



TEENS AND K-12 EDUCATION

A National Polling Report

SEPTEMBER 2021

KEY FINDINGS

- 1. While teens have grown less concerned with the COVID-19 pandemic, they are supportive of schools encouraging or requiring masks and vaccines for students and staff.** Most teens either say they are vaccinated or plan to get vaccinated in the future. Most say they are wearing masks frequently in public spaces, but they do not say the same about peers.
- 2. Teens are still reporting negative impacts of the pandemic on their mental health and overall wellbeing.** Though the impact is starting to trend more positively since March 2021 likely due to the significant increase of in-person learning. Teens who are attending in-school classes are connecting with their peers in a wider variety of ways than those who are attending classes completely online.
- 3. Teens' preferences are nearly evenly split between full-time regular schooling and hybrid schooling.** The preference for in-person learning has increased since March 2021. Most teens also feel they should at least have some say in schooling decisions, though about one-third say they don't have any say at all.
- 4. Teens and parents have contrasting views about what is the most important purpose of a high school education.** Teens believe skills for future employment and independent thinking are most important while parents believe skills for future employment and core academic subjects are most important.
- 5. Teens appear to be less engaged on a wide range of topics compared to previous survey waves.** They are most familiar with the COVID-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement. One-third of teens are aware of education reform, which is lower than in March 2021. Social media continues to be a big part of how teens learn about and engage with current events.

AGENDA

COVID-19 AND SCHOOLING

SCHOOL PREFERENCES

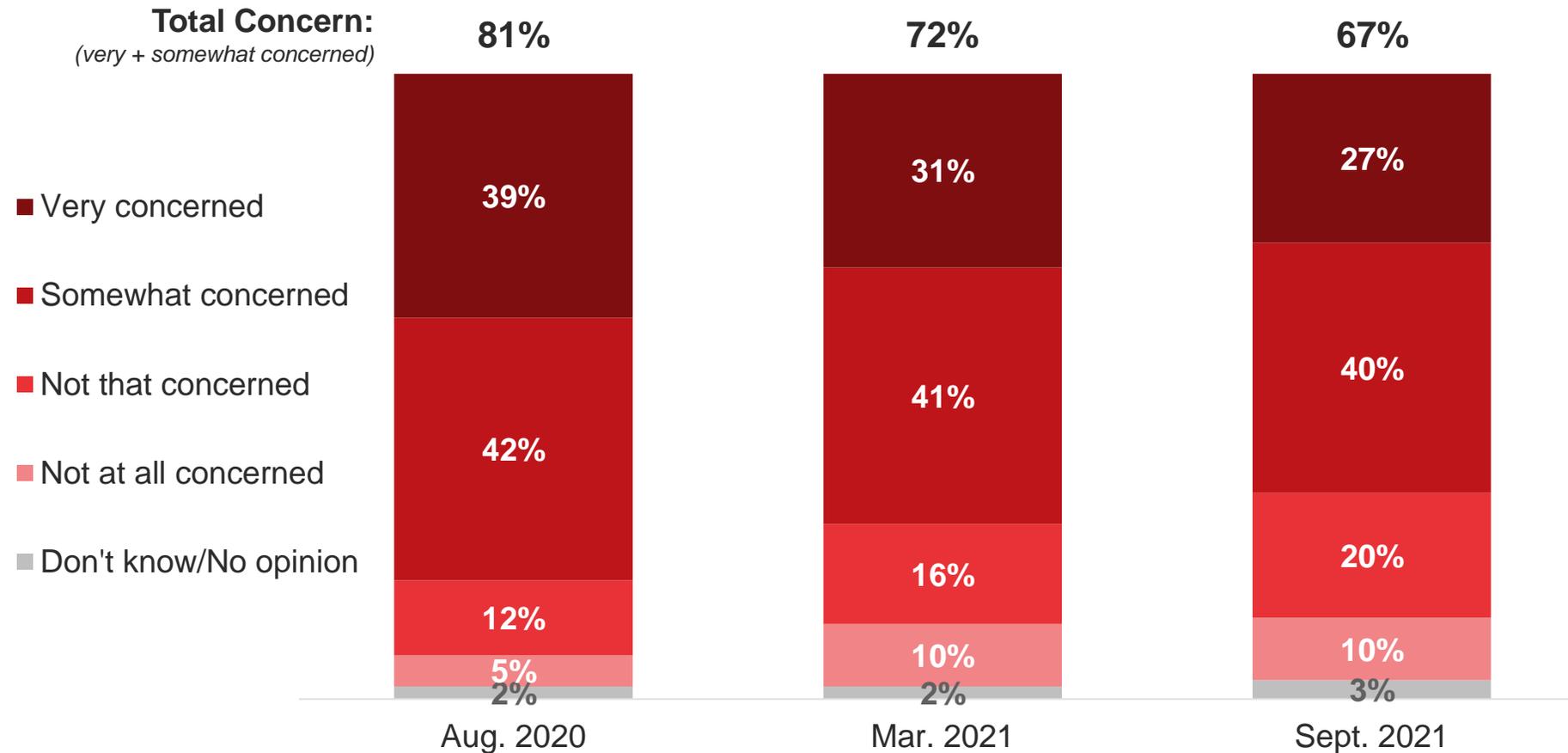
SOCIAL ISSUES

SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



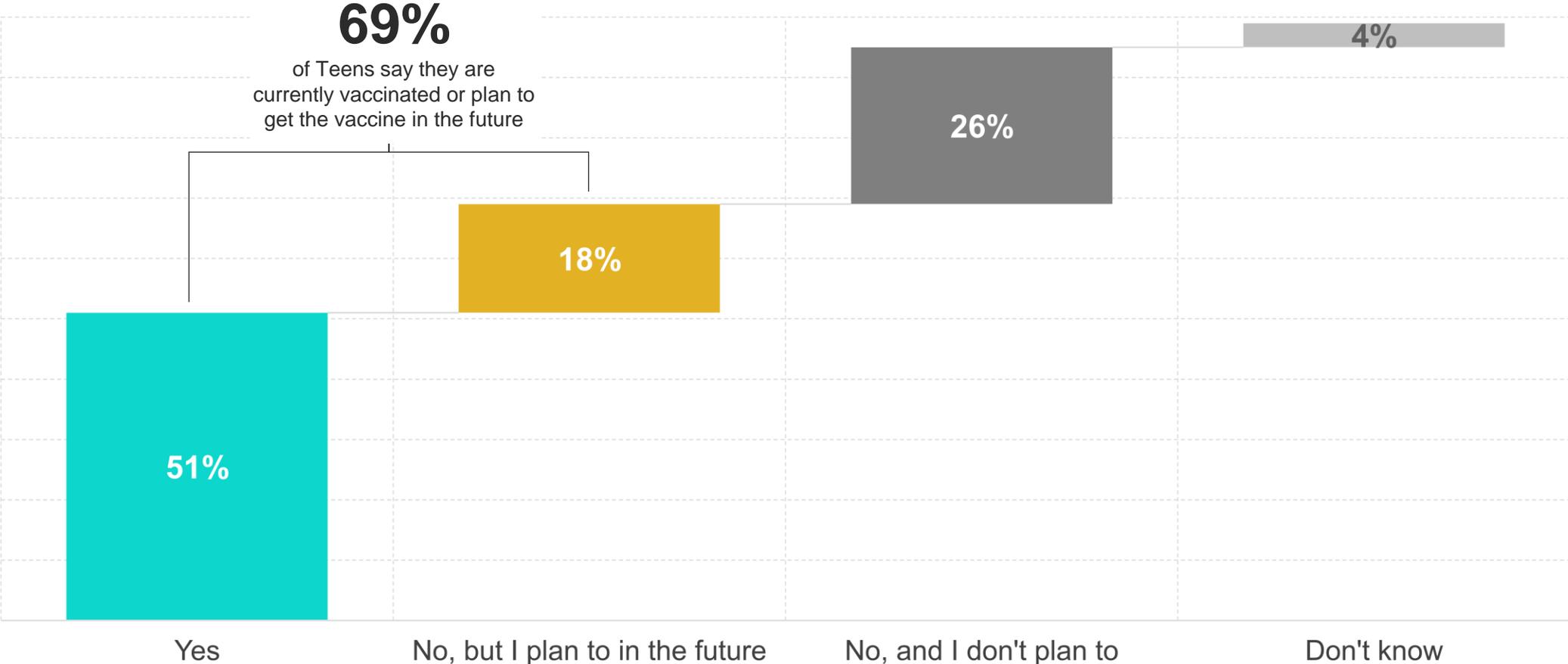
While the majority of teens remain at least somewhat concerned about the pandemic, overall concern has decreased by 14 percentage points since August 2020.

How concerned are you about the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic? Select one.



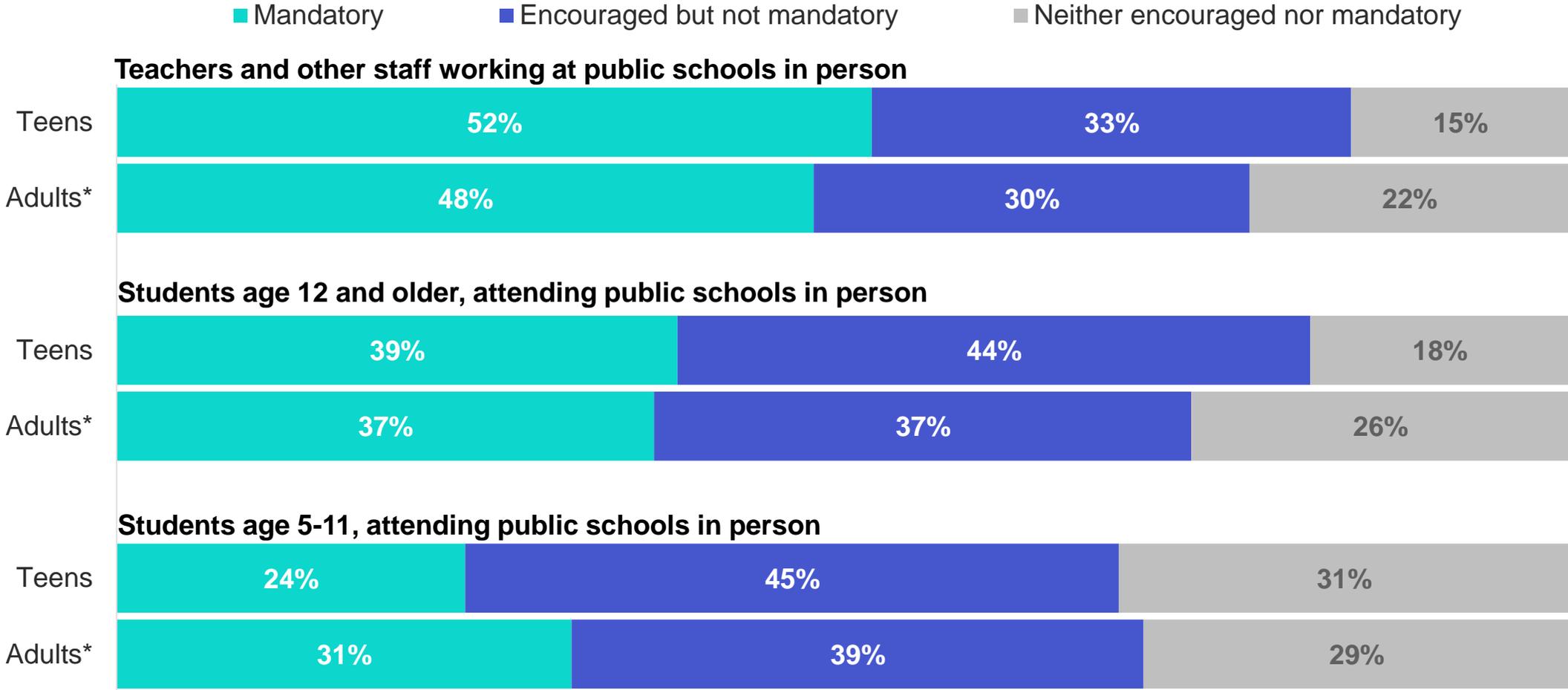
Half of teens say they have received the COVID-19 vaccine, while about a quarter aren't vaccinated and don't plan to get the vaccine in the future.

