



BEACON
RESEARCH



A National Survey of Parents For the Walton Family Foundation

April 2021

About the Survey



Mode	Online
Sample	2,718 parents of children in grades K-12
Dates	April 2-11, 2021
Weighting	Sample was weighted to known demographics of K-12 parents by race, ethnicity, and region.
Margin of error	+/-1.9%
Note	Some data may not add up to 100% due to rounding



- There is widespread support among parents for the massive infusion in federal education funding included in the stimulus plans.
- A majority sees the influx of federal dollars as an opportunity to make 'bold changes' in education policy.
- 3-in-4 believe the increase in funding will provide direct benefits to them.
- Majorities say they would take advantage of new education options offered.
- Parents attach a high degree of importance to transparency about how this money will be spent, and measuring its impact on student performance.

Rating Quality of Own Child's School



Do you think the quality of education provided at your own child's school is:

<u>Exc/good</u>	73%
<i>Excellent</i>	25
<i>Good</i>	48
<u>Fair/poor</u>	24%
<i>Only fair</i>	19
<i>Poor</i>	5

% saying 'exc/good'

\$100K+ income	86%
College-educ parents	83
Private school parents	80
Urban parents	79
Northeast region	76

% saying 'fair/poor'

Under \$50K income	34%
Small town/rural	31
Non-college parents	31
Latino parents	30

4-in-10 Parents 'Very Concerned' About Covid Learning Loss



How concerned are you that your child has not been making as much progress as they would in a typical year because of the Covid crisis:

Very concerned 39%

Somewhat concerned 28

A little/not concerned at all 30

Two Types of Parents 'Very Concerned' About Learning Loss



Very concerned/school positive

Parents who are 'very concerned' about their child's progress over the last year and think their school is doing a good job.

- 62% are white
- 62% are college grads
- 77% are married
- 74% are working full time
- 53% earn more than \$75K
- 55% are Democrats
- They voted for Biden by 25 points

Very concerned/school negative

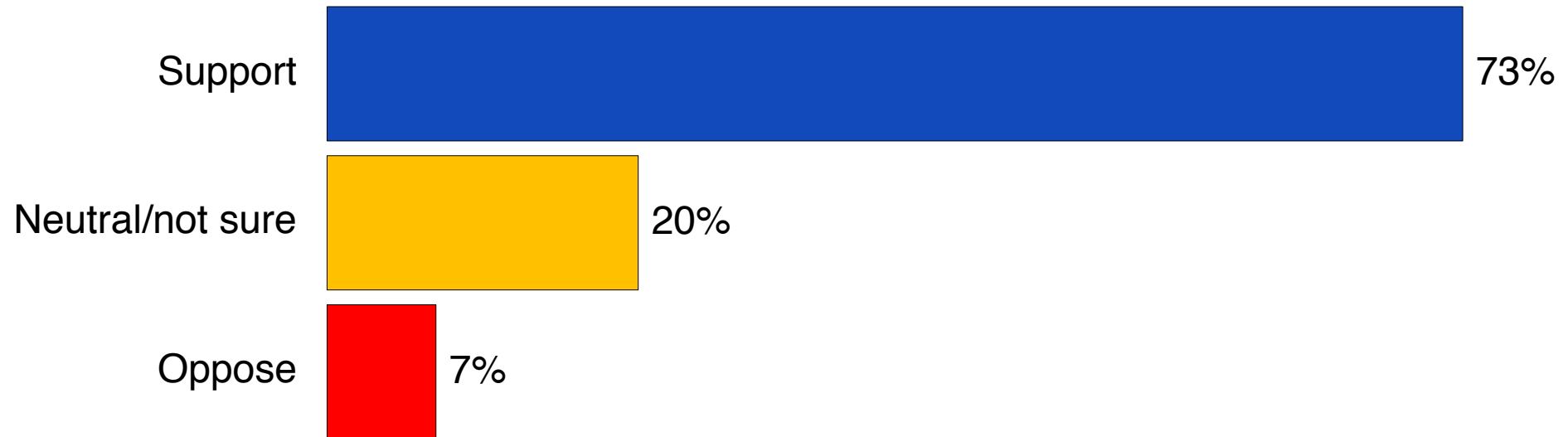
Parents who are 'very concerned' about their child's progress over the last year and think their school is not doing a good job.

