

Colorado School District Needs Inventory

April 17, 2020 | District/BOCES-Level Findings



Context and Methodology

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Colorado Department of Education administered the district and charter needs inventory from late March to early April.
- Superintendents, BOCES directors, and charter and approved facility school leaders were encouraged to complete the needs inventory to share the needs of schools and districts across the state, including support for learning at home and the general needs of the surrounding community.
- The Colorado Education Initiative staff provided data management, analysis, reporting, and follow-up support for the needs inventory effort.
- Regional analyses of the needs inventory were conducted based on the eight CDE regions illustrated in the map to the right. **Data summarized in this report reflect results as of Wednesday, April 15th, with updated priorities and key themes from brief regional follow-up interviews conducted by CEI staff in mid-April.**



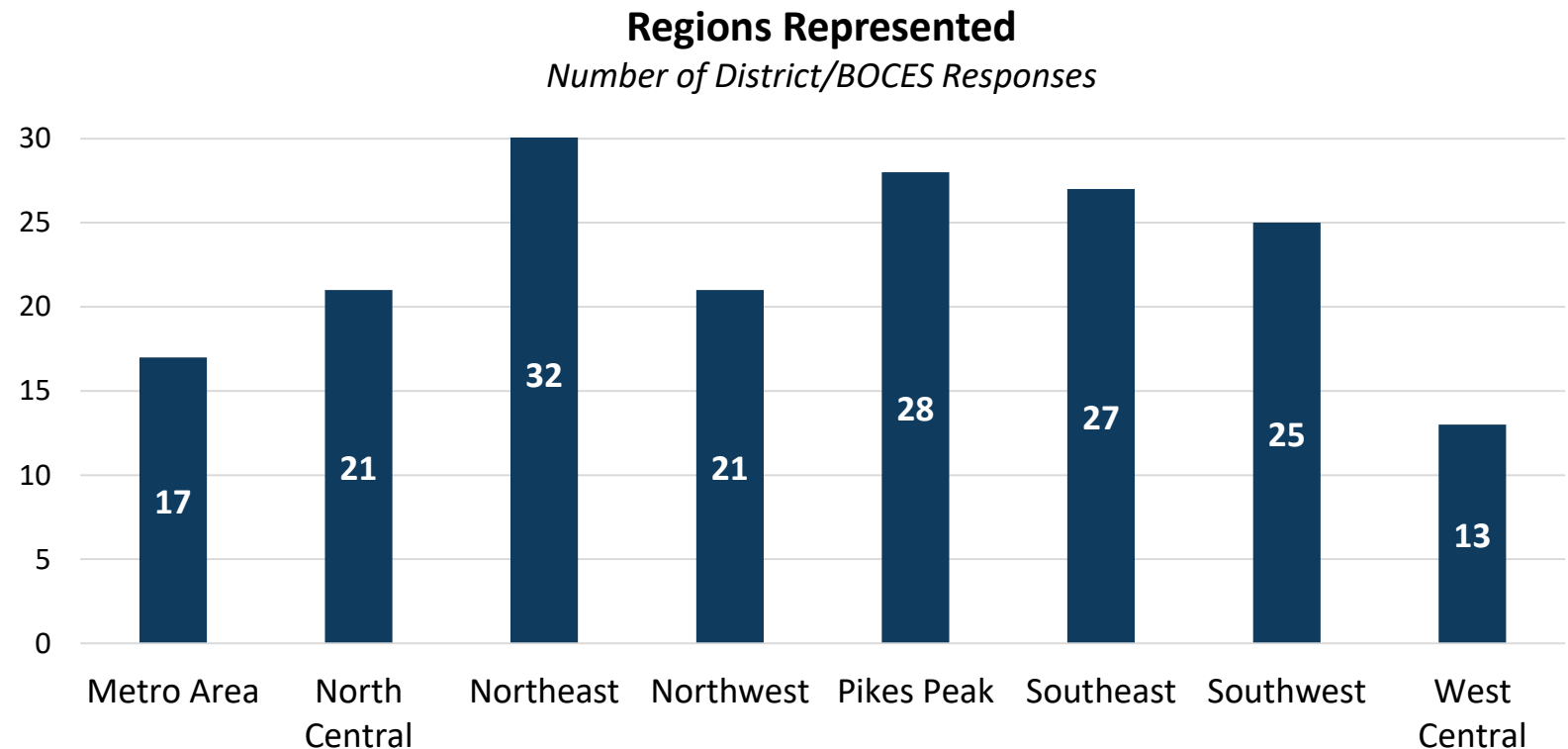
Respondents

- As of April 15th, there have been a **total of 370 respondents to the needs inventory**, with **184 of those representing districts or BOCES** and 186 representing charter or facility schools.
- The results in this report only reflect the school district or BOCES responses.** The charter school responses continue to be shared with CDE's Schools of Choice office for review and follow-up.

91% of Colorado districts/BOCES have responded.

These districts/BOCES serve **90%** of the state's public school students.

83% of responding districts represent rural communities.

