



# Oregon's Kitchen Table – Oregon Citizen Assembly on COVID-19 Recovery

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In summer 2020, Oregon's Kitchen Table and Healthy Democracy co-convened Oregon's first Citizen<sup>1</sup> Assembly. 36 Oregonians from all walks of life met seven times via Zoom to discuss, deliberate, and develop a set of recommendations for Oregon's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and economic and social aftermath.

During their initial meetings, the citizen panelists decided to focus on K-12 education and rent/mortgage assistance as their two main COVID-19 recovery topics. As they deliberated on those two topics, they were also responding to a question from a state senator about how the pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated racial and economic inequities and what might be done to address those inequities.

The Assembly's Citizen Panelists reviewed written public testimony to the Oregon Legislature's Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response, heard from a variety of expert witnesses, and deliberated over seven two-hour sessions. They also reviewed responses from an Oregon's Kitchen Table survey to get a sense of what other Oregonians across the state are thinking about regarding COVID-19 and K-12 education and rent/mortgage assistance.

The following executive summary provides an overview of the engagement process as well as high level findings. The attached report contains three sections:

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon's Kitchen Table uses the word "citizen" in the most inclusive sense. We use it to refer to the identity that people take on when they live and work in the public sphere, regardless of country of origin or legal status. The term Citizen Assembly is used throughout the world and refers to a specific method. A full description of this method as it has been used in different countries can be found here - <https://participedia.net/method/4258>.

- results from the online survey;
- a brief conclusion; and
- annotated survey results.

The recommendations from the Oregon Citizen Assembly can be found [here](#).

### **ABOUT OREGON'S KITCHEN TABLE**

Oregon's Kitchen Table is a program of the National Policy Consensus Center in the College of Urban and Public Affairs at Portland State University, and was created by a group of non-partisan, non-profit community organizations dedicated to helping Oregonians have a voice in public decision-making. Oregon's Kitchen Table creates public consultations to allow Oregonians to weigh in on policy questions posed by elected officials and public managers. OKT has been used at the state, local and regional levels to gather feedback from a wide variety of Oregonians using both our online surveying tool to solicit input from thousands of participants and in-person community gatherings of various sizes and formats. The online surveying tool is not intended to be a scientific study; rather it is one way to allow the public to share ideas, beliefs, and values with decision-makers.

We are committed to engaging community members from all walks of life – particularly communities that typically have not been represented or engaged in public processes - to achieve deep engagement. We work with organizers, translators, and interpreters to ensure that both materials and online and in-person consultations are available for non-native English speakers and people of all reading abilities.

### **ENGAGEMENT GOALS**

The purpose of this Oregon's Kitchen Table survey was to provide a way for members of the Oregon Citizen Assembly to hear – in a relatively short period of time - what fellow Oregonians are experiencing and thinking about during COVID19.

Together, the Oregon Citizen assembly and the Oregon's Kitchen Table survey represent two different ways to engage members of the public on a topic:

- A. The Oregon Citizen Assembly panelists were randomly selected from across the state of Oregon, to reflect a microcosm of the state on age, gender, race/ethnicity, geographic location, political party registration, educational attainment, and voter frequency. This group of 36 individuals was representative of the state's population
- B. The Oregon's Kitchen Table surveying tool is not intended to be a scientific study nor is it a representative sample; rather it is an opportunity for anyone in Oregon to share ideas, beliefs, and values with decisionmakers. This particular input effort was intended to augment the Oregon Citizen Assembly process within the restrictions of COVID-19 gatherings and a short timeline.

The Citizen Assembly model often includes a "Listening Phase", when the Assembly's panelists may invite open discussion and comment. As part of the Oregon Citizen Assembly's "Listening Phase," panelists invited Oregonians to provide their thoughts via the Oregon's Kitchen Table survey. During their discussions, Assembly panelists came up with questions that they would like to ask their fellow Oregonians and OKT staff turned those questions into an online survey.

### **PARTICIPATION / OUTREACH**

A total of 595 Oregonians responded to the OKT survey between July 31 to August 5, 2020. Outreach included an email to Oregon's Kitchen Table email list, social media posts, and distribution by individual networks, including the Oregon Citizen Assembly panelists. The survey was available online in both Spanish and English. The majority of participants were between 46 and 75 years old (64%), identified as white / Caucasian (79%), and prefer to receive information in English (95%). Geographically, the majority are from the Metro Region (75%) and half (50%) live in a large city.

Because this engagement is intended for the general public, it assumes that respondents bring different levels of knowledge and familiarity regarding K-12 education and rent/mortgage assistance. It was our goal to ensure that those who may not have as in-depth knowledge can still respond and share what they believe and have experienced.

## FINDINGS: COMMONLY HELD VALUES AND BELIEFS

The following commonly held values and beliefs emerged:

- People feel they have been “extremely” or “moderately” affected by COVID-19 (75%).
- Respondents are very concerned about their fellow Oregonians and the impacts of COVID-19. A higher percentage thinks that those around them are “extremely” or “moderately” affected (84%).
- There is a high degree of concern about disproportionate impacts of the virus and its consequences on communities of color and other under-represented communities.
- With regard to housing, while the majority of respondents (89%) think that they will be able to maintain their housing over the next six months, a majority (61%) are concerned that their friends, family, and neighbors may not be able to continue in their current housing.
- For most participants (90%), it is important to provide rent or mortgage assistance during this time.
- For K-12 education, while people who responded are “extremely” or “somewhat concerned” about students in Oregon generally over the next year (95%), people expressed a lesser degree of concern for their own children or students (63% responded either “extremely” or “somewhat concerned”).
- Continuity of school-based services (83%) and equal access to education (88%) during a crisis were both very important to respondents.

