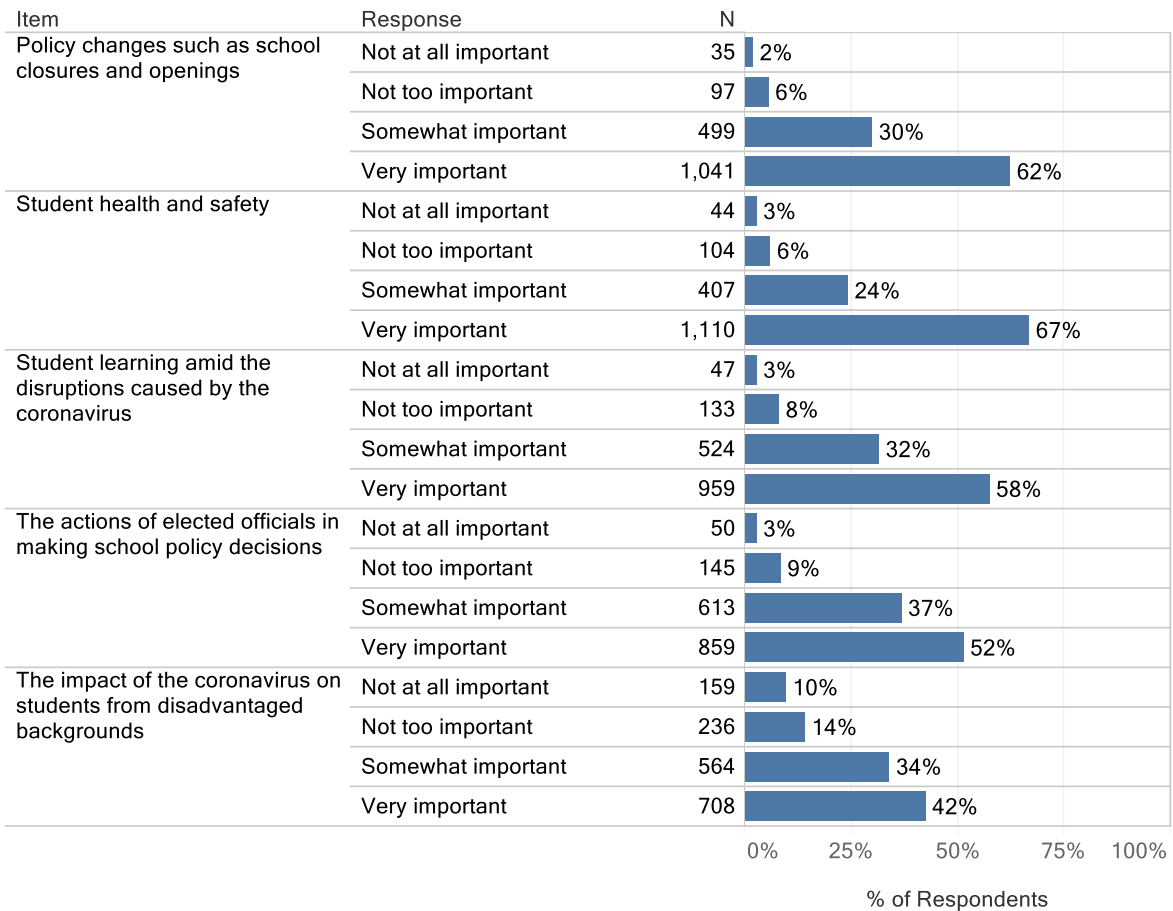
Question: "What is most important to you when it comes to coverage of schools and education? It is most important for education news to..."



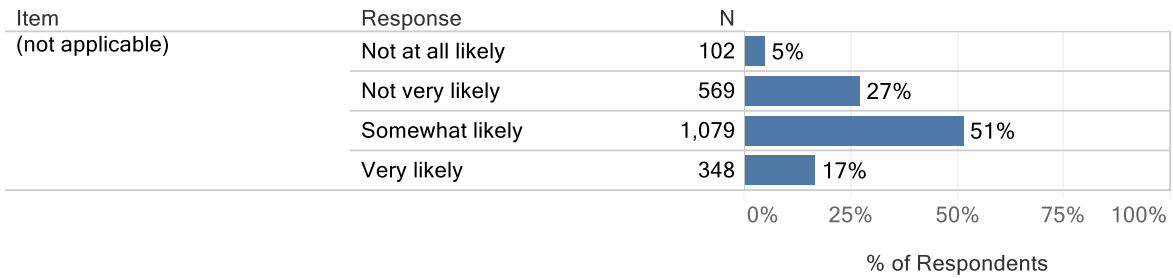
Question: "When it comes to news coverage of problems in your local school system, which comes closer to your view..."



