

EdTech Threats to Student Privacy and Equity in the Age of AI

Survey Research on Parent, Student, and Teacher Experiences

September 2023



Research Objectives

This year’s surveys comprise a fifth wave of tracking among teachers and parents and a third wave among students. The surveys measure and track changes in perceptions, experiences, training, engagement, and concerns about student data privacy, content filtering and blocking, student activity monitoring, and generative AI. Prior surveys were conducted in May/July 2020, February 2021, June/July 2021, and May/June 2022.

Methodology

Online surveys of **1,005 6th- to 12th-grade teachers; 1,018 parents of 6th- to 12th-grade students; and 1,029 9th- to 12th-grade students** were fielded **June–August 2023**.

	<i>Sample Size</i>	<i>Median Survey Time</i>
Teacher survey (6th–12th)	1,005	16 min
Parent survey (6th–12th)	1,018	18 min
Student (9th–12th)	1,029	10 min

Note: 2023 surveys focus on teachers and parents of middle and high schoolers. Student surveys continue to be among 9th–12th graders.

2023: 6 th –12 th grade teachers	2023: 6 th –12 th grade parents
2022: 6 th –10 th grade teachers	2022: 6 th –12 th grade parents
2021: 3 rd –10 th grade teachers	2021: K–12 th grade parents
2020: 3 rd –10 th grade teachers	2020: K–12 th grade parents

For tracking purposes, 2020 and 2021 data has been filtered, weighted, and reported to be comparable to the 2022 data.

Throughout the report, **↑ ↓** indicates significant differences between comparison groups at the 95% confidence level; **▲ ▼** Indicates significantly higher/lower than the previous survey at the 95% confidence level.

- **Schools are not adequately engaging and supporting students, parents, and teachers in addressing concerns about school data and technology practices:** Students, parents, and teachers report a lack of guidance, information, and training on privacy, student activity monitoring, content filtering and blocking, and generative AI. They want more support from their schools and to be involved in decisions about whether and how these technologies are used.
- **Content blocking and filtering is stifling student learning and growth:** Students and teachers agree that this technology is a barrier to learning, often making it hard to complete school assignments and access useful information.
- **Student activity monitoring continues to harm many of the students it claims to help:** Disciplinary actions, outing of students, and initiation of law enforcement contact are still regular outcomes of the use of this technology, even though it is procured by schools to help keep students safe.
- **Schools have provided little guidance about generative AI, leaving students, parents, and teachers in the dark:** Students, parents, and teachers report a collective state of confusion about policies and procedures related to responsible generative AI use in the classroom. Meanwhile, students are getting in trouble for the use of this technology.

Even more disheartening is that in all of these areas, at-risk communities of students are still experiencing disproportionate negative impacts of these old and new technologies:

- **Schools are filtering and blocking LGBTQ+ and race-related content, with Title I and licensed special education teachers more likely to report such practices:** Although filtering and blocking technology was originally intended to primarily target explicit adult content, more school administrators are using it to restrict access to other content they think is inappropriate, including LGBTQ+ and race-related content. Title I and licensed special education teachers are more likely to report this occurrence. In key respects, this finding parallels the broader trend in education of removing books and curricular content on these subjects.
- **Student activity monitoring is disproportionately harming students with disabilities and LGBTQ+ students:** Students with IEPs and/or 504 plans as well as licensed special education teachers report higher rates of discipline arising from student activity monitoring. LGBTQ+ students are also still being disciplined more than their peers and outed without their consent.
- **Title I and licensed special education teachers report higher rates of students receiving disciplinary actions for using or being accused of using generative AI:** Despite having little guidance from schools on generative AI use, Title I teachers, licensed special education teachers, and parents of students with IEPs and/or 504 plans report higher rates of their student(s) getting in trouble as compared to peers.