- 50% are parents of color
- 73% are not college grads
- 56% are married
- 50% are working full time
- 69% earn less than \$75K
- 64% are Republicans or independents
- They voted for Trump by 16 points

Widespread Support Among Parents for American Rescue Plan



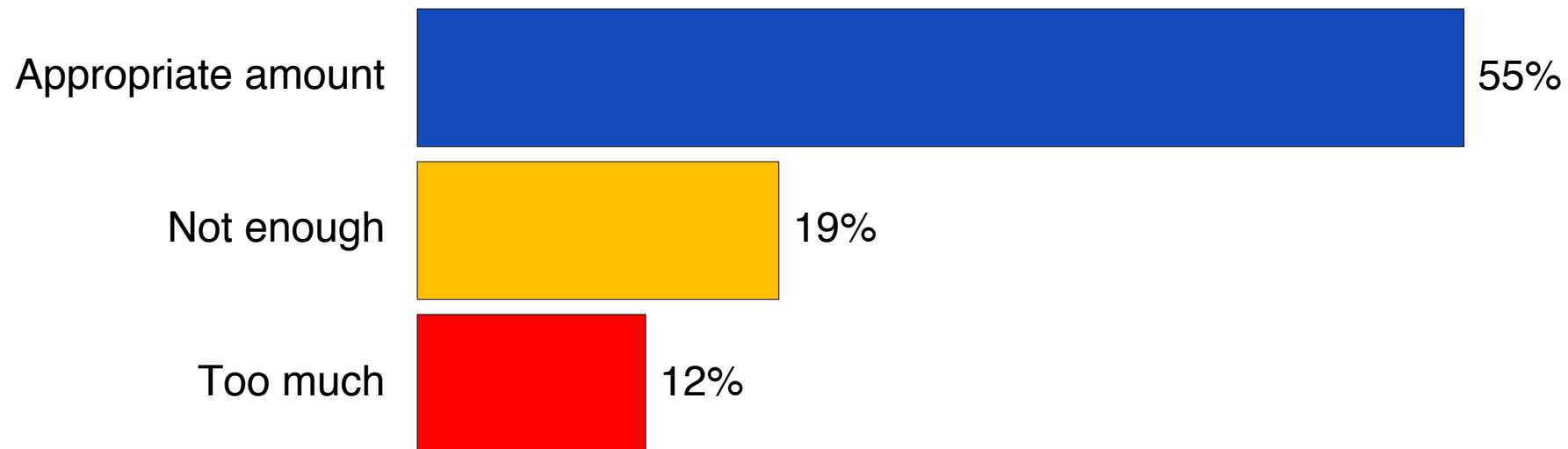
As you may know, Congress recently passed a major economic stimulus package known as the American Rescue Plan. Based on what you know, do you support or oppose this stimulus plan?



Parents Back Major Influx of New Federal Education Money



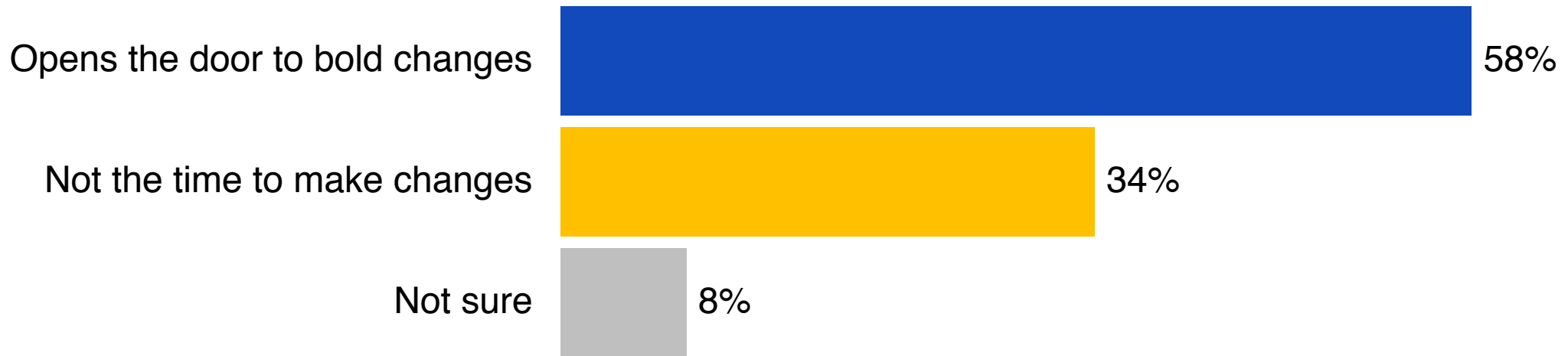
As part of stimulus packages, \$190 billion will be allocated to elementary, middle and high schools throughout the country to help them recover from the Covid crisis. This is over and above existing federal funding for education. It is a one-time infusion of funds intended to be used over the next couple of years to help schools reopen safely and support students struggling academically and mentally due to the pandemic. Does this seem like an appropriate amount to devote to this purpose, not enough for this purpose, or too much for this purpose?



Majority Sees Opportunity for 'Bold Changes'



Which of these two viewpoints are you more inclined to agree with: this major new influx in federal funds opens the door to making bold changes in public education; we should take advantage of this opportunity OR now is not the time to make major changes in public education; we should stick to funding existing programs and getting things back to normal.