Have you gotten the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) vaccine? Select one.



Half of teens and adults agree that the vaccine should be mandatory for teachers and staff. One-third of teens and adults believe it should be encouraged.

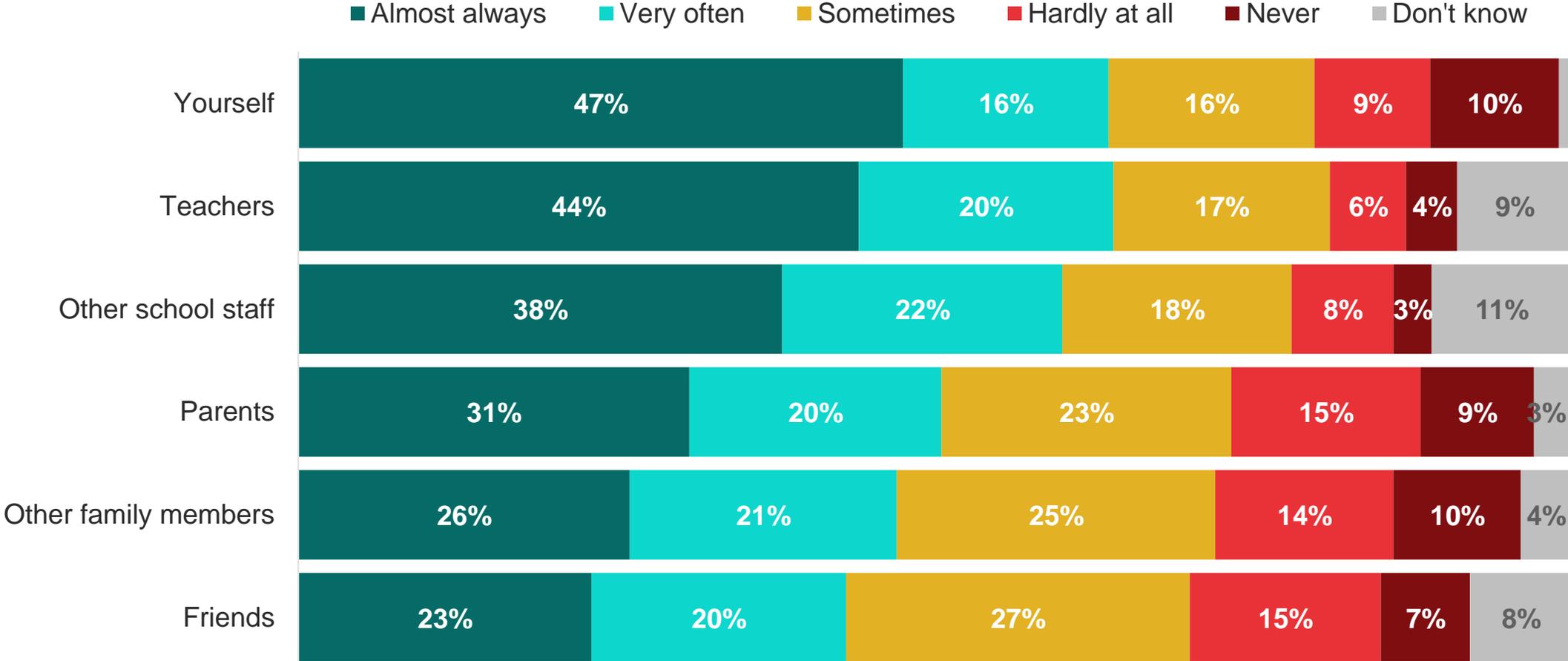
Do you think the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) vaccine should be mandatory or encouraged for each of the following groups?



*Adult data from EdChoice's Monthly Gen Pop Tracker (compared to data from August 2021)

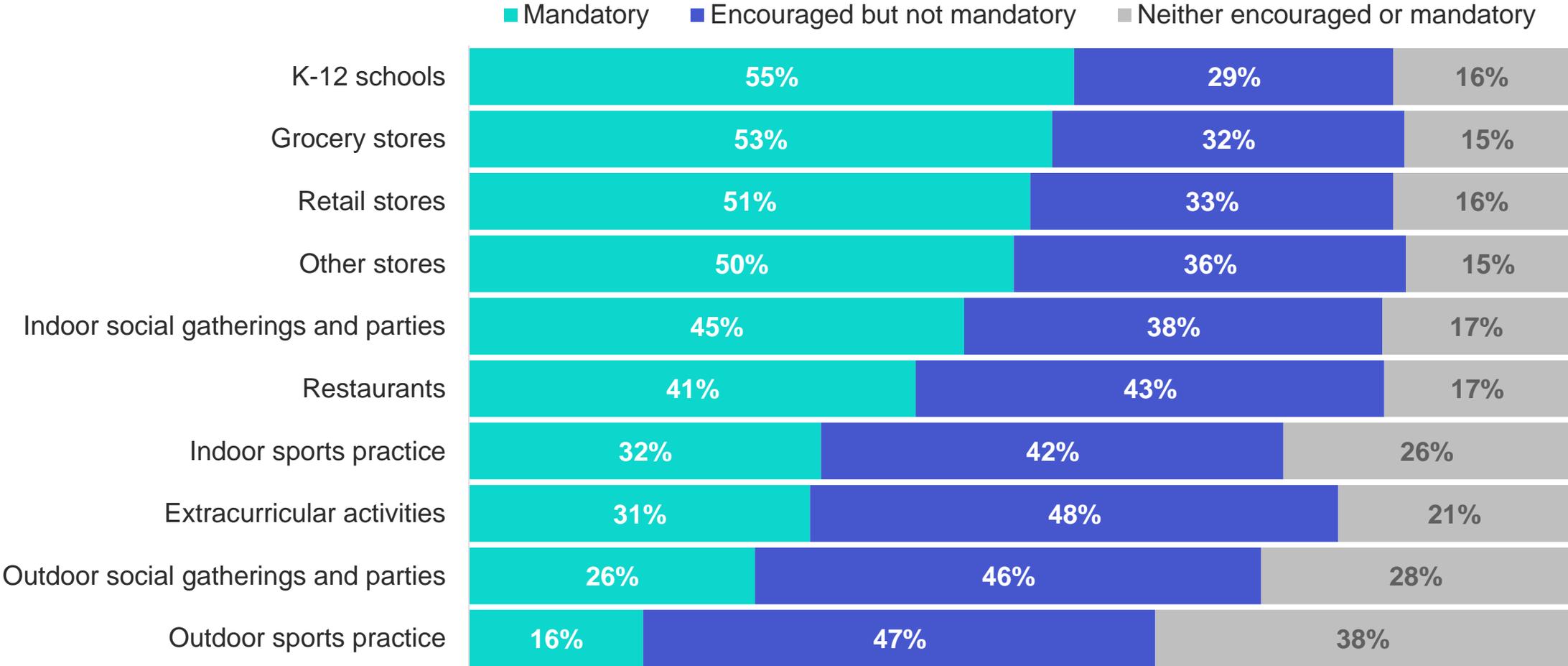
Teachers and school staff are wearing masks more often than teens' friends and family members.

Right now, how often do you notice each of the following groups wearing masks in public places?

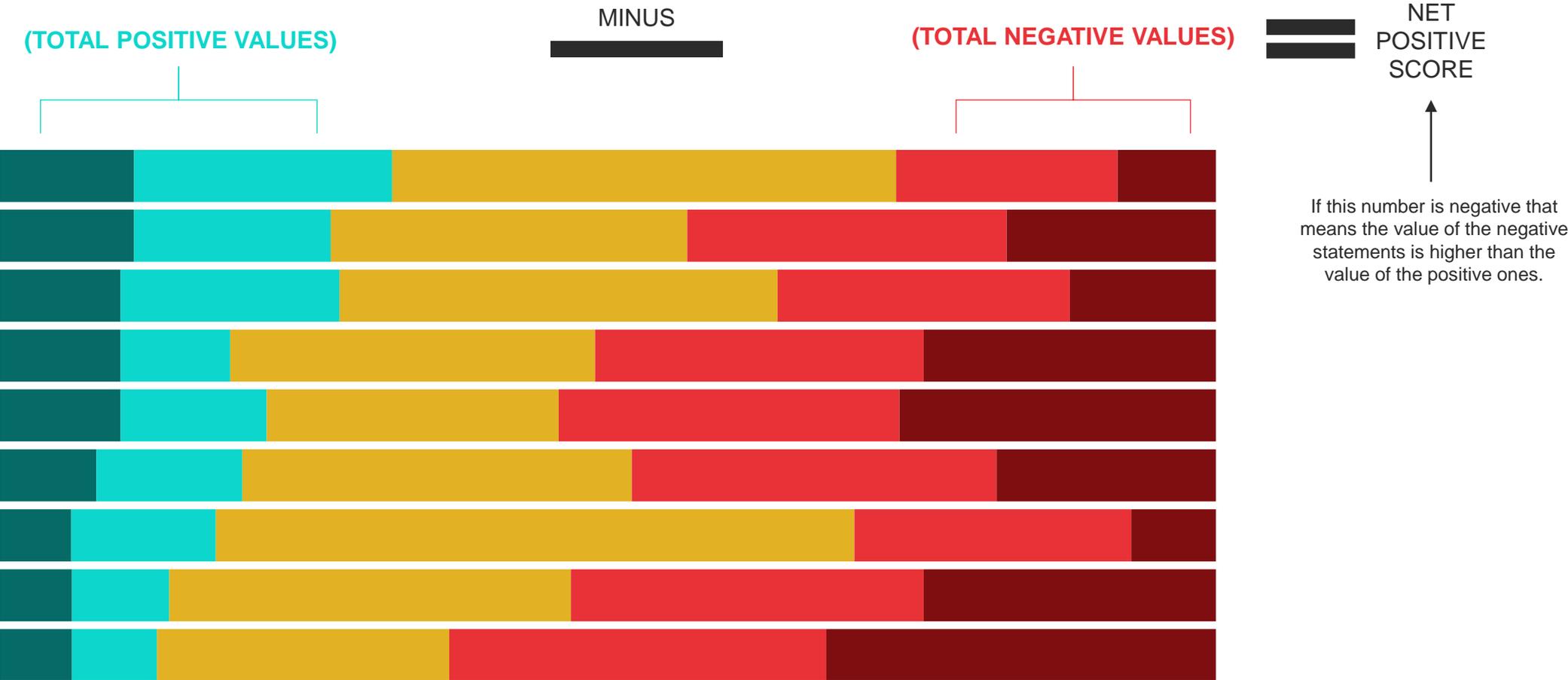


A little more than half of teens think that masks should be mandatory in schools.