## SECTION 1: ONLINE SURVEY

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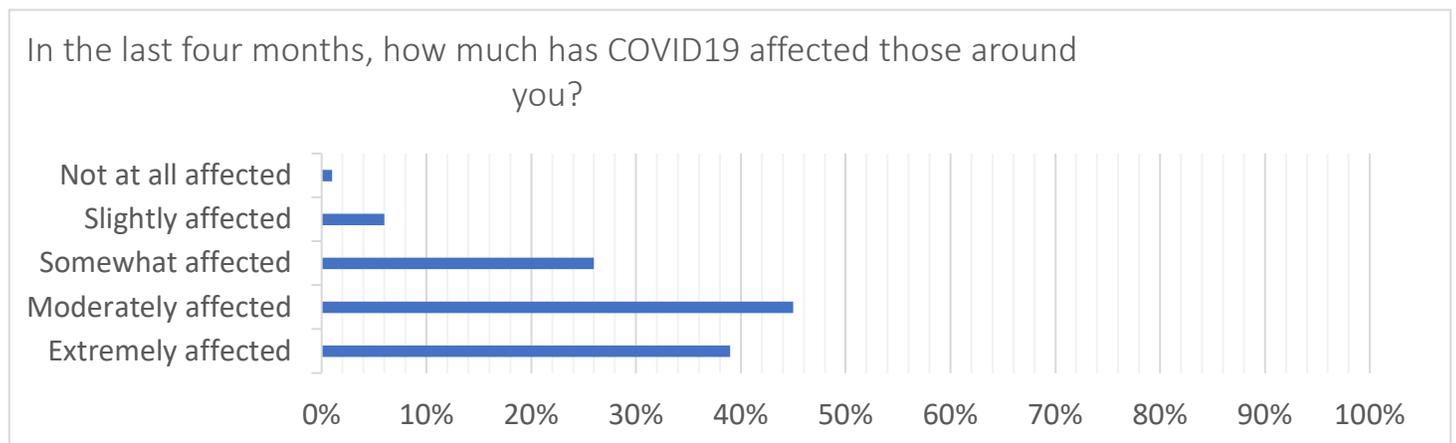
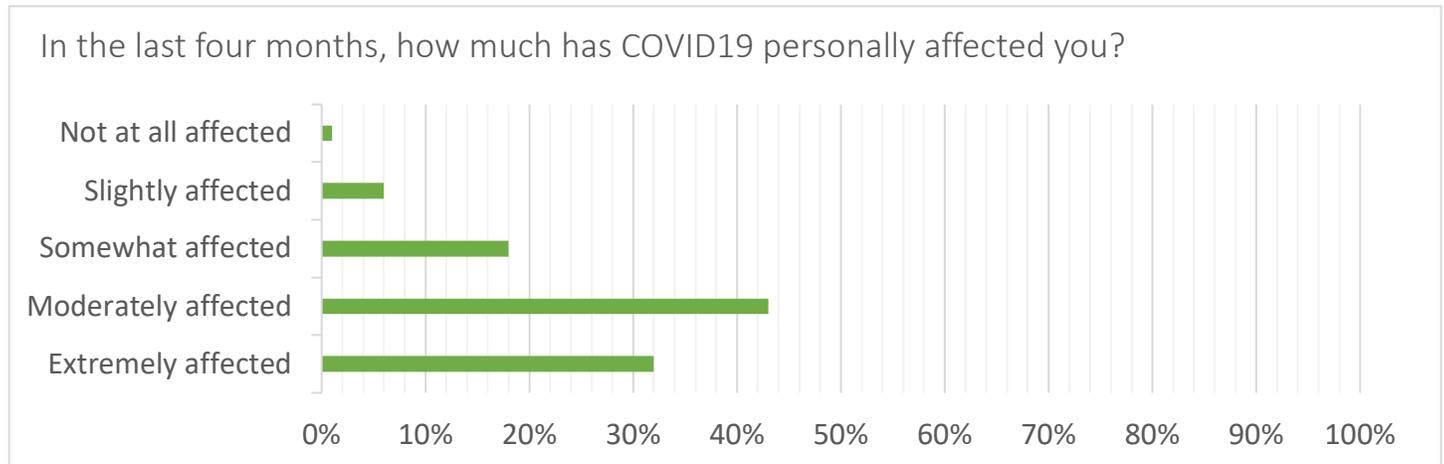
The OKT survey provided some background on what the Oregon Citizen Assembly is, the topics the citizen panelists selected, and the guiding question posed by Oregon State Senator Jeff Golden. Next, the survey posed a few questions about people’s experiences generally during COVID-19. The next set of questions focused on housing and rent/mortgage assistance concerns and priorities for COVID-19 recovery. The final set of questions focused on K-12 Education concerns and priorities for COVID-19 recovery. A series of demographic questions also informed OCA of who responded to the survey.

The raw data was processed and analyzed by OKT staff. The following analysis includes a summary of results and excerpted comments from open-ended questions. All responses to these questions were provided to the Oregon Citizen Assembly as a separate file.

## OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

### GENERAL IMPACTS OF COVID-19

One set of questions gauged how participants generally felt they and those around them had been affected by COVID-19. Most people (75% total) felt that they themselves were either “extremely” or “moderately” affected by COVID-19. Less than 10% felt they were either “slightly” or “not at all” affected (7% total). An even higher percentage (84% total) felt like those around them had been either “extremely” or “moderately” affected by COVID-19.



