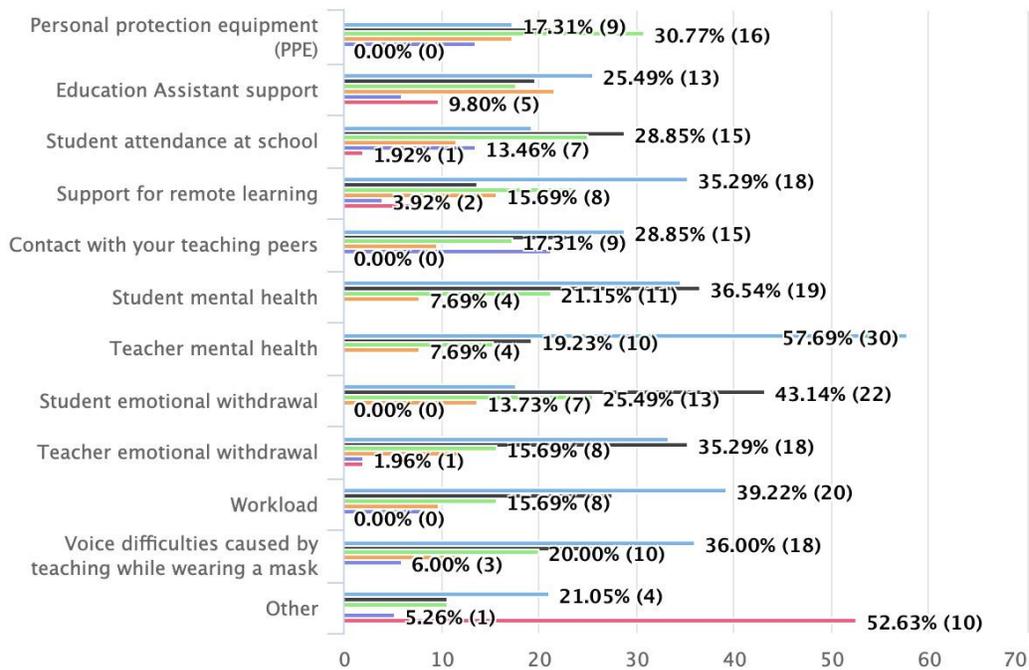# TIE-BC Members' Survey on COVID-19 Issues Summary (2021)

Preamble:

When examining results, TIE-BC took into consideration that some results from respondents represent views of those working in a remote teaching setting. However, this survey is focused on the views of those working in buildings with students, and their respective needs and experiences.