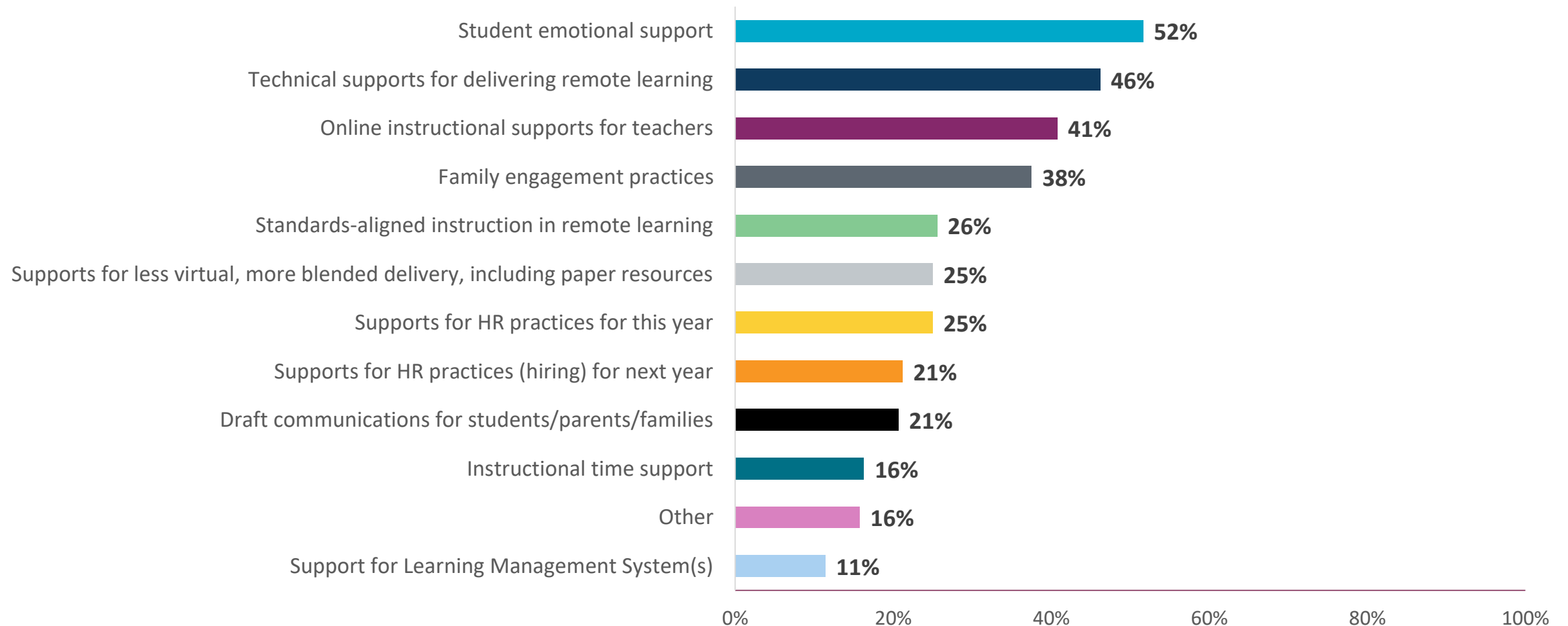


Education Needs



Top Education Supports Needed Across Colorado Districts

Percentage Selecting the Following Education Supports as Top Needs



Education Supports by Region

- **Both family engagement practices and student social emotional support were named as top priorities by all regions of the state.** In fact, support with student social emotional needs was identified as the number one priority for six of the eight regions.
- Technical supports for delivering remote learning and online instructional supports for teachers are common needs across regions, though seem to have been slightly deprioritized since the initial round of needs inventory responses.
- While supports for less virtual, more blended delivery, including paper resources and draft communications for students/parents/families, were selected less frequently as top priorities, several districts have offered to share resources to support these areas of need.
- The Northwest and West Central regions prioritized supports for HR practices as top needs, while approximately one-third of respondents in a few other regions – Metro area, North Central, and Southwest – are interested in supports for standards-aligned instruction through remote learning.
- **Follow-up calls with regional and district leaders on indicated consistent and elevated priority for student social emotional supports.** Leaders emphasized this need in particular for elementary students, while they noted more needs for student engagement at the secondary level. Many also noted a growing need for family engagement supports, as shown on the next slide.

Top Education Supports by Region: Detailed Data

Supports that were emphasized, corroborated, or named as emerging higher priorities on follow-up calls with regional leaders are bolded and underlined.

Metro Region ¹	Northeast Region ¹	Southeast Region	Northwest Region
<u>Student emotional support</u> 53%	<u>Student emotional support</u> 47%	Technical supports for delivering remote learning 59%	<u>Student emotional support</u> 52%
<u>Family engagement practices</u> 47%	Technical supports for delivering remote learning 44%	<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 56%	Technical supports for delivering remote learning 48%
Technical supports for delivering remote learning 41%	<u>Family engagement practices</u> 38%	<u>Student emotional support</u> 48%	Family engagement practices 43%
<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 41%	Draft communications for students/parents/families 34%	<u>Family engagement practices</u> 33%	<u>Supports for HR practices for this year</u> 38%
<u>Standards-aligned instruction in remote learning</u> 35%	<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 31%	Supports for less virtual, more blended delivery, including paper resources 33%	<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 33%
North Central Region	Pikes Peak Region	Southwest Region	West Central Region
Technical supports for delivering remote learning 57%	<u>Student emotional support</u> 57%	<u>Student emotional support</u> 52%	<u>Student emotional support</u> 69%
<u>Student emotional support</u> 43%	Technical supports for delivering remote learning 50%	<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 44%	Family engagement practices 46%
<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 38%	<u>Online instructional supports for teachers</u> 43%	Family engagement practices 32%	<u>Supports for HR practices (hiring) for next year</u> 46%
<u>Standards-aligned instruction in remote learning</u> 33%	Family engagement practices 39%	<u>Standards-aligned instruction in remote learning</u> 32%	<u>Supports for HR practices for this year</u> 46%
<u>Family engagement practices</u> 29%	Supports for less virtual, more blended delivery, including paper resources 39%	<u>Instructional time support</u> 28%	<u>Technical supports for delivering remote learning</u> 46%

¹ The Northeast region also named supports for HR practices as a top needed support on the follow-up call and deprioritized communications for students, parents, and families. The Metro region district leaders deprioritized technical supports for delivering remote learning.

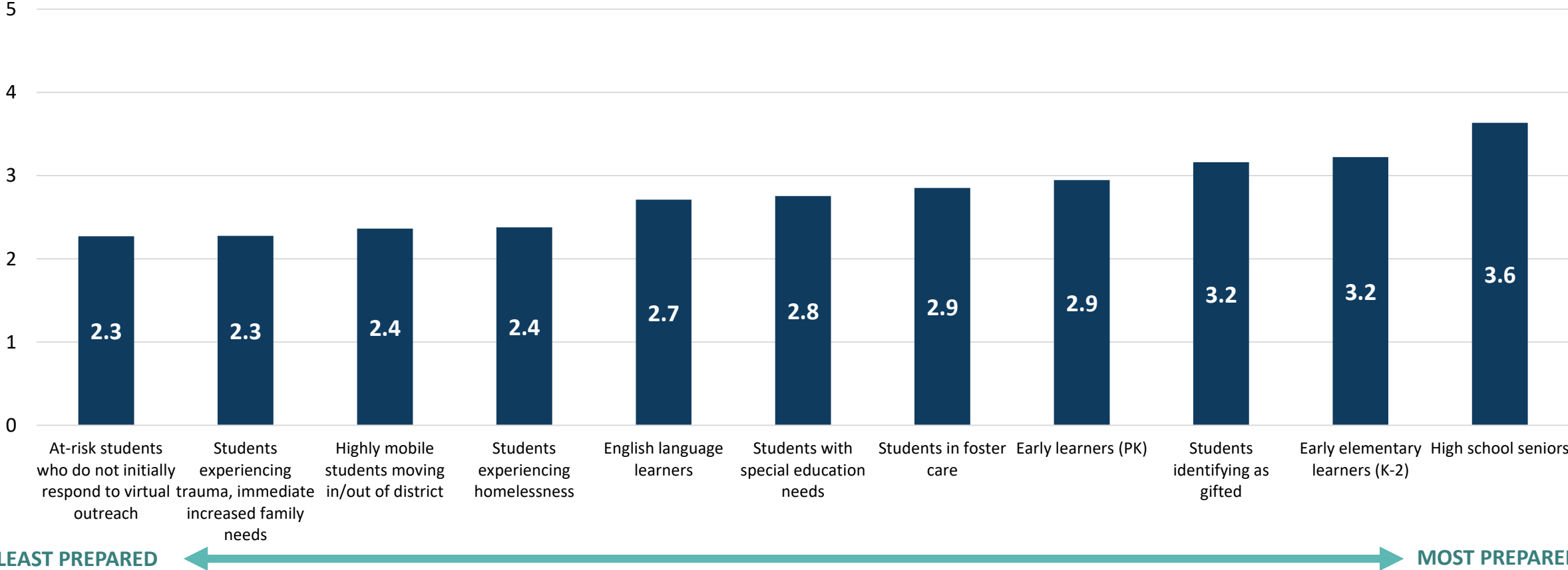
Student Subgroups



Preparedness to Support Student Subgroups

Preparedness to Meet Needs of the Following Student Groups during School Closures

Mean of Responses (1-5 scale, with 1 being least prepared and 5 being most prepared)



Preparedness to Support Student Subgroups by Region

- Overall, the level of preparedness to support particular groups of students is fairly consistent across different regions in the state, with a few exceptions, detailed below.
- **Districts in the North Central and West Central regions report feeling slightly more equipped to support their students with special needs** during remote learning than other parts of the state (means of 3.1 and 3.31, respectively).
- **Respondents from the West Central region rated their preparation for supporting students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, and early elementary learners especially low** compared to other regions.
- **In follow-up calls, district and regional leaders noted elevated concerns about supporting students with special needs, as well as early elementary students. Some also raised emerging concerns for high school seniors, English language learners, and early learners (PK).**

Preparedness to Support Student Subgroups by Region: Detailed Data

Mean of Responses by Region (1-5 scale, with 1 being least prepared and 5 being most prepared)

Subgroups emphasized by district and regional leaders on follow-up calls are bolded and underlined.

