



Ninth Annual Ed Talk, 2020-21: A Summary of Stakeholder Input

Prepared by the Office of Strategic Initiative Management
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Executive Summary

The annual Ed Talk event provides a forum for Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) staff to engage in dialogue with students, parents, and the broader community concerning issues impacting education today. The 2020-21 Ed Talk was held on December 5, 2020 as a virtual event due to COVID-19 restrictions.

This year's virtual event focused on key aspects of eLearning that our school community experienced since transitioning to a virtual learning environment resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The first session addressed the processes in action that ensure a smooth transition to virtual learning. The second session focused on additional aspects of eLearning, including student impact, and access and use of online resources. Prior to the two sessions, District staff provided an overview of the 2024 Strategic Plan.

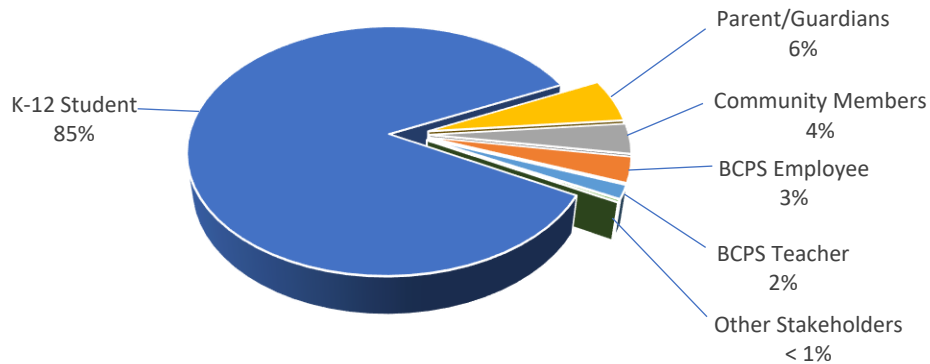
Following the presentations, sessions, and activities, participants were given an opportunity to provide feedback regarding each topic addressed during this year's Ed Talk. Participant perceptions were captured regarding access and knowledge of the 2024 Strategic Plan, the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' learning experience, and the level of support provided by BCPS during this time of transition. This document provides an overview of the feedback received from participants attending the 2020-21 Ed Talk. An overview of participants' characteristics is presented first. Additionally, the Appendix provides a copy of the program flyer.

Participant Characteristics

A total of 932 participants provided feedback through the annual Ed Talk survey, which represents a 371% increase over the 251 participants that provided feedback during the Eighth Annual Ed Talk held in 2019-20.

- **Municipalities.** Of the 31 municipalities within Broward County, 27 (87%) were represented at Ed Talk. Three municipalities in Miami-Dade County (Miami, Miami Gardens, North Miami) were also represented.
- **Participant Groups.** Participants represented many groups from throughout the community (Figure 1); respondents were given the opportunity to select multiple groups for which they represented. The largest group represented included K-12 students (85%, $n=831$). Parent/Guardians (6%, $n=54$), Community Members (4%, $n=38$), BCPS Employees (3%, $n=32$) and BCPS Teachers (2%, $n=17$) accounted for similar proportions of participants. Other Stakeholders ($n=3$) represented less than 1% of survey participants. Community Members include Community Organizations ($n=11$), Higher Education Affiliates ($n=8$), Business Community Members ($n=7$), Not-for-Profit Organizations ($n=6$), Faith-Based Organizations ($n=4$), and Elected Officials ($n=2$).