1. **Please indicate your level of concern for the following provisions while teaching during COVID-19:**
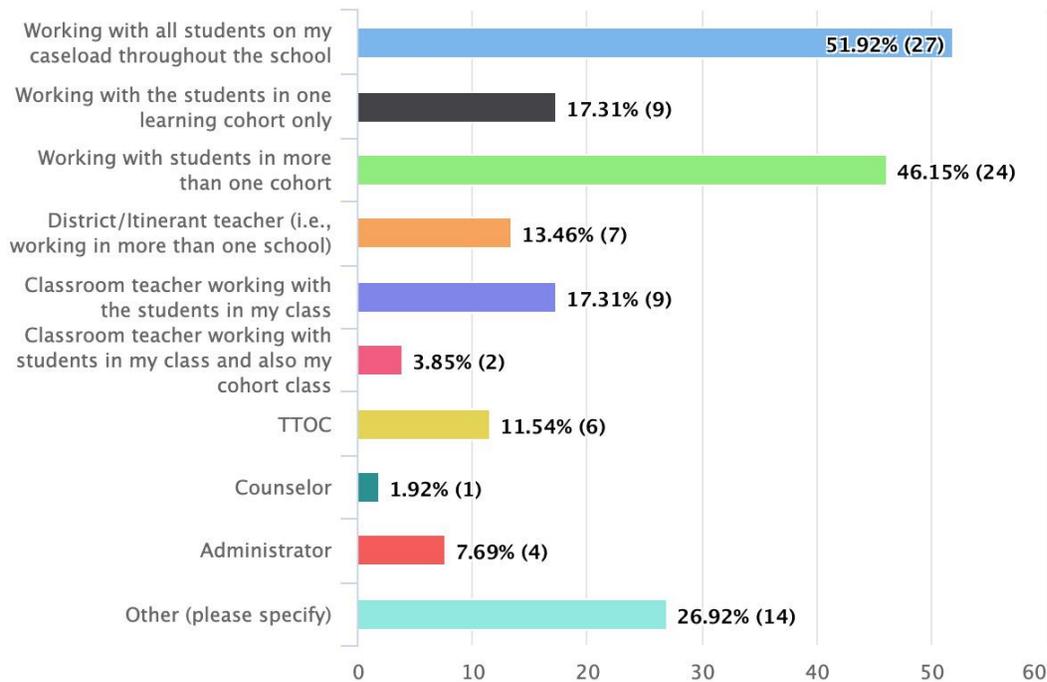
Personal protection equipment (PPE): 17.31% (9), 30.77% (16), 0.00% (0)
Education Assistant support: 25.49% (13), 9.80% (5)
Student attendance at school: 28.85% (15), 1.92% (1), 13.46% (7)
Support for remote learning: 35.29% (18), 3.92% (2), 15.69% (8)
Contact with your teaching peers: 17.31% (9), 28.85% (15), 0.00% (0)
Student mental health: 36.54% (19), 7.69% (4), 21.15% (11)
Teacher mental health: 57.69% (30), 7.69% (4), 19.23% (10)
Student emotional withdrawal: 43.14% (22), 0.00% (0), 13.73% (7), 25.49% (13)
Teacher emotional withdrawal: 35.29% (18), 1.96% (1), 15.69% (8)
Workload: 39.22% (20), 0.00% (0), 15.69% (8)
Voice difficulties caused by teaching while wearing a mask: 36.00% (18), 6.00% (3), 20.00% (10)
Other: 21.05% (4), 5.26% (1), 52.63% (10)

(x-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70)

Colour Meanings:
Light Blue - Extremely Concerned
Black - Very Concerned
Green - Concerned
Orange - Somewhat Concerned
Purple - Not at all Concerned
Red - Not Applicable

As noted in the chart….
- **Greatest concerns:**
  - **Teacher mental health (58%)**
  - **Student emotional withdrawal (43%)**
  - **Workload (39%)**
- **Of Moderate Concern (approximately 35%)**
  - **PPE**
  - **Student attendance**
 - **Contact with teaching peers**

2. Which teaching situations apply to you (check all that apply):

Category	Percentage
Working with all students on my caseload throughout the school	51.92% (27)
Working with the students in one learning cohort only	17.31% (9)
Working with students in more than one cohort	46.15% (24)
District/Itinerant teacher (i.e., working in more than one school)	13.46% (7)
Classroom teacher working with the students in my class	17.31% (9)
Classroom teacher working with students in my class and also my cohort class	3.85% (2)
TTOC	11.54% (6)
Counselor	1.92% (1)
Administrator	7.69% (4)
Other (please specify)	26.92% (14)

As noted from the chart:
- **Approximately 52% of respondents indicated that they work with all caseload students,**
- **46% are working with students in more than one cohort**
- **27% Other - Reading recovery, Learning Support Teacher**

