

Issue Brief:

The Parent-Teacher Perception Gap





**How parents and teachers align on
engagement and access**



September 2024



For more information about this survey, ranked choice voting, or the work of Sutherland Institute, contact us:

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Y² Analytics conducted the survey highlighted in this report.

METHODOLOGY DETAILS

n = 560 likely Utah voters and 610 Utah school teachers

Online interviews fielded Aug. 10 – Sept. 5, 2024

Margin of error +- 4.1

For this survey, likely Utah voters were sampled from the Utah state voter file and teachers were sampled from a list of public school teachers in Utah. Survey invitations were sent via email and text message, and interviews were completed online. The data were weighted to reflect the demographics of likely voters in the Utah 2024 general election, specifically in regard to gender, age, race, political party registration, and probability of voting in the election.

Before drawing the sample, a model of general election turnout was estimated using age, party registration status, length of registration, permanent absentee status, and past election turnout. This model produces a sampling pool of registered voters that can be randomly sampled based on their likelihood of voting. A Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) sample was drawn using this predicted turnout estimate such that voters with a higher probability of voting have a higher probability of being selected in the sample. Thus, the final sample accurately approximates a population of general election voters.

The visuals in this issue brief were constructed from average responses given to a series of questions. For more information about survey methodology, please contact Kyrene Gibb or Quin Monson at:

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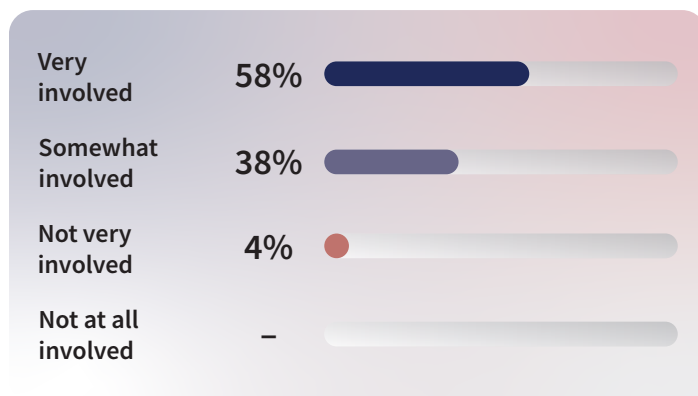


How parents and teachers align on engagement and access

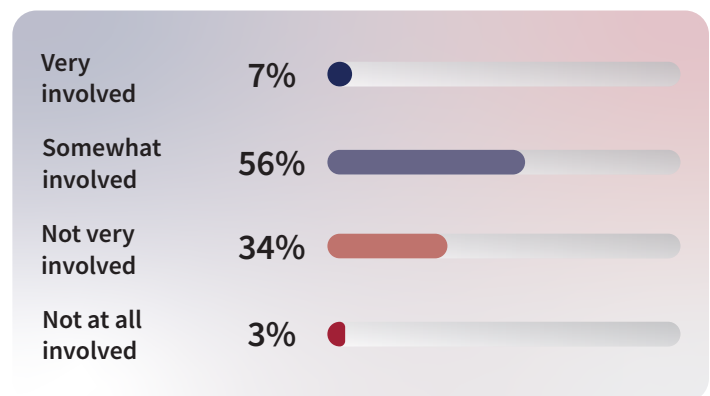
Sutherland Institute partners with Y² Analytics to regularly survey likely voters in Utah about key policy and political issues. This issue brief looks at the experience of parents and teachers in Utah education, including parent involvement in their child[ren]’s education, and how accessible curriculum and instructional materials are to parents.

560 Utah likely voters and 610 Utah teachers were selected and then interviewed online between Aug. 10 and Sept. 5, 2024. Data were weighted to reflect demographics of likely voters in the Utah 2024 general election, with a margin of error of +/- 4.1 percentage points.

How involved are you currently in your child[ren]’s education? (Parents)



How involved are parents in their child[ren]’s education? (Teachers)



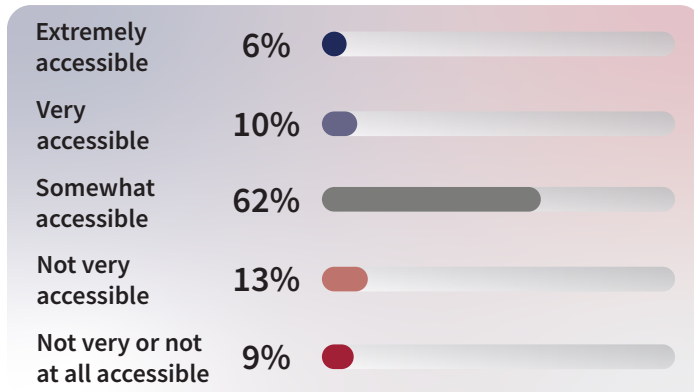
While parents and teachers share certain perceptions, a clear difference is apparent between parents and teachers in the level of perceived parent involvement in their child’s education. Basically, parents report being more involved than teachers report that parents are involved.