Figure 1. 2020-21 Ed Talk Participant Groups



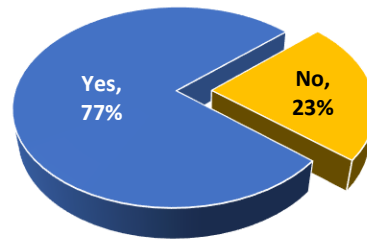
- **Race/Ethnicity.** Almost half of participants self-identified as African American/Black (42%, $n=390$), followed by Hispanic (23%, $n=217$), Caucasian (19%, $n=177$), Asian/Pacific Islanders (7%, $n=68$), Multi-Racial (7%, $n=64$), American Indians (1%, $n=6$), and those selecting Other (1%, $n=10$).
- **Gender.** Almost two-thirds of participants were female (65%, $n=608$) compared to 324 males (35%).
- **Age.** Most respondents were 18 years old or younger (89%, $n=832$) representing the large student participation. Participants aged 45-54 years old (5%, $n=42$) was the next largest group, followed by those 55 or older (3%, $n=26$), and 35-44 years old (2%, $n=20$). Those aged 19-24 years old (1%, $n=7$) and 25-34 (1%, $n=5$) comprised the remaining participants.
- **Education.** Excluding current K-12 students (87%, $n=810$), most participants had earned graduate (6%, $n=52$) or undergraduate (4%, $n=35$) degrees.
- **First-time Participation.** Most participants were attending Ed Talk for the first time (90%, $n=838$) this year with the remaining participants (10%, $n=94$) indicating they were returning participants.

Presentation: 2024 Strategic Plan

The first presentation by District staff provided an overview of the District’s 2024 Strategic Plan and a live debate where students debated what should be considered the most impactful 2024 Strategic Plan Initiative. Following presentations, all participants were asked for feedback regarding access to the 2024 Strategic Plan and the extent to which participants were familiar with the change management protocol of the plan. Additionally, participants were asked if the student debate further informed them of the impact of the 2024 Strategic Plan.

Access. Participants were asked if they knew where to find the 2024 Strategic Plan and download the one-page poster? Over three-fourths of respondents (77%, $n=720$) indicated that they knew where to access these documents online as shown in Figure 2.

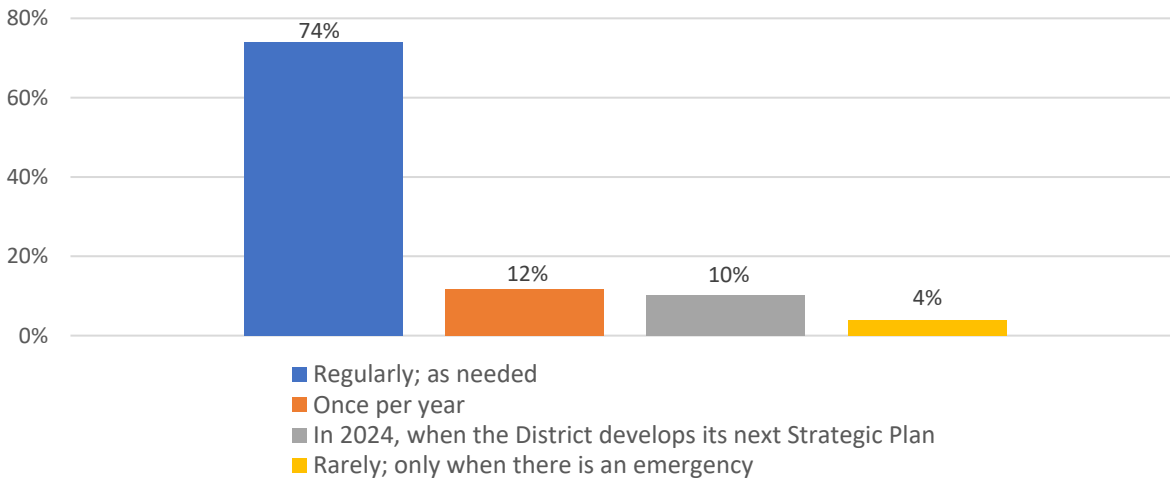
Figure 2. Do you know where to find the 2024 Strategic Plan and download the one-page poster?



Change Management. Participants were also asked if they knew that they could provide future input for improving the Strategic Plan, and how often proposed changes are evaluated for possible inclusion in future updates of the plan. A majority of respondents (78%, $n=729$) indicated that they knew they could visit browardschools.com/strategicplan to submit ideas on ways to improve our District, for possible inclusion in the next update of the 2024 Strategic Plan.

When asked how often proposed changes to the 2024 Strategic Plan will be evaluated for possible inclusion in the future, a significant proportion of respondents (74%, $n=690$) correctly answered that proposed changes are evaluated on a regular or as-needed basis, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. How often will proposed changes to the 2024 Strategic Plan be evaluated for possible inclusion?