3. To what extent are the following adequately provided in your school/worksite(s).
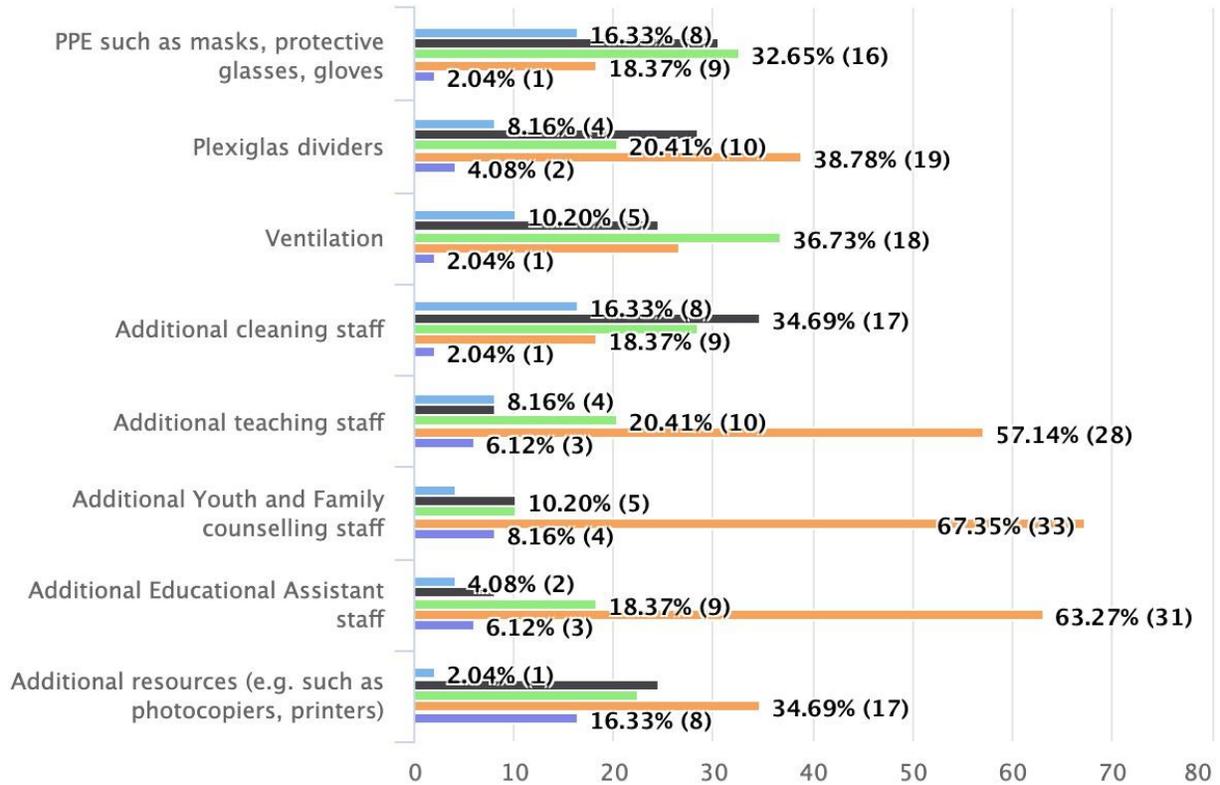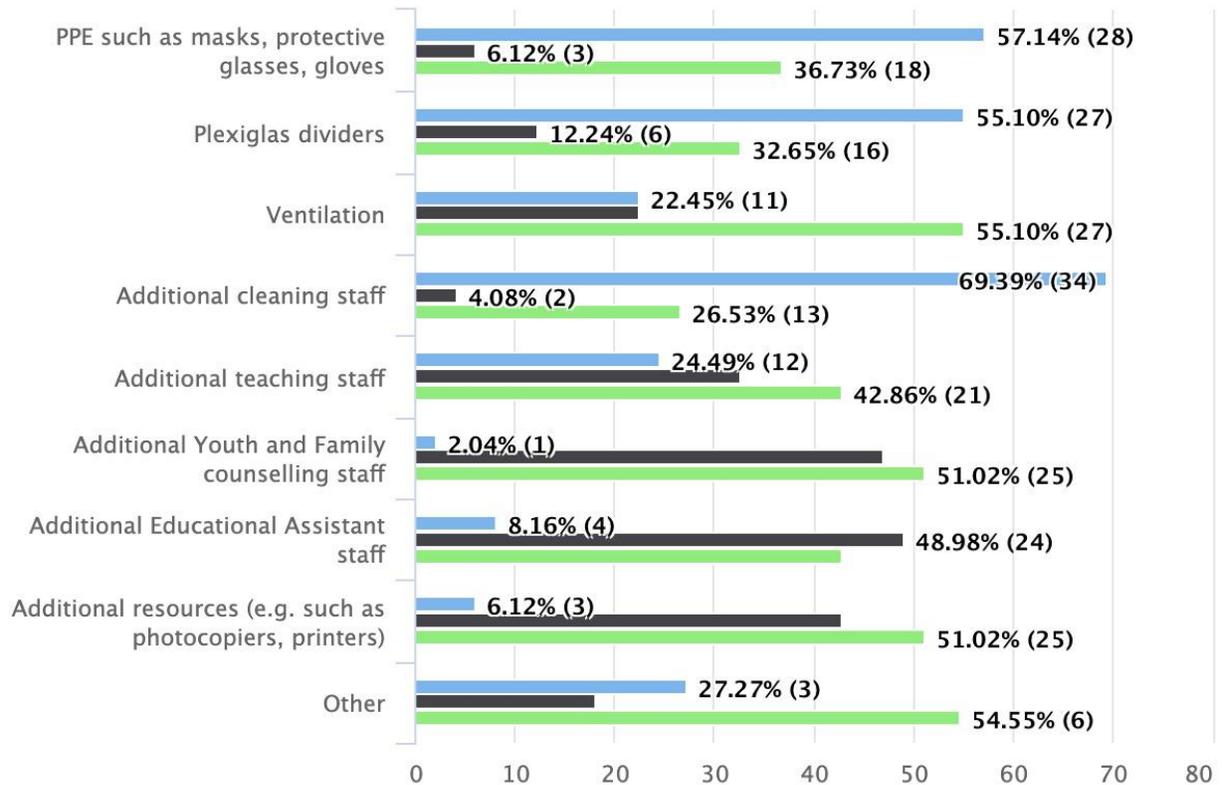