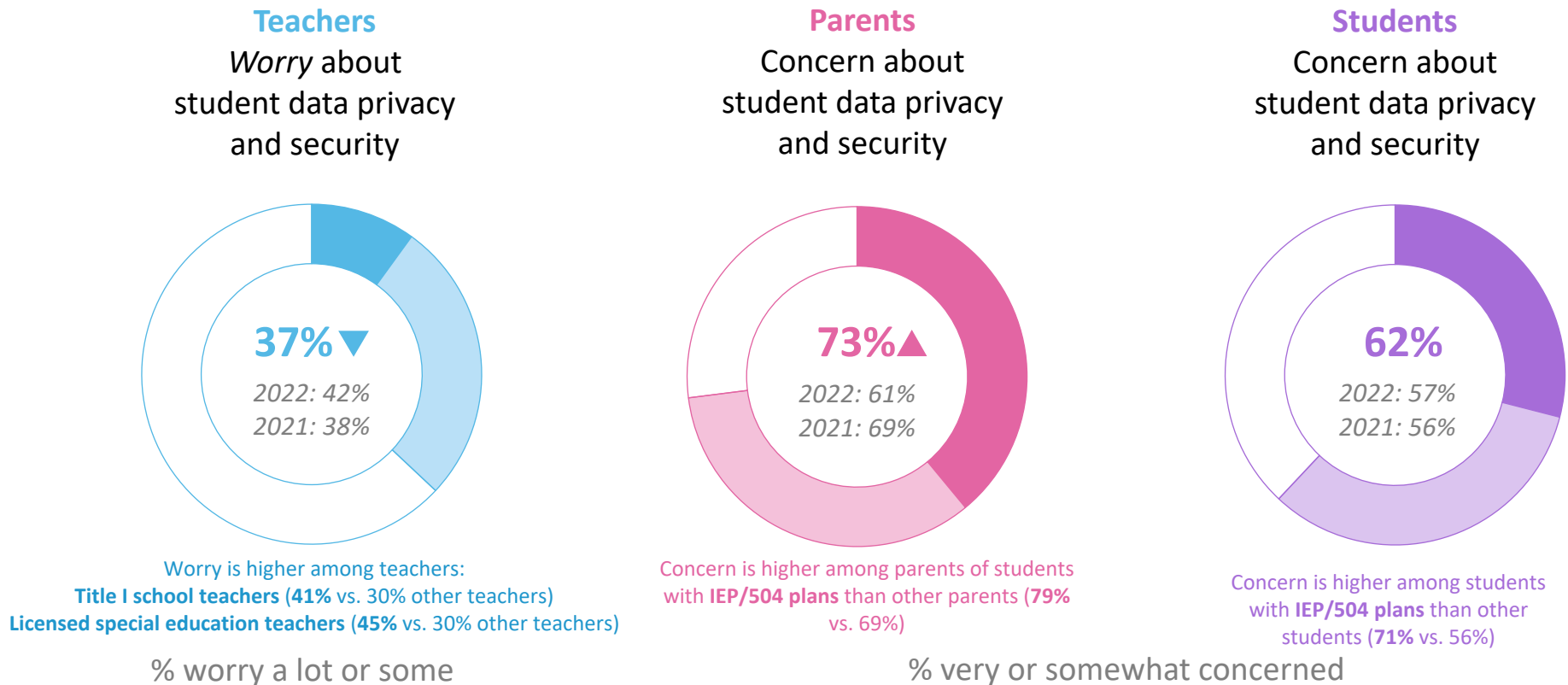
Student Privacy and EdTech Landscape From 30,000 Feet

Student privacy concerns rise among parents, lower among teachers

- Student concern about data privacy has increased directionally (not statistically significant).

Concern about student data privacy and security

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Parents (n=1,018) | ■ Students (n=1,029)



[Teachers_Q12 (Q25:2022)] Overall, how much do you worry about the privacy and security of your students' data and information that may be collected and stored by your school?
 [Parents_Q21 (Q24:2022)] Overall, how concerned are you about the privacy and security of your child's data and information that may be collected and stored by your child's school?
 [Students_Q10 (Q24:2022)] Overall, how concerned are you about the privacy and security of your data and information that may be collected and stored by your high school?

Darker shading = stronger intensity

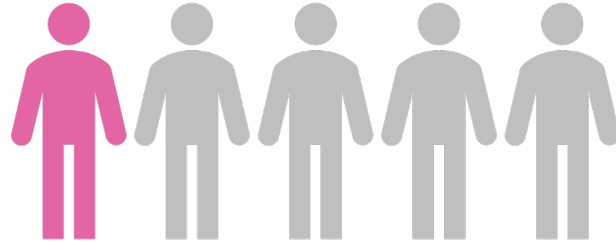
High rates of data breaches may contribute to parent concern

- 1 in 5 parents indicate they have been notified that their school has experienced a data breach.
- Those notified of a breach are more likely to be concerned about the privacy and security of their student's data.
- Just over half of parents know their school has a data breach notification plan. Almost 4 in 10 are unsure if such a notification plan exists.

Data breach notification

■ Parents (n=1,018)

1 in 5 parents have been notified of a school data breach



Among parents notified of data breaches ...

