

Reporting on the First Week of Re-Entry Alberta K-12 Schools

ATA Pandemic Research Study
Pulse Survey #1 (August 28 to August 31, 2020)



The Alberta Teachers' Association

www.teachers.ab.ca

Overview

This Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) pulse survey has been designed as a rapid 5 minute feedback tool for Alberta teachers and school leaders.

It will be used during school re-entry to gather a quick 'pulse' of the profession regarding the successes or challenges of the re-entry plans. It will also be used to further gain insight into the complexities of our Alberta teaching and learning conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Each month an ATA pulse survey, not to exceed 10 minutes in length, will be sent out at the end of a week and include approximately 20 to 30 questions.
- Each pulse survey includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative (open-ended) questions.
- One group of Alberta teachers and school leaders will be followed as participants in the pulse surveys throughout the 2020/2021 year.
- A second group of teachers and school leaders will be randomly selected each month to participate as representative voices of the profession of teaching across Alberta.
- Within one week of the pulse survey closing, a summary report (keeping all responses anonymous) will be posted online at teachers.ab.ca under the 'COVID-19 - Information and Resources for Teachers and Parents' ATA Teacher Pandemic Pulse Survey Results



Summary Highlights of Pandemic Pulse Survey:

"The First Week of Alberta School Re-Entry"

Sample Size: 2153 Alberta teachers and school leaders across Alberta

Detailed demographics of the respondents follows at the end of this summary report. Survey administered between August 28, 2020 and August 31, 2020 after the first week all staff returned to Alberta school buildings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The confidence interval is +/- 2% on all questions (19 times out of 20).

In the days and weeks ahead, Alberta teachers and school leaders expect that they will struggle with the following COVID-19 general preventative health measures:

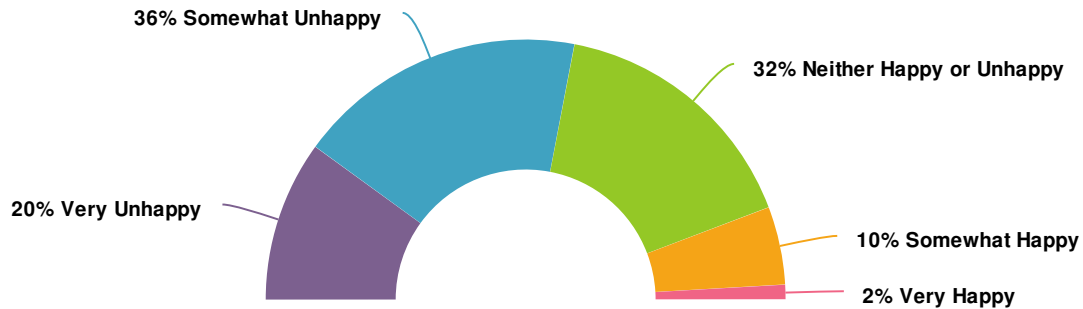
- #1 Maintaining physical distancing (94%)
 - #2 Students staying home when sick (80%)
 - #3 Classroom cleaning (74%)
 - #4 Continuous mask wearing (70%)
- Class sizes are large - 25% of the respondents indicated that their largest classes will be between 30 to 40+ students - making physical distancing a significant (if not impossible) challenge.
 - It is estimated that 15% of the class sizes across Alberta will be between 30 to 35 students; 8% will have 35 to 40 students; and 3% of teachers will be in classes with more than 40 students.
 - 70% of Alberta teachers did not receive two reusable masks from the Government of Alberta on their first day with all staff back into school buildings.
 - Given the last minute changes in school jurisdictions, 27% of teachers do not yet know their teaching assignment(s) and 70% of schools are still working on their timetables for classes.
 - Generally, teachers are demoralized with the Alberta school re-entry plan. Alberta teachers and school leaders found that their first week back in the school building was more difficult than expected (53%). Half (55%) feel unhappy or very unhappy, and the levels of anxiety and exhaustion are both extremely high (90%) for teachers and school leaders across Alberta.
 - A majority of respondents (65%) would have preferred a return to Scenario 2 where in-school classes would have partially resumed with additional health measures.








The Alberta Teachers' Association

Full Data Set (August 27 to 31, 2020)

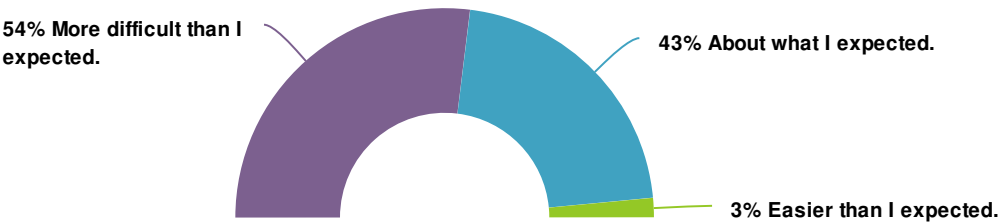
1. How are you feeling?



Value		Percent	Responses
Very Unhappy		20.0%	429
Somewhat Unhappy		36.0%	773
Neither Happy or Unhappy		32.4%	695
Somewhat Happy		9.7%	209
Very Happy		1.8%	39