Support for Bold Changes Cuts Across Demographic Lines



	Bold changes	Not the time		Bold changes	Not the time
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			<u>Region</u>		
White	56%	36%	Northeast	59%	36%
Latino	57	35	Midwest	56	35
Black	68	26	South	57	35
Asian	58	33	West	61	33
<u>Household income</u>			<u>Area</u>		
Under \$50K income	54	35	Urban	64	30
\$50K-\$100K	57	37	Suburban	58	36
\$100K+ income	65	31	Small town/rural	48	40

Support for Bold Changes Exists Among All Types of Parents



	Bold changes	Not the time
Rate own child's school as excellent/good	60%	34%
Rate own child's school as fair/poor	54	37
Very concerned about Covid learning loss	60	35
Somewhat concerned	56	37
A little concerned/not concerned	57	32
Very concerned/school positive	63	34
Very concerned/school negative	55	39

What Policy Ideas Do Parents See as Potentially Effective?



- We tested the perceived effectiveness of 14 different policy prescriptions.
- List was informed by input from advocates, lobbyists, previous polling and focus group research.
- Topics ranged from academic recovery to better technology, mental health and teacher support.
- Parents were asked to rate how effective they thought each option would be in terms of helping students in their state, and then were asked which three ideas they thought would have the greatest positive impact on students and families.

Most Parents See Nearly All These Steps Having an Impact



<i>How effective would each of the following be in terms of helping students in your state – extremely effective, very effective, somewhat effective, or not that effective:</i>	<i>% saying extremely or very effective</i>
Offering more college credit/work-based learning/apprenticeships	76%
Providing teachers w/ better instructional materials/digital resources	74
Providing special funding for students w/ greater learning needs	74
Expanding broadband access to underserved areas/upgrading tech	73
Providing tools/support to meet students' emotional/mental health needs	73
Developing tools to help teachers w/ student academic/mental health	71
Improving online learning by providing teachers w/ more training	70
Expanding high-quality tutoring programs	69
Expanding free pre-K and childcare options for all children	68
Offering summer school instruction to any child who wants it	66
Creating more pathways into teaching to draw more diverse workforce	66
Creating more school options, like charter schools, learning pods	65
Providing direct grants to parents of \$500 per child	62
Expanding learning time through longer school day/school year	45

Which Would Have the Greatest Positive Impact?



<i>Of the items you rated extremely/very effective, which <u>three</u> would have the greatest positive impact on students/families in your state:</i>	<i>% rating each item as 1 of top 3</i>
Offering more college credit/work-based learning/apprenticeships	22%
Providing teachers w/ better instructional materials/digital resources	22
Providing tools/support to meet students' emotional/mental health needs	21
Creating more school options, like charter schools, learning pods	21
Providing special funding for students w/ greater learning needs	20
Expanding broadband access to underserved areas/upgrading tech	20
Improving online learning by providing teachers w/ more training	19
Expanding free pre-K and childcare options for all children	19
Providing direct grants to parents of \$500 per child	19
Developing tools to help teachers w/ student academic/mental health	18
Expanding high-quality tutoring programs	18
Offering summer school instruction to any child who wants it	18
Creating more pathways into teaching to draw more diverse workforce	16
Expanding learning time through longer school day/school year	12

Differences By Race/Ethnicity in Top Choices



Rank	White parents	Latino parents	Black parents	Asian parents
1	College credits/CTE (22%)	College credits/CTE (24%)	Better teacher materials (24%)	College credits/CTE (25%)
2	Students w/ greater needs (22%)	Better teacher materials (23%)	College credits/CTE (21%)	Mental/emotional health (24%)
3	Mental/emotional health (21%)	More charter schools (23%)	Free pre-K/childcare (21%)	Better teacher materials (24%)
4	Better teacher materials (21%)	Broadband access (19%)	More charter schools (20%)	Direct \$500 grants (21%)
5	More charter schools (20%)	Mental/emotional health (19%)	Free tutoring (20%)	Broadband access (18%)
6	Broadband access (20%)	Summer school (19%)	Direct \$500 grants (20%)	Summer school (18%)

Differences By Income



Rank	Under \$50K	\$50K-\$100K	\$100K+
1	College credits/CTE (21%)	College credits/CTE (25%)	Improve online learning (22%)
2	Free pre-K/childcare (21%)	Better teacher materials (24%)	Students w/ greater needs (22%)
3	Mental/emotional health (21%)	Mental/emotional health (22%)	Innovative assessments (22%)
4	Better teacher materials (20%)	More charter schools (22%)	Better teacher materials (21%)
5	Direct \$500 grants (20%)	Free pre-K/childcare (19%)	College credits/CTE (21%)
6	Broadband access (20%)	Summer school (19%)	More charter schools (21%)

What Changes Would Parents Take Advantage Of?