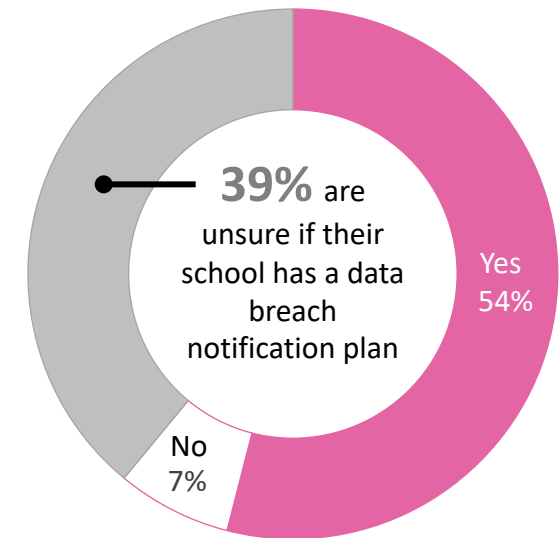
86% are concerned about privacy and security of child's data vs. 70% among parents not aware of a data breach

89% are familiar with data privacy policies and procedures at child's schools vs. 64% among parents not aware of a data breach

Among parents not concerned with data privacy ...

1 in 10 report being notified of a data breach at their child's school vs. 23% among those concerned

Parents: School has a response plan in place to notify parents of a data breach



[Parents_Q25] Have you ever been notified by your child's school about a data breach or ransomware attack putting student data at risk?

[Parents_Q26] Does your child's school have a plan or policy in place to notify parents when/if a data breach or ransomware attack occurs and puts student data at risk?

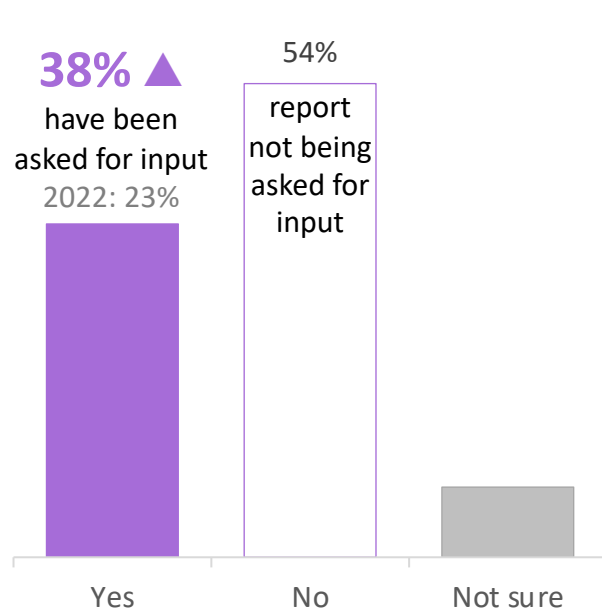
Most schools don't ask for parent, student input on responsible tech use

- More students report that their school solicits input from them on technology decisions than they did for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Conversely, fewer parents say they were asked for their input this year than they did for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Nearly all parents (95%) believe it is important for schools to engage parents in how schools plan to use student data and technology.
- Students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan and their parents are more likely to report being engaged by their school for input.

Input in determining responsible use of student data and technology

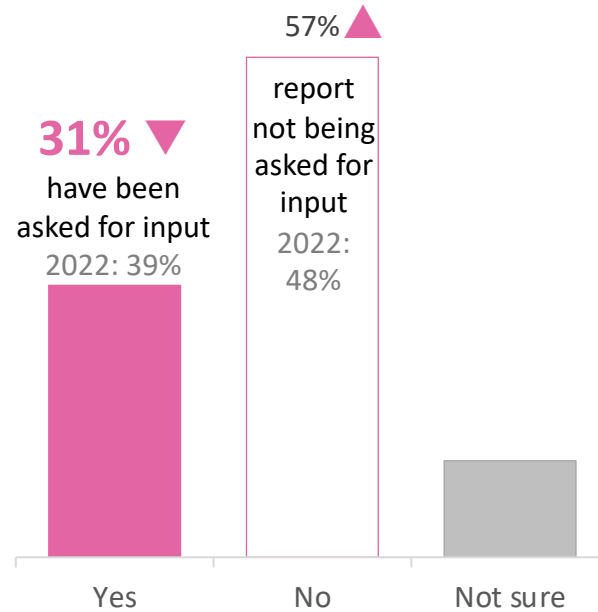
■ Students (n=1,029) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)