Do you think masking should be mandatory or encouraged in each of the following places?

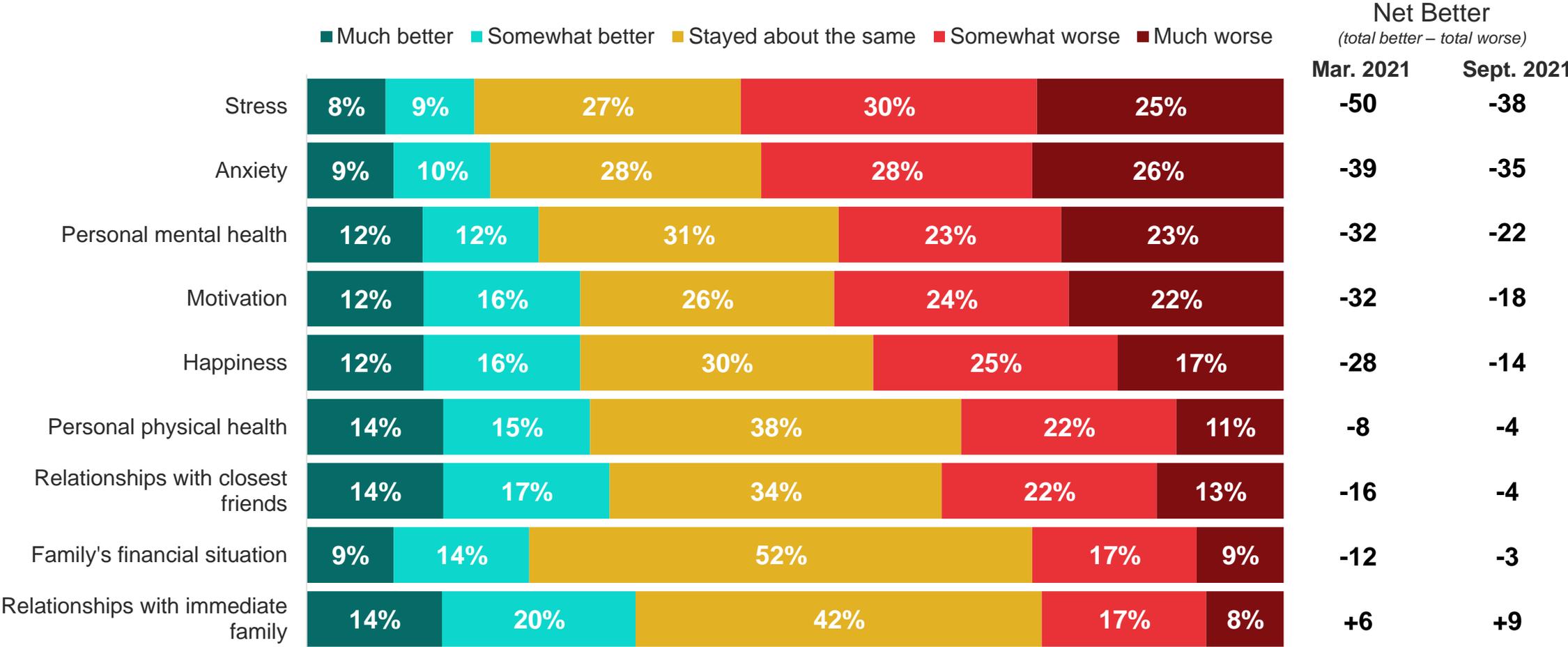


HOW TO CALCULATE NET SCORES:



Though improving, the pandemic continues to affect teens very negatively on a range of indicators — especially when it comes to their stress, anxiety, motivation, happiness, and mental health.

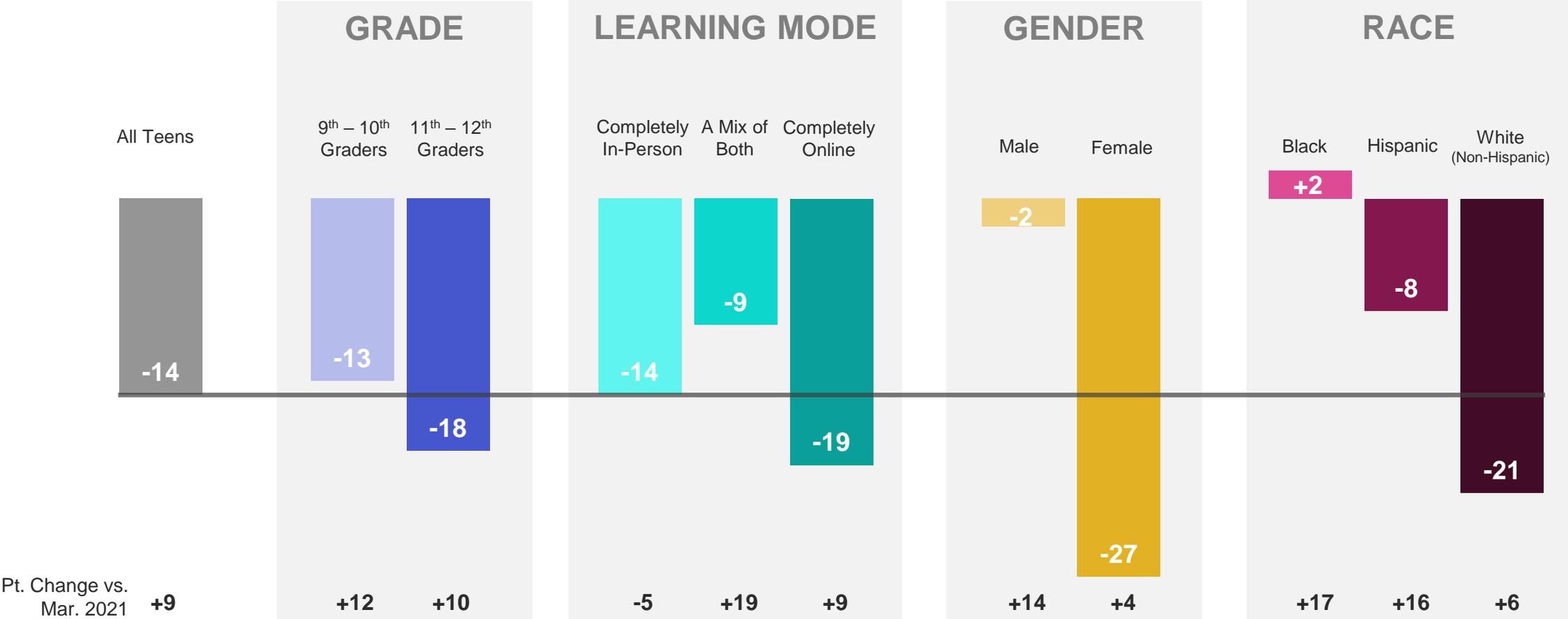
Since the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic started in March of 2020, how have each of the following changed for you? Select one per row.



Older teens (11th and 12th graders), females, whites, and those attending online classes have felt a greater negative impact from the pandemic compared to other groups.

Since the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic started in March of 2020, how have each of the following changed for you? Select one per row.