### HOUSING IMPACTS / CONCERNS

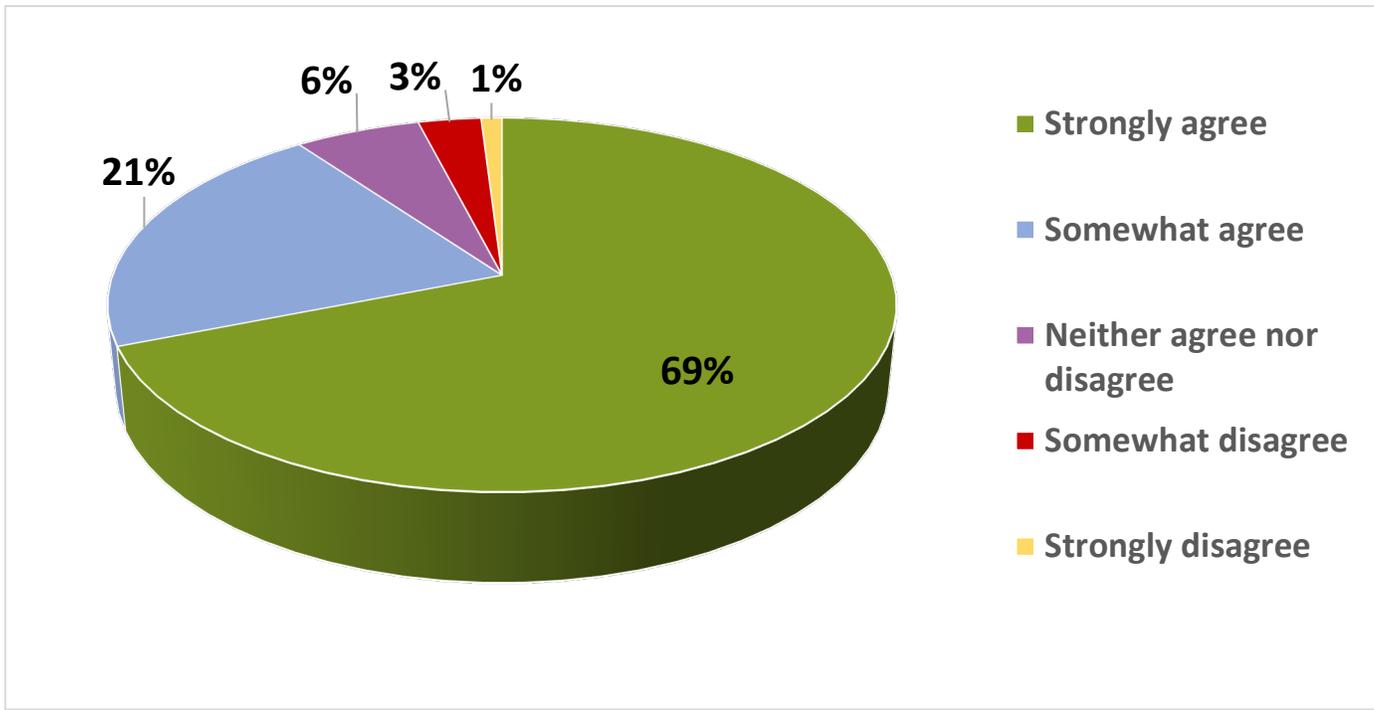
Participants were asked to what degree they agreed with a series of statements that addressed housing concerns. Most respondents felt confident in their ability to maintain their current housing situation over the next six months (71% strongly agreed) and a majority of participants (53%) were not concerned about having to delay payment of other bills in order to meet their housing costs. Participants shared more concern about their friends', neighbors', and family members' ability to maintain their housing (61%).

There was less agreement around the particular types of rent and/or mortgage assistance that is needed. “Greater risks of eviction or homelessness for communities of color and other under-represented communities due to COVID19” was one of the top selections (21%) as was “None of the Above” (21%).

In terms of how important it was to respondents to provide rental or mortgage assistance during COVID-19, most people felt this was important (90%), with the majority selecting “strongly agree” (69%).

The chart below shows the percentage of participants and their degree of agreement for the following statement:

**It is very important to me that we provide assistance to help people cover the cost of their rent or mortgage during COVID19.**



Participants were then given the opportunity to share in their own words concerns or thoughts they had about COVID-19 recovery and rent or mortgage assistance.

Common responses touched on the following themes:

- Concerns about who receives housing assistance. Some people shared a desire to ensure that landlords / property managers also receive assistance during a moratorium on evictions / pauses on paying rent, particularly those landlords who owned a small number of properties. Others shared a strong preference for ensuring that low-income people or those who had lost employment due to COVID-19 receive aid.
- Concerns about what the impacts might be when rent or mortgage deferrals ended. Some respondents shared their concern that people would still face challenges in paying back rent, particularly if they continued to be out of work.
- Some people felt like assistance is hard to access or understand and it is too restrictive in its requirements. Other people want to see regulations and oversight in place to ensure assistance goes to those who most need it.

## **EXCERPTED COMMENTS**

*I own a couple of rental properties. For the most part, my tenants have been able to pay their rent during the COVID-19 pandemic. I know there are resources for renters and also a moratorium on evictions due to lack of rent payment. I'm all for these ... but the concept of deferring payment to later doesn't make any sense to me. What bartender can afford to make up six months in rent at a later date? Going into deep debt doesn't seem like a real option. It has also not been clear what path a landlord has if their tenants can't pay rent. If landlords rely on their tenant's rent to pay their mortgage, I'm not sure there are clear options. If I were facing this, I'd start by talking with my mortgage lender to see if there is a way to defer payment.*

*We need to increase the amount of shelter beds and transitional housing spaces to be able to house the unhoused safely during the pandemic. Current shelter capacity will decrease drastically to accommodate 6ft distance requirements for health & safety.*

*Like many things, Rent/Mortgage affordability was an issue BEFORE the Pandemic and recession. A silver lining that, hopefully, helps concentrate our creativity and attention to pursuing systemic solutions, not just stop-gap measures.*

*No hay muchas ayudas para inmigrantes y las que hay piden muchos requisitos. (English translation: There is not much assistance for immigrants and those that do exist ask for many requirements.)*

*We hear a lot about the effect on renters, and the need to provide them with support. However, there's little discussion of the effect on landlords, or argument for why landlords should bear the brunt of financial support to renters. With so many people not having paid rent over the last six months, there's a high risk that many will not be able to pay when rent comes back. That means they may be evicted, but also means that landlords may never get money they were due - half a year's income. We should be planning to provide for both sides. Government financial support is appropriate. It's not a renters-good, landlords-bad situation.*

*Many mortgage loan companies consider COVID-19 "assistance" to be delaying the payments a few months and then having them be due at a later date in a large lump sum. That is not assistance, it's just delaying the payments, and it's not likely that anyone will have the money to cover the large amount due in a few months anyways. So many companies are saying they are offering "assistance", but that really isn't the case once you look into it like we did.*

*Moratoriums are important, but not if they leave people in greater debt than they can ever repay. We should be paying all citizens a standard payment so that they can continue to purchase groceries, pay rent, etc. even if their work is not available.*

