

Parent and Family Involvement in Education: 2023

First Look-Summary

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National Household Education Surveys Program

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Ellena Sempeles
Jiashan Cui
American Institutes for Research

Michelle McNamara
Project Officer
National Center for Education Statistics

U.S. Department of Education

Miquel A. Cardona

Secretary

Institute of Education Sciences

Matthew Soldner

Delegated Responsibilities of Director

National Center for Education Statistics

Peggy G. Carr

Commissioner

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Washington, D.C. 20202

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Content Contact

Michelle McNamara

(202) 245-7033

Michelle.McNamara@ed.gov

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Introduction

This report presents data on students in the United States in kindergarten through grade 12 in a physical or virtual school or are homeschooled for equivalent grades. The focus of the report is on parent and family involvement in the students' education during the 2022–23 school year, as reported by the students' parents or guardians.¹ It includes the percentage of students who participated in selected family activities. Demographic information about students and families is presented, including students' poverty status and parents' education and language spoken at home, as well as school characteristics, such as school size and school type. Tabular findings are in appendix A. These data represent circumstances after the termination of most COVID-19 pandemic safety measures limiting in-person group activities. The President of the United States announced on Jan. 30, 2023, that the COVID-19 public health emergency would end on May 11, 2023.

The data for this report come from the Parent and Family Involvement in Education (PFI) Survey, administered as part of the 2023 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES:2023). The PFI survey collects data about students who are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in a physical or virtual school or are homeschooled for equivalent grades and asks questions about various aspects of parent involvement in education, such as help with homework, family activities, and parent involvement at school. For homeschooled students, the survey asks questions related to students' homeschooling experiences, subject of classes taught, and the reasons for homeschooling. For students taking virtual courses, the survey asks about parents' reasons for choosing virtual schooling, the cost, and the amount of time each week the student takes virtual courses. The PFI questionnaires were completed by a parent or guardian who knew about the sampled child.¹

The NHES:2023 used a nationally representative address-based sample covering the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey was conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau from January through August 2023. The 2023 administration of NHES included a screener survey and two topical surveys: the Early Childhood Program Participation Survey, and the PFI. The screener survey asked for an enumeration of household members and was used to select an eligible child to be the focus of a topical survey. For more information about the NHES:2023 methodology, please reference the forthcoming *National Household Education Surveys Program of 2023: Data File User's Manual* (Wan et al., forthcoming).

Although the NHES is a repeating cross-sectional survey, changes in the sample frame, data collection methods and wording of some items have occurred over time. Because of these changes, caution should be used in comparing results in this report to those from prior NHES collections.² The total number of cases used in this report is 19,562 students, representing a population of approximately 53 million students in kindergarten through grade 12 in the 2022–23 school year.

¹ Respondents to the PFI questionnaire are referred to as “parents” throughout this report, irrespective of their relationship to the sampled child.

² For information about these changes, please see the data file user's manuals <https://nces.ed.gov/nhes/dataproducts.asp>.

PFI questionnaires were completed for 19,562 students in kindergarten through grade 12 in a physical or virtual school or were homeschooled for equivalent grades, for a weighted PFI unit response rate of 87.7 percent and an overall estimated weighted unit response rate (the screener weighted unit response rate multiplied by the PFI unit weighted response rate) of 53.3 percent. An analysis of bias in the NHES:2023 data detected some measurable bias in certain demographic characteristics and survey responses. The level of potential bias detected is considered to be low.

Results presented in this report are weighted. All statements of comparison have been tested for statistical significance using two-tailed *t*-tests and are significant at the 95 percent confidence level. No adjustments were made for multiple comparisons. Some estimates that appear different may not be measurably different in a statistical sense due to sampling error.

This *First Look* report presents selected descriptive information. Readers are cautioned not to draw causal inferences based on the results presented. Many of the variables examined in this report may be related to one another, but the interactions and relationships among them have not been explored. The variables examined here are just a few of the variables that can be examined in these data; they were selected to demonstrate the range of information available from the study. The release of this report is intended to encourage in-depth analysis of the data.

For readers interested in appendixes with tables of estimates, definitions of terms used in the findings and tables, and additional information about the survey from which the findings are drawn, please see the “View full report” link at <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2024113>.

Selected Findings

- In the 2022–23 school year, school communication with parents, as reported by parents, most commonly occurred through school-wide newsletters, memos, e-mails, or notices. This type of communication, addressed to all parents, was reported for 90 percent of students in kindergarten through grade 12. Receiving emails or notes specifically about the student was reported for 66 percent of students and receiving phone calls about the student was reported for 41 percent of students (table A-1).
- On average, students in kindergarten through grade 12 had parents who reported participating in 6 school-related activities in the 2022–23 school year. The most common school-related activity was attending a general school or parent-teacher organization or association meeting (reported for 83 percent of students). That was followed by attending a school or class event (74 percent) and attending a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference (72 percent) (table A-2).
- For students whose parents reported that they had homework outside of school, 79 percent had parents who said the amount of homework was “about right.” Parents also reported being “very satisfied” (the highest on a four-point scale) with the following school characteristics: the school overall (for 63 percent of students); the student’s current teachers (62 percent); the academic standards of the school (60 percent); the order and discipline at the school (55 percent); and the school staff’s interaction with parents (55 percent) (table A-3).
- For students who were not homeschooled and whose parents had considered other schools for the student, the factors most frequently rated as “very important” when choosing a school were the quality of teachers, principal or other staff at the school (77 percent); safety, which includes student discipline (74 percent); and curriculum focus or unique academic programs (57 percent) (table A-4).
- According to parents, a higher percentage of students attended a community, religious, or ethnic event (44 percent) with their family in the past month than attended an athletic or sporting event (40 percent); went to a play, concert, or other live show (32 percent); visited a bookstore (29 percent); visited a library (29 percent); visited an art gallery, a museum, or a historical site (23 percent); or visited a zoo or an aquarium (21 percent) (table A-5).
- In the 2022–23 school year, among students aged 5 through 17 with a grade equivalent of kindergarten through grade 12, some 5.2 percent received instruction at home (either homeschooled or in full-time virtual education), which is higher than the percentage of students who received instruction at home in the school year 2018–19 (3.7 percent). In the school year 2022–23, some 3.4 percent were reported as being homeschooled and 2.5 percent of students were enrolled in full-time virtual education, regardless of whether the parent considers the child to be homeschooled or not. Specifically, 1.8 percent of students who were enrolled full time in virtual programs were doing so as students of public or private schools, and 0.7 percent were doing so as homeschoolers (table A-6).

- According to parents whose children were homeschooled, the reason most frequently rated as “important” to homeschool was a concern about environment of other schools (83 percent). This percentage was higher than those for the other reasons, including a desire to provide moral instruction (75 percent), a desire to emphasize family life together (72 percent) and a dissatisfaction with academic instruction at other schools (72 percent). When asked about the *most* important reason for homeschooling, concern about the environment of other schools was also cited most often at 28 percent (table A-7).
- In the 2022–23 school year, 93 percent took no virtual courses and 7 percent of enrolled or homeschooled students took at least one virtual course. Specifically, 3 percent took all courses virtually, and 5 percent took some but not all courses virtually (table A-8).³

³ Details may not sum to total because of rounding.

References

Wan, C., McMillan, A., Xia, J., Battle, D., Kincel, B., and Cox, C. (forthcoming). *National Household Education Surveys Program of 2023: Data File User's Manual* (NCES 2023-XXX). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.