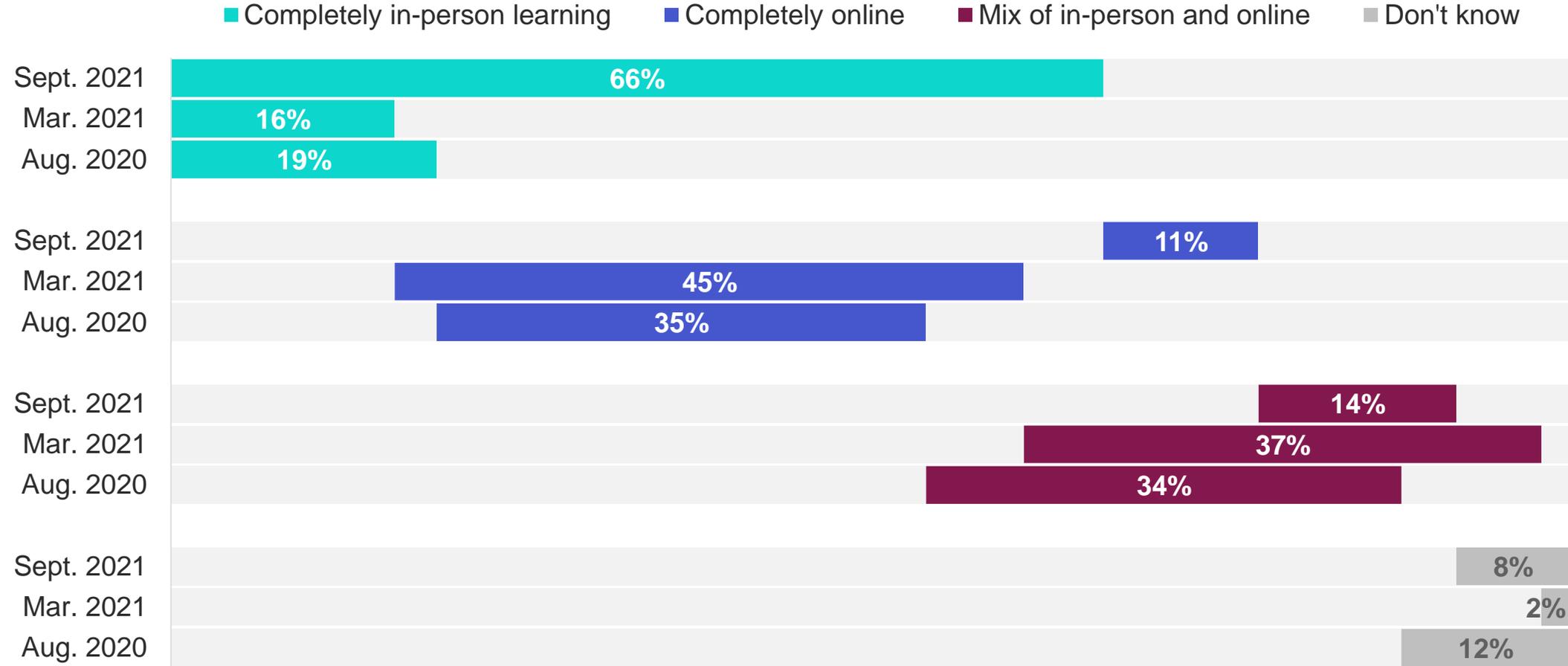
AVERAGE NET BETTER SCORE BY DEMOGRAPHIC



Data not reported for 6th – 8th Graders due to low sample unweighted N < 80

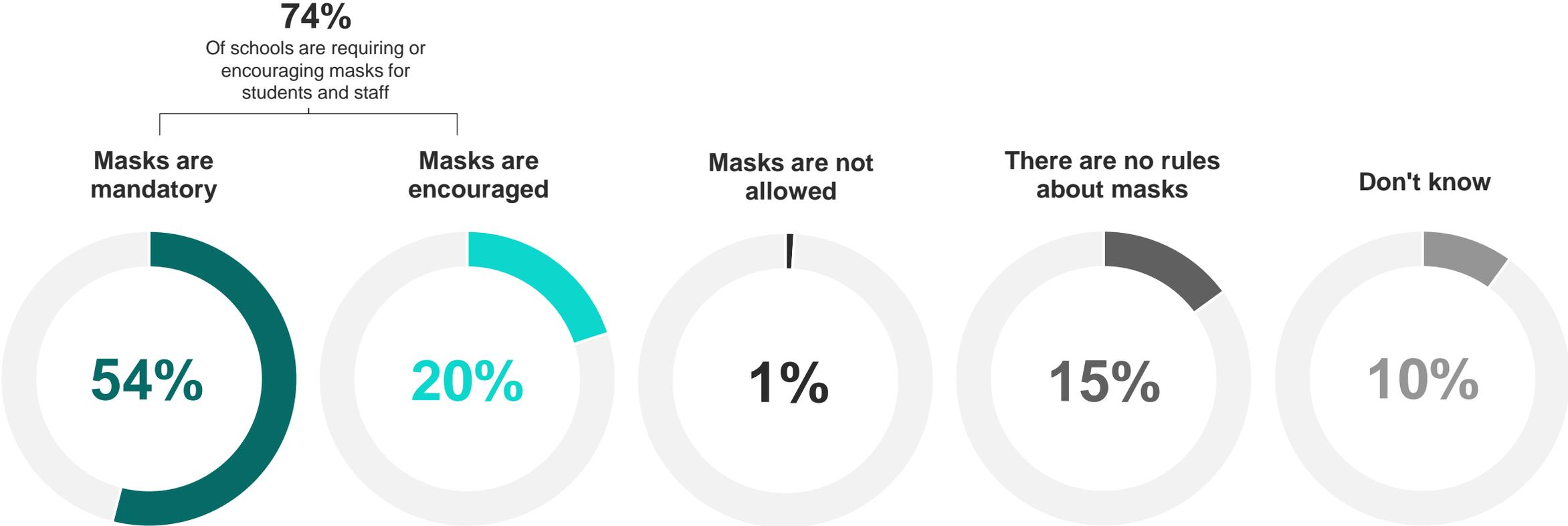
Since August 2020, the number of teens attending in-person classes has increased significantly from 19% to 66%.

Which of the following approaches is your school taking right now?



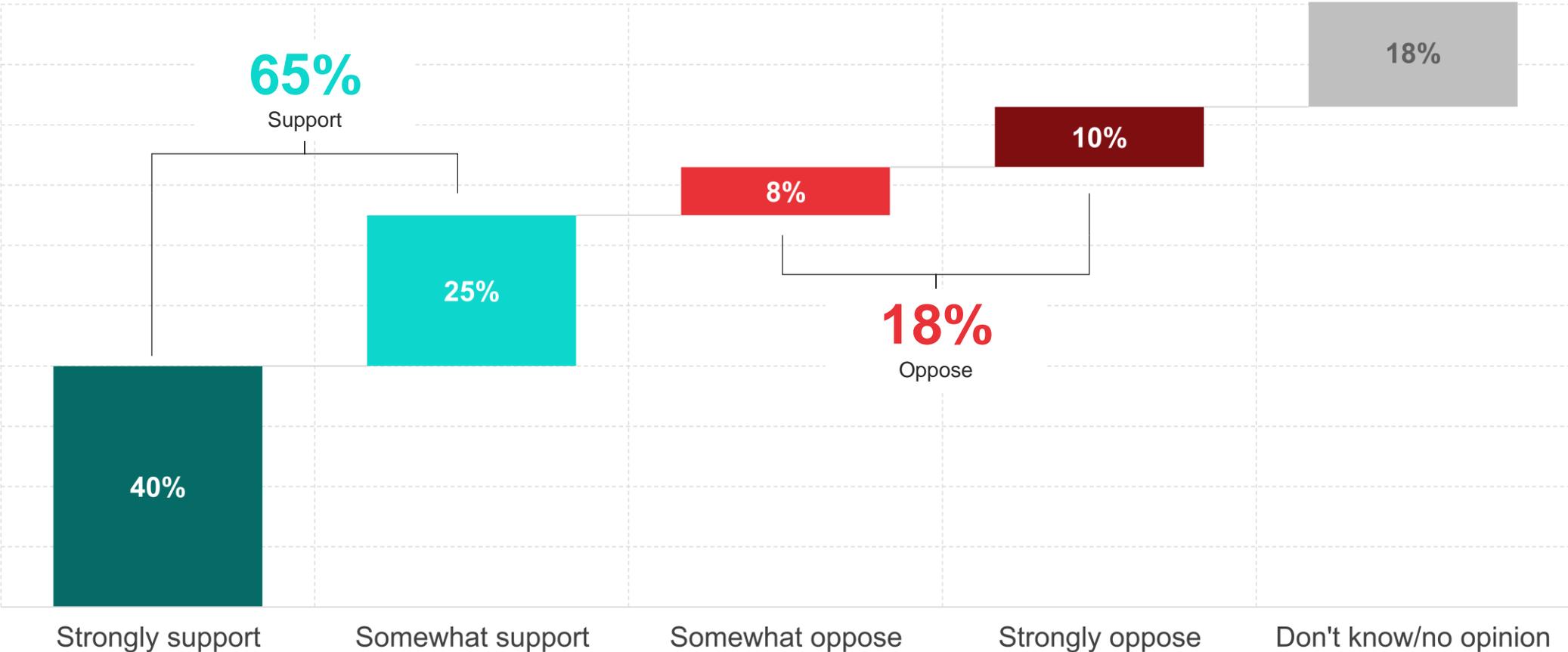
Half of teens report their school is requiring students and staff to wear masks. About one-fourth say there are no rules one way or the other, or they don't know.

What are the masking rules for students and staff at your school?



Nearly two-thirds of teens support masking at their school. One out of five are opposed to masking.

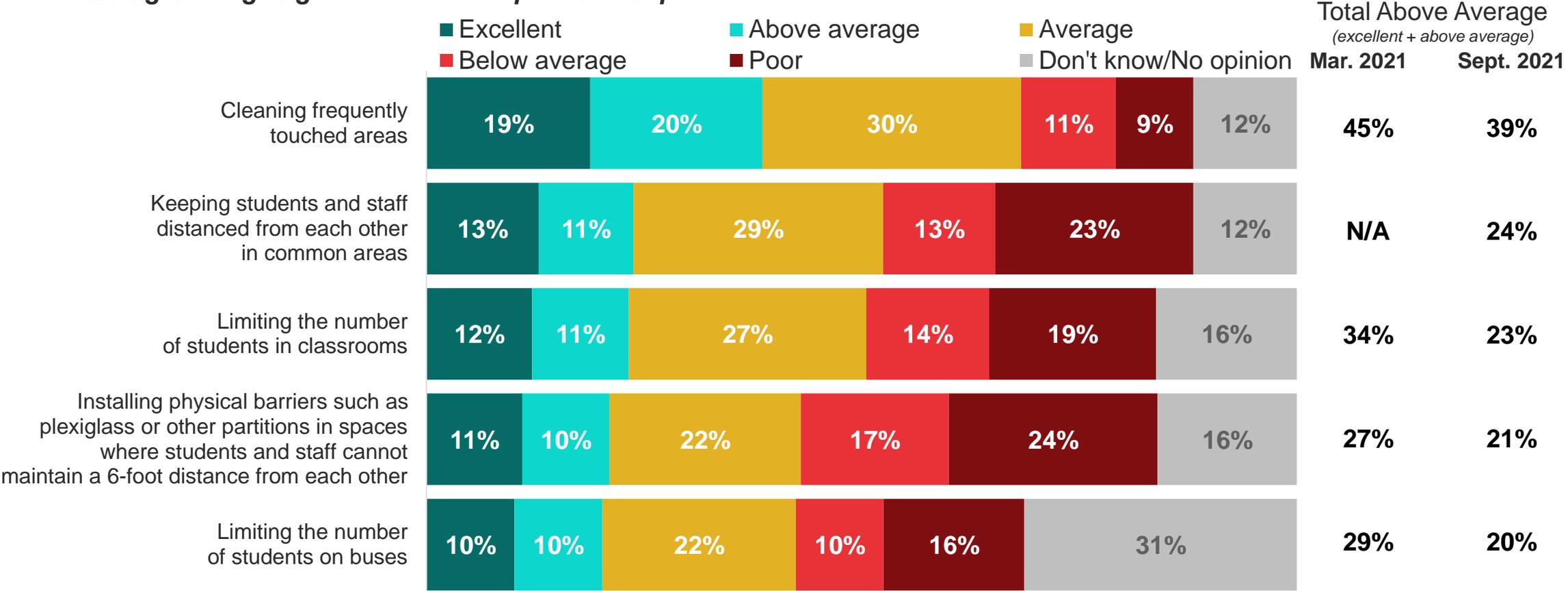
How much do you support or oppose masking at your school right now?