Impact of the 2024 Strategic Plan. Participants were asked if the student debate further aligned and informed them of the impact of the 2024 Strategic Plan. Participants responded overwhelmingly (92%, $n=854$) that the student debate did provide more information about the impact of our 2024 Strategic Plan.

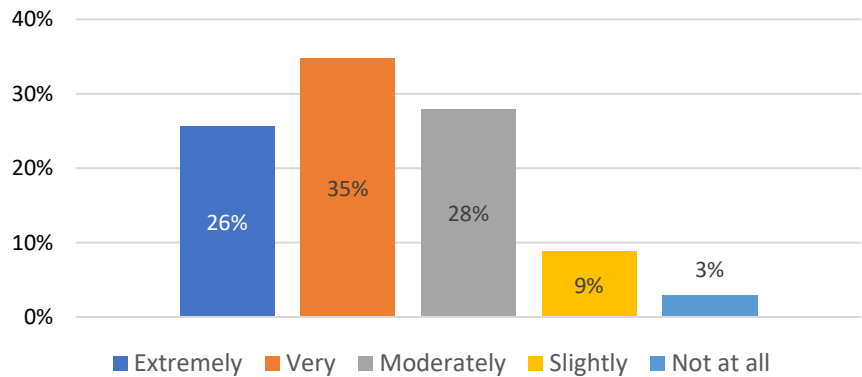
Session 1: Learning Never Closes: Processes in Action

Session 1 focused on how the District addressed the transition to a safe, healthy, and effective virtual learning environment following school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. The session included presentations by District staff followed by a Question and Answer (Q&A) period, and a Mindfulness Break and activity.

Following presentations, participants were given an opportunity to answer survey questions addressing the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' learning experience, access to technology, health and safety of the return to in-person learning, and District communication regarding a safer and healthier school environment. Not Applicable (N/A) responses are not reported, in order to provide a clearer picture of stakeholder perceptions.

Participants were asked how much their or their child's learning experience changed since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (see Figure 4). Overall, 88% ($n=781$) of respondents reported an Extremely (26%, $n=226$), Very (35%, $n=308$), or Moderately (28%, $n=247$) large impact on the student learning experience.

Figure 4. How much did you/your child's learning experience change between spring 2020 and fall 2020?



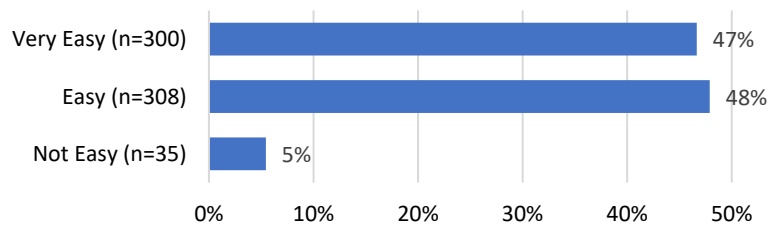
97%

Had the Technology Needed to Fully Participate in eLearning in Fall 2020

Participants were asked if they or their child had the technology needed to fully participate in learning (internet, computer-personal/District-issued) in fall 2020. Almost all respondents (97%, $n=864$) indicated that they had the technology needed to fully participate in an e-Learning environment at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year.

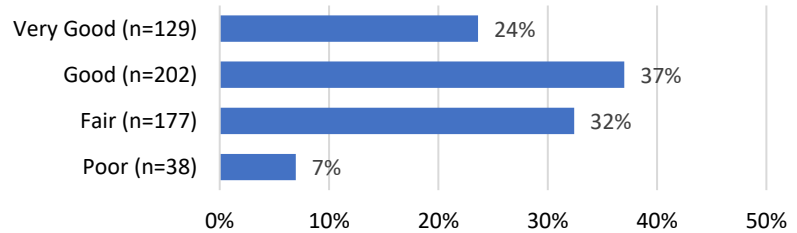
Ease of access to a District-issued laptop was also a high priority for the District. As shown in Figure 5, 95% of participants responded that it was Very Easy (47%, $n=300$) or Easy (48%, $n=308$) to obtain a District-issued laptop if one was needed.

