# LEARNING DURING COVID

The UP for Learning Youth Advisory Council (YAC) shared a survey with Vermont middle and high school students to find out about their experience with school during COVID. We received an incredible response from schools all across the state. The following data represents their voices. We hope this data will help you understand the experience of Vermont students over the past year, and encourage you to think differently about how school can look moving forward.
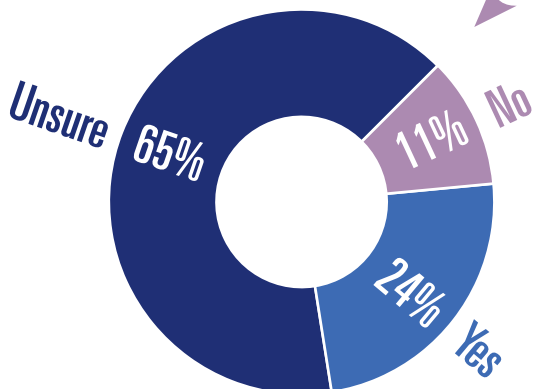
Are you enrolled in the statewide online option (Virtual Learning Academy)?

No 82%   18% Yes
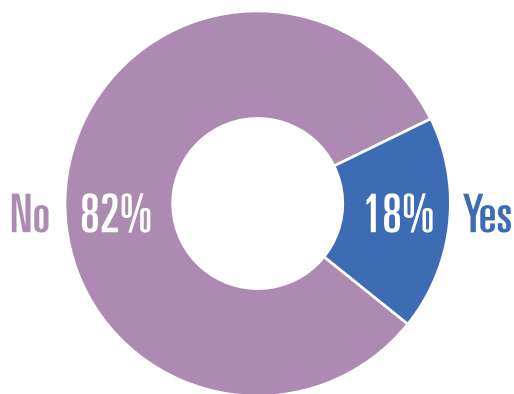
WHAT STOOD OUT AS A STRENGTH?

>> Resiliency of our youth
>> Adapting to new learning environments
>> Gratitude for the educators
>> Awareness of COVID Safety Protocols

Has your school offered opportunities to address the social and emotional needs of students?

Unsure 65%   11% No   24% Yes

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

>> 38% have found the virtual learning days harder

>> 65% of youth were unsure if their school offered opportunities to address the social and emotional needs of students (11% said their school did not address the SE needs)

>> Stress

>> Too much time on screens — learning remotely and online

>> Grading systems

WHAT VT STUDENTS WANT TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS TO KNOW

Top 7 Takeaways: VOICES of Vermont's Students

1. Engagement

"I would say they need to **focus more on how the students learn,** and teach them in ways they understand."

2. Mental Health

"**I'm stressed out of my mind** because I'm not going to be able to finish 100% of the courses."

"Now I get scared to see my report card and I know my parents expect greatness because that's what I gave them in the 2019-2020 school year. **I think my mental health isn't doing great because of school.** I am constantly stressed and I just don't feel good enough."

3. Transitions:
Unsteadiness of the Learning Environment

"I think at this point I am doing my best to grasp the topics and knowledge that I can while remaining highly cognizant of how I am doing mentally, physically, and emotionally. While my learning is a priority, and always will be, during these times **that priority has changed from last year** — it is now a different kind of priority."

4. Social-Emotional & Community Connections

"We get a lot of work and sometimes it gets stressful. It would be better if we could **take some time and talk** about the stresses."

"We should have a place to communicate if the people we want to talk to are across the class we can't talk through gmail or a shared google docs. **I have lost a few friends because I can't talk to them.** Please give us an option to talk."

5. Communication

"My friends who are enrolled in virtual education are **not getting the individual support or attention** from their teachers."

Learning could be improved by "making **more time for discussion for online students** rather than lecture."

6. Choice and Voice

A change could be **"letting students have a say in what works best for them,** what their needs are, and how they work at their best, and then having a discussion about it with their teachers."

"Tests only damage kids' learning. **School is about learning, not scores.**"

7. Less work on screens

"I would give more work we can complete **off a screen.**"

HOW VT YOUTH WANT TO MOVE FORWARD

» Relationships!
Reconnecting needs to be a **TOP priority.**

» Reimagine the Master Schedule
Less transitions for students, **more time to connect** with each other, and **more choice** in learning.

» Assessment
Does the evaluation and assessment of learning truly get at **what is important?**

» We want to get outside! Get in the community!
Take advantage of the **lessons learned** from remote learning.

UP
for Learning