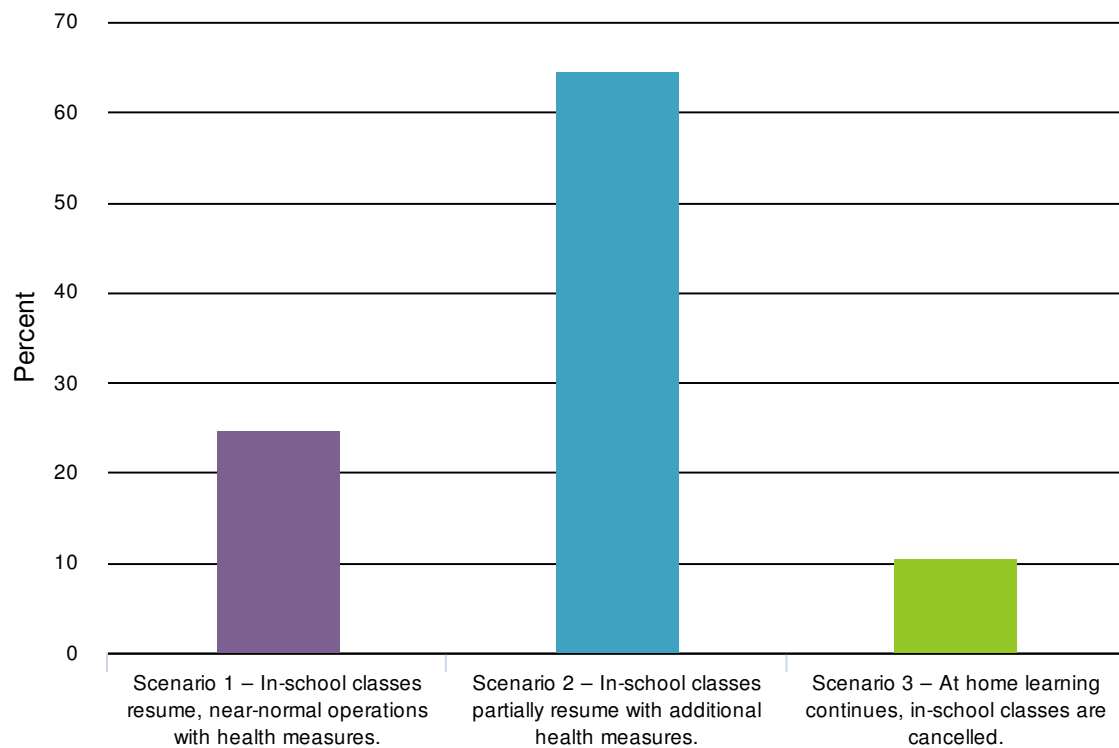
Totals: 2,145




2. How challenging was your first week back in the school building?



Value		Percent	Responses
More difficult than I expected.	<div><div></div></div>	53.9%	1,149
About what I expected.	<div><div></div></div>	43.1%	920
Easier than I expected.	<div><div></div></div>	3.0%	64
			Totals: 2,133

3. Which was your preferred Alberta school re-entry scenario?

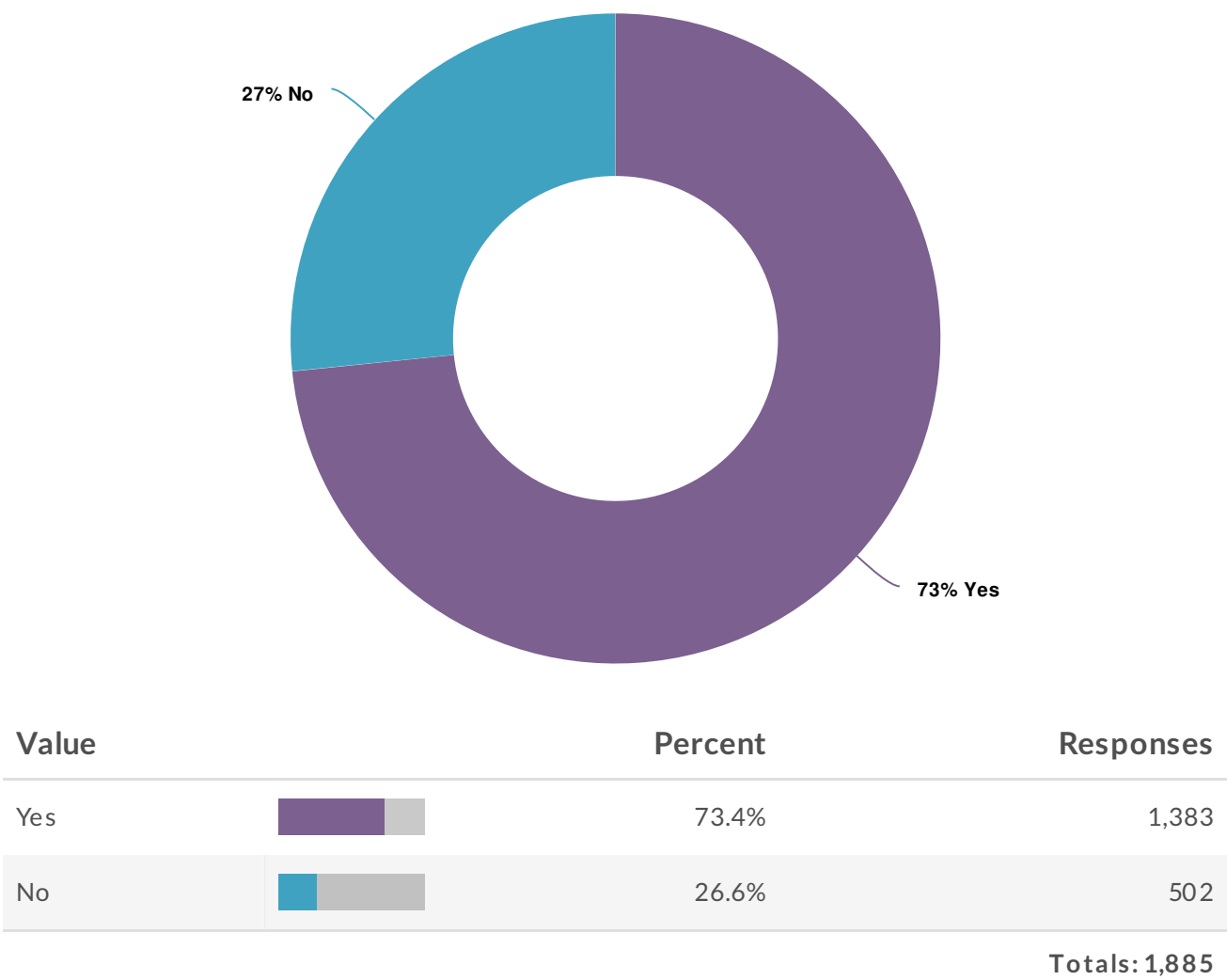


Value		Percent	Responses
Scenario 1 – In-school classes resume, near-normal operations with health measures.		24.8%	533
Scenario 2 – In-school classes partially resume with additional health measures.		64.6%	1,387
Scenario 3 – At home learning continues, in-school classes are cancelled.		10.5%	226
Totals: 2,146			

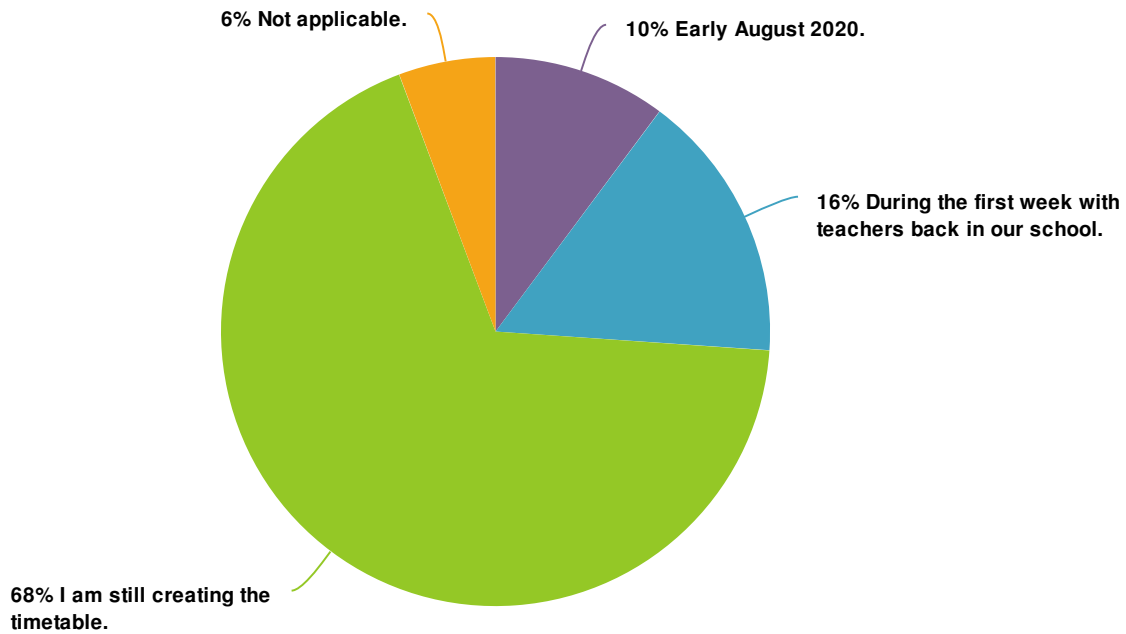
4. Thinking about this past week, identify your level of agreement with the following statements:





	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	Responses
I am invigorated thinking about my students coming back into my classroom. Count Row %	316 14.7%	498 23.2%	569 26.6%	588 27.4%	172 8.0%	2,143
I feel isolated. Count Row %	222 10.3%	733 34.2%	271 12.6%	644 30.0%	275 12.8%	2,145
I feel hopeful. Count Row %	347 16.2%	669 31.2%	515 24.0%	555 25.9%	60 2.8%	2,146
I feel anxious. Count Row %	39 1.8%	78 3.6%	97 4.5%	777 36.2%	1,156 53.8%	2,147
I feel exhausted by the end of the day. Count Row %	29 1.4%	111 5.2%	81 3.8%	670 31.3%	1,250 58.4%	2,141
Totals Total Responses						2147

5. Do you know what your teaching assignment(s) will be as students return to school?



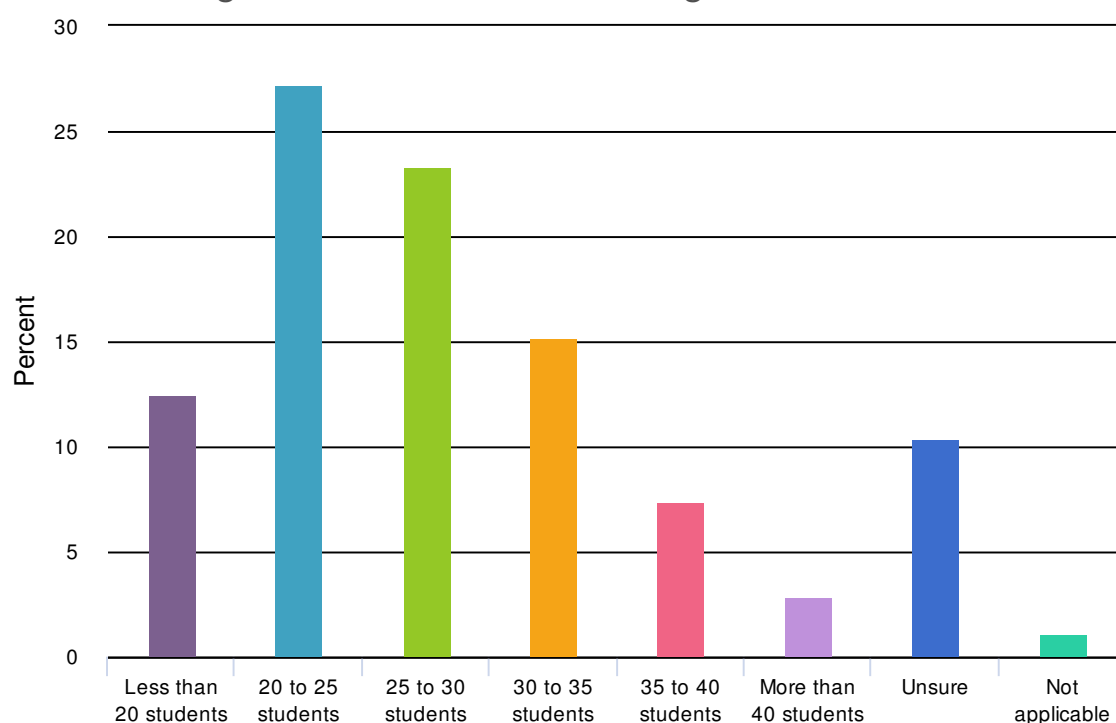
6. When was your school able to finish the timetable?



Value		Percent	Responses
Early August 2020.		10.2%	16
During the first week with teachers back in our school.		15.9%	25
I am still creating the timetable.		68.2%	107
Not applicable.		5.7%	9

Totals: 157

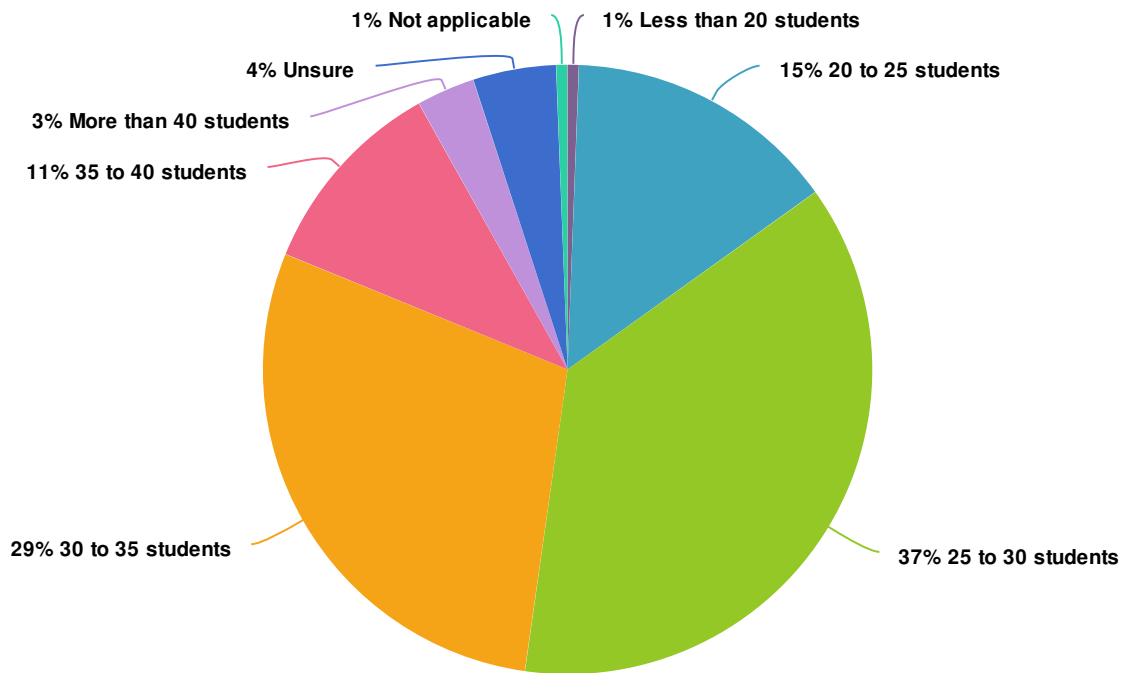
7. The size of the largest class that I will be teaching when students return will be:



Value		Percent	Responses
Less than 20 students	<div><div></div></div>	12.5%	235
20 to 25 students	<div><div></div></div>	27.2%	514
25 to 30 students	<div><div></div></div>	23.3%	440
30 to 35 students	<div><div></div></div>	15.2%	286
35 to 40 students	<div><div></div></div>	7.4%	140
More than 40 students	<div><div></div></div>	2.9%	55
Unsure	<div><div></div></div>	10.4%	196
Not applicable	<div><div></div></div>	1.1%	21

Totals: 1,887

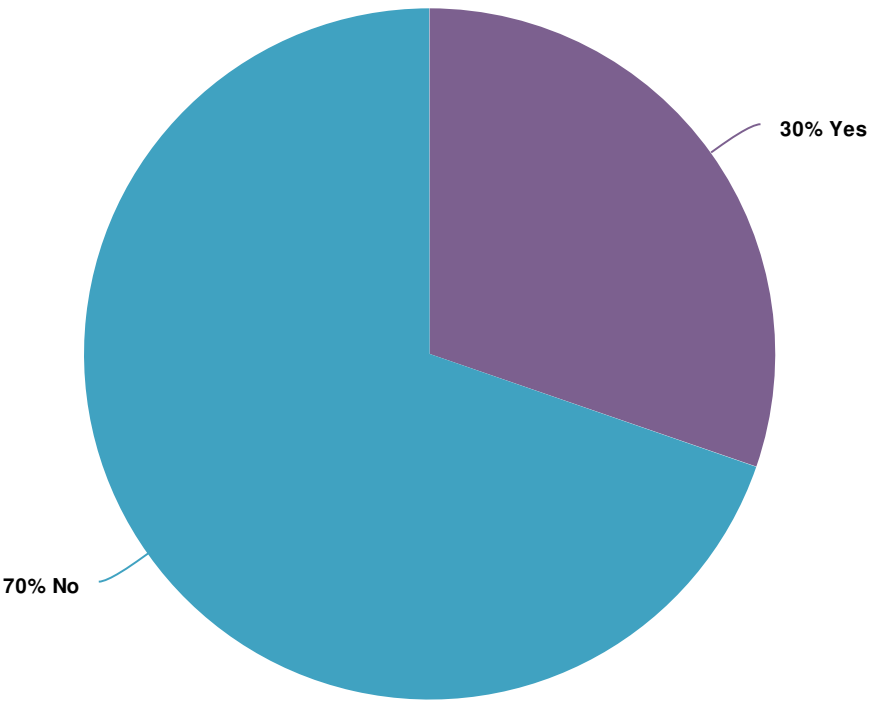
8. The size of the largest class within the school when students return will be:



Value		Percent	Responses
Less than 20 students	<div><div></div></div>	0.6%	1
20 to 25 students	<div><div></div></div>	14.5%	23
25 to 30 students	<div><div></div></div>	37.1%	59
30 to 35 students	<div><div></div></div>	28.9%	46
35 to 40 students	<div><div></div></div>	10.7%	17
More than 40 students	<div><div></div></div>	3.1%	5
Unsure	<div><div></div></div>	4.4%	7
Not applicable	<div><div></div></div>	0.6%	1

Totals: 159

9. Did you receive two reusable masks from the Government of Alberta on your first day back into the school building with all staff?



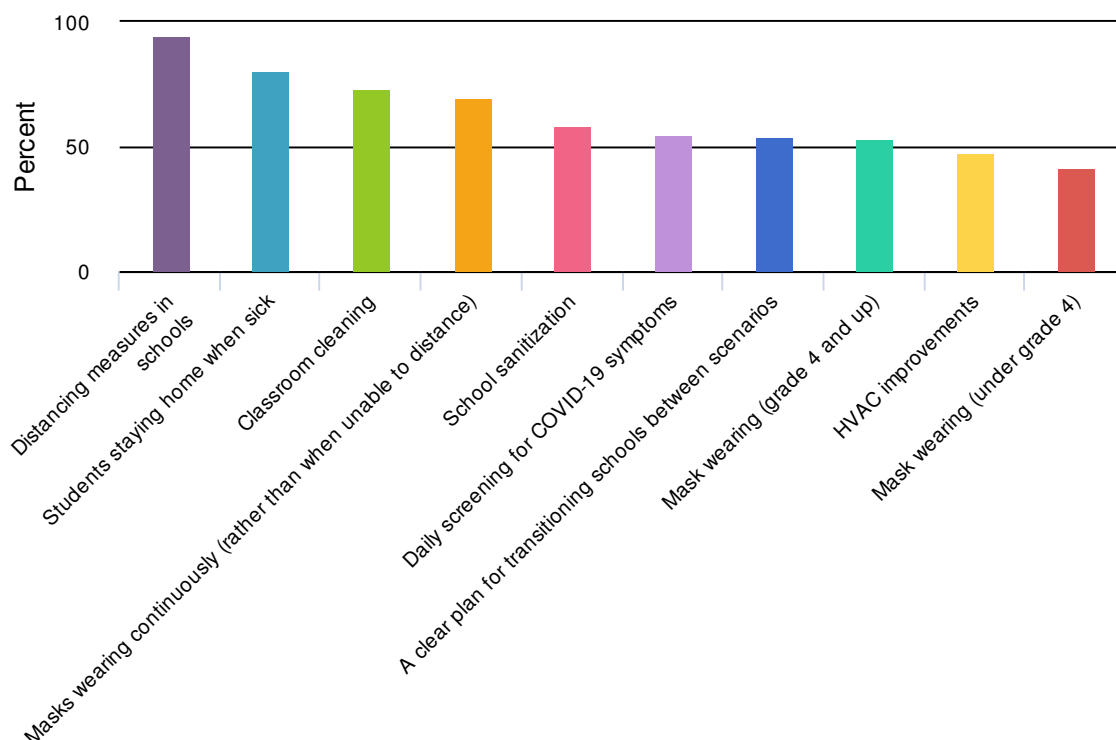
Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	30.3%	646
No	<div><div></div></div>	69.7%	1,488
Totals: 2,134			