Students: Asked for input on school tech and data use



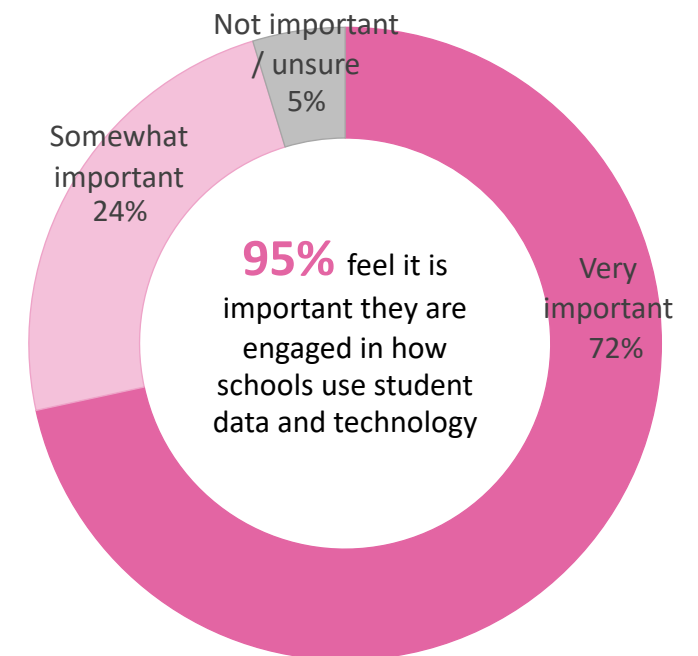
Students with IEPs/504 plans more likely than other students to be asked (58% vs. 22%)

Parents: Asked for input on school tech and data use



Parents of students with IEPs/504 plans more likely than other parents to be asked (48% vs. 22%)

Parents: Importance of being engaged in school tech and data decisions



[Students_Q13 (Q421:2022)] Has your school asked for your input to help it determine how to securely and responsibly use student data and technology?

[Parents_Q29 (Q421:2022)] Has your child's school or district asked for your input as a parent to inform how they securely and responsibly use student data and technology?

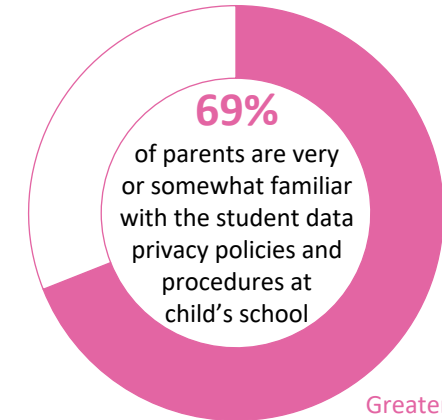
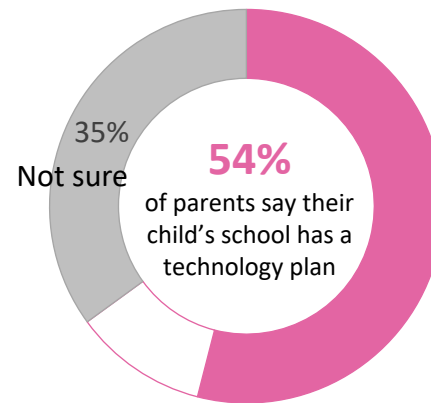
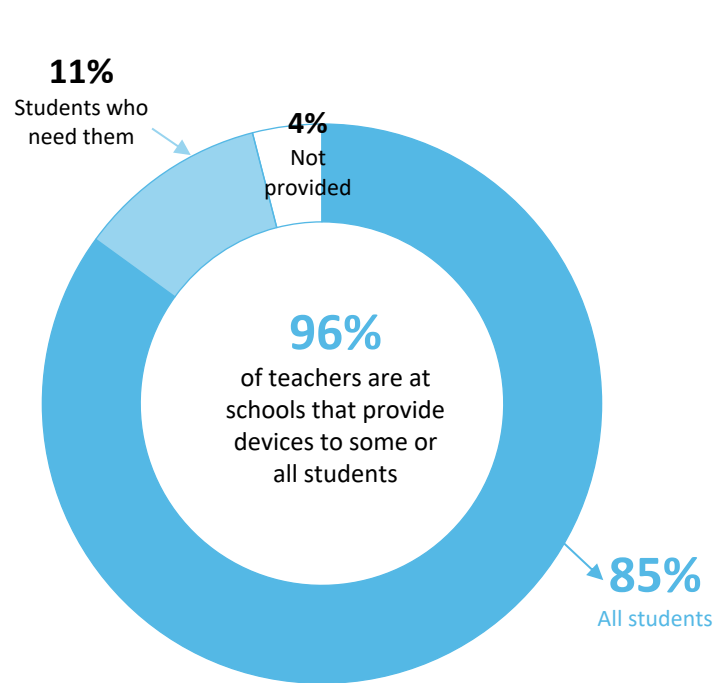
[Parents_Q30] In your opinion, how important is it for schools and school districts to engage parents/guardians about how they plan to use student data and technology?