	Metropolitan	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Pikes Peak	Southeast	Southwest	West Central
At-risk students who do not initially respond to virtual outreach	2.18	2.67	2.38	2.19	2.14	2.33	2.20	1.92
Students experiencing trauma, immediate increased family needs	<u>2.59</u>	2.38	2.25	2.19	2.21	2.41	2.08	2.15
Highly mobile students moving in/out of district	2.29	2.71	2.41	2.29	2.46	2.22	2.32	2.08
Students experiencing homelessness	2.35	2.71	2.63	2.10	2.39	2.70	2.20	1.38
English language learners	2.76	2.86	2.69	2.52	2.54	2.78	<u>3.00</u>	2.46
Students with special education needs	<u>2.53</u>	<u>3.10</u>	<u>2.59</u>	2.29	2.82	2.78	<u>2.84</u>	<u>3.31</u>
Students in foster care	2.65	3.10	3.00	2.52	2.96	2.96	2.92	2.31
Early learners (PK)	<u>3.00</u>	3.14	3.17	2.67	3.15	3.00	2.52	2.69
Students identifying as gifted	3.24	3.38	3.28	2.90	3.29	3.04	3.04	3.08
Early elementary learners (K-2)	3.41	<u>3.52</u>	3.50	<u>3.24</u>	<u>3.14</u>	3.15	2.96	<u>2.62</u>
High school seniors	3.65	3.62	3.81	3.43	<u>3.79</u>	<u>3.88</u>	3.28	3.46

References to Student Subgroup Needs

- The following slides summarize qualitative references to student subgroup needs in open-ended responses throughout the needs inventory.
- Follow-up data collection efforts planned for April-May 2020 will gather more detailed information about the needs of specific groups of students.

At-Risk Students Not Initially Responding to Virtual Outreach

- **40 respondents (22 percent) reported that they are least prepared to support at-risk students who do not initially respond to virtual outreach**, but a small group of five respondents also ranked themselves as most prepared to support this group.
- Both the most prepared and least prepared groups represent a variety of regions and district sizes.

References in Open-Ended Responses:

- Some respondents alluded to the inability to reach students and shared some strategies they're attempting to get in touch, including phone calls to families and individual outreach.
- As noted in the connectivity results below, access to internet continues to be a critical need for many students across the state and was reiterated in many respondents' open-ended responses.
- It's worth noting that a number of districts referenced educators' work to connect with students continues to be a top priority and an area in which they're proud of their work to date.

Students Experiencing Trauma, Increased Family Needs

- **40 respondents (22 percent) reported that they are least prepared to support students experiencing trauma, isolation, or immediate increased family needs.**
- Only two districts ranked themselves as most prepared to support this group of students – both in the North Central region.

References to Students Experiencing Trauma in Open-Ended Responses:

- A few respondents shared concerns and questions about the best ways to support students' social-emotional needs or implement MTSS in a remote learning environment.
- A number of districts also noted that there are many impacted families dealing with increased needs in their communities currently, and as much possible, they're coordinating with local nonprofits and organizations to address these needs.

Highly Mobile Students Moving In/Out of Districts

- **41 respondents (22 percent) reported that they are least prepared to support highly mobile students who are moving in or out of their districts.**
- Three districts ranked themselves as most prepared to support this group of student, two of which are in the North Central region.

References to Highly Mobile Students in Open-Ended Responses:

- One metro area district noted their concern about getting highly mobile students access to remote learning multiple times throughout the inventory, raising that only larger broadband internet access or hotspots could effectively address the connectivity issues for mobile families.
- Another respondent shared their concern that migrant families are disconnected from most resources in their community and will have a lot of increased needs during this time.

Students Experiencing Homelessness

- **54 respondents (29 percent) reported that they are least prepared to support students experiencing homelessness.**
- Eight districts/BOCES ranked themselves as most prepared to support this group of student, most of which are in rural or small rural communities.

References to Students Experiencing Homelessness in Open-Ended Responses:

- A number of respondents raised concerns about the ability of students experiencing homelessness to access remote learning.
- One metro area district is provided bus passes to families eligible for McKinney-Vento services so that they can more easily access community resources and supports.
- Another metro area respondent named outreach to vulnerable students, including those in poverty or experiencing homelessness, as their biggest concern.

English Language Learners

- **Six respondents reported being very prepared** (response option=5) **to support English language learners**, with five from the Northeast or North Central regions.
- **24 respondents (13 percent) rated their level of preparedness as 1, or least prepared, representing a variety of regions across the state.** Notably, all but one of these districts represents a rural or small rural community.

References to English Language Learners in Open-Ended Responses:

- When asked about additional community needs, one rural district named English language learners.
- Another district shared that they provided information via packets, printed in multiple languages, at key pick-up points for materials due to concern about accessibility of information electronically due to either lack of internet access or language barriers.
- One small rural district noted that one of their community's additional needs is access to materials and resources in Spanish.

Students with Special Education Needs

- **3 respondents reported being very prepared** (response option=5) **to support students with special education needs, including one BOCES.** A number of other BOCES respondents rated their preparedness level as a 3 or 4.
- **17 respondents (9 percent) rated their level of preparedness as 1, or least prepared, representing a variety of regions and district sizes.**

References to Students with Special Education Needs in Open-Ended Responses:

- Many respondents raised questions and concerns about providing services to students with special education needs in their open-ended responses.
- Specifically, a couple noted the need for the ability to share special education documents securely via encryption.
- A few others praised their educators' work supporting special education students in particular, with one sharing that they're providing a "good-faith effort" to provide services to students on IEPs and are in daily contact with parents and families.
- Two other respondents reported the need for compensatory services for special education in the future.

Students in Foster Care

- **Seven districts/BOCES (3 percent) responded that they feel very prepared to support students in foster care**, five of which are located in rural or small rural districts.
- **Twenty districts/BOCES (10 percent) reported feeling least prepared to support students in foster care**, twelve of which are located in rural or small rural districts and five of which are located in the West Central region of the state.

References to Students in Foster Care in Open-Ended Responses:

- One district reported that outreach to vulnerable populations (including students in foster care) was a top concern for them.

Early Learners (PK)

- **Sixteen districts/BOCES (9 percent) responded that they feel very prepared to support early learners**, all sixteen of which are located in rural/small rural districts/BOCES.
- **Twenty two (12 percent) reported feeling least prepared to support early learners**, seventeen of which are in rural districts/BOCES and five of which are located in the Southwest region of the state.