Among parents, 96% say they are somewhat or very involved in their child’s education, while 63% of teachers agree. The largest discrepancy is that 58% of parents rate themselves as very involved in the education of their children – a view shared by only 7% of teachers. This suggests an area where parents and teachers might benefit from clearer communication on what involvement looks like to each group.

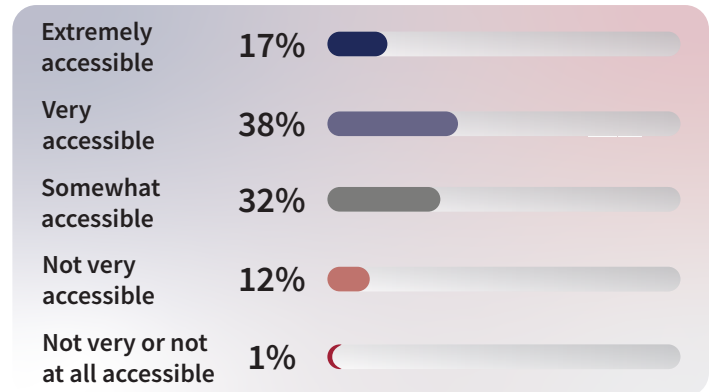
The following charts dive into parent and teacher perception and experience of the accessibility of curriculum and instructional materials.

In your view, are instructional materials and curriculum that are used to teach students currently easily accessible to parents?

Parents

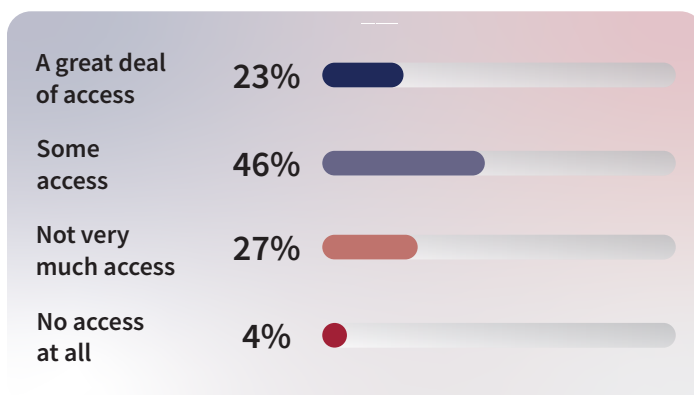


Teachers

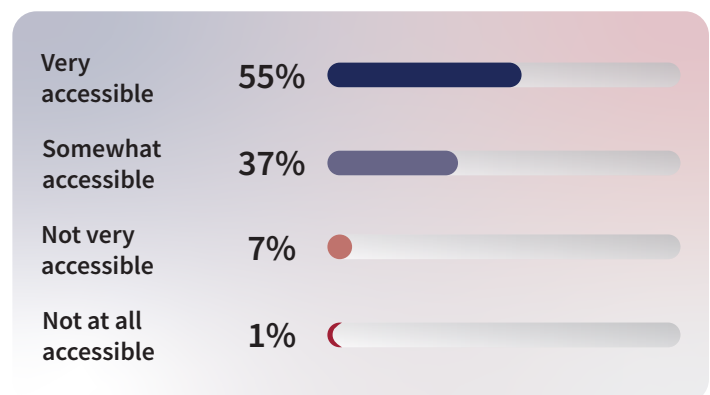


While the overwhelming majority of parents (78%) and teachers (87%) agree that there is some level of accessibility to information about instructional materials and curriculum in schools, their assessment of the level of ease in accessing that information varies widely. While 55% of teachers say that this information is extremely or very accessible, the majority of parents (62%) say this information is only somewhat accessible. This likely reflects a difference in experience of teachers sharing information and parents attempting to access that information.