10. Identify your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable	Responses
I have had enough instruction on the COVID-19 safety measures for our school. Count Row %	351 16.4%	550 25.6%	331 15.4%	721 33.6%	179 8.3%	13 0.6%	2,145
I have had enough time to adequately plan for resuming classes with students. Count Row %	1,025 47.7%	626 29.2%	176 8.2%	249 11.6%	48 2.2%	23 1.1%	2,147
I believe our school is ready to welcome our students. Count Row %	570 26.5%	666 31.0%	424 19.7%	397 18.5%	75 3.5%	16 0.7%	2,148
I am concerned about my class sizes and physical distancing measures. Count Row %	80 3.7%	90 4.2%	80 3.7%	494 23.0%	1,347 62.7%	56 2.6%	2,147
I feel control over the circumstances surrounding my return to the classroom/school. Count Row %	955 44.5%	767 35.7%	226 10.5%	167 7.8%	26 1.2%	7 0.3%	2,148

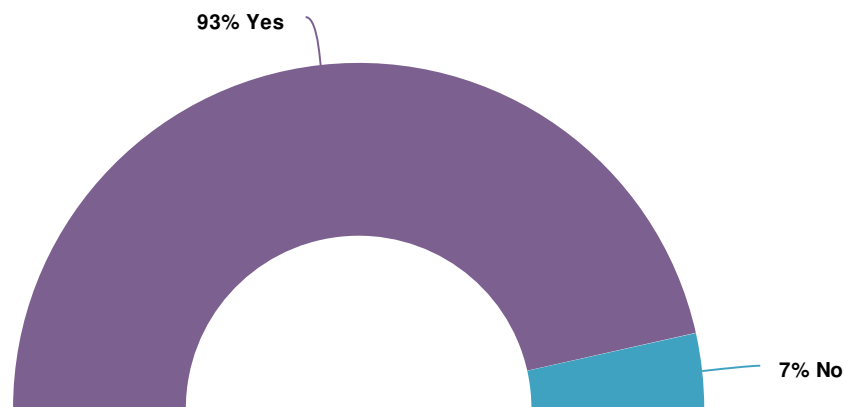
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable	Responses
I believe that I will have access to substitute teachers as needed this Fall 2020. Count Row %	556 25.9%	514 23.9%	762 35.5%	235 10.9%	45 2.1%	37 1.7%	2,149
I am confident in the strength of the COVID-19 Outbreak Plan for my school. Count Row %	500 23.3%	582 27.1%	679 31.6%	320 14.9%	48 2.2%	18 0.8%	2,147
Our school has established dedicated support(s) for student mental health and well-being. Count Row %	420 19.5%	524 24.4%	560 26.1%	519 24.2%	107 5.0%	19 0.9%	2,149
I am confident in our ability to implement a strong cohorting plan for our school. Count Row %	534 24.9%	550 25.6%	435 20.3%	521 24.3%	75 3.5%	32 1.5%	2,147
I am comfortable with the ATA's messaging and/or priorities for a successful and safe re-entry to Alberta school buildings. Count Row %	151 7.0%	295 13.7%	529 24.6%	869 40.5%	292 13.6%	11 0.5%	2,147
Totals							2149
Total Responses							

11. Which of the following general preventative measures do you think will be most challenging in the days and weeks ahead? (Check all that apply)



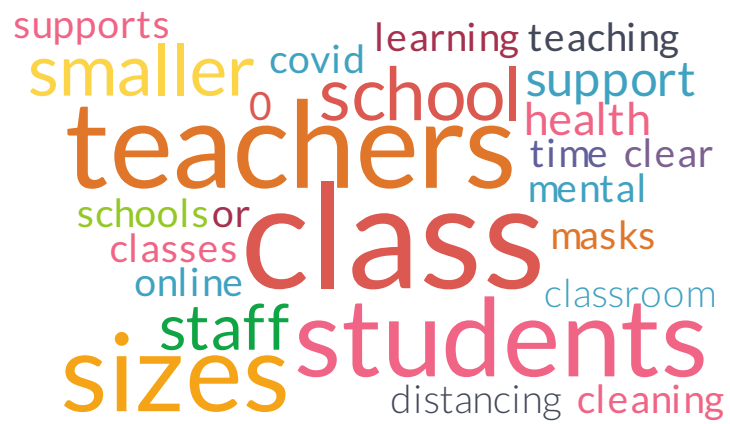
Value		Percent	Responses
Distancing measures in schools		94.2%	2,023
Students staying home when sick		80.2%	1,723
Classroom cleaning		73.6%	1,582
Masks wearing continuously (rather than when unable to distance)		69.9%	1,501
School sanitization		58.7%	1,260
Daily screening for COVID-19 symptoms		54.7%	1,175
A clear plan for transitioning schools between scenarios		54.2%	1,165
Mask wearing (grade 4 and up)		53.0%	1,138
HVAC improvements		47.6%	1,023
Mask wearing (under grade 4)		41.5%	892

12. Are you aware of the ATA's formal request to the Minister of Education for a delay of Alberta school re-entry until after Labour Day?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes	<div><div></div></div>	93.0%	1,996
No	<div><div></div></div>	7.0%	151
			Totals: 2,147

13. If possible, please suggest one or two key support(s) or resource(s) you would like to see going into the Fall and Winter of 2020?



Samples of Teacher and School Leader Voices - Key Supports/Resources Needed for Fall and Winter 2020

“ Hire more teachers to reduce class sizes. ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 750

“ - CLEAR plan for what has to happen for schools to close - or for people to quarantine - PPE that works given to us - we shouldn't have to fight for it ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 753

“ Cancellation of PATs and diplomas ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 758

“ SMALLER CLASS SIZES!!! ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 759

“ Cohorts actually being cohorts. Junior high students are in home rooms for core subjects and then MIXING FOR OPTIONS!!! That is not cohorting... and then there is the busses. No cohorting there either! ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 764

“ I think wearing masks full time is going to be very difficult for staff and students. There are many classes where social distancing won't happen due to room and class size. ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 770

“ My high school is going with a 5 period day. I will have 4 different groups of 30-35 students in my classroom each day. Desks are not able to give proper physical distancing. Our cohort size is undefinable assume work part time jobs. I am worried and anxious. We need to cap class sizes at 15 if we have any hope of being able to safely teach face-to-face. ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 849

“ Additional cleaning supplies for school staff to access. Additional classroom teachers to lower class sizes (however there are no additional spaces in existing buildings to house additional classes). Access to funds to purchase individual student desks as the school I work at has only aperture tables (which do not allow two students to sit at and not be facing each other but are too large in the classroom). ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 914

“ Enough actual custodial staff and designated supplies to sanitize classrooms and common areas all day, ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 987

“ 1) Smaller class size 2) Extra support for sanitization throughout the day. ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 1010

“ Contracts for subs, more supports for high risk individuals ”

08/29/2020 Response id: 1350

“ public education has been put in an impossible situation Nothing we say or advocate for makes a difference- we won't get any resources and we won't get any support. It feels hopeless. ”