*I am concerned about lower income or less job-stable members of our community being able to pay their rents or mortgage or having to choose between necessary expenses (food, healthcare, utilities) and rent or mortgage. However, I am also concerned about landlords, particularly landlords who hold very few or small properties. They cannot generally afford to provide rent relief and will end up in poor economic situations, too.*

*It should be mandatory that people asking for help prove that they truly need it. In other words, make sure they are not playing the system and taking away from people who really need it.*

*This is a wicked problem. Landlords, especially those with only one or maybe two properties who have a mortgage may face a significant pinch as well. This may require a national moratorium on mortgages at an institutional level (ALL banks and lending institutions across the board), or other radical national approach -- unlikely in the current political climate. State scale will be too costly in short and long term.*

## K-12 EDUCATION IMPACTS / CONCERNS

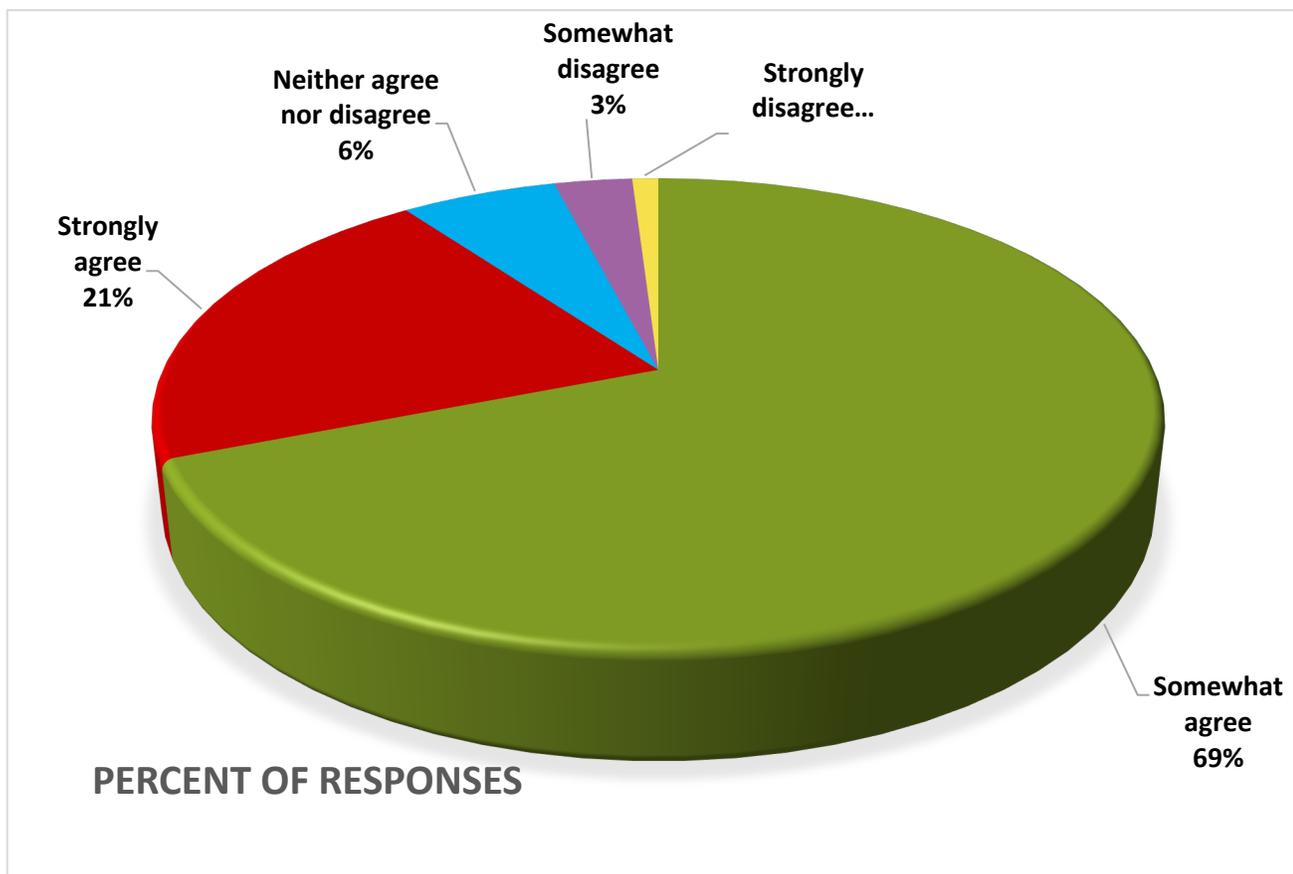
As with housing, participants had multiple concerns about the effects of COVID-19 on K-12 education, including:

- Opportunity gaps for students from communities of color and other underrepresented communities (18%)
- Students getting further behind because they don't own a computer or have internet access (17%)
- Teacher / staff retention or fear of returning to the classroom (16%)
- Student academic progress (15%)

One set of questions asked participants about their level of concern regarding their own students and students generally throughout Oregon. Over half of those who responded said they were either "extremely" or "somewhat" concerned (63%) about their own students' educational experience. A larger number said they were concerned about students' educational experience throughout Oregon (70% were "extremely" concerned).