Despite widespread student use of school-issued devices, many parents don't know whether their school has a tech plan

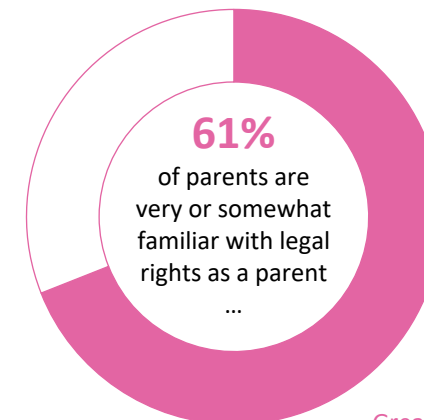
- 54% of parents indicate that their school has a technology plan addressing student privacy and security issues, and 35% are unsure.
- Familiarity with student data privacy policies and with legal rights as a parent is higher among parents of children with an IEP and/or a 504 plan than among parents whose children do not have these plans.

School-provided devices and school technology plan

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)



Greater familiarity:
IEP/504 plans
(78% vs. 63%)



Greater familiarity:
IEP/504 plans (72% vs. 54%)

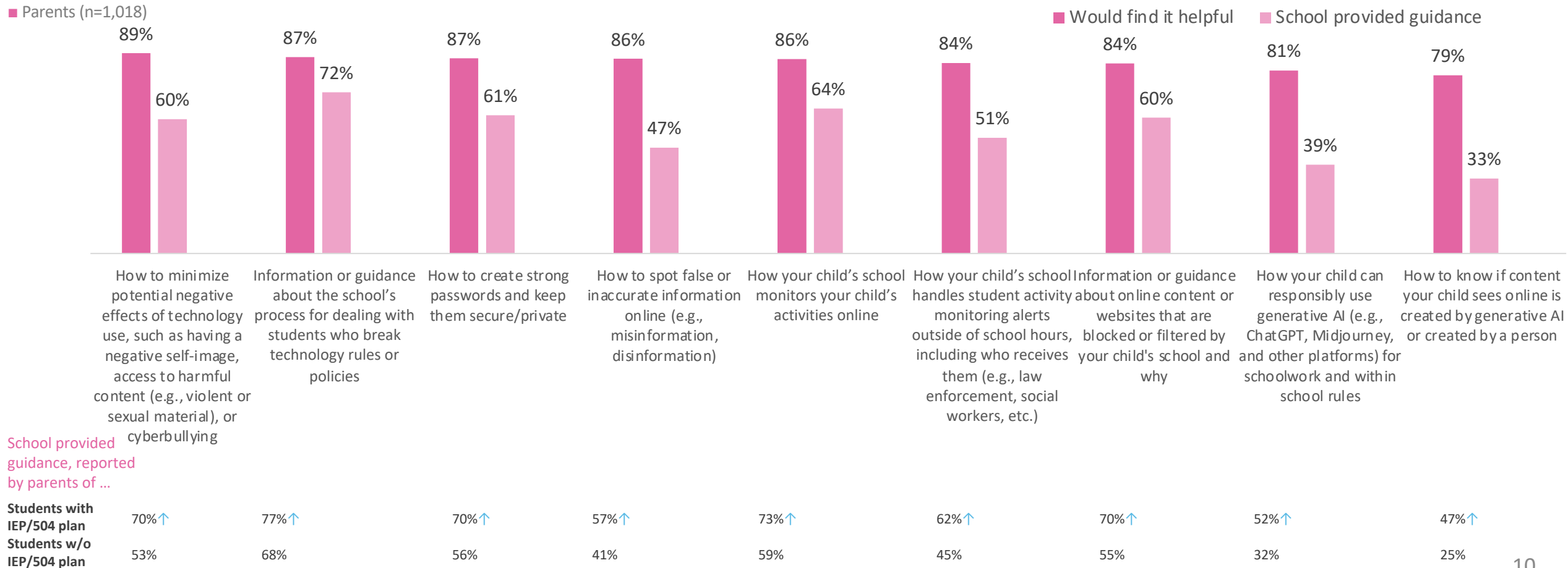
... (continued) when it comes to protecting and making decisions about the privacy and security of child's student information

[Teachers_Q11 (Q15A:2022)] When school resumes next year (2023-2024), will your school support students by providing and/or maintaining tablets, laptops, or Chromebooks to students for their use at school, at home, or both?
 [Parents_Q24 (Q30:2022)] Does your child's school have a technology plan addressing student privacy and security issues?
 [Parents_Q22] How familiar would you say you are with the student data privacy policies and procedures at your child's school?
 [Parents_Q27] How familiar are you with your legal rights as a parent when it comes to protecting and making decisions about the privacy and security of your child's student information at their school?