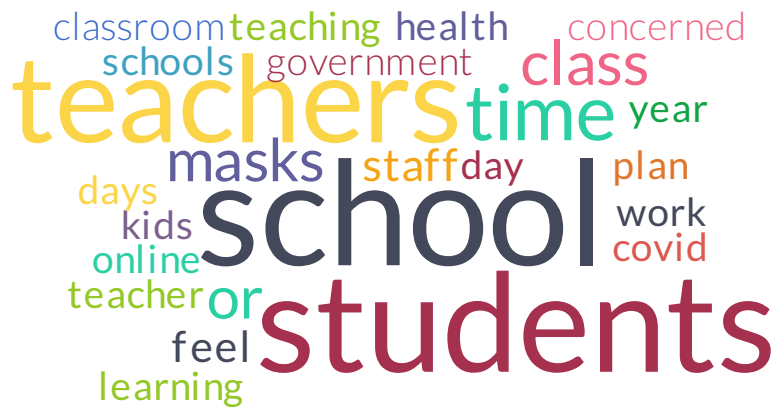
08/29/2020 Response id: 1539

“ More funding for cleaning or direction on what to do during an outbreak, which is inevitable ”
08/30/2020 Response id: 2070

“ We need more substitute teachers!!!! ”
09/01/2020 Response id: 2576

“ Funding to ensure smaller class sizes. This is the only way we can keep our kids safe within our building. Kids don't know how to social distance, as well, there isn't space to do so! ”
09/01/2020 Response id: 2807

14. What other questions/concerns/issues would you like to share with the Association?



Samples of Teacher and School Leader Voices - Other Questions, Concerns or Issues

“ Will our supplies promised to us from the government arrive in time? ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 752

“ We needed more time to prepare. ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 760

“ PPE for staff and students has not arrived at our school and we start up with students on Monday. I was asked yesterday to teach online. No real guidelines for how to program for students on IPPs, or what to do with students that do not have technology or do not take part in online lessons ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 761

“ I am concerned at how little teacher mental and physical health is being considered. ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 806

“ The amount of administrative work I am expected to do as well as being an effective instructional leader and appropriately accessible to the school community is actually not possible. I am very worried about my mental and physical health and that is not even considering the extra layer of Covid-19. ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 987

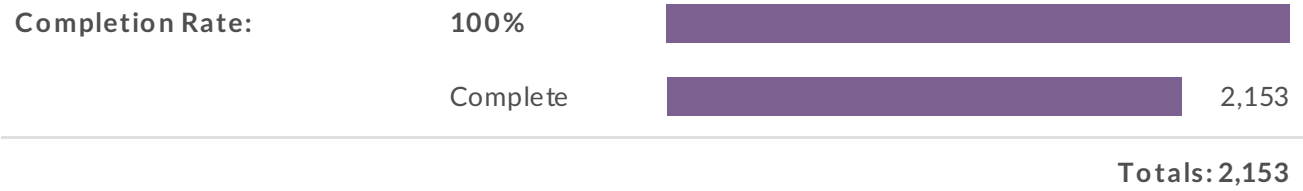
“ I have worked nonstop for the last 3 days, trying to finish setting up my classroom. I will be working all weekend to plan and prepare student work and complete classroom setup. I am already exhausted from the stress and extra work, and school has yet to begin. The parents of students at our school are very stressed with the new rules and routines that our division has set up to keep their children safe. Our principal looks exhausted as well. I am worried about the emotional welfare of my students and how they will stay healthy. I am also worried about my mental health and stress level this year. ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 1010

“ I had to work late into the night every night this week and deal with big changes being dropped on us creating the worst mess I have ever experienced in 30 years. How can a government put no real plans or money into a COVID-19 re-entry and expect a huge board to get everything done in three days? We did not have all summer with a clear plan and clear directives to get ready for fall start-up. I still do not know which of my staff will teach online and which will be in school! School starts Tuesday so how is this even remotely realistic. Unreal ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 1021

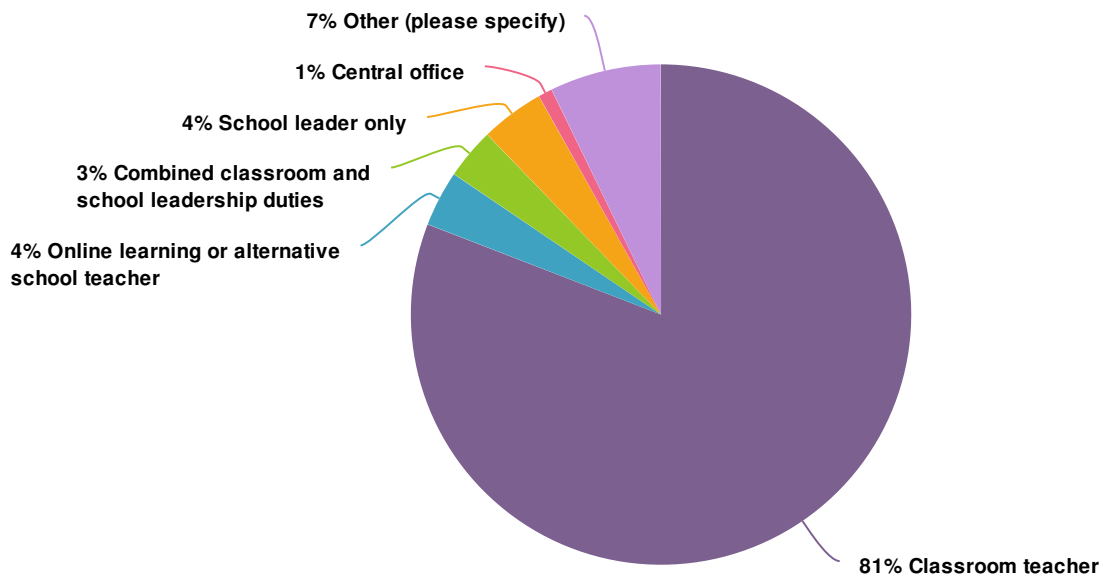
“ I am concerned about subs entering multiple buildings and being with numerous cohorts. ”
08/29/2020 Response id: 1248

“ If I pass away because of an outbreak at my school, can my partner sue the government? ”
08/30/2020 Response id: 2062