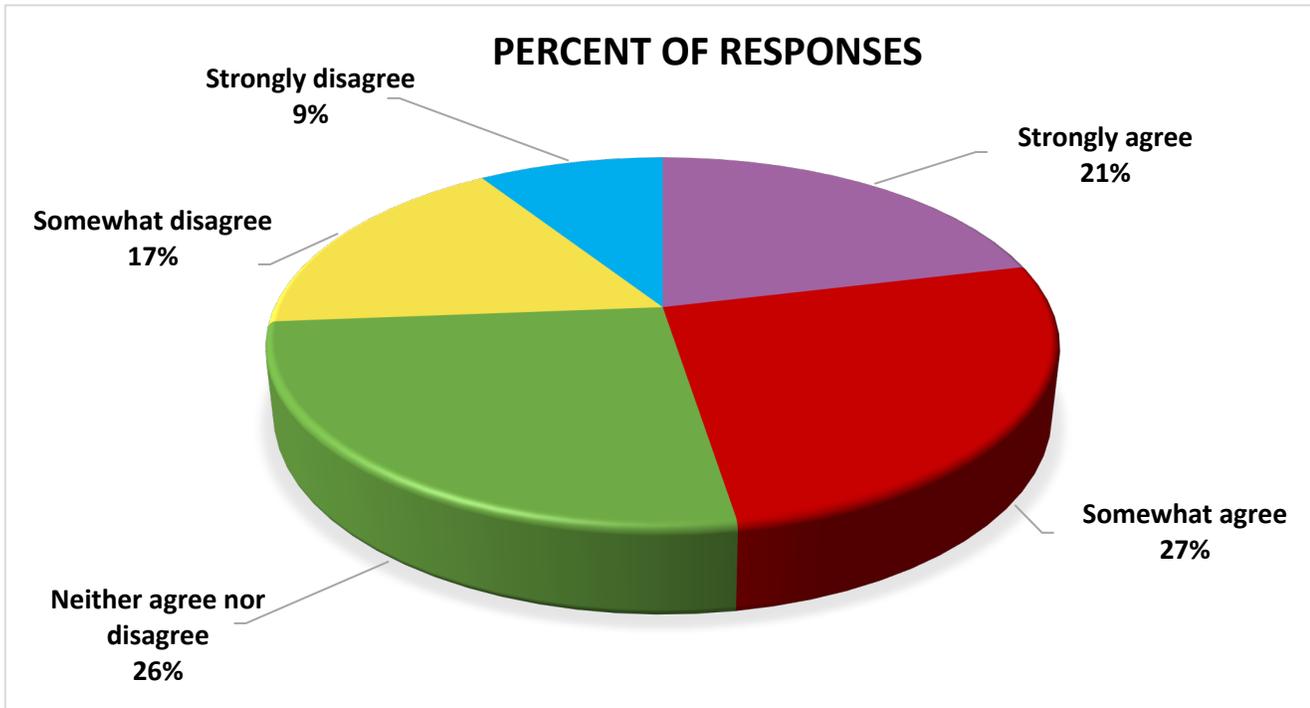
Participants were then asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. There was a wide variety of degree of agreement regarding how confident people felt in their ability to balance their students' learning with their own work or job, with nearly 1/3 marking "Neither agree nor disagree" (32%).

**I am confident that my family will be able to balance my children's learning with my work or job, no matter what form school takes next year.**



When people were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement “I feel like my family has the resources and tools it needs to successfully support my children’s academic progress over the next year,” while more people marked “Somewhat agree” (27%), similar percentages also marked “neither agree nor disagree” (26%) or “strongly agree” (21%).

**I feel like my family has the resources and tools it needs to successfully support my children’s academic progress over the next year.**



Respondents were much more in alignment when responding to questions about ensuring access to education, concerns about widening opportunity gaps and preventing disruption of school-based services, with over 60% marking “strongly agree” for each of those statements.

Participants were then given the opportunity to share in their own words anything else they would like to regarding K-12 education with the Oregon Citizen Assembly panelists.

Common responses touched on the following themes:

- Timing of re-opening schools
- Support for parents in both balancing work / childcare and being able to assist students in virtual learning
- Several comments focused on isolation / emotional wellbeing of students during times when schools are closed for in-person gathering or instruction
- Lack of extracurricular activities / supports
- Need for training for both teachers and parents in how to do virtual learning
- Support and care for children in unsafe home situations / environments

## **EXCERPTED COMMENTS**

If the schools do not open it will be almost impossible for me to keep my job I work long hours I am I single minority parent my youngest child has had two brain surgeries and has an IEP it is a complete failure to do distance-learning I am not a special education teacher I cannot teach him what he needs to be taught he also got speech and occupational therapy at school now he is getting none I am watching him regress and it is sad

Muchos padres no saben leer y escribir, no pueden apoyar a sus hijos, el último periodo de escuela dentro de la pandemia, los padres se frustraron por no saber cómo apoyar a sus hijos y porque con muchos padres no tuvieron comunicación con los maestros o las escuelas, la comunicación fue más con los estudiantes, así que los padres no tenía información. Los que si tuvieron información o contacto es porque hablan Inglés, esa fue otra barrera para los que no hablan Inglés. (Very rough English translation: Many parents do not know how to read and write, they cannot support their children, the last period of school within the pandemic, parents were frustrated because they did not know how to support their children and because with many parents they did not have communication with the teachers or the schools, communication was more with students, so parents had no information. Those who did have information or contact is because they speak English, that was another barrier for those who do not speak English.)

Sometimes it is not possible to provide equal access to education or meet the needs of all students in the time of a crisis, but any recovery plan needs to include how those missed services will be made up.

As a rural community member, gaps in online education are already exacerbated by the low quality of internet access out here. High demand for online teaching is going to slow this down even further. Many rural inhabitants can only use their phone for online access, and this is incredibly expensive; without libraries open to help supplement online access, I fear many rural kids are going to fall through the cracks.

Schools have been asked to provide many services to families and students that are not truly in their purview (mental health services, food and physical health services, etc.). This has never been a good solution, just a convenient one. COVID is showing us how this is not sustainable. Other state and federal services should be developed to provide these services to people more regularly and comprehensively.

I am far less concerned about academics for students during this unusual moment in history, than sustained social and emotional well-being. This is an unusual moment in history, and kids all over the country and world will have disrupted academics. They will bounce back, and we need to ensure all kids have basic supports in place to weather the pandemic with resilience.

Education is important, but more important is kids not contributing to community spread of the coronavirus, infecting teachers and parents and grandparents. I can easily see our school system becoming overwhelmed as more and more teachers fall ill.

Please consider the high cost of closing schools during this time. COVID is a risk, but children seem safer than most, and keeping them out of school does way more harm than good. Not to mention the harm to parents who are struggling. There are plenty of risks in this world and we need to learn to balance them and not make fear-based harmful decisions.