Figure 5. How easy was it for you to obtain a District-issued laptop if one was needed?



Relating to students returning to in-person on-campus learning, participants were asked to rate the efforts of schools to promote physical distancing, and improve health and safety. As shown in Figure 6, approximately 93% of respondents (n=508) indicated Very Good (24%, n=129), Good (37%, n=202), or Fair (32%, n=177).

Figure 6. If you/your child returned to on-campus learning, how would you rate the efforts at the school level to promote physical distancing, and improve health and safety?



Participants were also asked to rate the effectiveness of the District and schools in communicating the steps taken to promote a safer, healthier school environment. Overall, 97% of respondents (n=804) indicated Very Good (31%, n=260), Good (42%, n=353), or Fair (23%, n=191), as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. How well did the District/School communicate the steps taken to promote a safer/healthier, school environment?

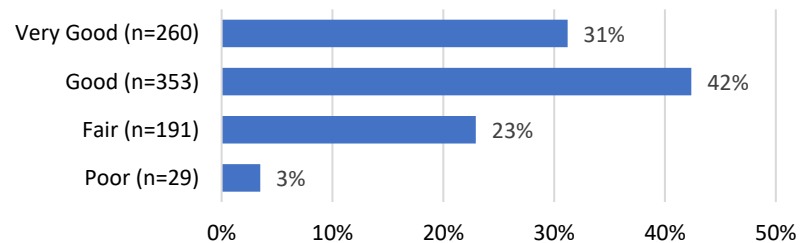
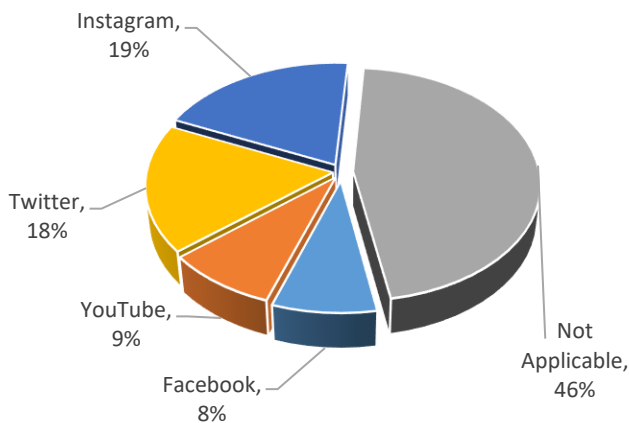


Figure 8. Which BCPS social media platforms do you follow? Select all that apply



As a follow-up, participants were asked to identify the BCPS social media platforms they follow. Respondents could select more than one response. As shown in Figure 8, the largest response group selected Not Applicable (46%, n=520).

Most participants following BCPS social media platforms selected Instagram (19%, n=218) and Twitter (18%, n=201) followed by fewer users following YouTube (9%, n=98) and Facebook (8%, n=91).

Mindfulness Break. Participants provided additional feedback regarding the impact of the Mindfulness Break and activity held during the 2020-21 Ed Talk, as well as the use of the Mindfulness resources and sessions in BCPS during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most respondents (83%, n=776) found the Ed Talk Mindfulness Break beneficial, while almost half reported use of the resources (49%, n=455) and/or participation in District Mindfulness sessions (44%, n=413).

83%
Reported the Mindfulness Break was Beneficial

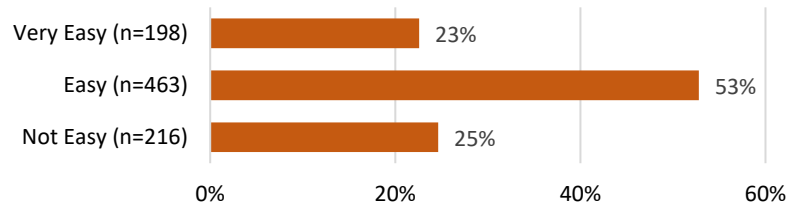
Session 2: eLearning: The Classroom of the Future

Session 2 provided another opportunity for participants to interact and share ideas, this time about how students adjusted to an eLearning educational environment and the access and use of online learning resources. The session included a live debate where students examined whether eLearning is an effective alternative for in-person learning, as well as presentations by District staff, followed by a Question and Answer (Q&A) period.