Colour Meanings:
Light Blue - Very Adequate
Black - Adequate
Green - Somewhat Adequate
Orange - Not Adequate
Purple - Don't Know

As noted in the chart
- **Respondents note that many of the staff supports listed are being adequately provided.**
- **Respondents note that there is not adequate PPE being provided.**
-

4. Has your School District used the additional COVID-19 focused Federal funding for any of the following:

Colour Meanings:
Light Blue - Yes
Black - No
Green - Don't Know
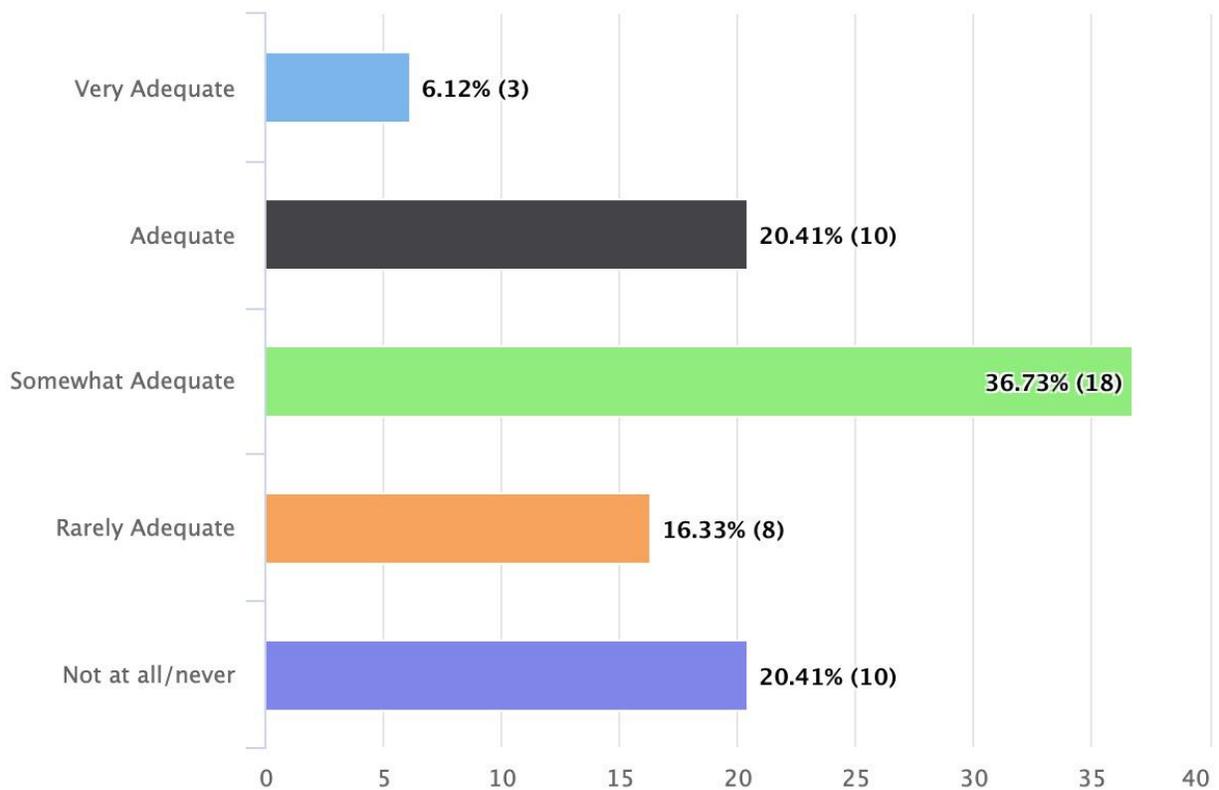
As noted in the chart…
- Many respondents do not know how the Federal funding is being spent for any of the categories listed.
- The category that has had the most funding allotted to it is 'Additional Cleaning Staff'.
- The category that is seemingly the least funded is the "Additional Youth and Family Counselling Staff."