Compared to responses in the spring, Teens are now less likely to rate schools above average on various reopening indicators. The steepest decrease (-11 points) concerned limiting students in classrooms.

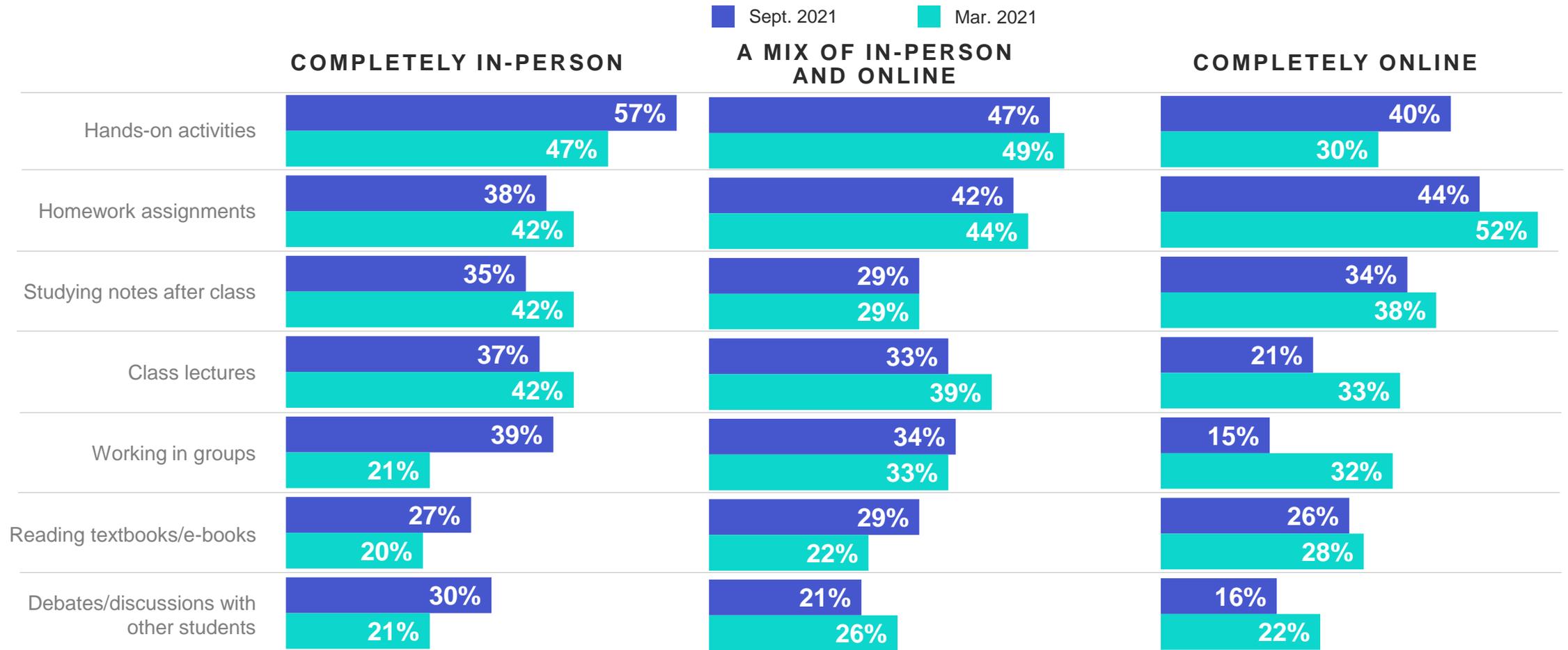
How would you rate your school on each of the following when reopening for in-person classes? Select one per row.

Among those going to school full or part time in-person



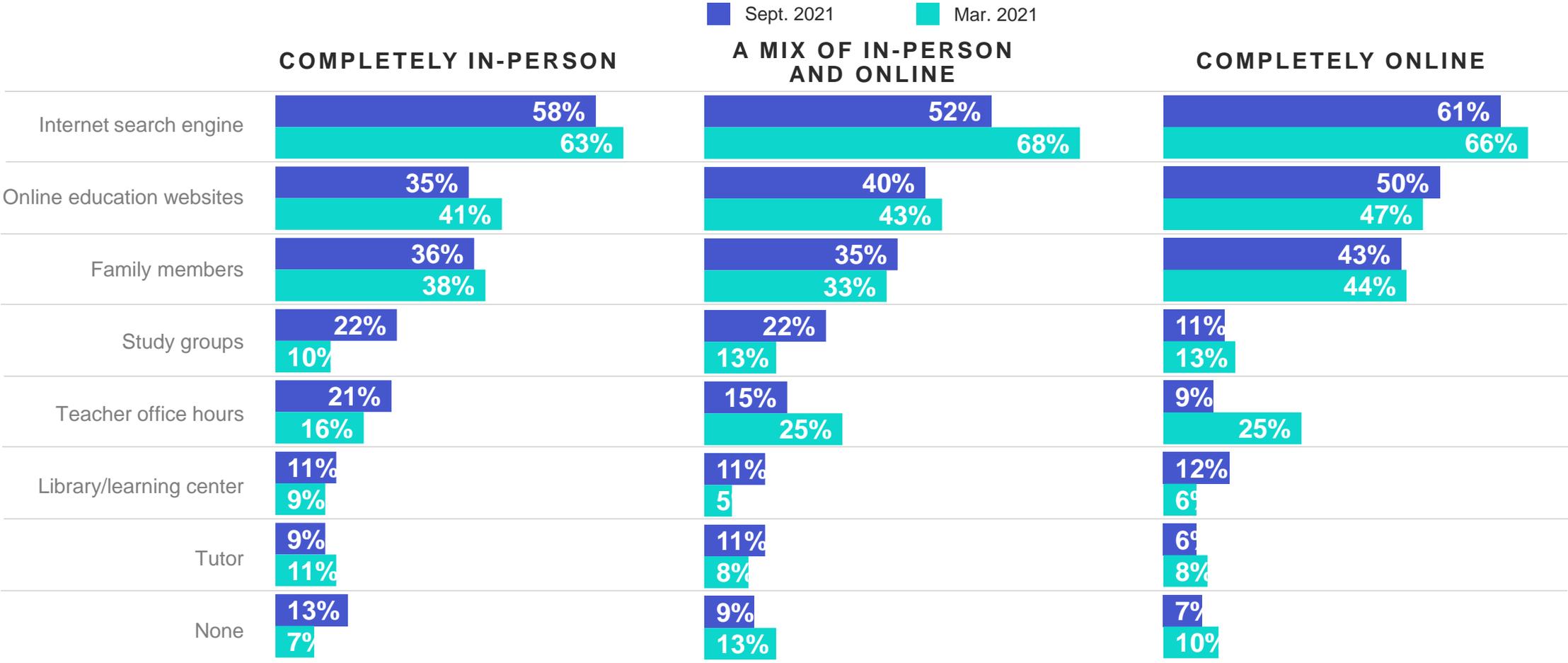
Students say they learn best with hands-on activities, this is especially true of those attending classes completely in-person. Those attending classes online are more reliant on homework assignments.

Right now, how are you learning best in school? Select all that apply.



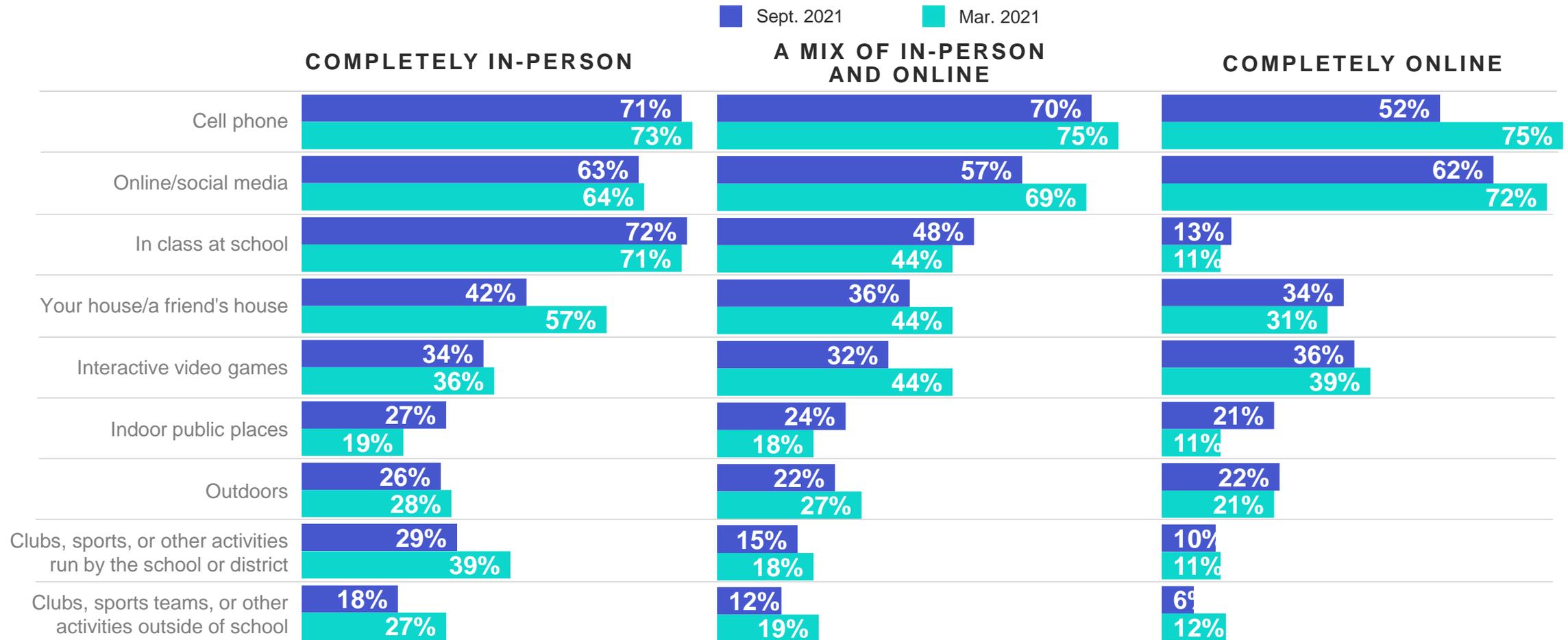
Regardless of learning mode students are utilizing search engines most to help them with schoolwork. At least one-third of students say they are relying on other family members or educational websites for help.

Right now, which of the following do you currently use to help you with schoolwork? Select all that apply.



Teens are heavily reliant on their phone and social media to connect with peers. Those learning in-person in some capacity are connecting with their peers in a wider variety of ways.

Right now, where do you connect with friends and other students? Select all that apply.



