



## Introduction

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a severe disruption of all aspects of life in New York City. This includes the educational experiences of the city's more than 1.1 million public school students, who have transitioned to remote learning since schools were closed in the middle of March. Even apart from the current public health and economic situation, New York City--like many school districts--has faced issues related to disparate resources, opportunities, and outcomes among its public school students. It is important that the education community ensure that these inequities are not heightened, but rather mitigated to the greatest extent possible, during the current crisis.

HERE to HERE has been working with the ten Bronx high schools in our network--as well as schools participating in the CareerWise New York (CWNy) apprenticeship program--to identify and address the needs of students and their families. As part of this work, our Student Ambassadors filled out a brief survey and asked their peers to do the same.

The major takeaways from this analysis of survey results are:

- Nearly all of the 174 students who responded to the survey had access to the internet and WiFi. A vast majority said their internet connection was either strong or very strong. Nearly all respondents said they had either a laptop, Chromebook, iPad, or desktop computer. The vast majority said their devices work well or very well.
- Just over 40% of respondents said they had no access to a guidance counselor, social worker, or therapist, and 15% said they only sometimes had access to such resources.
- Nearly one-quarter of students were somewhat or very concerned about income or money. Between 10-15% of students said they had a need or very high need for food, medicine, cleaning supplies, and social-emotional support.
- Of the four schools that made up the most respondents--Comp Sci High, Bronx International, Lab School of Finance and Technology, and University Heights--students at Bronx International reported having the most need.
- Check-ins with Cohort 1 apprentices revealed that the vast majority are doing well and eager to get back to work. A handful of students were unable to be reached due to disconnected phones.

## Who was Reached

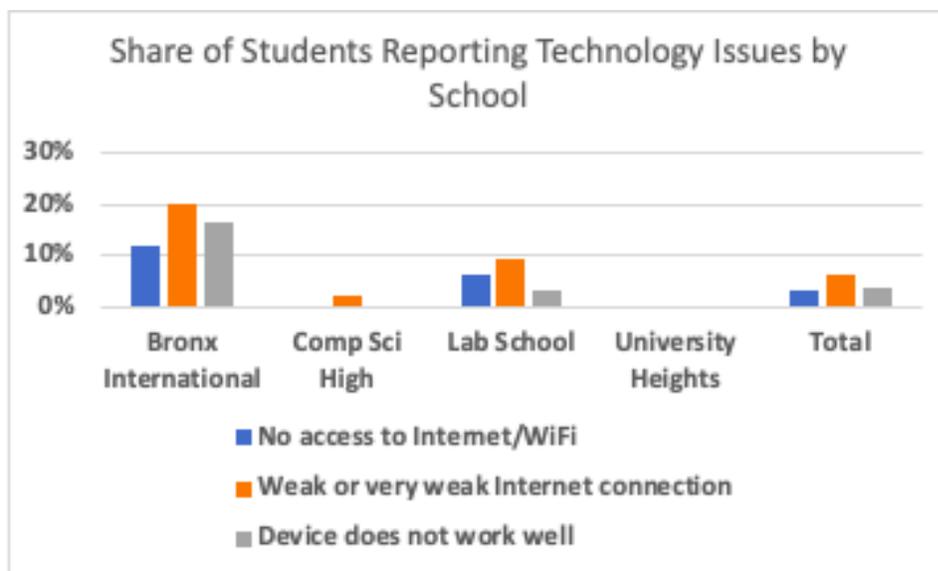
As of the morning of April 10, 2020, the survey was completed by 174 students across 18 schools. Nearly three-quarters of respondents were from one of four schools (Comp Sci High, Bronx International, Lab School of Finance and Technology, and University Heights). Nearly 70% of those reached were

sophomores or juniors and 20% were freshman. Outreach was also conducted to 81 Cohort 1 apprentices; 7 could not be reached.