Gaps exist in school guidance on the use of school technology and what parents find helpful

- Though still not at levels needed to meet demand, parents of students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan are more likely to report receiving guidance on these topics.

Guidance about school technology



School provided guidance, reported by parents of ...

Students with IEP/504 plan
Students w/o IEP/504 plan

[Parents_Q19] During the school year that just ended, did your school provide you and/or your child guidance or support on the following technology topics?

[Parents_Q20] Listed below are those same technology topics high school students could learn about. To what extent do you feel it would be helpful for your child's school to provide guidance or support to students on these topics?

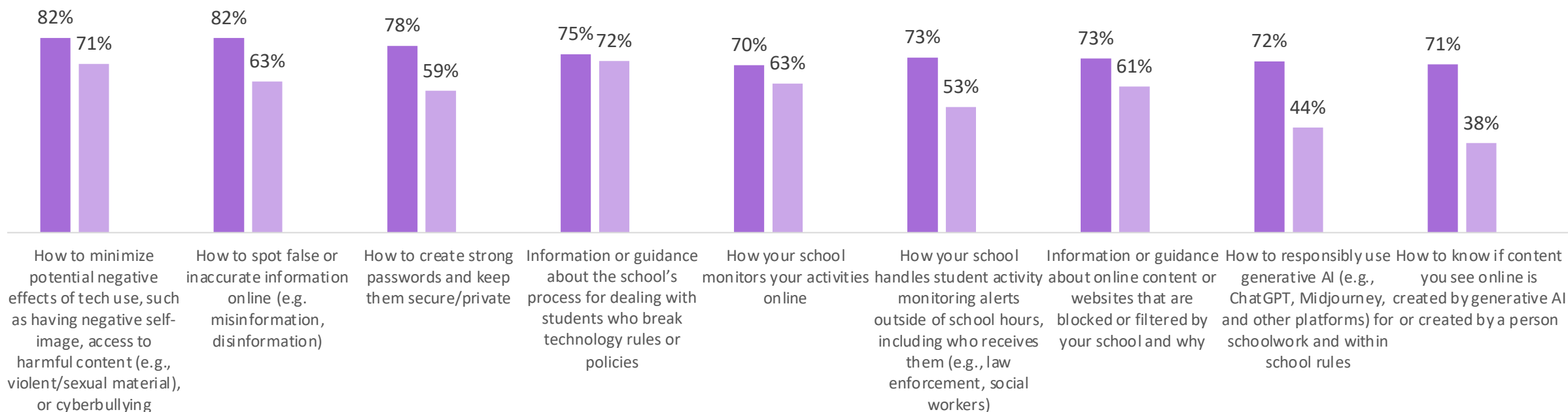
Schools fall short of student demands for tech guidance

- More students indicate schools provide guidance on what happens when technology rules are broken and how to minimize negative effects of technology use.
- There are large gaps between what students would find helpful and what they receive in terms of guidance about student activity monitoring, content filtering and blocking, and using generative AI.
- Students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan are consistently more likely to report that their school provides guidance on these topics.

Guidance about school technology

■ Students (n=1,029)

■ Would find it helpful ■ School provided guidance



School provided guidance, reported by ...

Students with IEP/504 plan	77% ↑	69% ↑	67% ↑	78% ↑	71% ↑	67% ↑	71% ↑	56% ↑	51% ↑
Students w/o IEP/504 plan	66%	59%	54%	67%	56%	42%	54%	35%	26%

[Students_Q08] During this school year, did your school provide you guidance or support on the following?

[Students_Q09] Listed below are those same technology topics high school students could learn about. How helpful would you find learning about each of the following?