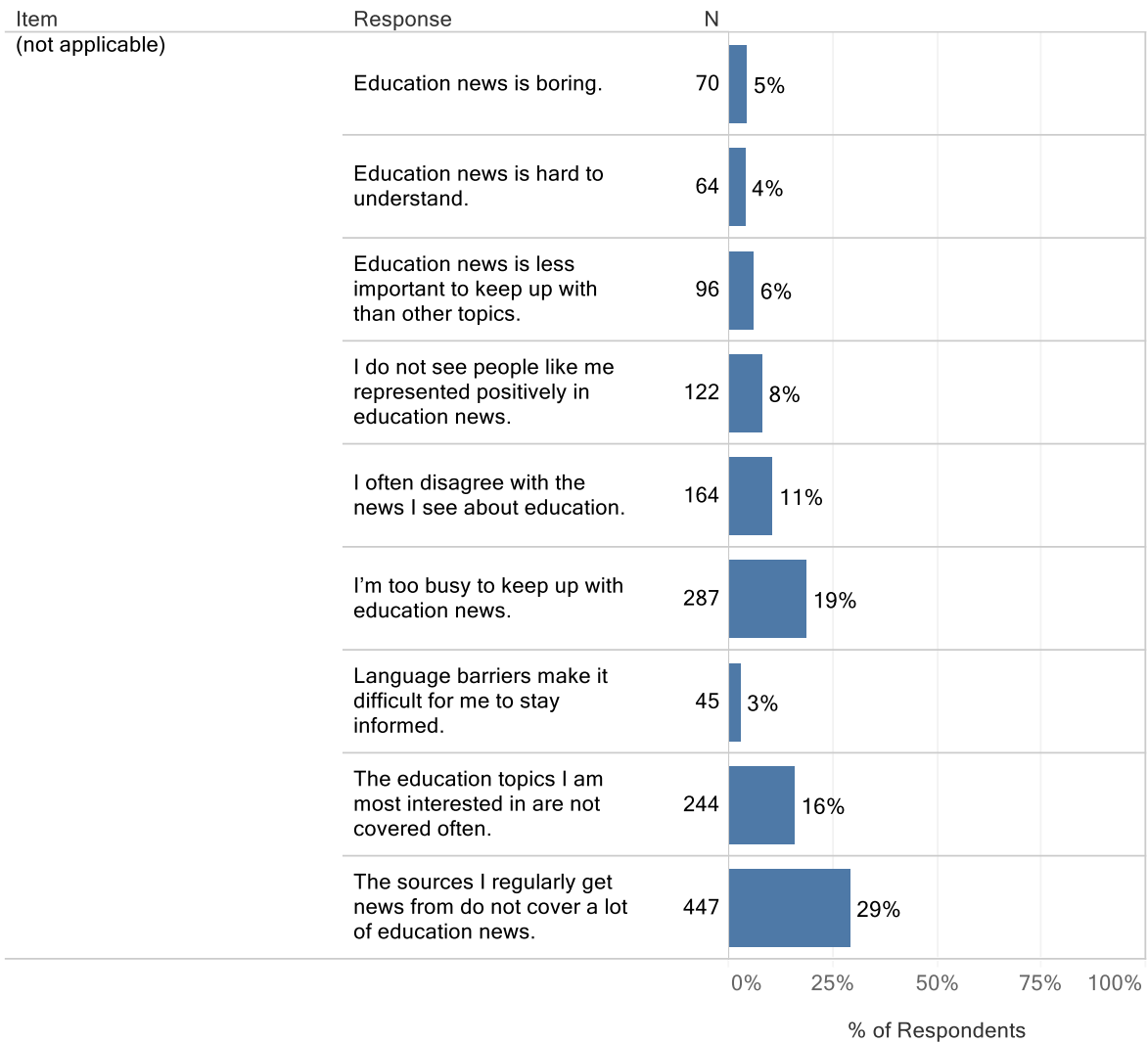
Question: "When it comes to the coronavirus and schools, how important is it to you that journalists continue to focus on..."