5. To what extent are you getting <u>timely</u> information you need about COVID-19 exposures and outbreaks in your school/works site?

Very timely — 8.00% (4)

Timely — 22.00% (11)

Somewhat timely — 38.00% (19)

Not at all/never timely — 32.00% (16)
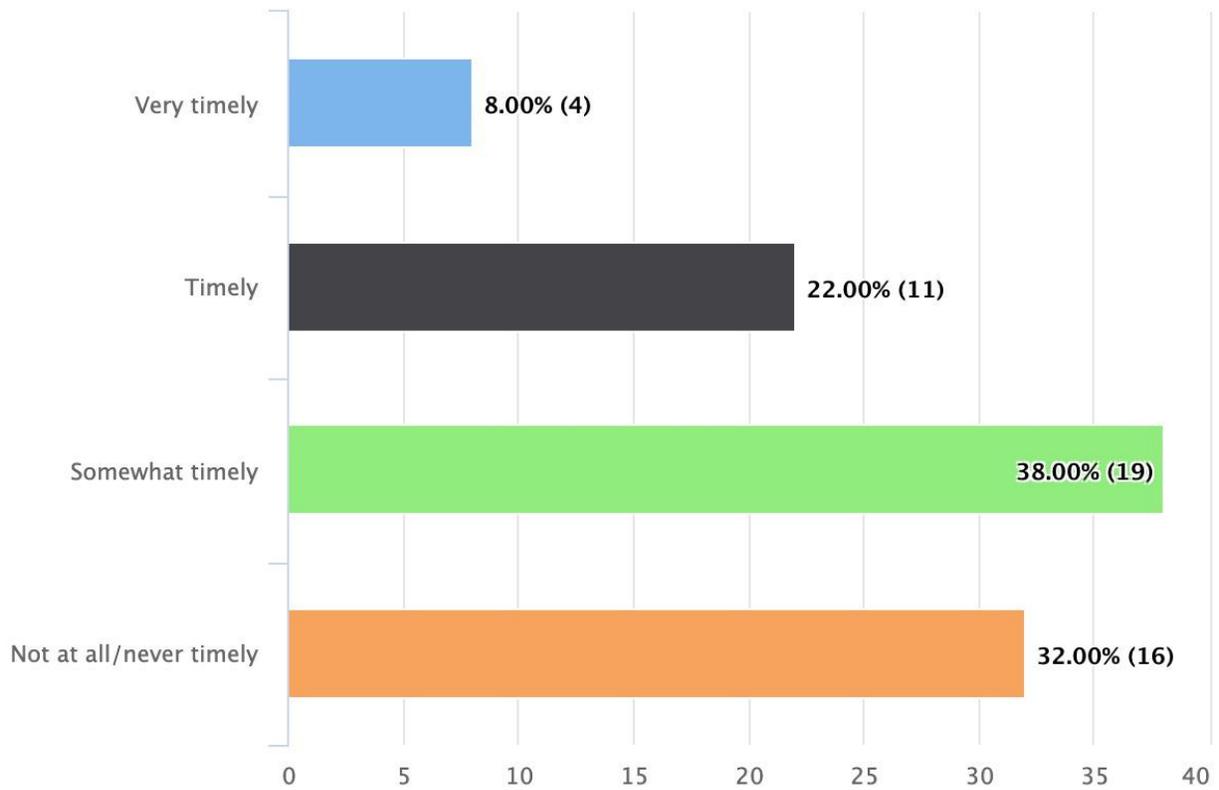
- As noted in the chart, only 30% of respondents find that the information given to them regarding COVID-19 exposures in their schools is 'Timely'.
- As well, 32% have indicated that they are not receiving information, or that the information given is not timely.