DEMOGRAPHICS



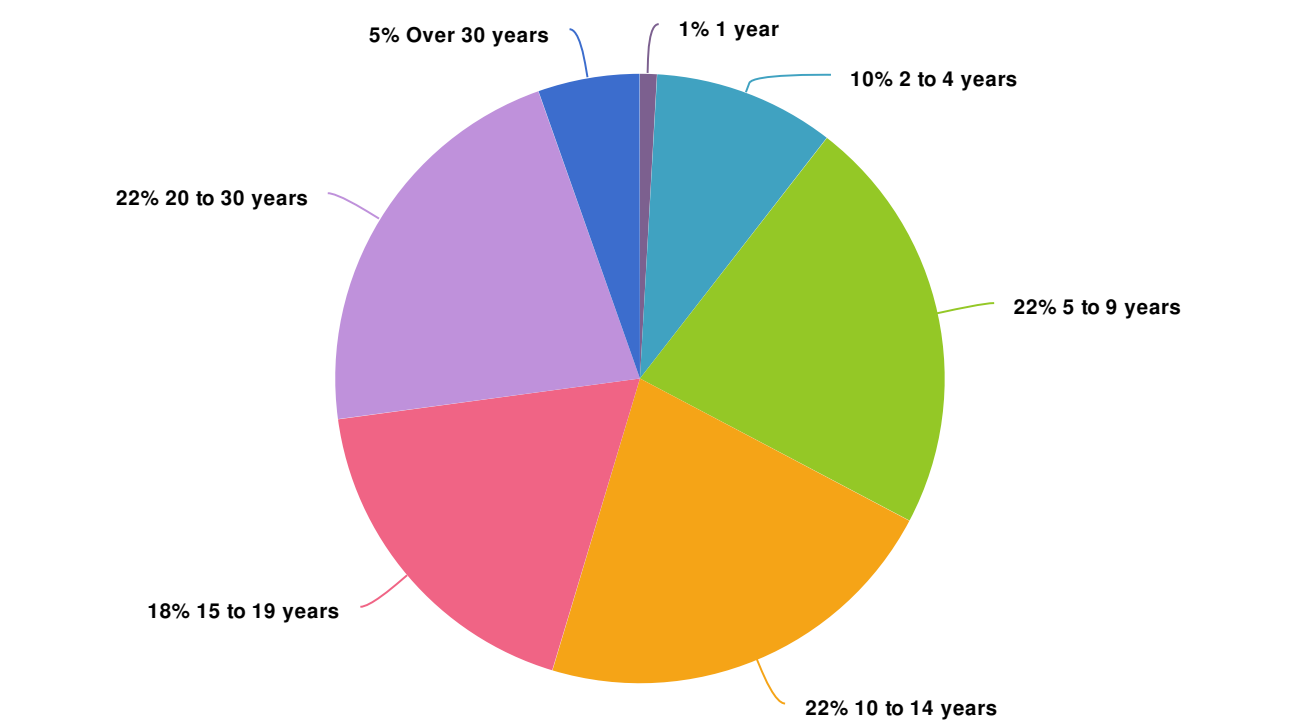
15. Your current assignment



Value		Percent	Responses
Classroom teacher	<div><div></div></div>	80.8%	1,739
Online learning or alternative school teacher	<div><div></div></div>	3.6%	78
Combined classroom and school leadership duties	<div><div></div></div>	3.3%	71
School leader only	<div><div></div></div>	4.1%	88
Central office	<div><div></div></div>	0.9%	20
Other (please specify)	<div><div></div></div>	7.2%	155

Totals: 2,151

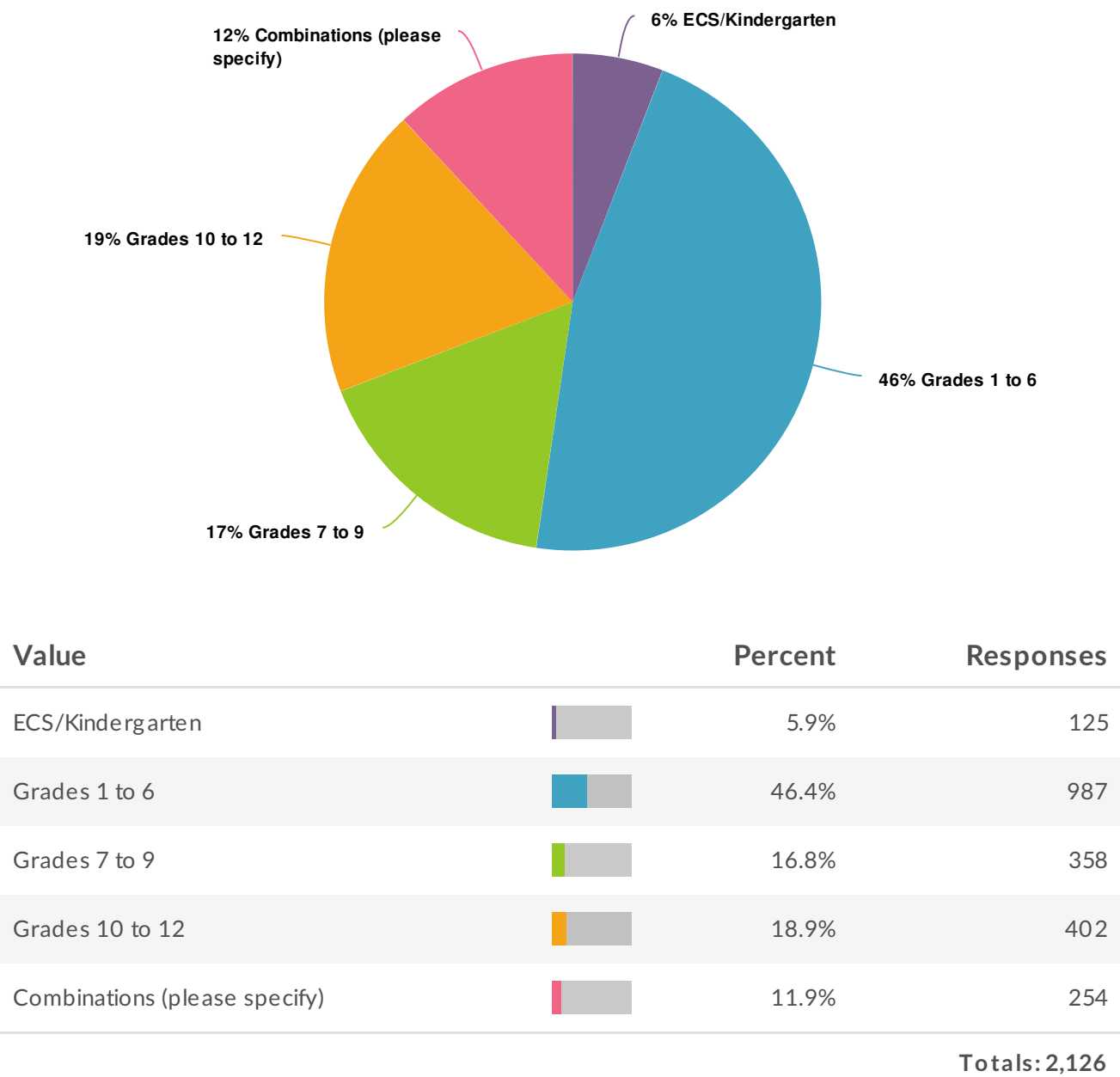
16. Your teaching experience, including current year