References to Early Learners (PK) in Open-Ended Responses:

- Two districts noted that they've been able to get all of their students devices with the exception of their Pre-K students.
- One district flagged that they need support meeting the educational needs of preschoolers in their district.
- Another respondent shared their need for resources for PK-2 learning, including packets and other supports, naming that they're considering SeeSaw as a communication tool for this age group.
- One district stated that "clear guidance and information from the Federal Office of Head Start and the Colorado Preschool Program about funding continuity and remote learning expectations has been very helpful for Early Childhood."

Students Identifying as Gifted

- **Thirteen districts/BOCES (7 percent) responded that they feel very prepared to support students identifying as gifted**, ten of which are located in rural or small rural districts.
- **Eleven (5 percent) districts reported feeling least prepared to support students identifying as gifted**, all of which are located in rural or small rural districts.
- No respondents reflected on gifted students in the open-ended responses of this initial needs inventory.

Early Elementary Learners (K-2)

- **Fifteen districts/BOCES (9 percent) responded that they feel very prepared to support early elementary learners.**
- **Nine (5 percent) reported feeling least prepared to support early elementary students**, five of which are located in the Southwest region of the state.

References to Early Elementary or Elementary Students in Open-Ended Responses:

- Two rural districts shared their approach to supporting elementary students' learning – teachers prepared hardcopy packets and book materials to last through the end of the school year (as opposed to their technology-based learning strategies with secondary students).
- Another respondent elevated the challenges faced by families attempting to facilitate and support learning in particular with young students, who need more guidance and have critical benchmarks for next-grade expectations.
- As noted above, another respondent requested resources and supports for PK-2 learning specifically.

High School Seniors

- **Seventeen percent of respondents (31) reported feeling very prepared to support high school seniors during this time, while six (3 percent) shared that they are least prepared to support seniors.**

References to High School Seniors in Open-Ended Responses:

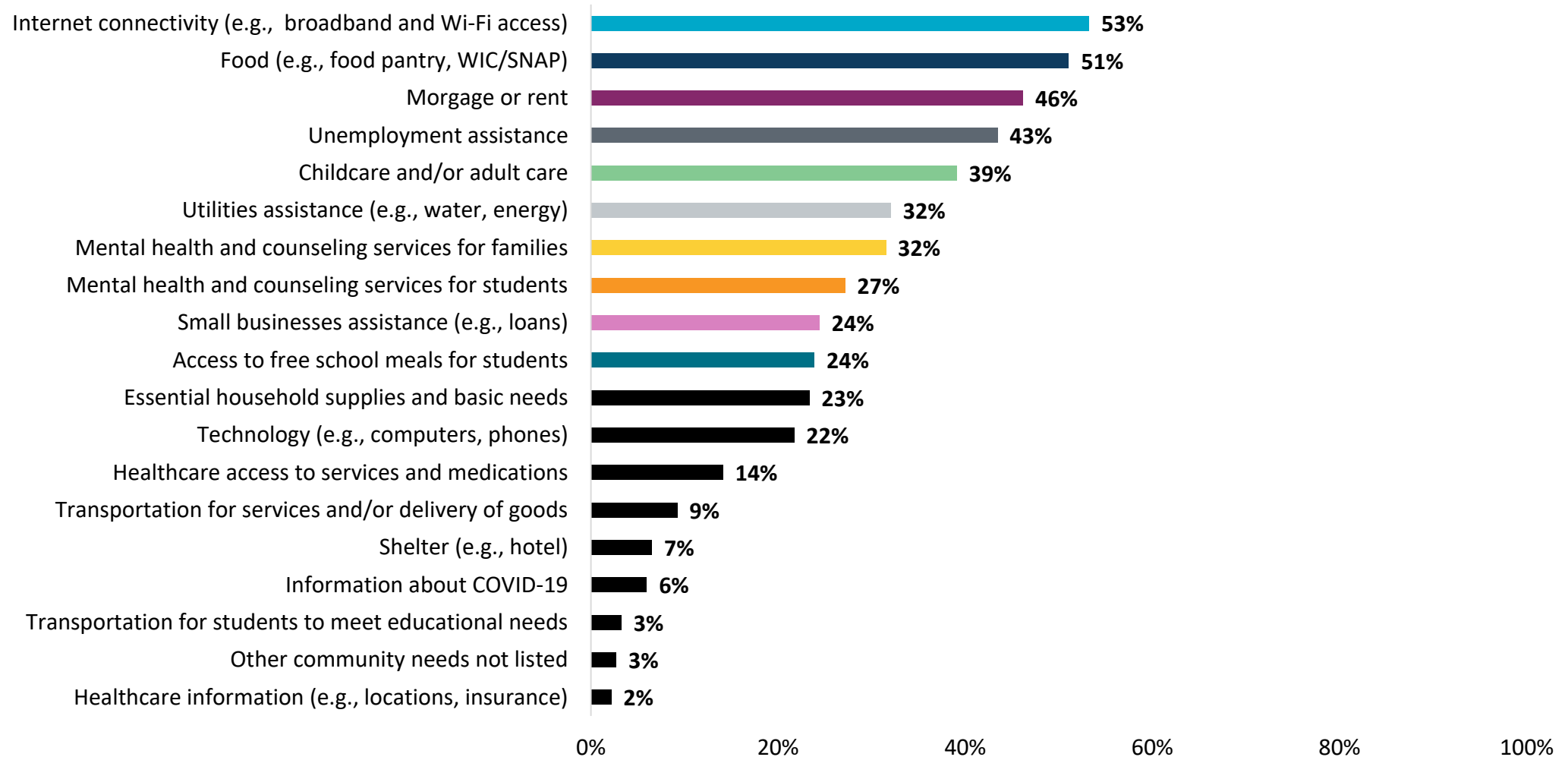
- One rural district shared that their 11th and 12th graders are completing transition portfolios and activities through Everfi.
- One urban district highlighted one of their successes as keeping juniors and seniors on track for graduation.

Community Needs



Community Needs

Percentage Selecting as Top Community Needs



Community Needs by Region

- While there was variability in the top community need identified across regions, **internet connectivity and food access were the two community needs that commonly appeared as a top need in most regions across the state.** In addition to efforts to address urgent needs related to food access, some districts noted that they are actively working to engage community stakeholders to more systematically identify and address needs. Some rural districts cited concerns that their community members may not be able to access food and other resources because they lack access to transportation.
- **Mortgage and rent support was prioritized by every region with the exception of the Southeast Region.**
- **Three fourths of regions indicated that unemployment assistance was an urgent community need,** a sizable increase in the last couple weeks since the initial analysis of early needs inventory results.
- **Mental health and counseling services for either students or families were prioritized in 50 percent of regions.** Districts fully anticipate that there will be an increased need for mental health and counseling services and are concerned about the impacts of isolation on students and families. Moreover, districts raised concerns about domestic violence and child abuse.
- **Five regions (62 percent) named childcare and/or adult care** as an important community need.
- **Follow-up calls with regional and district leaders provided updated information about community needs.** Generally, overall technology and access to devices is becoming less of a need as districts and schools worked to address that, to the extent possible, over the last month. Connectivity continues to be an issue in rural communities. Additionally, leaders emphasized the need for mental health and counseling supports and elevated the needs related to food access, mortgage and rent support, childcare, and unemployment assistance.

Top Community Needs by Region: Detailed Data

Needs that were emphasized, corroborated, or named as emerging higher priorities on follow-up calls with regional leaders are bolded and underlined.