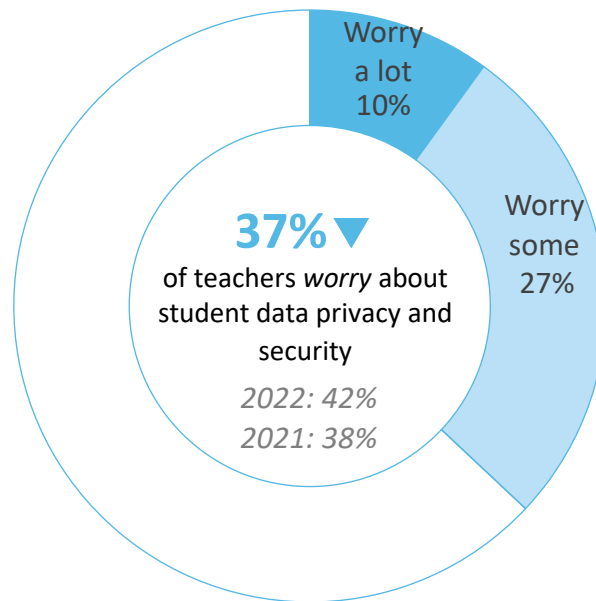
Teachers' concern about student privacy has decreased

- Concerns about student privacy have receded to 2021–22 levels among teachers.
- Concern is higher among teachers in Title I schools and licensed special education teachers compared to their non-Title I peers and teachers who are not licensed in special education.
- Licensed special education teachers are more likely to discuss student privacy with their students.

Concern about student data privacy and security

■ Teachers (n=1,005)

Teachers: Worry about student data privacy and security



Worry is higher among teachers in Title I schools (41% vs. 30%) and licensed special education teachers (45% vs. 30%)

78% of teachers say they discussed student data or information privacy with their students

- **Licensed special education teachers (88%** vs. 69%) are more likely to talk to their students about this

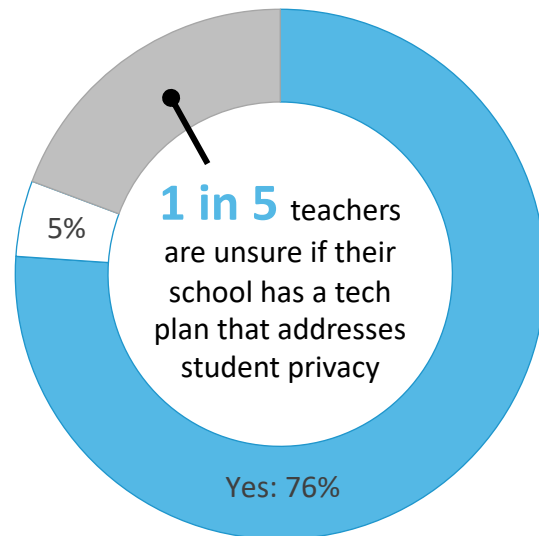
Large proportions of teachers lack training and tech plan awareness

- Teacher responses reveal gaps in the technology and data privacy support they receive from their schools.
- 1 in 5 teachers do not know if their school has a tech plan that addresses student privacy.
- Larger percentages of teachers indicate they have not received formal training in student privacy or filtering and blocking policies.

School has a technology plan and training

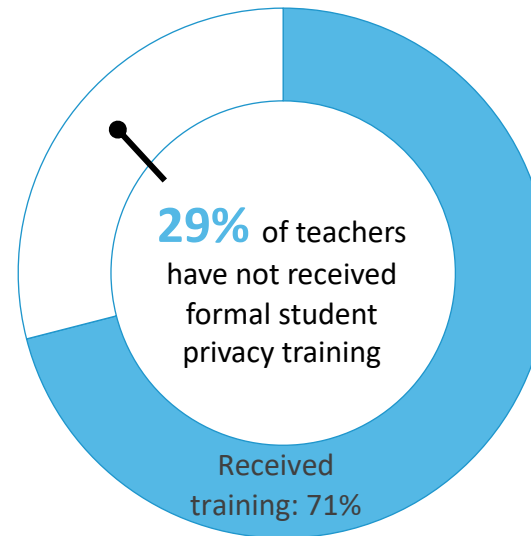
■ Teachers (n=1,005)

Technology plan awareness



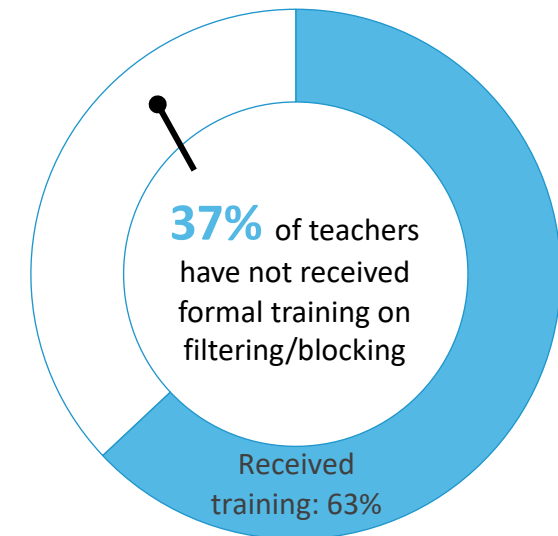
Licensed special education teachers more likely than other teachers to report their school has a tech plan (84% vs. 69%)

Formal training: Student privacy



Licensed special education teachers more likely than other teachers to report receiving training (82% vs. 62%)

Formal training: Filtering and blocking



[Teachers_Q19] Does your school or school district have a technology plan addressing student privacy and security issues?