Following presentations, participants were given an opportunity to provide feedback addressing how well students adjusted to eLearning, the ease of access to online learning resources, the effectiveness of the tools BCPS used to support eLearning, and the levels of use of BCPS eLearning tools. Additionally, participants were asked if the student debate and session provided a better understanding of eLearning. Not Applicable (N/A) responses are not reported, in order to provide a clearer picture of stakeholder perceptions.

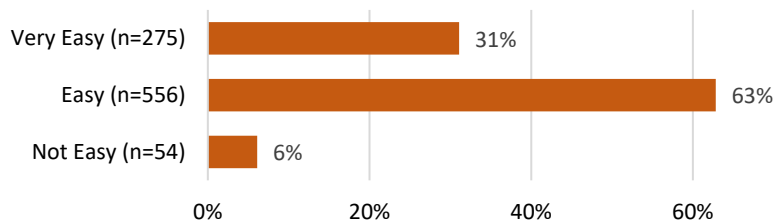
When asked how easy it was for their child(ren) to adjust to eLearning, three-fourths or 75% ($n=661$) of respondents reported it was Very Easy (23%, $n=198$) or Easy (53%, $n=463$) to adjust to eLearning.

Figure 9. How easy was it for your child(ren) to adjust to eLearning?



Participants were also asked about access to learning resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost all respondents (94%, $n=831$) indicated that it was Very Easy (31%, $n=275$) or Easy (63%, $n=556$) to access learning resources.

Figure 10. How easy was it for you to access learning resources?



97%

Reported the Tools Provided by BCPS were Adequate to Assist with eLearning

Participants were asked if the tools provided by BCPS were adequate in assisting with eLearning. Almost all respondents (97%, $n=758$) agreed that the tools provided were adequate to support our eLearning environment.

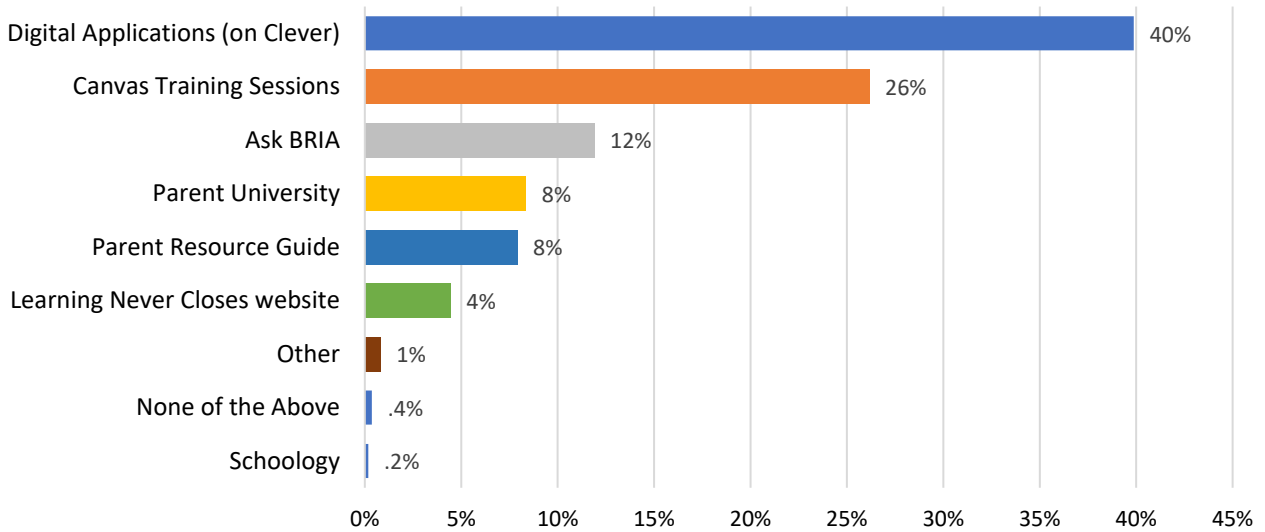
Diving deeper, participants were asked what specific District tools they used to assist with eLearning. Respondents could select more than one tool that they used.