Metro Region ¹	West Central Region	Southeast Region	Northwest Region
<u>Mental health and counseling services for families</u> 65%	<u>Internet connectivity</u> 69%	Unemployment assistance 59%	<u>Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP)</u> 67%
Internet connectivity 59%	Unemployment assistance 54%	<u>Internet connectivity</u> 52%	<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 67%
Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP) 53%	Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP) 54%	<u>Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP)</u> 44%	Internet connectivity 43%
<u>Mental health and counseling services for students</u> 53%	<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 46%	Mental health and counseling services for families 41%	Utilities assistance (e.g., water, energy) 43%
<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 41%	Childcare and/or adult care 38%	Technology (computers, phones, etc.) 33%	<u>Unemployment assistance</u> 43%
<u>Unemployment assistance</u> 41%	Utilities assistance (e.g., water, energy) 38%		
	<u>Mental health and counseling services for families</u> 38%		
North Central Region	Pikes Peak Region ¹	Southwest Region ¹	Northeast Region
Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP) 62%	Internet connectivity 75%	Childcare and/or adult care 52%	<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 52%
Internet connectivity 52%	<u>Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP)</u> 46%	Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP) 52%	<u>Childcare and/or adult care</u> 47%
<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 52%	<u>Unemployment assistance</u> 46%	<u>Internet connectivity</u> 52%	Food (e.g., food pantry, WIC/SNAP) 41%
Childcare and/or adult care 43%	<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 43%	<u>Mortgage or rent</u> 52%	Utilities assistance (e.g., water, energy) 41%
<u>Mental health and counseling services for students</u> 43%	<u>Childcare and/or adult care</u> 36%	Utilities assistance (e.g., water, energy) 36%	Unemployment assistance 38%
			<u>Access to free school meals for students</u> 38%

¹ In follow-up calls, Pikes Peak call participants emphasized all needs except connectivity, which they deprioritized. Metro regional leaders also deprioritized internet connectivity. Leaders from the Southwest region noted that childcare is now a lower priority, while connectivity and mental health and counseling services for families are greater needs.

Student Access to Technology, Internet, and Software

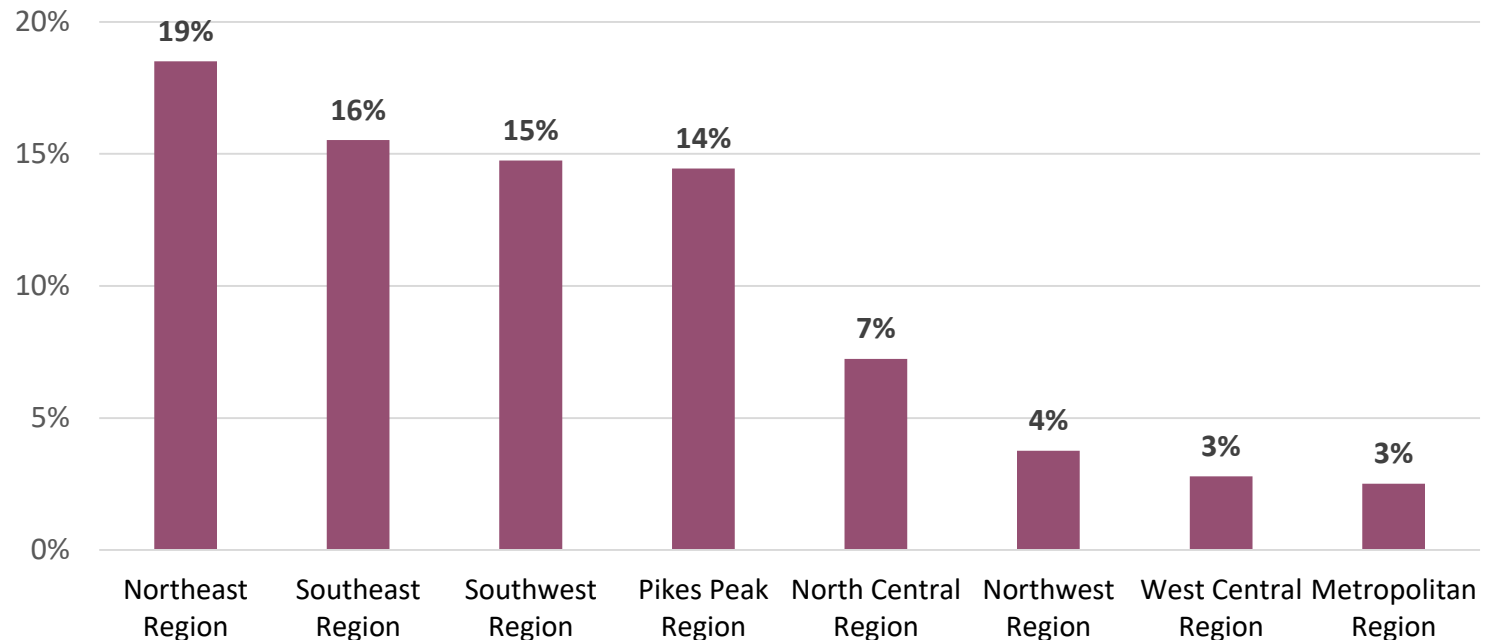


Student Access to Devices

Based on the responses from 184 districts/BOCES, the estimated number of students without access to a Wi-Fi-enabled device is 52,918 statewide, or approximately 6 percent of students in the represented districts/BOCES.

Region	Approx. Count of Students without Device
Pikes Peak	22,556
Metropolitan ¹	10,372
North Central Region	9,568
Southwest Region	3,487
Northeast Region	2,616
Southeast Region	1,859
Northwest Region	1,401
West Central Region	1,059
TOTAL	52,918

Estimated Percentage of Students Lacking a Wi-Fi-Enabled Device at Home by Region



¹ These data reflect the updated response from DPS to adjust their number to 0, reflecting the anticipated fulfilled needs of their students without devices once their next order of Chromebooks is received.

More Details about Access to Devices

As noted above, technical supports for delivering remote learning was ranked as the second highest education need among district/BOCES respondents, with 46 percent reporting that they need support.

Understanding Need for Devices

- In some cases, initial estimates for technology needs were inaccurate as families that have multiple children now need to use devices at the same time.

Differences Across Grade Levels

- Several districts reported not having devices for PK-2, while others questioned the appropriateness of online learning for early learners.
- Districts who report having less devices than they need report that they are prioritizing getting devices to high schoolers.

Outdated or Insufficient Devices

- Many districts had to use old computers or tablets that do not have the capability to update or run the software programs and platforms that students and teachers are using.
- Districts shared that cell phones (and sometimes tablets) are not appropriate for online learning, while also noting that phones may be some students only options for accessing learning.