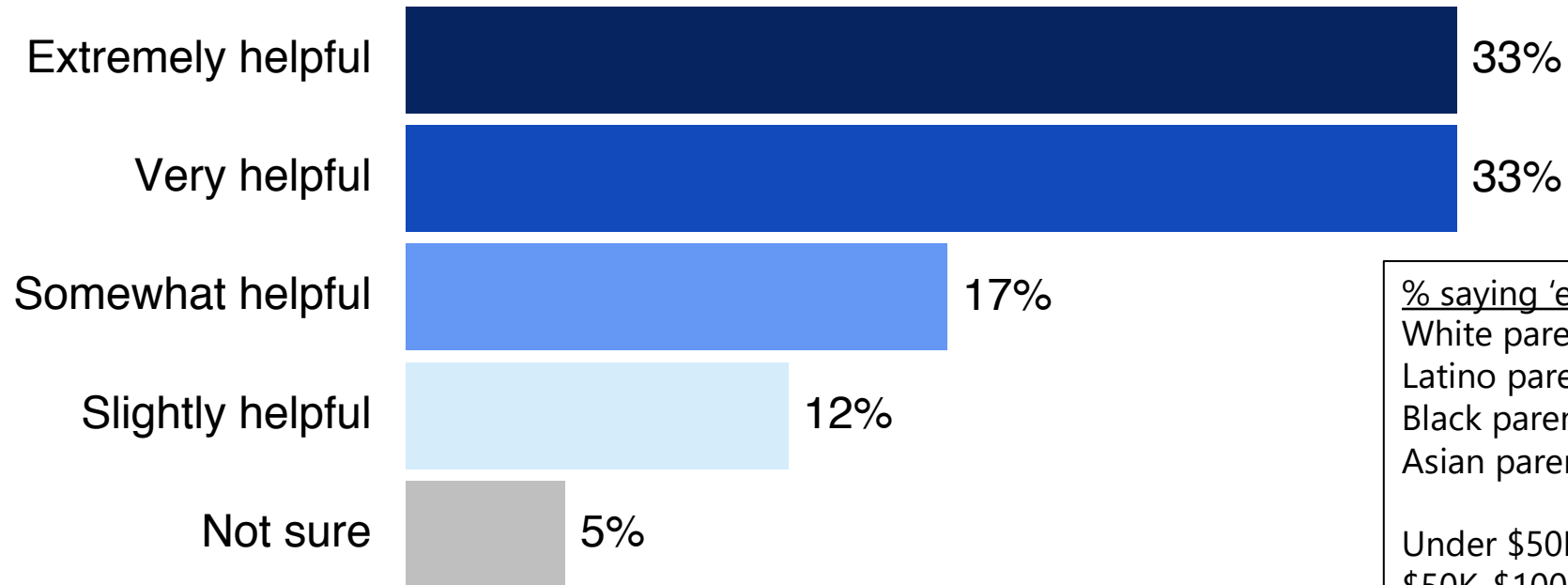
We asked parents specifically about their interest in using:

- Direct grants
- Better technology for the home
- Tutoring
- College credit/CTE options

Majority Sees Direct \$500 Grants as Very Helpful



If all parents were provided with a one-time grant of \$500 per child for educational needs, how much impact would that have on your own child/children and their academic success?



% saying 'extremely/very helpful'	
White parents	67%
Latino parents	65
Black parents	67
Asian parents	59
Under \$50K income	69
\$50K-\$100K income	63
\$100K+ income	66
Rate own schools good	70
Own schools not good	54
Very concerned/schl pos	83
Very concerned/schl neg	57

More Than 40% Say They Would Benefit From Tech Upgrades



Thinking about the current level of technology in your own household – that is, computers, internet or wifi service, and things like that – do you basically have what you need for your child’s educational purposes or would it be of significant help to you to have more or better equipment?