AGENDA

COVID-19 AND SCHOOLING

SCHOOL PREFERENCES

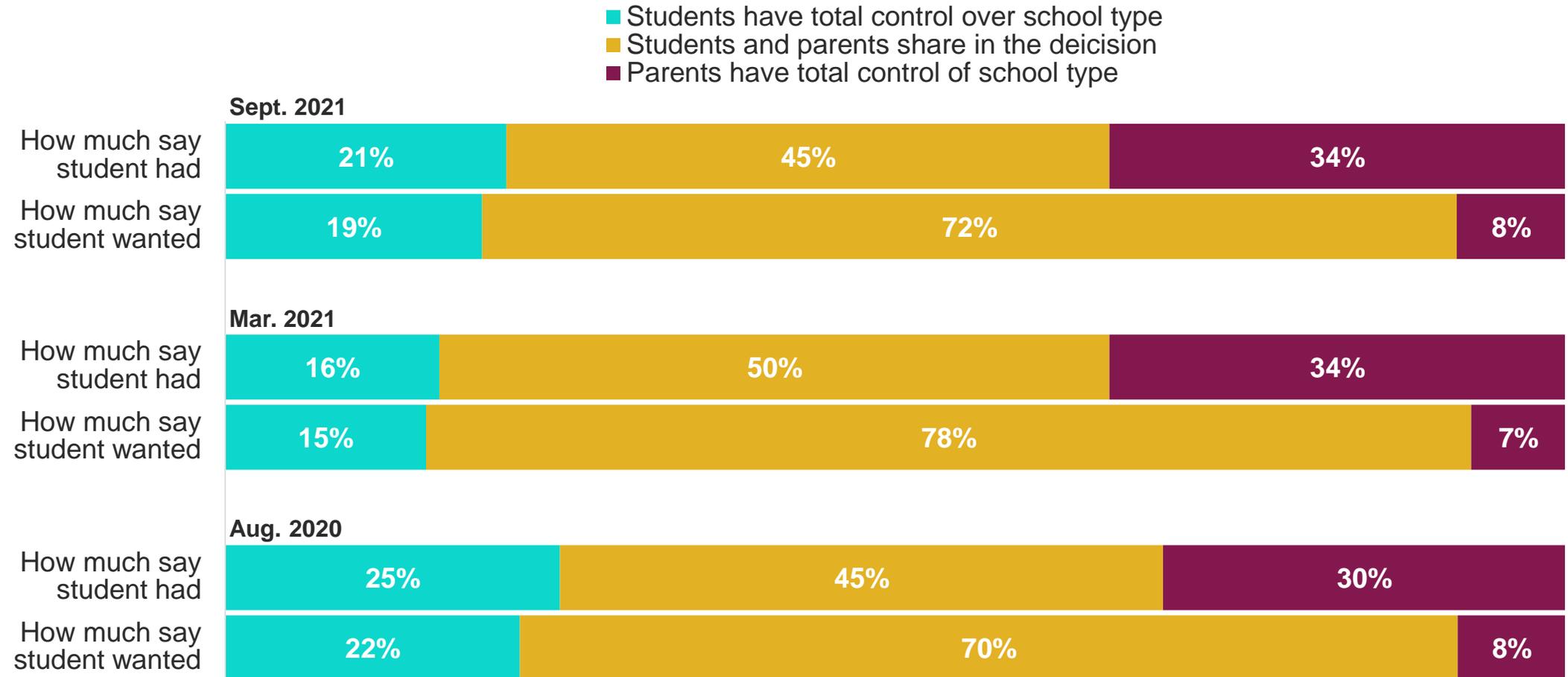
SOCIAL ISSUES

SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



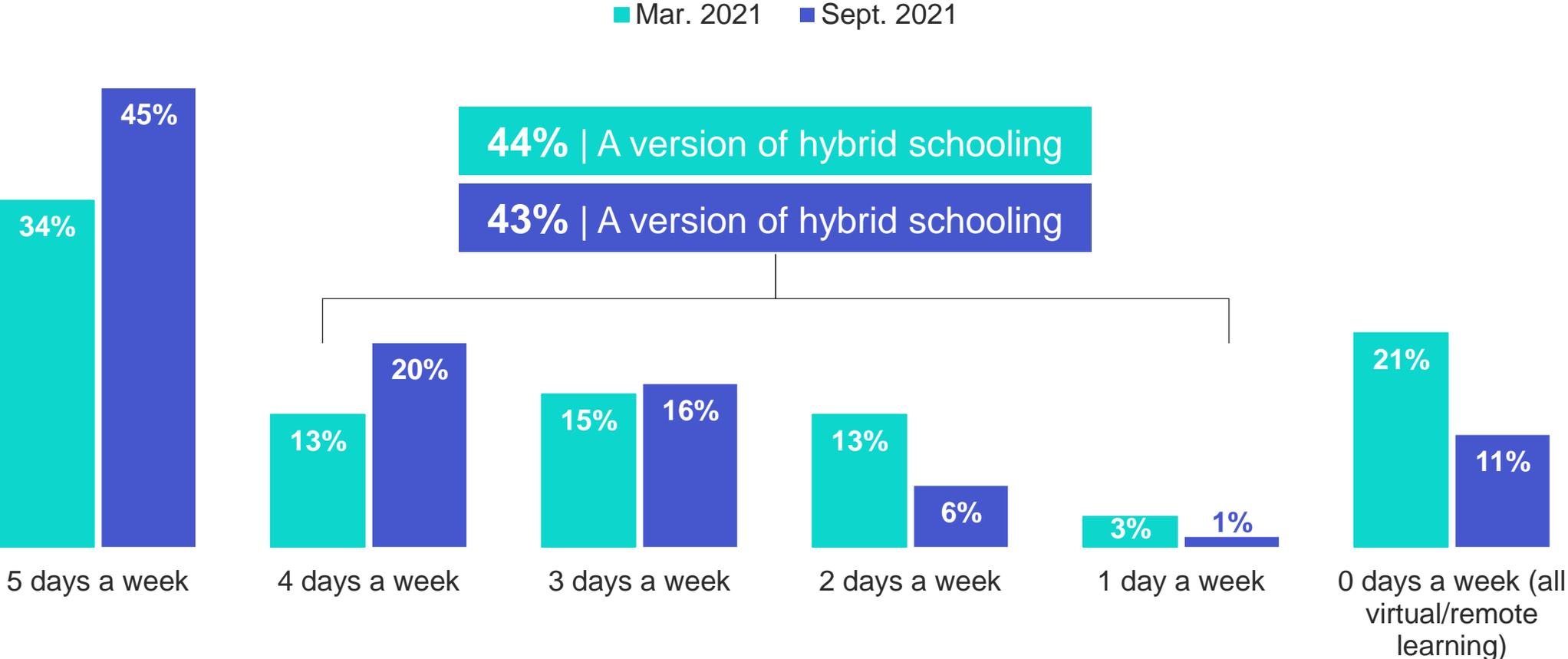
Teens feel they should at least have some say in the type of school they attend, however one-third state they had no say at all.

How much of a say did you have in the type of school you are attending this school year? How much of a say do you think students should have in the type of school they attend?



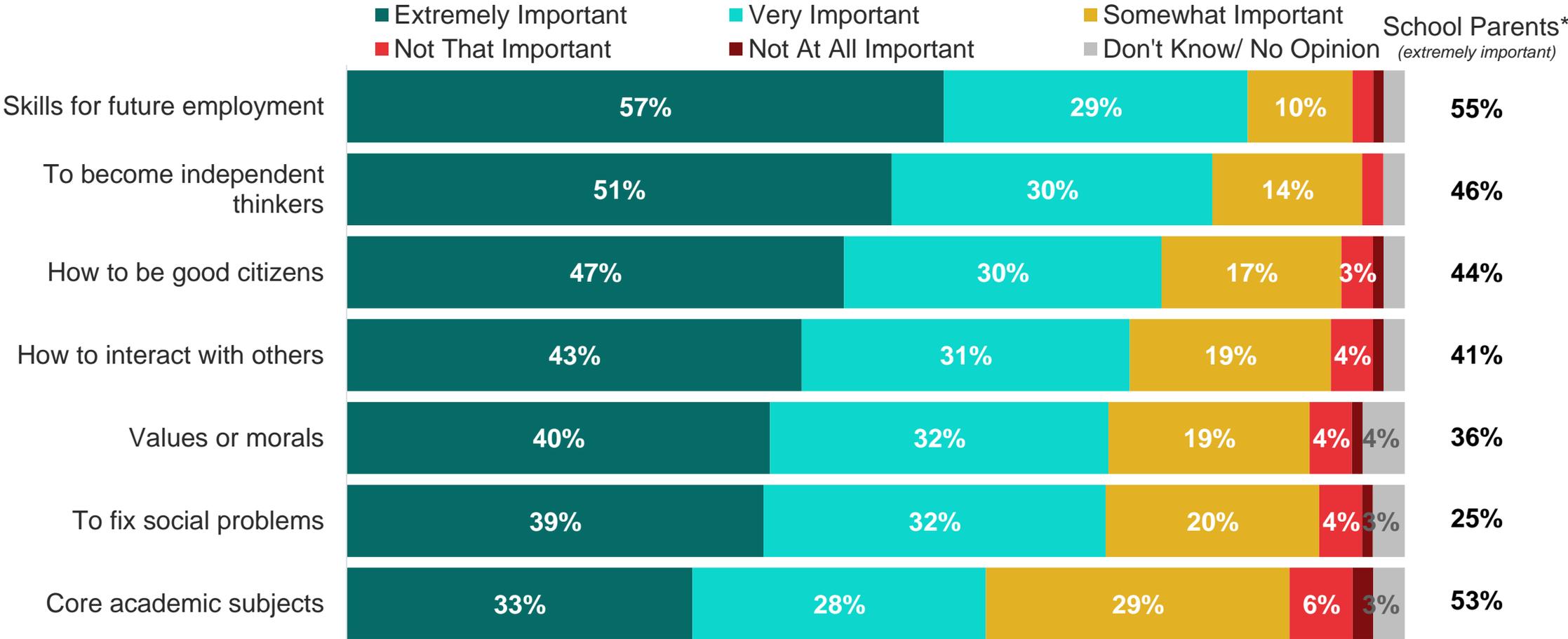
Teens' preferences are nearly evenly split between full-time regular schooling and hybrid schooling. One out of 10 say they do not want to attend school in person – half the level observed in March.

After the pandemic, if given the option, how many days per week would you like to attend classes in-person?



Teens think that it's most important for school to teach them skills for future employment and to become independent thinkers.