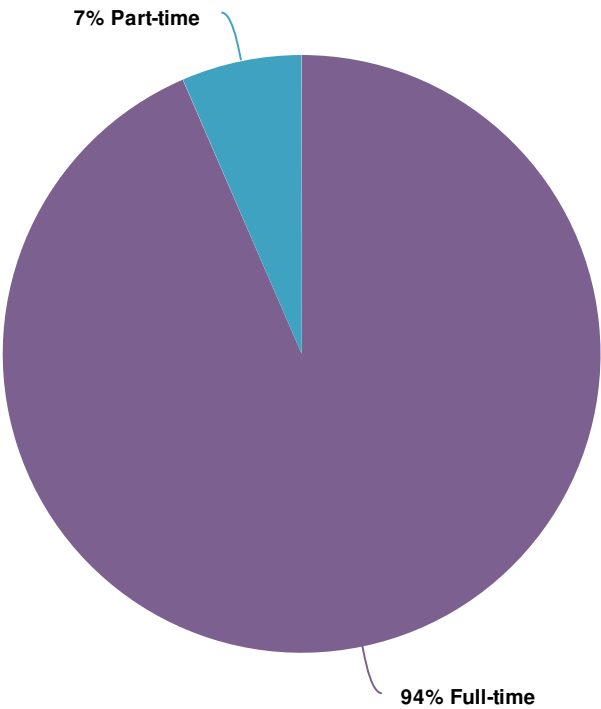
Value		Percent	Responses
1 year	<div><div></div></div>	0.9%	20
2 to 4 years	<div><div></div></div>	9.6%	204
5 to 9 years	<div><div></div></div>	22.2%	472
10 to 14 years	<div><div></div></div>	21.9%	466
15 to 19 years	<div><div></div></div>	18.2%	387
20 to 30 years	<div><div></div></div>	21.7%	462
Over 30 years	<div><div></div></div>	5.4%	115

Totals: 2,126

17. Your current assignment is related exclusively or mainly to students in



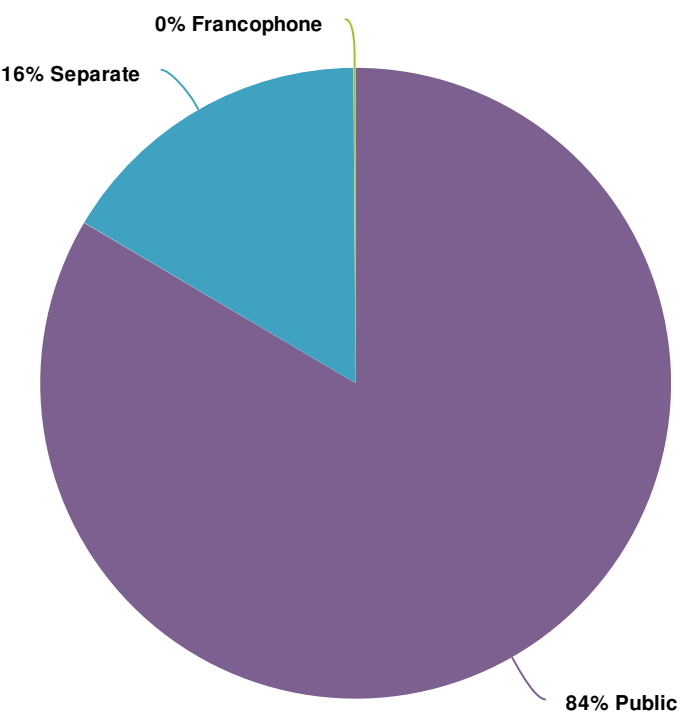
18. You are employed



Value		Percent	Responses
Full-time	<div><div></div></div>	93.5%	1,981
Part-time	<div><div></div></div>	6.5%	138

Totals: 2,119

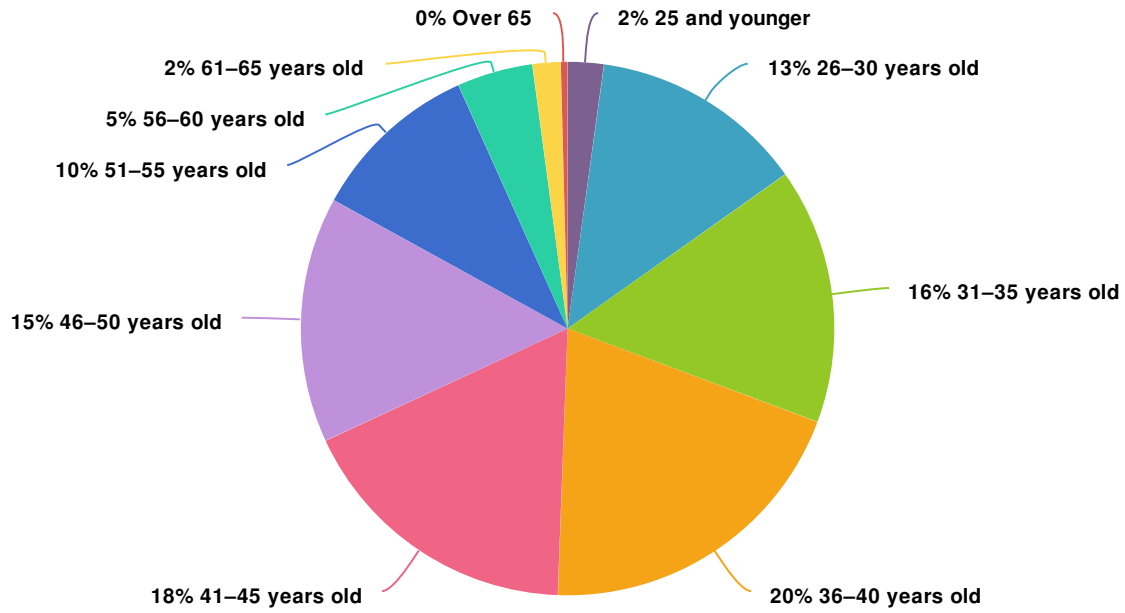
19. Type of school authority in which you are employed



Value		Percent	Responses
Public	<div><div></div></div>	83.5%	1,771
Separate	<div><div></div></div>	16.4%	348
Francophone	<div><div></div></div>	0.1%	2

Totals: 2,121

20. Your age



Value		Percent	Responses
25 and younger	<div><div></div></div>	2.2%	46
26-30 years old	<div><div></div></div>	13.0%	277
31-35 years old	<div><div></div></div>	15.5%	329
36-40 years old	<div><div></div></div>	19.9%	424
41-45 years old	<div><div></div></div>	17.5%	372
46-50 years old	<div><div></div></div>	14.9%	317
51-55 years old	<div><div></div></div>	10.3%	219
56-60 years old	<div><div></div></div>	4.6%	98
61-65 years old	<div><div></div></div>	1.7%	36
Over 65	<div><div></div></div>	0.4%	9

Totals: 2,127



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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