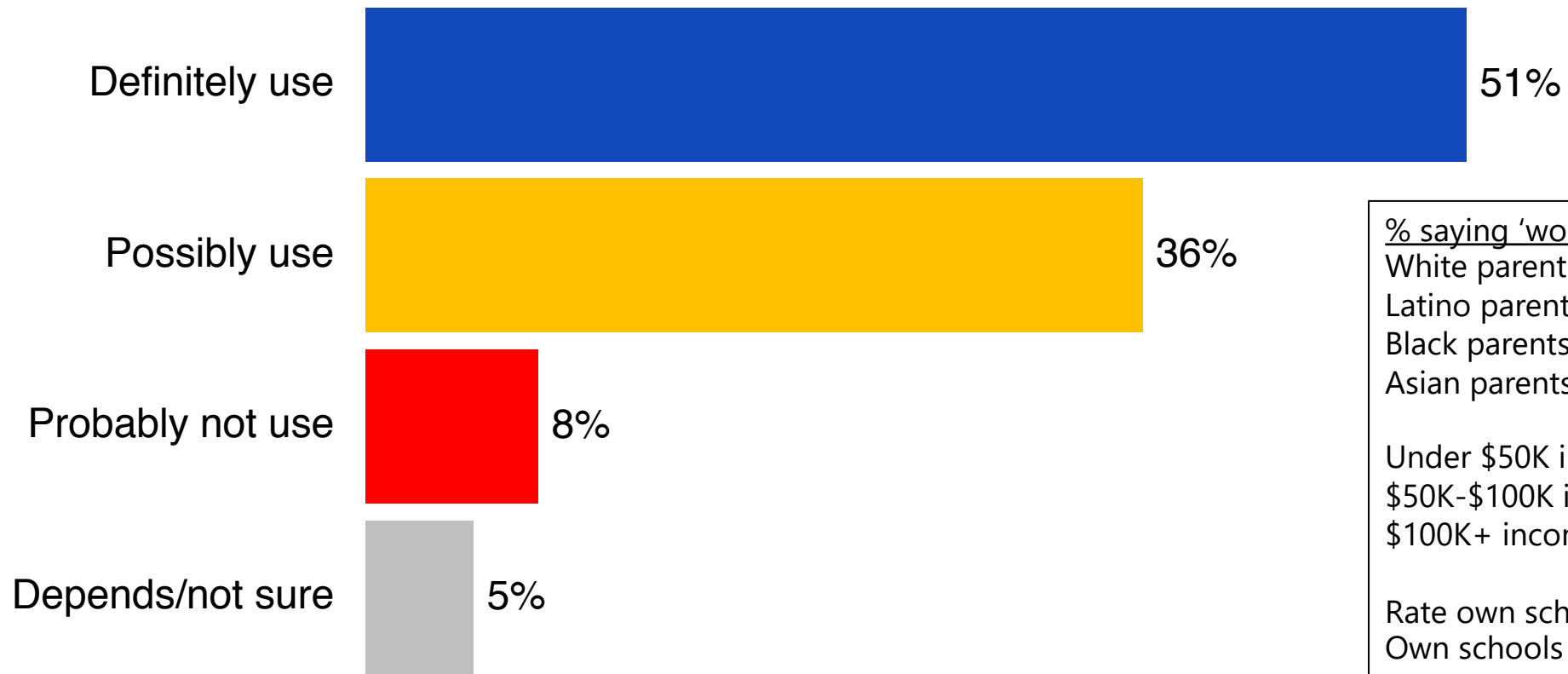
% saying it would help to have more

White parents	43%
Latino parents	44
Black parents	52
Asian parents	46
Under \$50K income	56
\$50K-\$100K income	44
\$100K+ income	29
Rate own schools good	41
Own schools not good	55
Very concerned/schl pos	36
Very concerned/schl neg	56

Most Parents Say They Would Take Advantage of Free Tutoring



If there were a significant expansion of high-quality tutoring services available at your child's school for no cost to you, is that a service that you would definitely use, possibly use, or probably not use for your child/children?

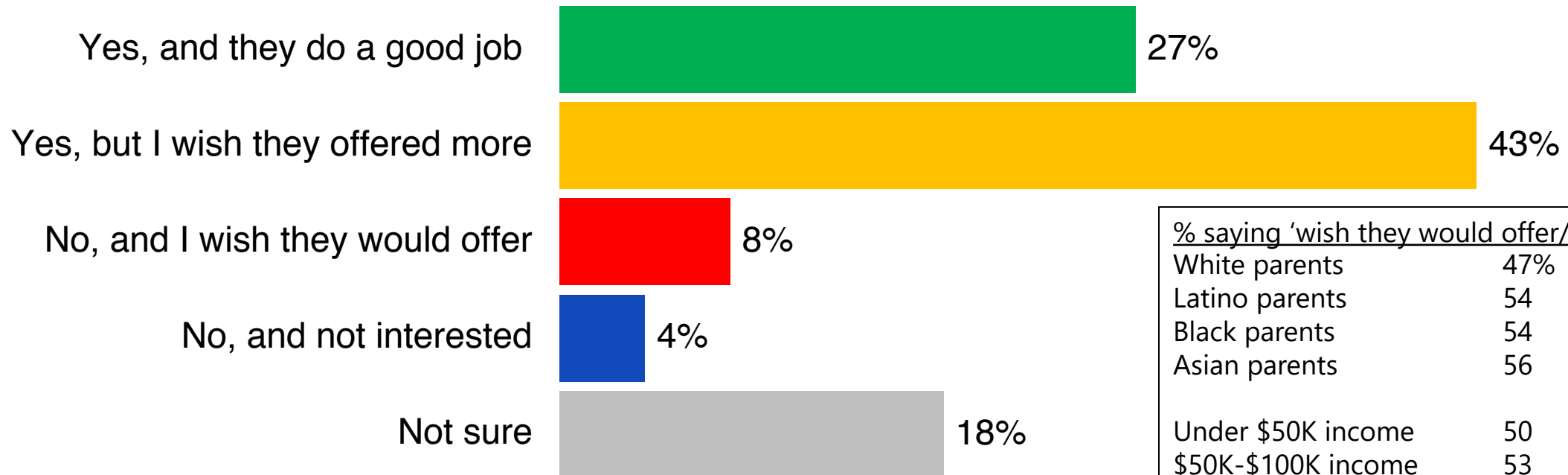


<u>% saying 'would definitely use'</u>	
White parents	49%
Latino parents	56
Black parents	60
Asian parents	46
Under \$50K income	51
\$50K-\$100K income	48
\$100K+ income	57
Rate own schools good	53
Own schools not good	49
Very concerned/schl pos	75
Very concerned/schl neg	71



Half of All Parents Would Like to See More CTE Options

Do the schools in your community offer opportunities for high school students to earn college credits and/or participate in work-based learning programs or apprenticeships in various career fields?