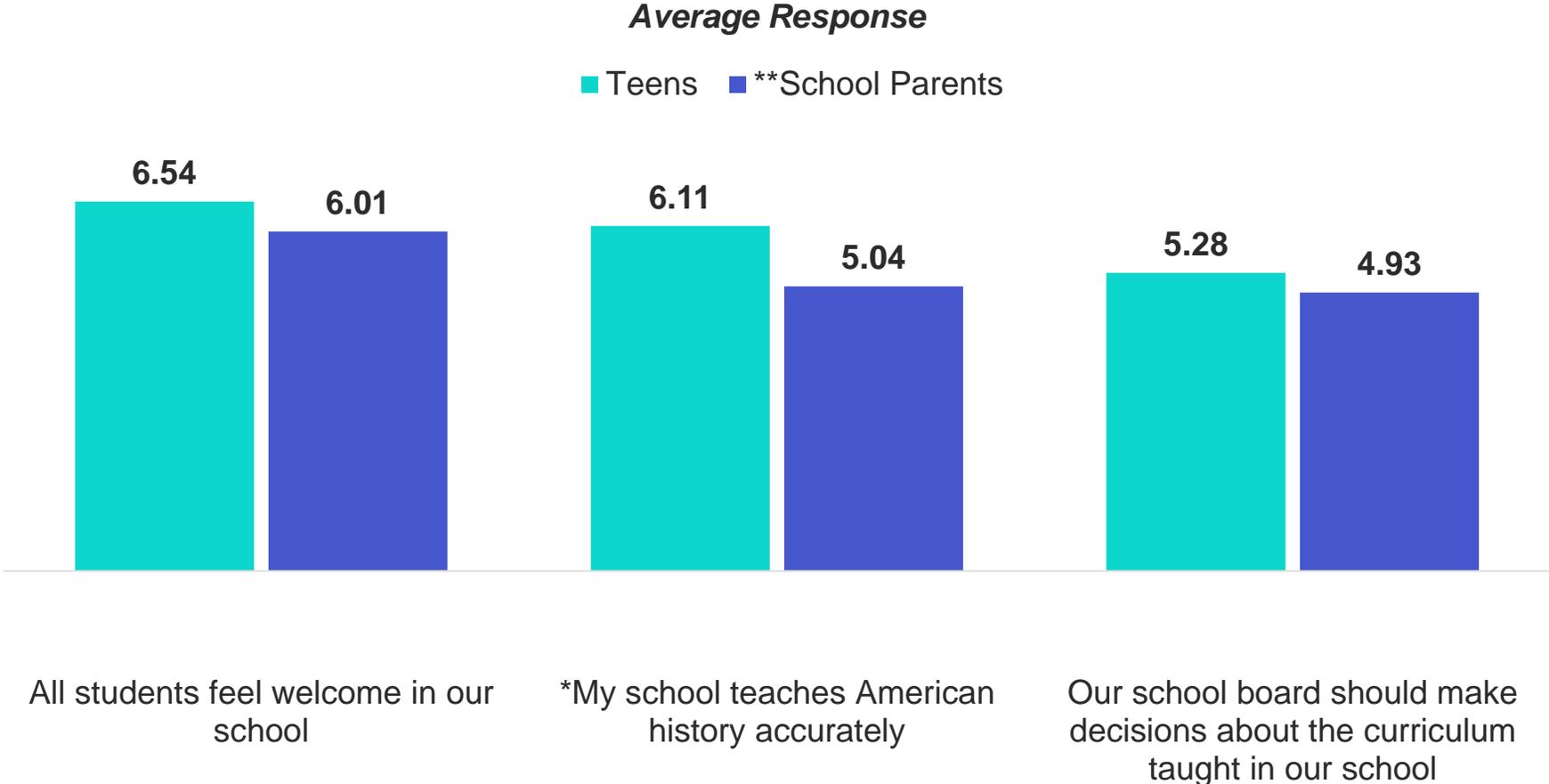
In your opinion, how important is it for you to learn each of these at school?



*School Parent data from EdChoice's Monthly School Parent Tracker (compared to school parent data from August 2021)

Teens and school parents have similar middling agreements across all statements about their school.

On a scale of 0-10 where 0 means 'completely disagree' and 10 means 'completely agree' how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

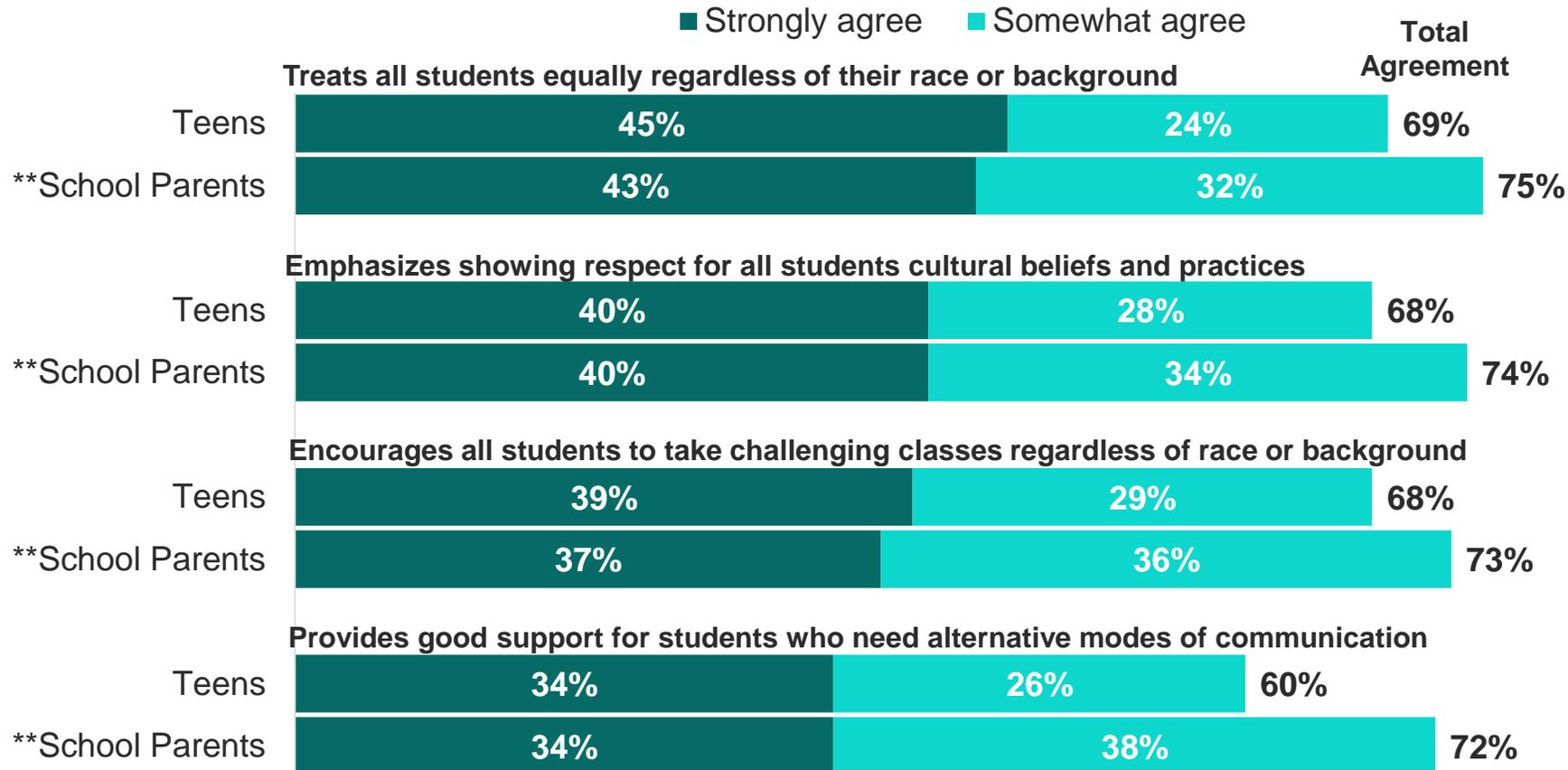


*Response option slightly different from what was asked among the School Parents

**School Parent data from EdChoice's Monthly School Parent Tracker (compared to school parent data from August 2021)

School parents are more likely than teens to agree that their child's school implements diversity, equity, and inclusion.

On a scale of 0-10 where 0 means 'completely disagree' and 10 means 'completely agree' how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following?



School parents are on average **7 points higher** than Teens on agreement across statements.