## CONCLUSION

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The results of this engagement provide a sense of the values and beliefs held by those who participated at this particular time around the Oregon's recovery from COVID-19, particularly in the areas of rent/mortgage assistance and K-12 education. The Oregon Citizen Assembly was given results as an annotated survey (Appendix A) and an initial report that highlighted common themes (Appendix B). In addition, all open-ended comments were provided as a separate file for their review. At the end of their seven deliberative discussions, the panelists then developed a set of principles and recommendations (Appendix C) that they presented to a group of state legislators (including Senator Jeff Golden who participated in a virtual presentation of the recommendations). The principles and recommendations were also both posted publicly on Oregon's Kitchen Table's and Healthy Democracy's websites.

Of note, several people expressed a desire for assessing and re-thinking housing and K-12 education systems long-term and shared that they considered this an opportunity to do so, beyond short-term recovery. One person wrote regarding housing, "A silver lining that, hopefully, helps concentrate our creativity and attention to pursuing systemic solutions, not just stop-gap measures." Another comment echoed that urge: "What we think of 'school' and 'learning' may need new definition."

As Oregon moves forward with strategies and solutions to help the state recover from the pandemic, there will need to be ongoing engagement opportunities. There are considerable opportunities to take a deeper look at more specific topics within housing and K-12 education in the coming months.

## Appendix A. Oregon Citizen Assembly on COVID Recovery – Annotated Survey

## INTRODUCTION

Hello, fellow Oregonians. We've been thinking about you over the past few months, and we hope you are safe and well. Though we know that everyone has a lot on their mind right now, we are engaged in an important democratic experiment. We'd love it if you would join us.

This summer, Oregon's Kitchen Table and our friends at Healthy Democracy have convened Oregon's first Citizen Assembly. A Citizens Assembly is a group of 40 ordinary people with different backgrounds. They discuss public issues and then recommend future policy. They were selected randomly and the group is balanced to match the communities that make up Oregon.

The group is discussing the state's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis. After their first two meetings, they decided to focus on K-12 Education and Rent / Mortgage Assistance. As they look at those two topics, they are also responding to a question from a state senator about how the pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated racial and economic inequities and what might be done to address those inequities.

Now they would like to hear from you. Please fill out this survey. It will take just a few minutes.

The survey will close on Wednesday August 5th at 12 noon. The following night, August 6, we will share the results with the Citizen Assembly. We will also put results on our website (<https://www.oregonskitchentable.org/results>), and we will send you a link to the results.

We value your opinion! Please invite your friends and family to fill out the survey, too.

All answers will be private. We will not tie them to your name or contact information.

## SURVEY QUESTIONS

*Note: Some percentages may not be exactly 100% due to rounding.*

## 1. In the last four months, how much has COVID19 personally affected you?

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=596
Extremely affected	32%
Moderately affected	43%
Somewhat affected	18%
Slightly affected	6%
Not at all affected	1%

**2. In the last four months, how much has COVID19 affected those around you (family, friends, neighbors, coworkers)?**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=594
Extremely affected	39%
Moderately affected	45%
Somewhat affected	13%
Slightly affected	3%
Not at all affected	1%

**3. How would you describe your current housing status? You may choose all that apply to you.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=594
I own my own home	84%
I rent my home or apartment	11%
I am currently unhoused	0%
I live with friends or family and don't pay rent or a mortgage	2%
I live in a shared housing facility owned / managed by someone else (e.g. a shelter, a hospital, detention facility, long-term care facility, or nursing home)	1%
Other (please describe)	2%
Choose not to answer	1%

**4. What about rent or mortgages have you been thinking about the most over the past four months? Please check all that apply.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=1009
Ability to pay my rent or mortgage on time	10%
Ability for landlords / property owners to pay their bills on time	12%
Ability to find housing that I can afford	5%
Eviction	5%
Foreclosure	3%
Ability to pay for utilities	8%
Ability to pay for repairs	10%

Greater risks of eviction or homelessness for communities of color and other under-represented communities due to COVID19	21%
Other (please describe)	4%
None of the above	21%

**5. We’re going to give a series of statements. We’d like to know how strongly you agree or disagree with them. Please choose one answer for each statement.**

**I am confident that I will be able to maintain my current housing situation over the next six months.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=594
Strongly agree	71%
Somewhat agree	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	6%
Somewhat disagree	3%
Strongly disagree	1%

**I am concerned that I will have to delay paying other important bills (e.g. food, insurance, healthcare, utilities), stop saving for retirement, or borrow money in order to meet my housing costs in the next six months.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=593
Strongly agree	8%
Somewhat agree	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	9%
Somewhat disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	53%

**I am concerned that my friends and neighbors will not be able to maintain their current housing situations over the next six months.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=594
Strongly agree	22%
Somewhat agree	39%
Neither agree nor disagree	18%

Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	10%

**It is very important to me that we provide assistance to help people cover the cost of their rent or mortgage during COVID19.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=593
Strongly agree	69%
Somewhat agree	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	6%
Somewhat disagree	3%
Strongly disagree	1%

**6. Is there anything else that you think the members of the Oregon Citizen Assembly should know about Rent / Mortgage Assistance as they develop recommendations?**

*Responses available from Oregon's Kitchen Table upon request.*

**The other topic the Citizen Assembly is focusing on is K-12 Education and the impacts COVID19 has had on Oregon students' learning.**

**7. What is your relationship to K-12 Education in Oregon?**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=701
Parent or caregiver of current or incoming K-12 student(s)	25%
Current K-12 student	2%
Recent high school graduate (graduated in 2020)	1%
K-12 Teacher	5%
School administrator	1%
School staff	4%
Community member	46%
Other (please describe)	17%

**8. What about K-12 Education do you think about the most right now? Please check all that apply.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=2334
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Student academic progress	15%
Schools meeting state requirements	5%
Schools meeting college entrance requirements for graduating seniors	5%
Students getting further behind because they don't own a computer or have internet access.	17%
Opportunity gaps for students from communities of color and other underrepresented communities	18%
Student retention	7%
Teacher / staff retention or fear of returning to the classroom	16%
Student readiness to move on to the next grade level	11%
Other (please explain)	6%

**9. If you are a parent or educator, how concerned are you about your students' educational experience for the next school year?**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=428
Extremely concerned	45%
Somewhat concerned	18%
Only a little concerned	4%
Not concerned at all	2%
Don't Know or No Opinion	31%