How much access would you say your child[ren]’s teachers provide to the curriculum and instructional materials that they use inside the classroom? (Parents)



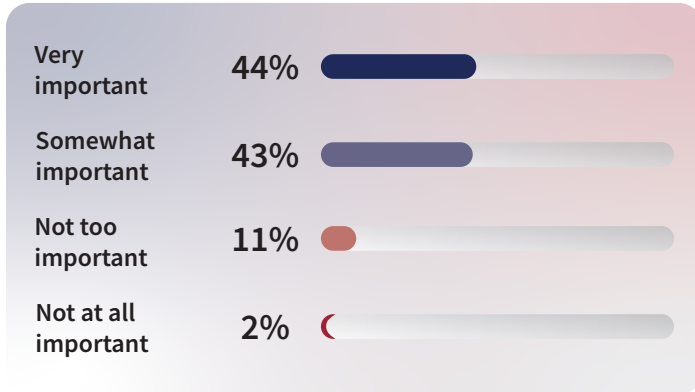
How accessible would you say you make the curriculum and instructional materials that you use inside the classroom? (Teachers)



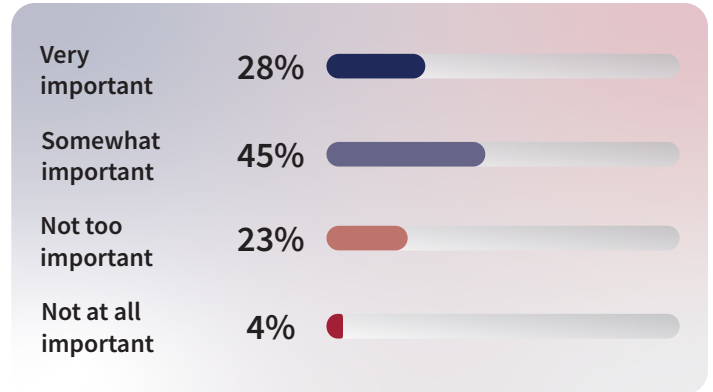
A similar pattern surfaces when parents rate teachers and teachers rate themselves in making curriculum information accessible to parents. For instance, while 69% of parents feel teachers provide some or a great deal of access to curriculum and instructional materials, a full 92% of teachers rate themselves that way. While the source of the discrepancy is not totally clear, it is a pattern that replicates itself in the opposite direction for parent involvement.

Generally speaking, how important to you is it that instructional materials and curriculum being used to teach students in Utah schools be easily accessible to parents?

Parents



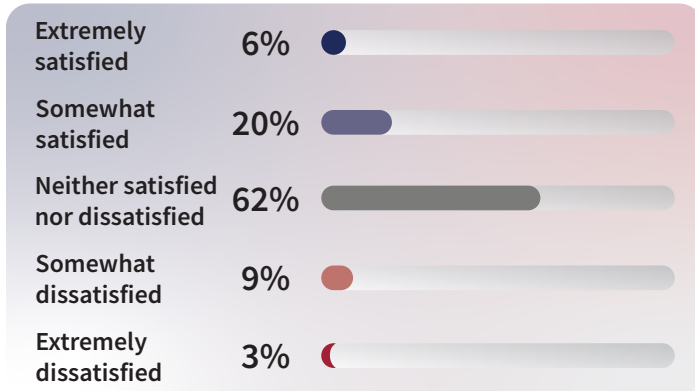
Teachers



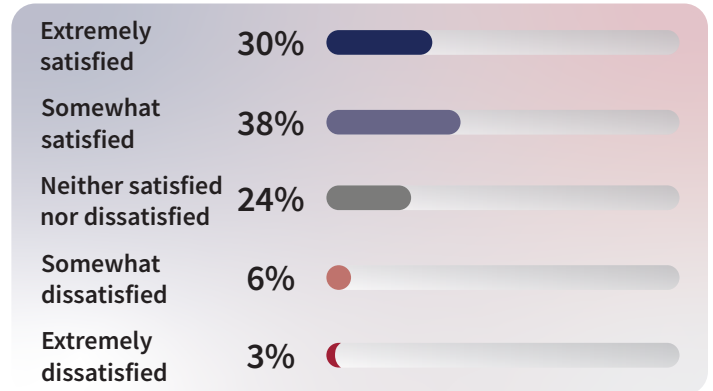
The overwhelming majority of parents (87%) and teachers (73%) say it's important to them that Utah parents can easily access instructional materials and curriculum being used to teach students. At the same time, more parents (44%) than teachers (28%) say it's very important to them. While both groups prioritize this, parents seem to feel more strongly about the importance of instructional materials and curriculum used to teach in Utah schools being easily accessible.

Many teachers use Canvas as a tool to keep parents informed about what is being taught in their classroom. How satisfied are you with Canvas as a tool for accessing classroom instruction?

Parents



Teachers



Canvas is a learning management system that many teachers use for parent-teacher communication and sharing access to learning materials. Among teachers, 68% are somewhat or extremely satisfied with Canvas as a tool for accessing classroom instruction, while only 26% of parents feel the same. Due to the statewide reliance on Canvas in public schools, the differing experience of teachers and parents with Canvas may explain some of the differing evaluations of parents and teachers regarding how easy it is to access information about instructional materials and curriculum.



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