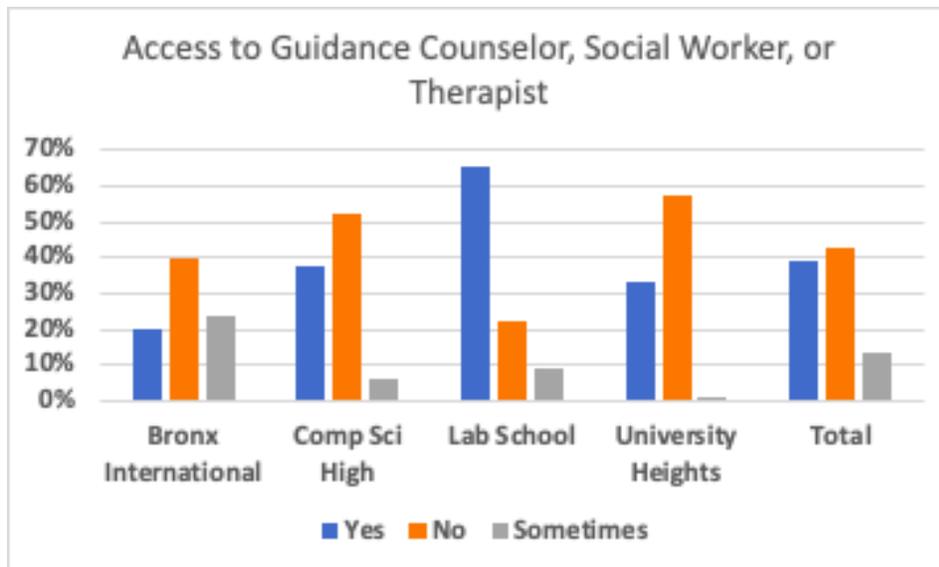
It is important to consider that the responses of the survey may not fully reflect the concerns and needs of the larger student community, as students who responded naturally had access to the internet and were otherwise in position to complete the survey.

### Access to Supports and Resources

Nearly all of the students who responded to the survey said they had a way to contact their school or teacher for academic support, and nearly all said they had access to the internet/WiFi. The two students who said they could not contact their school or teacher--and three of the six students who reported not having internet--attend Bronx International. All but four students reported having either a laptop, Chromebook, iPad, or desktop; the four students who did not have any of these devices attend Bronx International. Students at Bronx International were also more likely to report weak or very weak internet connectivity and have devices that don't work very well or don't work at all.



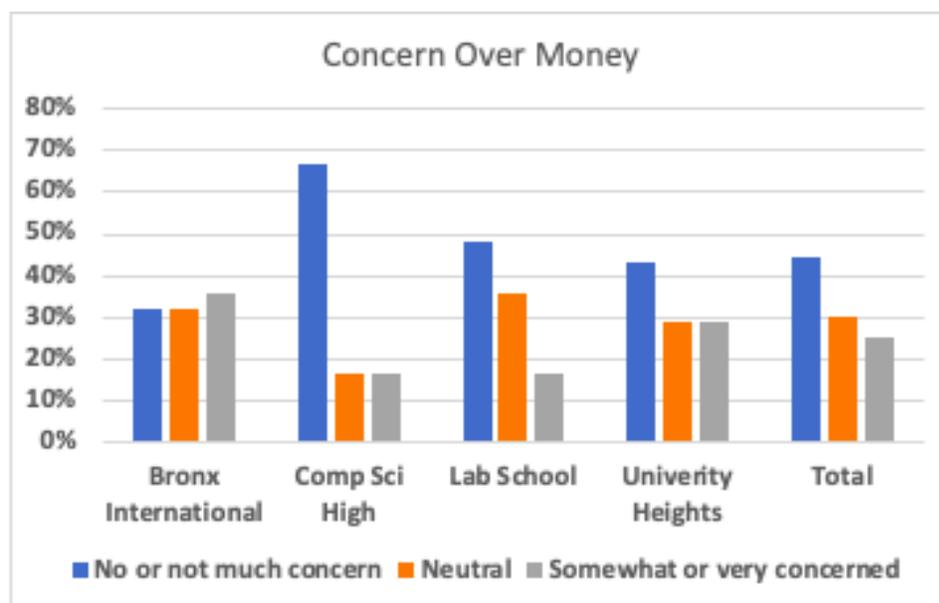
43% of surveyed students said they do not have continued access to a guidance counselor, social worker, or therapist and 14% said they sometimes have access. Students at Comp Sci High and University Heights were most likely to say they lacked access to these supports. 37% of respondents said a parent is their main source of social-emotional support and 32% said a friend was their main source.