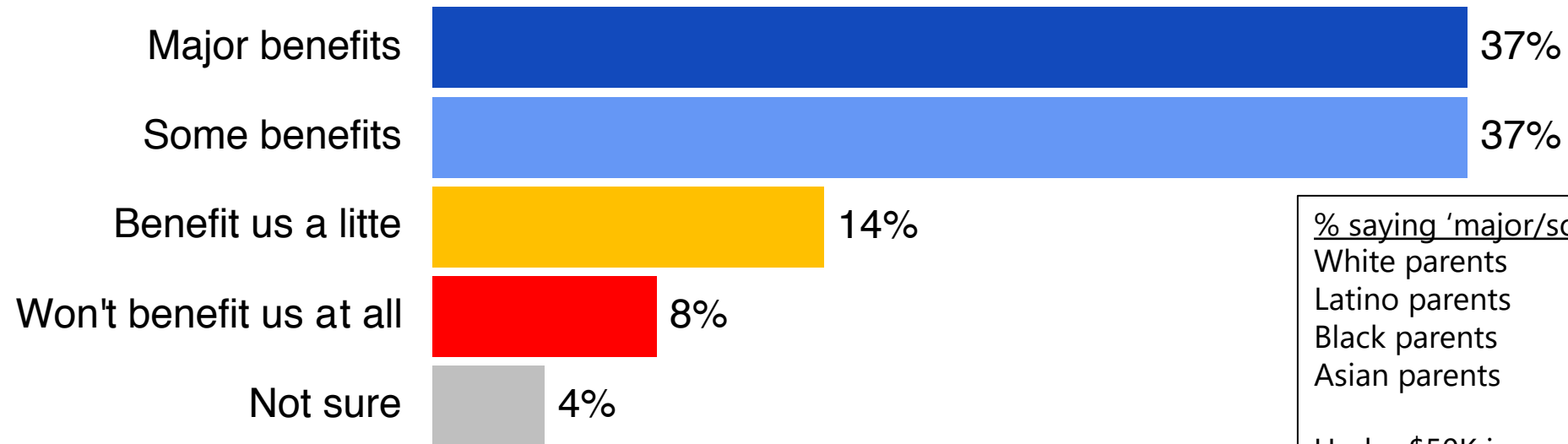
% saying 'wish they would offer/offer more'

White parents	47%
Latino parents	54
Black parents	54
Asian parents	56
Under \$50K income	50
\$50K-\$100K income	53
\$100K+ income	46
Rate own schools good	47
Own schools not good	62
Very concerned/schl pos	40
Very concerned/schl neg	57

3-in-4 Feel Education Stimulus Will Benefit Their Child



How much do you think this \$190 billion in additional funding will help you and your child/children: it should provide major benefits to us, it should provide some benefits to us, it may benefit us a little bit, or it probably won't benefit us at all?



% saying 'major/some benefits'	
White parents	73%
Latino parents	74
Black parents	81
Asian parents	74
Under \$50K income	71
\$50K-\$100K income	74
\$100K+ income	79
Rate own schools good	79
Own schools not good	62
Very concerned/schl pos	87
Very concerned/schl neg	64

Most Parents Want Transparency and Testing



- Overwhelming majorities of parents want states to be transparent about how the education stimulus money is being used, and provide updates on the new funding's impact on student performance.
- The level of importance attached to transparency is very consistent across racial, ethnic, income and other demographic lines.
- Parents say it is very important that schools provide up-to-date assessments of how students are performing academically, and how much learning loss was suffered over the last year as a result of the Covid crisis.