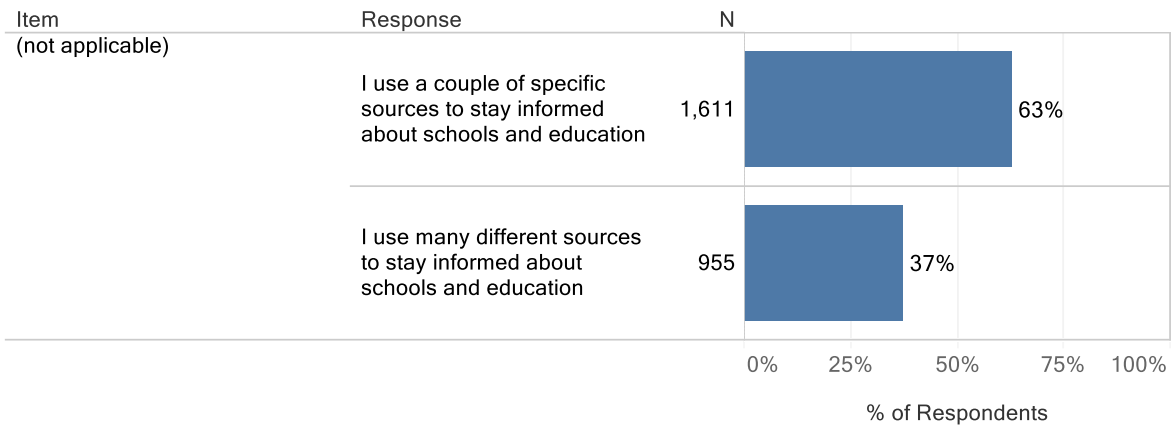
Question: "When you see news and information about schools and education on social media, how likely are you to remember the original source of that information?"



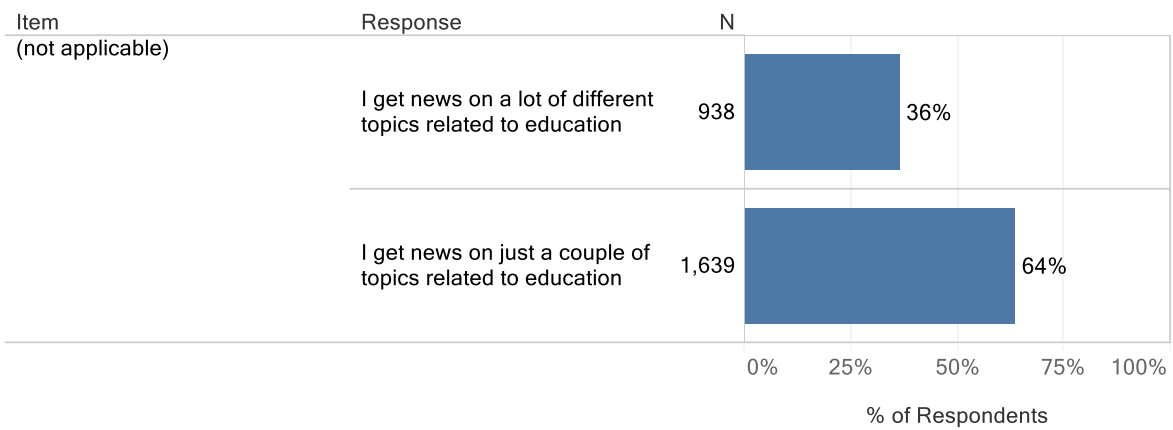
Question: "Which of the following makes it most difficult for you to stay informed about schools and education?"



Question: "Which statement best describes how many sources you use to stay informed about schools and education?"



Question: "Which statement best describes how much news you get about schools and education in general?"



Question: "Which statement best describes how you get news and information about schools and education?"