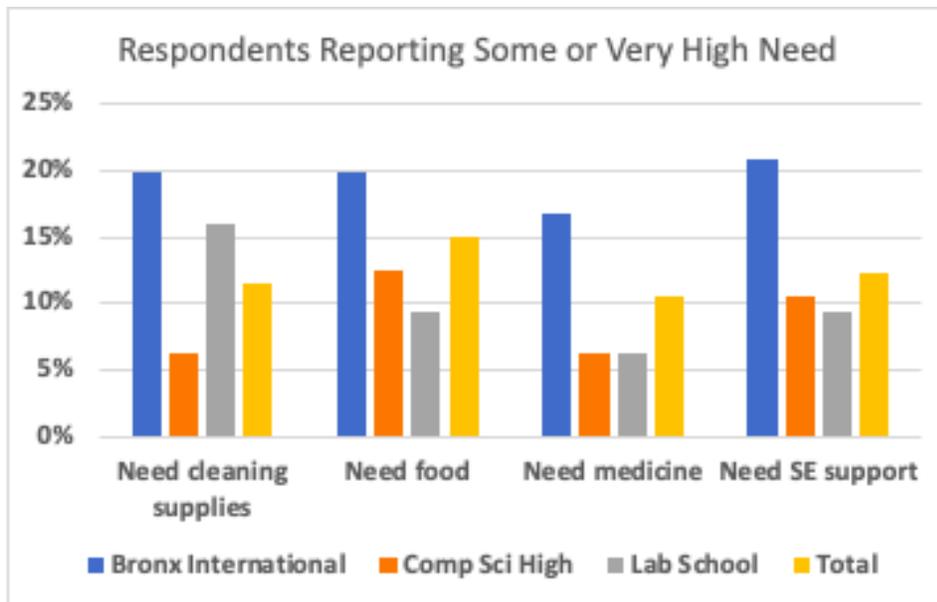
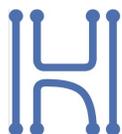


### Concerns and Needs

Between two-thirds and three-quarters of students reported having not much need or no need at all for food, medicine, cleaning supplies, or social-emotional support. Between 10% and 15% reported having a need or very high need for these items/supports (between 15% and 20% responded neutrally).

However, a greater share of students (around 25%) reported being concerned or very concerned about money.





Bronx International students reported the highest levels of concern and need for cleaning supplies, food, medicine, and social-emotional support. More than one-third were concerned or very concerned about money.

### CareerWise Cohort one Apprentices

Outreach was also conducted to 81 Cohort 1 apprentices; all but 7 were reached by phone. The vast majority responded that they were doing well and many reported being eager to return to work. Most said they were receiving emails from their employer and/or CUNY. Of the seven apprentices who were not reached, several appeared to have their phones disconnected, which could be cause for concern. A few apprentices also mentioned having problems logging into CUNY First, CUNY's academic management system.

### Conclusion

It is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the data--given that those who completed the survey were in a position to do so and therefore may not fully reflect the challenges young people and their families are facing. A vast majority of students did respond that their technology needs were largely met, and a slim majority reported not having a need for food, medicine, cleaning supplies, and social emotional support. However, there were differences among schools, with students at Bronx International exhibiting the most need.

The findings from this survey point to broad areas where the education community should pay particular attention during the current crisis:

**Ensure young people have internet and phone access.** Though the vast majority of students who completed the survey reported having reliable internet access, there were some students for whom this



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wasn't the case. Considering this survey was administered electronically, it is highly likely that the share of students reporting a reliable internet connection in the survey understates this potential issue in the general student population. HERE to HERE has been working on acquiring and providing hardware to meet students' technology needs.

**Provide mental health supports.** A majority of survey respondents reported that they either did not or only sometimes had access to a guidance counselor, therapist, or social worker. Given the unprecedented and tragic nature of the current situation, it is important that we ensure young people have support to cope with the stress and trauma they may be experiencing. Stakeholders should explore the viability of making remote counseling and other forms of mental health support available to students.

**Conduct outreach and provide financial support to areas with large undocumented populations:** The high school in our survey with students who reported the greatest needs and concerns is one in which the vast majority of students are immigrants, and it is likely that documentation status is a hinderance in accessing necessary assistance. These students and families must be provided with the support they need to weather this period of economic distress.