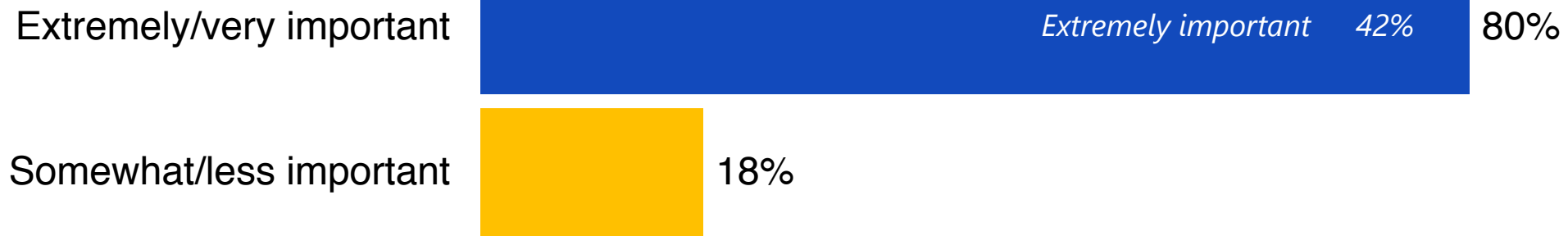
Parents Attach High Level of Importance to Transparency



[Sample A] *How important is it for schools in your state to be transparent with the public about how these new federal funds are spent:*



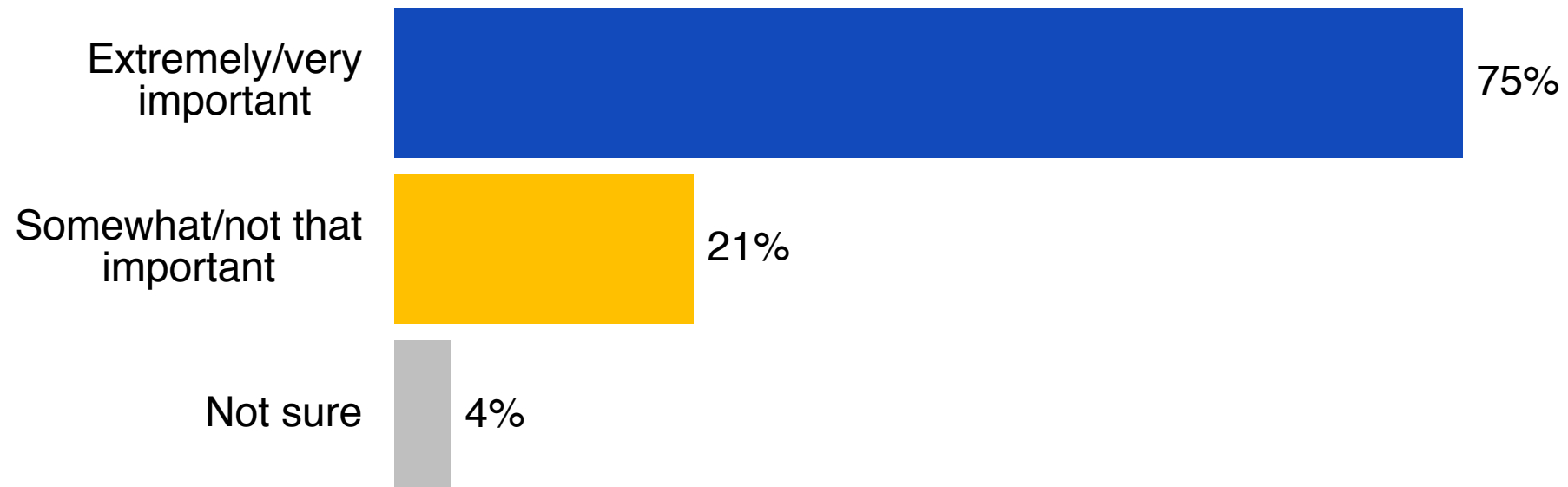
[Sample B] *How important is it for schools in your state to provide regular updates on whether student performance is increasing over time as a result of this increased federal funding:*



3-in-4 Want Up-to-Date Assessments of Covid Impact



As you may know, many states waived their annual academic testing during the last school year because of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result, teachers and schools did not receive up-to-date information on how students performed academically. How important is it to you personally to accurately understand student learning and learning loss as a result of Covid disruptions at your child's/children's school this year?



Key Findings Among Black Parents



Higher Support Among Black Parents for American Rescue Plan and Education Stimulus Money

- 84% of Black parents support the American Rescue Plan (vs. 73% all parents)
- Most Black parents say \$190 billion in new education funding is 'appropriate amount' (61%) or 'not enough' (23%). (vs. 74%)
- 68% say new federal funding presents opportunity to make 'bold changes' in public education (vs. 56%)