As shown in Figure 11, most respondents cited Digital Applications on students' Clever launchpad (40%, $n=439$) and Canvas training sessions (26%, $n=288$) as the District tools they used to assist with eLearning. Fewer respondents reported using Ask BRIA (12%, $n=131$), Parent University (8%, $n=92$), Parent Resource Guide (8%, $n=87$), and the Learning Never Closes website (4%, $n=49$).

The remaining respondents used Other resources (1%, $n=9$), none of the resources listed (.4%, $n=4$) and Schoology (.2%, $n=2$). Respondents selecting Other indicated one response each for ESOL Talks, Friends

and YouTube, Google/YouTube, a Professional Learning Community (PLC), their school, their teachers, their school technology support, Teams, and UOPeople.edu.

Figure 11. What District tools did you use to assist with eLearning? (Select all that apply)



Finally, participants were asked about the value of the student debate and this session that focused on eLearning. Almost all participants (91%, $n=850$) indicated that the student debate provided more information about eLearning as an effective alternative for in-person learning. Even more respondents (93%, $n=866$) reported that this session provide a better understanding of eLearning.

Closing Session: Town Hall

The final session was new to Ed Talk this year and consisted of a Town Hall where participants could submit questions which a facilitator would direct to an appropriate leadership member for response. Following the Town Hall session, participants were again given an opportunity to provide feedback on the value of this new component of Ed Talk. Participants reported their overwhelming support, with 94% responding that the Town Hall session was informative ($n=879$) and a valuable addition to Ed Talk ($n=874$).

94%
Reported the Town Hall was Informative and a Valuable Addition to Ed Talk

Discussion

The 2020-21 Ed Talk event continued the annual dialogue among students, parents, teachers, District staff, and the broader community. As in prior years, participants provided feedback following all presentations, sessions, and activities to capture perspectives on value and impact. Overall, findings revealed:

- Participant's responded favorably regarding access and input to the 2024 Strategic Plan.
- Student access to technology to fully participate in eLearning during the 2020-21 school year was rated highly by respondents.
- Participants expressed strong support for the District's emphasis on the health and safety of students returning to on-campus learning. The District and schools were also viewed as effective at communicating the steps taken to promote a safer and healthier school environment.
- While only three-fourths of respondents reported that it was easy for children to adjust to eLearning, almost all indicated that it was easy to access learning resources, and that the tools provided were adequate to assist with eLearning.
- New components of this year's Ed Talk, including a Mindfulness Break and activity, and a Town Hall question and answer session were viewed favorably by participants.

District staff are encouraged to review the information contained herein to inform planning and practice around eLearning, and ways to better serve our internal and external stakeholders as we continue to navigate a virtual learning environment. Findings from this report will also prove valuable in identifying additional critical topics for future Ed Talk events.

The School Board of Broward County, Florida

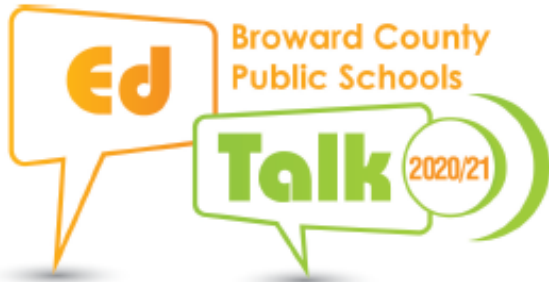
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Appendix: Ed Talk 2020-21 Program Flyer



Broward County Public Schools

You Are Invited!

A public forum designed to engage the community in discussing educational strategies and next steps for the District.



Make your voice count by attending.



Students earn community service hours.



Engage with School Board Members, Superintendent and Senior District Leadership.

Presented in English, Haitian Creole, Portuguese and Spanish.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2020
9 a.m. to noon

Register at browardschools.com/edtalk

Deadline: Friday, December 4

This is a virtual event. The Microsoft Teams meeting link will be sent during the week of the event.

FREE EVENT

For more information, contact the Office of Communications at 754-321-2300 or bcps.pio@browardschools.com.



The School Board of Broward County, Florida
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