

Remote Learning Outcomes



By Dr. R. Pletsch

Statistics show that fully remote learning students tend to be absent more and so do hybrid students compared to those that have in person class. This along with many other items were found in a national survey by the RAND Corporation and "Edweek" research center. During the pandemic, all students have lost out of learning time. Many stu-

dents have fallen behind and may need to repeat a grade. Chicago Public Schools has instructed principals not to retain students this year. This survey found that one in five schools were fully in person, one in five fully remote, and the other three-fifths were a hybrid combination of the two.

The RAND Corp. found 90% of fully remote students also had at least one in person class per day, but fully remote schools offered on average 110 fewer minutes of instruction in English/Language Arts and 80 minutes less in Math and 40 minutes less of Natural Science than schools that were fully in person. All these categories have less time than in previous years. These are national averages and may not include schools with which you are involved.

Report says it realizes that some families are capable of subsidising these minutes with help at home. Some have educators in the family who are on call. Teachers reported that in fully remote classrooms missed up to 15% of the curriculum they would hope to cover in a normal year. Some stated working with the in-home students allows them to prepare better lessons. Many have no travel time, no hallway monitoring and no bathroom monitoring. Therefore, leaving more time to

prepare better lessons.

Technology is always a challenge. Many schools have their own Technology person on site, but what about the in-home students and the teachers? Nearly half of the remote learning teachers have experienced problems more than once a day and 80% say that the internet was reliable enough to still deliver instructions.

Principals reports say that they believe that the in person learners are still missing about 4% of suggested curriculum, but hybrid students are missing 8% and those fully remote are losing 20%. They noticed that the attendance does show significant problems especially among the remote and the hybrid students. They still expect these to be offered for at least one more year. This is not universal, as 15 states and New York City passed laws that will not allow remote learning next school year.

As we approach 2021-22 remote learning is still an option for many people. It has become a convenience and sometimes necessity for some families. Sometimes the teachers need to watch elderly parents or they, themselves are better physically capable to deliver the product from home and others can avoid paying for babysitters. Students in some families are in multiple schools and it becomes quite easier to have them under one roof.

I have talked to many parents and teachers locally. Those that are considering remote learning again have more personal reasons than you can count. One thing a parent told me that I would not have thought of was that some schools do not have uniforms and they used to worry about the "style police". If your family has a choice, please consider everything. As of now, the parent makes the ultimate choice and I am sure they will use it wisely.