6. To what extent are you getting adequate information about COVID-19 exposures and outbreaks in your school?

Response	Percentage (Count)
Very Adequate	6.12% (3)
Adequate	20.41% (10)
Somewhat Adequate	36.73% (18)
Rarely Adequate	16.33% (8)
Not at all/never	20.41% (10)

- 57% of respondents answered that the information has been adequate regarding outbreaks in their schools.
- 36% of respondents answered that the information has not been adequate or have not received information about outbreaks in their schools.

There were a large number of respondents for each of our longer-form questions (#7-9). We have organized them into categories that were shared amongst answers. The 5 key challenges respondents shared included: student and staff safety, social-emotional and mental health, scheduling and support for students, student attendance (in-school and remote) and staffing shortages.

What challenges have you experienced with supporting inclusion during COVID-19?

STUDENT AND STAFF SAFETY

My students because they are Special Education Resource Kids cross cohorts frequently to participate in electives. This has been a bit unsettling for some.

Can't distance from special needs students. Impossible. Multiple staff are in multi grade resource rooms.

Number of students & cohorts I am exposed to & need to only use a shield at times to articulate clearly. Working in Close proximity to students. Plexiglass provided was unusable in my teaching situation & area.

Little ones with behaviour are unable to keep hands to self. It's pretty much the "same old same old" when working with complex kids in primary. Boogers and sneezes and coughing - oh my!

No flexibility/limited in use of spaces.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Feeling isolated from my colleagues, not doing extra-curricular activities

Anxiety issues with my autistic students.

Changing expectations for my role; dramatically increased levels of stress management for my students and colleagues - managing my own anxiety regarding covid exposures

My caseload is not getting adequate support. Feeling WAY over worked. Am very concerned about teacher mental health due to isolation, minimal time to meet and collaborate

Tension in the overall school community; Students anxious; Can't hear students in masks, they use it as a reason to not talk/share in class

support for students (scheduling, space limitations, Remote learning, etc)

Scheduling support is challenging. The students are often outside for part of the afternoon which is good but requires walking out to find them.

smaller groups means more groups getting less time. I have too many students to actually fit into regular weekly schedule - have to rotate; difficult deciding who will get support and how much; early literacy instruction very difficult with both student and teacher wearing masks worry about voice strain due to

sanitation measures (bleach fogging), not able to stay at school in evening to complete after school tasks always in catch-up mode now, but never catching up.