District Troubleshooting

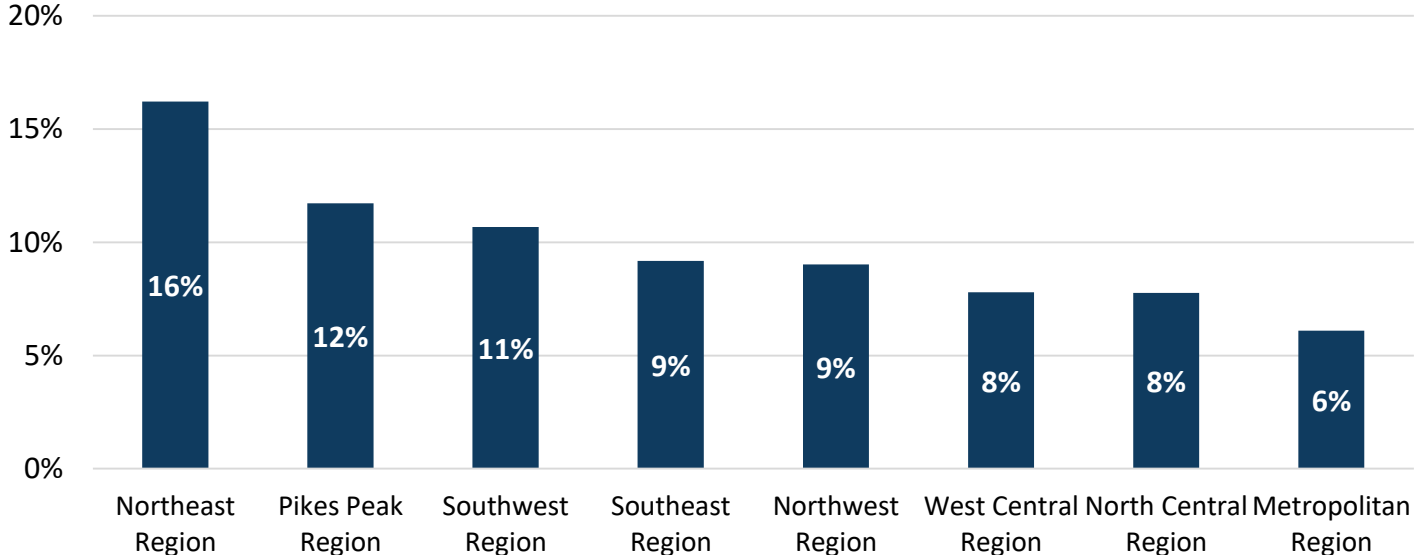
- Districts are working to implement after-hours technology distribution, prioritizing families working frontline jobs.
- Districts are now working to troubleshoot hardware issues, such as replacing chargers, batteries, and broken devices.

Student Access to Internet

- Based on the responses from 184 districts/BOCES across the state, **the estimated number of students without access to internet at home is 65,860, or approximately 8 percent of students in represented districts/BOCES.**
- A number of districts mentioned that these needs will continue to evolve in the coming weeks, as they are able to provide more solutions to students but also as they learn more about students with inadequate or slow internet access (rather than students with no access).

Region	Approx. Count of Students without Access to Internet
Metropolitan ¹	25,097
Pikes Peak	18,287
North Central Region	10,249
Northwest Region	3,356
West Central Region	2,955
Southwest Region	2,524
Northeast Region	2,293
Southeast Region	1,099
TOTAL	65,860

Estimated Percentage of Students Lacking Access to Internet at Home by Region



¹These data reflect the updated response from DPS to adjust their number to 2,000, reflecting the anticipated remaining needs after accounting for current efforts underway to secure more hotspots and connect students to internet access.

More Details about Access to Internet

- As shown above, **internet connectivity was the top community need identified by respondents, with 53 percent reporting that this is a key need.**

Viable Solutions

- Some districts reported that they recently purchased hotspots to help provide internet access for students, though many rural districts noted that with limited cellphone service areas in their communities, **hotspots are not a viable solution for all homes.** Another respondent reported that the hotspots available from Sprint do not offer sufficient service for video lesson or group chatting functionalities. One rural superintendent noted that the 100 hotspots purchased for their students were lost in transit, further limiting their ability to provide internet access. Another respondent noted that like computers, many hotspots are now backordered due to heightened demand.
- **On the other hand, a number of respondents shared that internet providers in rural areas cannot provide fast enough service to accommodate the network needs for providing distance learning.** Some also noted that internet providers are offering lower cost – and sometimes free – internet access but that only free access would truly address their students’ needs. Many are also concerned about what they view as deceptive advertising and billing practices. One district shared that they are exploring prepaying for internet service for some of their families but are needing to coordinate across numerous providers to determine coverage.

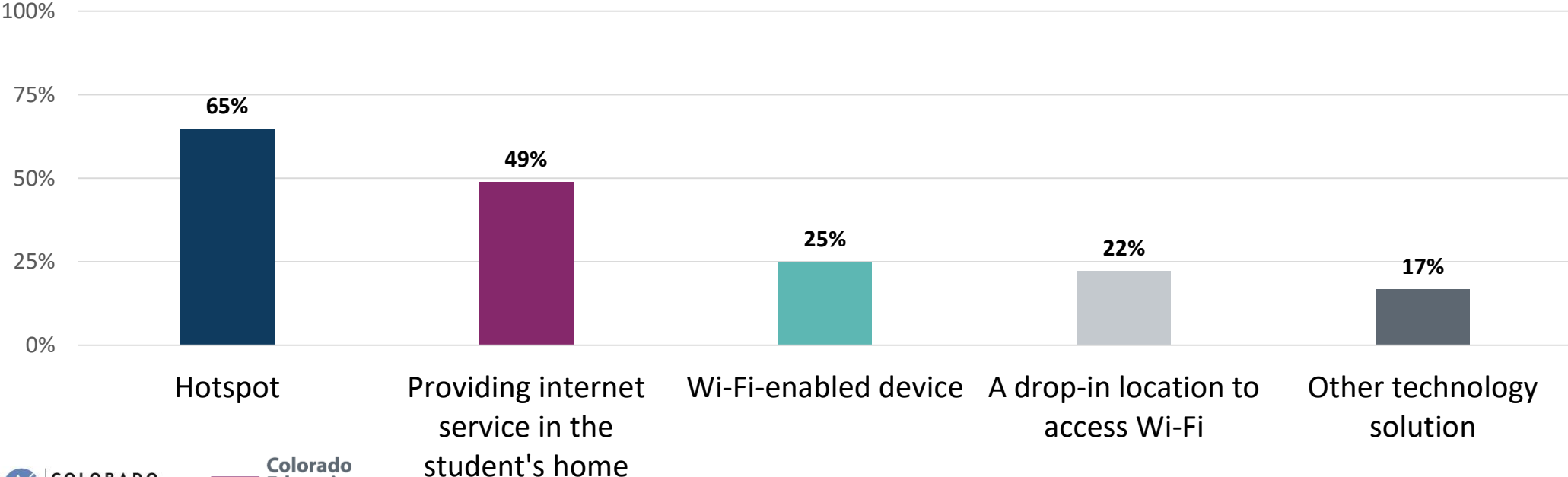
Budget Concerns

- There is increasing concern among respondents about how budgets will absorb these unanticipated costs for providing technology and/or hotspots to students.