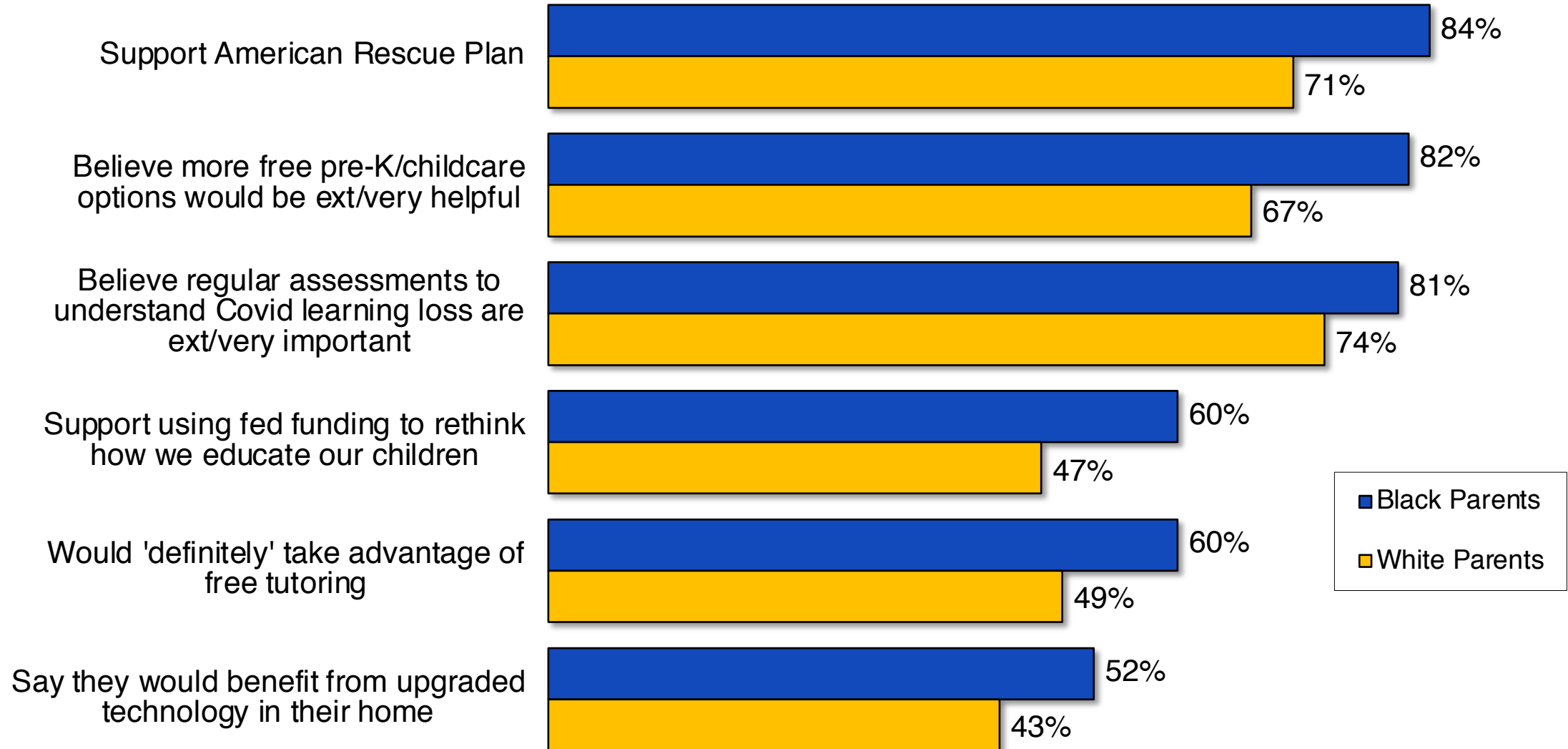
Black Parents More Likely to Say Tutoring, Upgraded Technology, and Expanded CTE Options Would Be Helpful

- 60% of Black parents say they would 'definitely' take advantage of free high-quality tutoring if offered (vs. 51%)
- 52% of Black parents say they could use more or upgraded technology in their home for education purposes (vs. 44%)
- 54% of Black parents want more or better CTE offerings; another 18% are 'not sure' if their school offers CTE (vs. 50%)

Demand for Assessments and Transparency Equally High Among Black Parents

- 81% of Black parents say regular updates on the impact of new federal funding is extremely/very important (vs. 80%)
- 81% of Black parents say regular assessments to understand learning loss from Covid is extremely/very important (vs. 75%)

Notable Differences Between Black Parents and White Parents





Appendix

List of Specific Policy Prescriptions Tested



How effective would each of these be in terms of helping students in your state – extremely, very, somewhat, or not that effective.

- Providing direct grants to parents of \$500 per child for personal educational needs
- Expanding high-quality tutoring programs
- Improving online learning by providing teachers with more training
- Expanding free pre-K and childcare options for all children
- Offering summer school instruction to any child who wants it
- Providing special funding for students w/ greater learning needs, like students w/ disabilities or students living in poverty
- Creating more school options, like charter schools or learning pods, so families can choose the school that best meets their child's needs
- Creating more pathways into teaching to draw a more diverse and skilled teacher workforce
- Expanding broadband access to underserved areas and upgrade technology
- Offering more opportunities for students to earn college credits or participate in work-based learning programs or apprenticeships
- Developing innovative assessments/other tools that can help teachers/schools better understand student academic/mental health needs
- Expand learning time through a longer school day or longer school year
- Providing tools, training and supports so schools can best meet the emotional and mental health needs of students
- Providing teachers w/ better instructional materials, including digital resources, that are aligned to state learning standards