I would typically have small groups organized by need but now I have to support one cohort at a time which reduces the number of students I can see. It's hard to teach group of students who are in different cohorts. I can't run social thinking groups with only 2 kids. I don't have time to give L.A. to all the different classes

Regarding remote learning: The first hurdle is making sure that the family has enough and adequate technology for students. Once that is in place, the next issue is the time and effort it takes for the family to support the lessons or activities. Not all families are able to do this. Regarding in-school teaching: the Resource Teachers are stretched so thinly that they are supporting cohorts and there is no more time for programming or providing behaviour support for the many students on their caseloads that are NOT in their cohorts. The perfect storm.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The biggest challenge has been inconsistent attendance. Many students who require extra support are not attending school and there are no remote learning options in our district. Some students are doing homeschooling through our distance education program but that program filled up very quickly in the fall

The gap is widening between students who are more at-risk because they are either not attending school, or don't have the supports and extra services in place for success.

Kids not attending school on a regular basis. This puts them behind those who are there. Then, when you are on day 3 of a project or lesson, those who missed days 1 and 2 are so far behind you can't get them caught up.

Erratic student attendance means more challenges for class routines. This, in turn, provides challenges for including students with certain needs.

STAFFING SHORTAGES

We are always short EA staff, and it has been challenging working among different cohorts. Many students with educational needs have missed more time this year due to COVID clusters in our community. District resources like OT and PT cancelled visits with students due to clusters or rumours of clusters.

EA shortage; EAs are RARELY replaced -high teacher and EA turnover due to health and stress; when a new teacher or EA starts, the Learning Support team has to teach and train new staff to work with our students with designations. This has significantly increased our workload.

Not having EA's or teaching staff available for covering illness. As an LST teacher, I have had to cover EA breaks, teacher absences, etc. My caseload is not getting adequate support. Feeling WAY over worked.

Do you have a success story to share about supporting inclusion during COVID-19?

Respondents also shared success stories about supporting inclusion during COVID including: positive social emotional connections, mental health support systems and integration of technology into daily practice.

POSITIVE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS

It has been great to see how happy most students are with being in school. Also the cohort groups are playing together very well. I think the additional structures in place have been supportive for some students.

Assigning EAs to one classroom to support their safety has made them more connected to all the kids in the class and the teacher. In the past we assigned them to work with multiple kids in a day.

My Down Syndrome student had been extremely supported by our foods teacher and he has also welcomed another member of my class to participate although she is not associated with the class at all. PE teacher has supported one of my autistic kids who has difficulties with a full time class. He has supported him coming back after half the class to calm and take time for himself. Our photography teacher has supported my student in helping her to take steps to calm her anxiety when a new project frustrates her by walking, listening to music and just talking it out. So many great teachers in our High School.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SYSTEMS

I started offering the Headspace App to intermediate students who struggle with anxiety (and boy, are there intermediate students with anxiety this year!). I have 4 students who self-select headspace breaks with or without a peer; in school or at home. All of them have worked through the Headspace for Netflix (free) meditations. 2 of them have worked through various singles on the Headspace app and 2 are working through courses on the Headspace app. In general, I have a kid in my office at least once a week using Headspace to calm and add tools to their toolbox as they look for ways to cope with stress in this difficult time.

INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO DAILY PRACTICE

Online model is working very well for some students and has increased engagement and success. Keeping some format of online (ie TEAMS) would be amazing, supported by the districts.

Student with high level of anxiety managed to show up at school and pass the course with A grade, while she was away for a long time and who struggles with ADD as well as well!

We were able to move transition to Kindergarten meetings online last spring and that went very well. I also noticed that sometimes with Zoom meetings parents find it easier to attend.

ADAPTED SCHOOL ROUTINES

I work in a gorgeous new school, so the feeling of clean and bright is in the air. If I worked in the 70-year-old school I used to know and love, I'm sure I'd have significant concerns about ventilation.

There has been less distractions with the extra things that teachers often offer. We've been very down to business. There is less movement in the hallways and in general it's a quieter place to be.

The focus changed as much as possible to extend LST services by providing home programs for parents and team teaching with classroom teachers. We now have LST providing some class-wide early literacy foundational supports to students and parents - a long-time wish come true.