Access to Internet: Possible Solutions

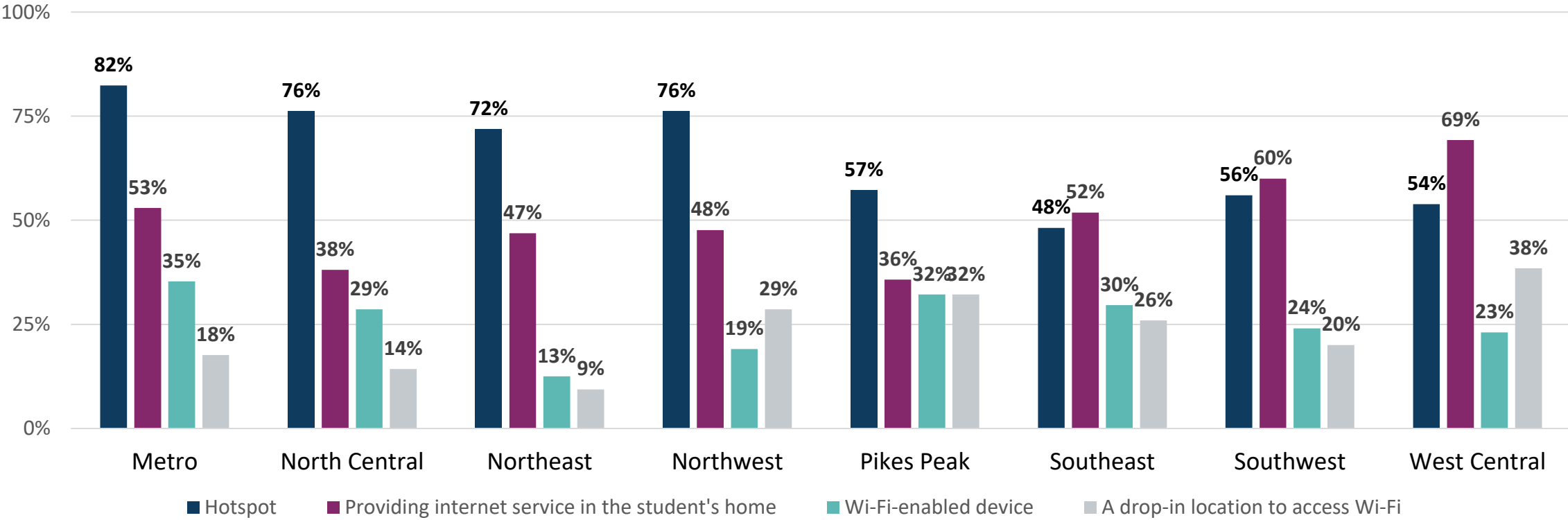
As shown in the graph below, hotspots were the most commonly selected solution for students facing connectivity problems, with nearly two-thirds reporting that they could be practical solutions for their students to access internet.

Percentage of Respondents who Reported that the Following Approaches Would Be Practical Solutions for Connectivity Issues



Access to Internet: Possible Solutions By Region

Percentage of Respondents who Reported that the Following Approaches Would Be Practical Solutions for Connectivity Issues by Region



Software Needs

48% of respondents reported they need Zoom, Teams, or similar technology.

Many people reported the need for support to help cover the cost of the paid versions of Zoom or similar technology due to increasing privacy concerns with the free versions.

9% reported needing Microsoft Office.

20% shared that they have other software needs.

These included Google Voice, Google Hangouts, Learning Management Systems, and security and content filtering software.

23% of respondents noted that they do not have any software needs at this time.¹

- **Even when respondents reported a software need, a number of them indicated that this is not their greatest area of need currently.**
- Increasingly, **districts and BOCES are raising concerns about privacy issues in using particular software, especially Zoom.**
- Similarly, a number of respondents flagged the need for encryption abilities for transferring files, such as for special education services, and for content filtering software.
- Finally, some respondents shared that their software needs are more related to training educators rather than acquiring the software.

Regional Successes



Statewide Successes: Themes

Initial common themes emerged from the success stories that districts shared. Follow-up data collection efforts planned for April-May 2020 will gather more promising practices and stories highlighting successes across the state.

- **Each region emphasized the incredible work that teachers are doing in service of our Colorado students and families.** Teachers are leaning in to create and share engaging, meaningful learning opportunities, sometimes with tools and resources that teachers are learning for the first time themselves. Colorado teachers are demonstrating resilience, flexibility, grit, and dedication through incredibly stressful circumstances and in turn our students have the opportunity to practice and strengthen their own skills and competencies.
- **Community and district partnerships across Colorado have built food distribution systems to meet the basic needs of students and families** and effectively designing and implementing innovative solutions to ensure that meals can be delivered to families.
- **Our districts are working to build and strengthen relationships with students and families.** There is clear recognition that prioritizing connection during this time is foundational to learning and development needs. Schools and districts are creatively leveraging staff to ensure that there are consistent touchpoints with students and families.
- **Several districts shared their willingness to offer supports, resources, and staff time to other districts** across the state, reflecting solidarity and connection in our local control state.

Highlighting Successes: Metro Region

“We are also stressing that relationships come first, learning follows. We got a little caught up in ensuring evidence of learning the first week... This upcoming week we are stressing quality over quantity, relationships first, check in with students and families, and don't be afraid to take risks.”

- Districts in the Metro Region quickly leveraged district and community infrastructure to put meal distribution systems in place.
- While there is still a need for additional devices, districts were able to assess student needs and distribute available devices in a short time period.
- Professional development supports were designed and launched to support a rapid transition to online learning. Districts that began remote learning early on have offered to share educator supports and resources that they are using.
- Districts emphasized their decision to step back and prioritize relationships with students above all else.
- There is deep recognition of the stress and change that students and families are navigating during this time.

Highlighting Successes: North Central Region

“The Early Childhood home visiting program, which launched remote visits on March 13, has helped us to connect with families. Clear guidance and information from the Federal Office of Head Start and the Colorado Preschool Program about funding continuity and remote learning expectations has also been very helpful...”

- North Central districts highlight the incredible resourcefulness of their teachers in creating engaging and meaningful learning opportunities for students.
- Early efforts to connect with families has resulted in high levels of participation from students and families in home learning opportunities.
- Districts have experienced an outpouring of support from all segments of the community - students, families, partners, government agencies – which has facilitated a relatively smooth transition during a challenging time.
- There has been strong collaboration district staff and teachers to build out remote learning curriculum and lesson plans which has enabled teachers to get a head start on planning, connecting and engaging with students, and establishing new classroom routines.

Highlighting Successes: Northeast Region

“Teacher to parent communication has been consistent and expansive at this time, and is our greatest strength. Teachers have made contact with higher risk/need students and families to ensure they have what resources are available to them, and support parents with transition to remote learning.”

- Communication channels with families and community partners have been critical during this time. Given the small community context, teachers and leaders have deep knowledge of student and family needs and have been able to provide more personalized support as a result.
- Districts in the Northeast Region have worked to activate food distribution networks and take a significant role in problem-solving around internet connectivity.
- District leaders noted the incredible compassion and flexibility of teachers in the Northeast Region during this time. There is also clear willingness to lean into their own learning curve at this time in effort to effectively support their students.
- Northeast Region has effectively leveraged Zoom and Google Classroom to transition into remote learning over the past few weeks.

Highlighting Successes: Northwest Region

“Our Instruction Department has done an amazing job working with school leaders to roll out virtual learning for our students. Every day teachers are sharing new resources with each other to better meet the needs of students.”

- The Coronavirus context has created new, meaningful opportunities for teacher collaboration within districts in the Northwest Region.
- School and district staff have been proactive and demonstrated immense dedication to supporting students and families through the transition to remote learning. Districts have created tutorials to support parents and educators with utilizing tools and technology that can support student learning.
- Contacting families on a weekly basis has resulted in increased partnership, clear expectations around school work, and dissemination of resources and information. Given the different demands that families, students, and educators are navigating, districts are working with families to strike the right balance with regard to expectations around formal learning time.