**10. As an Oregonian, how concerned are you about Oregon students' educational experience in the next school year?**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=582
Extremely concerned	70%
Somewhat concerned	25%
Only a little concerned	5%
Not concerned at all	<1%
Don't Know or No Opinion	1%

**11. Now we're going to give a series of statements. We'd like to know how strongly you agree or disagree with them. Please choose one answer for each statement. If you don't think the statement applies to you, you may skip answering.**



**I am confident that my family will be able to balance my children’s learning with my work or job, no matter what form school takes next year.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=370
Strongly agree	16%
Somewhat agree	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	32%
Somewhat disagree	21%
Strongly disagree	14%

**I feel like my family has the resources and tools it needs to successfully support my children’s academic progress over the next year.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=366
Strongly agree	21%
Somewhat agree	26%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%
Somewhat disagree	17%
Strongly disagree	9%

**I am concerned about how we will be able to ensure that students – in any kind of educational setting – are getting what they need and meeting academic goals during and after COVID19.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=564
Strongly agree	69%
Somewhat agree	24%
Neither agree nor disagree	4%
Somewhat disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	2%

**It is important to make sure that all children have equal access to education, even in a time of crisis.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=578
Strongly agree	88%
Somewhat agree	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	2%
Somewhat disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	<1%

**I am concerned that the next school year will lead to bigger opportunity gaps for students from communities of color and other underrepresented communities.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=573
Strongly agree	74%
Somewhat agree	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	5%
Somewhat disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	2%

**It is important to make sure that school-based services (e.g. food, mental health services, services for students with disabilities) are not disrupted in a time of crisis.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=578
Strongly agree	83%
Somewhat agree	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	2%
Somewhat disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	<1%

**12. Is there anything else that you think the members of the Oregon Citizen Assembly should know about K-12 Education as they develop recommendations?**

*Responses available from Oregon's Kitchen Table upon request.*

**Now we ask a few questions about you. We know that COVID19 has had disproportionate impacts in Oregon, particularly on older people and on Black and Indigenous people, Pacific Islanders, and members of other communities of color. Your answers will help us make sure that we hear from the whole community. You can choose to answer or not.**

**13. How old are you?**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=594
Under 18 years old	0%
19 to 25 years old	1%
26 to 35 years old	7%
36 to 45 years old	19%
46 to 60 years old	29%
61 to 75 years old	35%
More than 75 years old	8%
Choose not to answer	1%

**14. Which races and/or ethnicities do you consider yourself to be? Mark all that apply.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=627
Asian / Pacific Islander	3%
Black/African American/African/Caribbean	3%
Hispanic/Latino	7%
Middle Eastern / North African	<1%
Native American/American Indian/Native Alaskan	2%
White/Caucasian	79%
Choose not to answer	5%

**If you would like to share in your own words how you describe your race, origin, ethnicity, ancestry and/or tribal affiliations, please use this space:**

*Responses available from Oregon's Kitchen Table upon request.*

**15. What part of Oregon do you live in? Please choose one (your primary residence).**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=591
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Central Oregon (Crook, Deschutes, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Sherman and Wasco Counties)	5%
Metro Region (Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties)	75%
Valley / North Coast (Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook and Yamhill Counties)	15%
Eastern Oregon (Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and Wheeler Counties)	2%
Southern Oregon (Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine Counties)	3%
Choose not to answer	1%

**16. How would you describe your community? Please choose one (your primary residence).**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=592
Large city	50%
Rural area	10%
Small town or city	16%
Suburb near a large city	21%
I don't know or choose to answer	1%
Other (please describe) _____	1%

**17. What language do you want to get information in? Please choose all that apply.**

RESPONSE CATEGORY	N=601
English	95%
Spanish	4%
Other (please describe) _____	1%
Choose not to answer	<1%



## *Initial Report for Oregon Citizen Assembly members*

### **PROJECT GOALS**

The purpose of this Oregon's Kitchen Table survey was to provide a way for members of the Oregon Citizen Assembly to hear – in a relatively short period of time - what their fellow Oregonians are experiencing and thinking about during COVID19. OKT's surveying tool is not intended to be a scientific study; rather it is an opportunity for the public to share ideas, beliefs, and values with decisionmakers. This particular input effort was intended to augment the Oregon Citizen Assembly process within the restrictions of COVID19 gatherings and a short timeline.

### **PARTICIPATION / OUTREACH**

A total of 595 Oregonians responded to the OKT survey between July 31 to August 5, 2020. Outreach included an email to Oregon's Kitchen Table email list, social media posts, and distribution by individual networks. The survey was available online in both Spanish and English. The majority of participants were between 46 and 75 years old (64%), identified as white / Caucasian (79%), and prefer to receive information in English (95%). Geographically, the majority are from the Metro Region (75%) and half (50%) live in a large city.

### **THEMES**

Generally, those who responded to the survey feel they have been “extremely” or “moderately” affected by COVID19 (75%). Respondents are thinking a lot about and are very concerned about their fellow Oregonians and the impacts of COVID19. A higher percentage thinks that those around them are “extremely” or “moderately” affected (84%). One of the highest responses to what people are thinking most about was disproportionate impacts on communities of color and other under-represented communities (one of the two highest issues around housing people are thinking about and the highest issue around K-12 education).

In regards to housing, while the majority of respondents (89%) think that they will be able to maintain their housing over the next six months, a majority (61%) are concerned that their friends, family and neighbors will not be able to. For a majority (90%), it is important to provide rent or mortgage assistance during this time.

For K-12 education, while people who responded are “extremely” or “somewhat concerned” about students in Oregon generally over the next year (95%), people expressed a lesser degree of concern for their own children or students (63% responded either “extremely” or “somewhat concerned”). There is less agreement in people's confidence in having the tools or resources to support their students or in their ability to balance work and learning over the next school year. Continuity of school-based services (83%) and equal access to education (88%) during a crisis were both very important to respondents.