**School Parent data from EdChoice's Monthly School Parent Tracker (compared to data from August 2021)

AGENDA

COVID-19 AND SCHOOLING

SCHOOL PREFERENCES

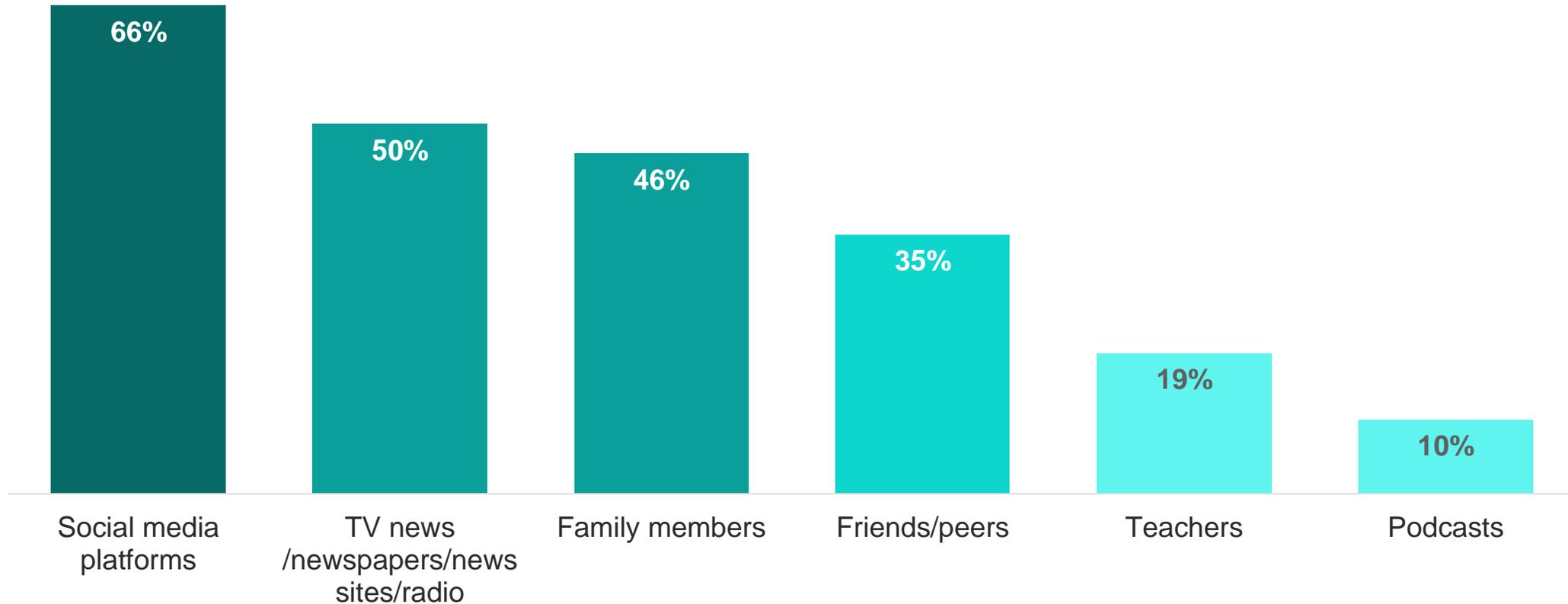
SOCIAL ISSUES

SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



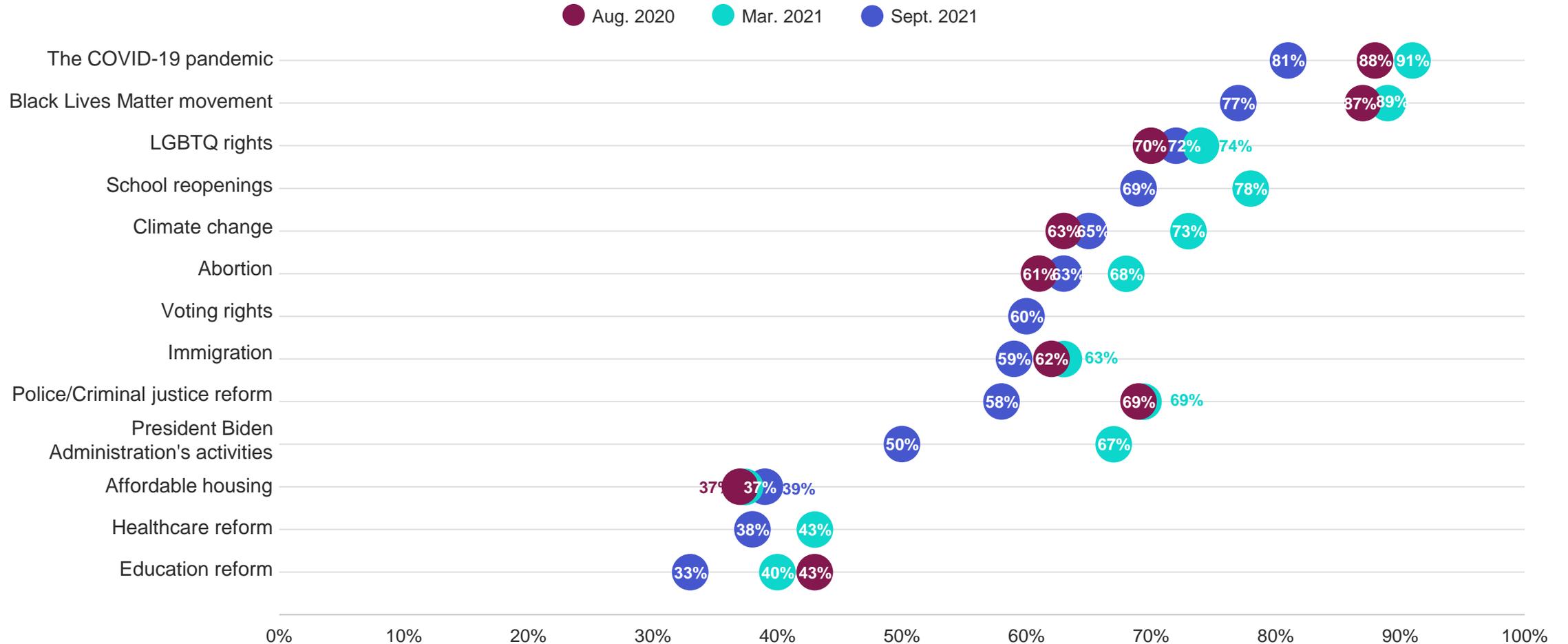
Teens rely on social media most to get information about current events, followed by news sources and family members.

What sources do you primarily get your information about current events from?



Teens appear to be less engaged on a wide range of topics compared to previous survey waves. They are most familiar with the COVID-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement and least familiar with education reform.

Which of the following have you read, seen, heard something about? Select all that apply.

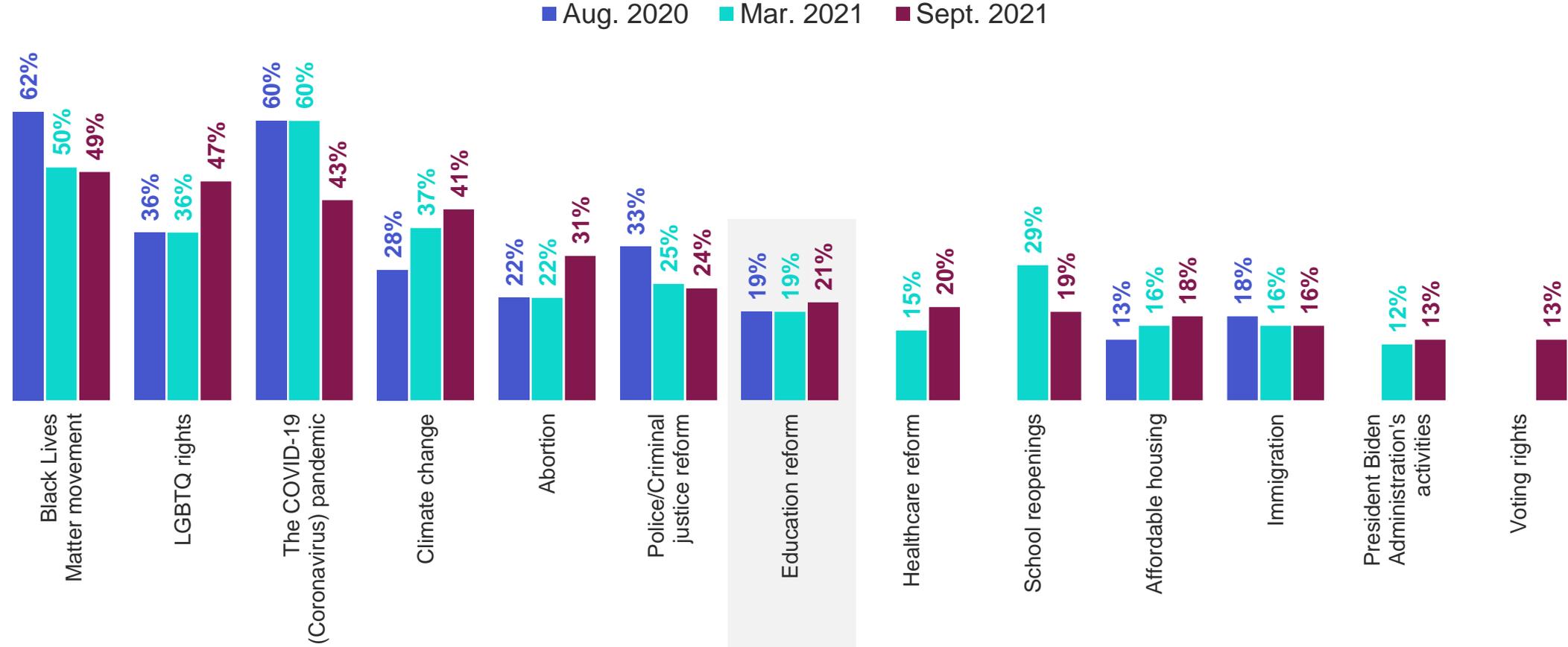


*some of the response options not asked for every wave.

Among those familiar, one out of five teens say education reform is a priority issue – in the middle compared to other issues. Teens are placing less importance on the COVID-19 pandemic compared to previous waves.

Which of these issues are most important to you? Select three.

Among those aware of each issue



*some of the response options not asked for every wave.

AGENDA

COVID-19 AND SCHOOLING

SCHOOL PREFERENCES

SOCIAL ISSUES

SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



Survey Profile, 1

Dates	August 31 – September 10, 2021
Survey Data Collection & Quality Control	Morning Consult
Survey Sponsor	EdChoice
Population	Teens ages (13-18) <i>**NOTE survey done in March 2021 did not include 18-year-olds</i>
Sampling Frame	National sample of teens (age 13-18) living in the United States, including the District of Columbia
Sampling Method	Non-Probability
Mode	Online Survey
Language	English

Survey Profile, 2

Survey Time	Median = 10.4 minutes
Sample Size	Total, N = 1,000 Teens
Quotas	N/A
Weighting	Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Census Region
Measure of Precision (adjusted for weighting)	± 3.89 percentage points
Participation Rate	17.19%
Methods Page	https://edchoice.morningconsultintelligence.com/methodology/
Project Contact	Paul DiPerna, paul@edchoice.org

Demographic Groups with Unweighted Sample Sizes

Demographics	Unweighted (N =)
Male	432
Female	568
6-8th Graders	63
9th-10th Graders	306
11th-12th Graders	462
Completely in-person learning	640
Completely online	119
Mix of in-person and online	166

Demographics	Unweighted (N =)
White (non-hispanic)	415
Hispanic	259
Black	204
Asian	112
Northeast	177
Midwest	181
South	426
West	216

Demographic Groups by Unweighted, Weighted, and Target Percentages

Demographics	Unweighted	Weighted	Target (%)
Age: 13	5%	17%	17%
Age: 14	8%	17%	17%
Age: 15	17%	16%	16%
Age: 16	21%	16%	16%
Age: 17	23%	16%	16%
Age: 18	26%	18%	18%
Male	43%	51%	51%
Female	57%	49%	49%
White	42%	52%	52%
Hispanic	26%	24%	24%
Black	17%	14%	14%
Other	16%	10%	10%
Northeast	18%	16%	16%
Midwest	18%	21%	21%
South	43%	39%	39%
West	22%	24%	24%

WHO WE ARE

 **MORNING CONSULT**[®]

Morning Consult is a global data intelligence company delivering insights on what people think in real time.

By surveying tens of thousands across the globe every day, Morning Consult is unmatched in scale and speed: It determines the true measure of what people think and how their decisions impact business, politics and the economy.

Industry leaders rely on Morning Consult's proprietary technology and analysis for real-time intelligence to transform information into a competitive advantage.

 **CHOICE**

EdChoice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. Our team is driven by the shared mission to advance freedom and choice in K-12 education where all families, regardless of race, origin or family income, are free to choose a learning environment—public or private, near or far, religious or secular—that works best for their children.

Learn more at: [EDCHOICE.ORG](https://edchoice.org)





MORNINGCONSULT.COM