Highlighting Successes: Pikes Peak Region

“Due to the unusually snowy winter, we already had all our schools develop e-learning plans as part of our strategy. We didn't know we were planning for Coronavirus disruptions, but those plans have been the foundation of what we're doing now...excellent learning and engagement is evident across all our schools and zones.”

- Educators have leveraged resources across multiple organizations and platforms including blended learning professional development resources from iLearn, Google Hangouts, Curriculum Associates, and Vizzle. Specifically, staff have used Google Hangouts and a safe version of Zoom Meetings for hosting IEP meetings and providing face-to-face direct instruction/therapies to students individually and in small groups.
- Continuity planning had already begun in certain districts and staff were able to leverage and build on those plans to quickly pivot and support students during this time.
- Pikes Peak districts prioritized helping meet the food and resource needs of students and families and focused on a slower and deliberate role out of remote learning. There has been a strong partnership between community partners and districts to carry out food distribution efforts.

Highlighting Successes: Southeast Region

“As always, the best resource is people. Our employees have ‘put on their game faces’ and are making this work. Our teacher aids are doing a fantastic job calling their assigned families (Sped students) and touching base every day and helping them find solutions to their new educational needs.”

- Districts in the Southeast Region have started to utilize repurposed para-professional time to increase and strengthen outreach to families to ensure that the districts are meeting educational needs of their students.
- In addition to increased collaboration within districts and schools, districts across the Southeast Region have been in communication and are sharing strategies and resources to support students and families.
- Educators have created different avenues for accessing learning that include both virtual opportunities and learning packets. They are working to meet students and families in the ways that they can most effectively access instruction.

Highlighting Successes: Southwest Region

“Reaching out personally and frequently to connect with staff, students, and parents during this difficult time has really helped to build relationships as well as trust and a sense of community.”

- Districts frequently mentioned the ways that they have been able to use Zoom to connect with students and families, support instruction, and provide special services. Efforts have led to 90-100% participation from students.
- Educators have made use of a wide variety of programs to deliver instruction and are working to research how to best support more hands on learning for courses like building trades.
- School and district staff are testing out different communications strategies to connect with the team and emphasize available supports. Communications have focused on topics such as tips for creating schedules, navigating different tools for instruction, sharing messages from the psychologist, underscoring the importance of internet safety; and entertaining videos to promote connection and relationships.

Highlighting Successes: West Central Region

“I am really proud of all that our technology staff, leadership team members, especially instructional leadership team, teachers, school leaders and other staff members, nursing and custodial staff [have done]. Tech has provided a full time help desk for parents, students, and staff...”

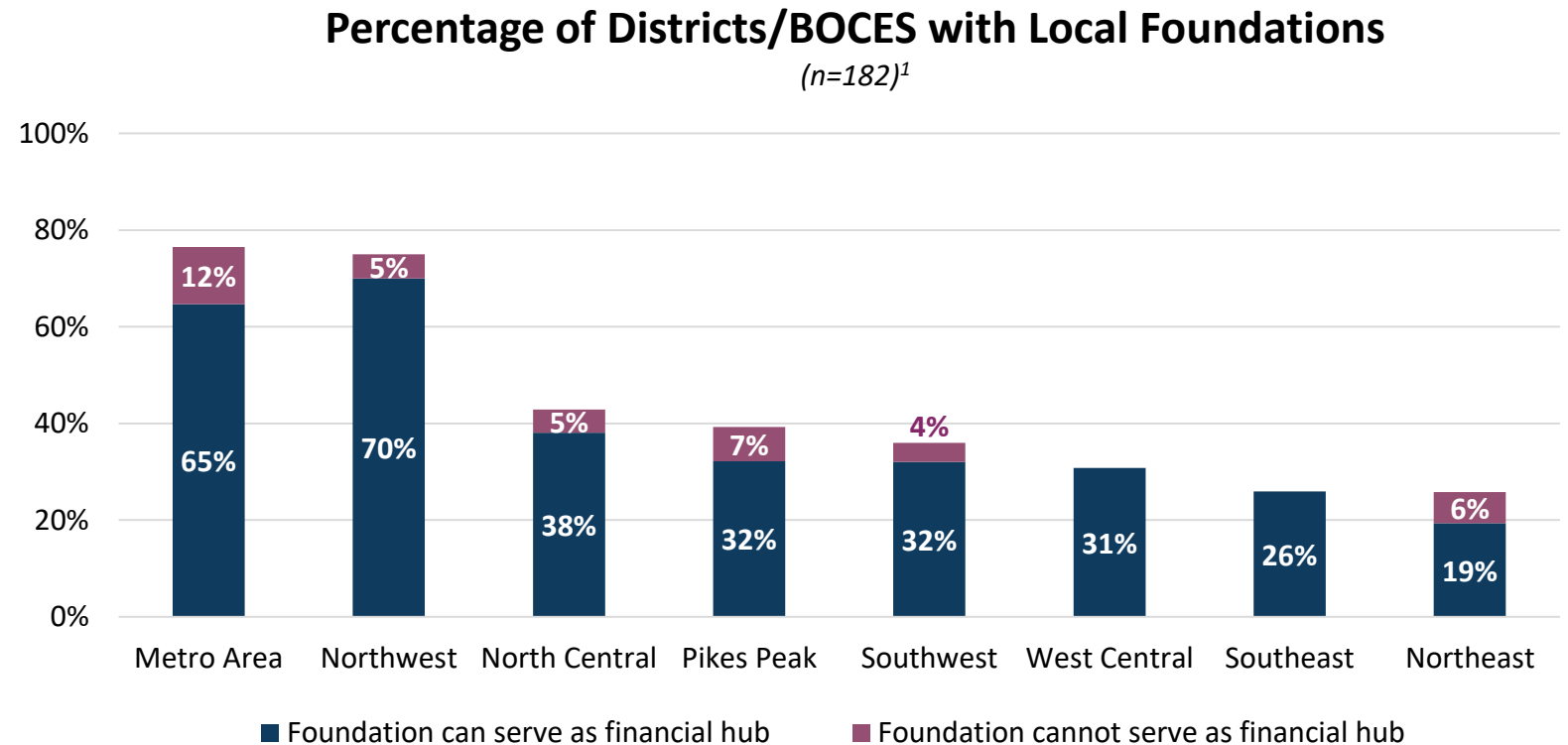
- West Central Region districts have created and disseminated resources and protocols to staff, families, and students to support the transition to remote learning. This has included leveraging the supports of a technology coach to work with educators in some districts. Districts have volunteered their staff to support other districts in problem-solving different aspects of this transition.
- Teachers have focused on relationships and connections with their students and have taken the lead and developed a system for checking in with students daily by capitalizing on other staff members availability.
- Staff have collaborated to create engaging learning opportunities for their students and families. One example is building out challenges for students and providing all of the supplies necessary for students that want to participate. Students who send a picture of their projects are entered into a weekly raffle to win prizes.

Local School District Foundation Support



Local School District Foundations

- Overall, **42 percent of responding districts/BOCES have a local foundation for their district(s)**, with the vast majority of those able to serve as a financial hub for the district(s), as indicated by the dark blue in the graph.
- However, **districts and BOCES in the Metro Area and Northwest regions are substantially more likely to have local district foundations** than any other region in the state.



¹ Two district/BOCES respondents did not respond to these questions on the needs inventory.