### **RESPONDENTS' OWN WORDS**

Respondents were given several opportunities in the survey to respond in their own words. These responses provide further descriptions of what individuals have been experiencing during COVID19 as well as what, in particular, they want the Oregon Citizen Assembly to know.

### **OREGON'S KITCHEN TABLE**

Oregon's Kitchen Table is committed to reaching community members in Oregon from all walks of life—particularly in communities that historically have not been well represented in public processes—to achieve deep engagement. In a



typical Oregon’s Kitchen Table project we utilize translators and interpreters, conduct culturally specific community organizing and outreach, and hold small in-person listening sessions. We aim to ensure that materials and online and in-person consultations are available for non-native English speakers and those who may have lower literacy levels.



## Appendix C. 2020 Oregon Citizen Assembly Pilot on COVID-19 Recovery Core Principles and Policy Recommendations

*The following Core Principles and Policy Recommendations were created by the 36 Citizen Panelists of the 2020 Oregon Citizen Assembly Pilot on COVID-19 Recovery. The project was a partnership between Healthy Democracy and Oregon's Kitchen Table. Panelists were randomly selected from across the state of Oregon, to reflect a microcosm of the state on age, gender, race/ethnicity, geographic location, political party registration, educational attainment, and voter frequency.*

*The Principles and Recommendations were written by the Assembly's Citizen Panelists, after reviewing written testimony, hearing from a variety of expert witnesses, and deliberating over seven two-hour sessions. They represent the words of Panelists themselves and have not been edited by staff. Text in italics are notes by staff.*

### Core Principles

*These represent general Principles pertaining to COVID-19 recovery. The Assembly prioritized these as the top factors for decision-makers to consider, from a lengthy list of potential Principles identified by the Assembly.*

1. Oregon's response to COVID-19 should be guided by the best available science and research currently available. The policy discussion should stay focused on science. In addition, to the extent possible, Oregon should coordinate policies with neighboring states to promote consistent policies over a broader geographic region.
2. Every person has a right to safe, clean, and livable housing. Without appropriate, secure housing, the fabric of our entire community will feel the drastic effects.
3. Health and economy are closely integrated: we need to prioritize funding and policies that promote healthy people, for example: testing, vaccines, and controlling the spread of infection.
4. All jobs fill a specific need and everything should be done to make sure those jobs continue to exist. Employment and housing go hand in hand. Locally owned small businesses need more help to prevent them from going under and procedures for assistance should be as simple as possible.
5. Essential service workers should get hazard pay. They are determined by the number of hours they have to work to provide the necessary services. These workers include transportation, grocery, medical, food service, child care, and many others that are assisting people during the pandemic.

There are many reasons this is important, one of which is burnout. When one works as hard as one can and knows others are receiving unemployment, it starts to take a toll mentally. Hazard pay would create an incentive for people who are working. They are providing a service that is extremely dangerous and deserves to be compensated. People are working in frightening situations; some people are getting assaulted by customers who disagree with COVID-19 policies. If those workers are not present, where will the customers go?

6. Ensure health and safety for students, teachers, staff and their respective households in the process of engaging all students while acquiring their education. Provide access for all students, but also focus on equity. For example children who need extra help or have special needs may require more resources.

# Policy Recommendations

*These Recommendations seek to answer a question that was chosen by the Assembly, from among several questions submitted by a bipartisan selection of state legislators. The question the Assembly chose to answer was:*

*What do you see as relationships between the pandemic and inequalities in social & economic structures – what has been learned about that? With increased interest in racial justice – how important is that? How much do we need change now? When pandemic is done, how important is it to pursue changes in basic systems? Does this point to an imperative to change our basic systems – social, economic, justice, even energy? How does the pandemic affect inequalities and does it actually affect inequalities?*

*These Recommendations fall under two topic areas, which were also chosen by the Assembly: housing and education.*

*The Recommendations below received at least two-thirds support from the Assembly at large. (Level of general support for each Recommendation appears in parentheses.)*

## Housing

### **Recommendation** (79% support)

Provide programs to keep people in safe and secure homes.

- Help those who have become displaced.
- Assist those who have the potential of becoming homeless.
- Ensure that affected people who need funding the most are getting it.
- Ensure that affected people have somewhere to go. Those who have not been affected by the pandemic now have an opportunity to step up to make a difference in their community such as through volunteering or donating. Example: building tiny houses.
- Initiate or continue meal service/deliveries.
- Consider establishing community gardens in places where there are empty lots; these could be spaces to grow food or put people to work.
- Place a moratorium on evictions. Payments should be made directly to landlords to ensure people are not getting evicted and that the help they are receiving is going to housing.
- Prioritize compensation for essential workers who are working through the pandemic in order to ensure that others have what they need.

## Education

### **Recommendation 1** (74% support)

Internet access and technology affects social inequities; making it accessible to all families meets this and our principles.

- Students and parents should receive training on accessing information from the internet. Parents should also be instructed on assisting students in an online learning environment.
- Each county/district should consider accessibility and the utilization of community resources as a part of prioritizing the distribution of subsidies (e.g. church or other community groups offering lunches).

### **Recommendation 2** (68% support)

Bolster counseling programs to give students a direct channel to counselors by establishing wellness working groups that incorporate guidance counselors, teachers, and representatives from parent teacher organizations. Have benchmarks for the working group that cover these main points and give schools a baseline expectation. Provide resources for children slipping behind, at-risk children, and students with special needs – tutoring or counseling.

- Student meetings possibly once a month.
- Guidelines for teachers to identify students who are struggling in the classroom.
- Implement one monthly activity in small groups (online or in-person).
- Weekly check-ins with students and school representatives to check in on student mental health. The lack of in person bonding and relationships with other students is a concern. Consider establishing small student groups of the same grade and similar interests for activities other than online academic learning in order to create opportunities for social interaction. There may be a way to use school facilities in a limited capacity to provide a safe socialization environment, i.e. using the facilities for dance, art, or other elective activities.

### **Recommendation 3** (68% support)

School districts along with local governments should come together to create the metrics and safety measures in order to manage social distancing, mask wearing, and safety procedures to keep everyone safe. Parents should have the opportunity to choose an online option as well for families who are high risk.