[Teachers_Q16] How, if at all, has your school or district shared student data privacy policies and procedures with you in your role as a teacher? Select all that apply.

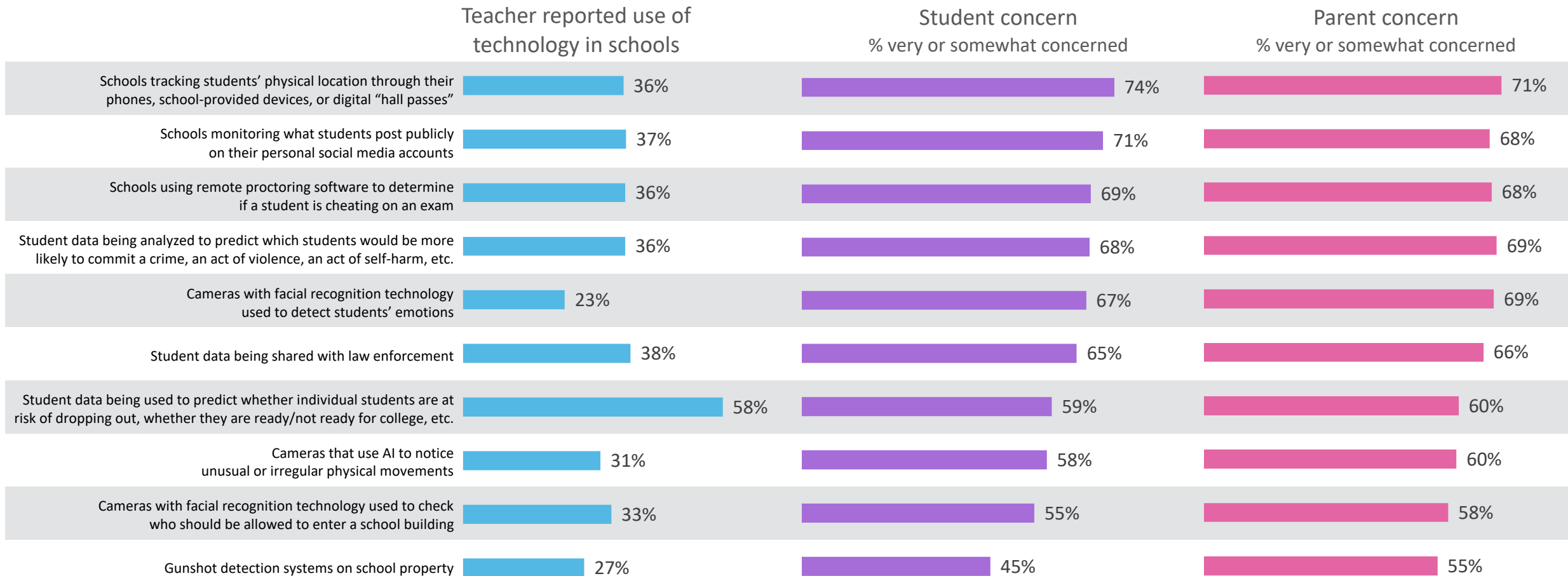
[Teachers_Q22] How, if at all, has your school or district shared content filtering and blocking policies and procedures with you in your role as a teacher? Select all that apply.

Parents and students express concerns about a range of technologies

- At least one-third of teachers report that several of these technologies are already in use at their schools.

Use and concern about technology uses

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Students (n=1,029) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)



[Teachers_Q18] Listed below are potential ways that data or technology could be used in schools. Which of the following is your school or school district doing today?

[Parents_Q23] Listed below are potential ways that data or technology could be used in schools. How concerned would you say you are with each when it comes to your child and your child's school?

[Students_Q11] Listed below are potential ways that data or technology could be used in schools. How concerned would you say you are with each if they were used at your school?

Rank ordered by student concern

Parent and student concern about data sharing with law enforcement and predictive analytics has grown

- Students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan are more likely than students without IEP/504 plans to express concern.
- Teachers at Title I schools and licensed special education teachers are significantly more likely than non-Title I school teachers and teachers not licensed in special education to report technology being used for school safety.

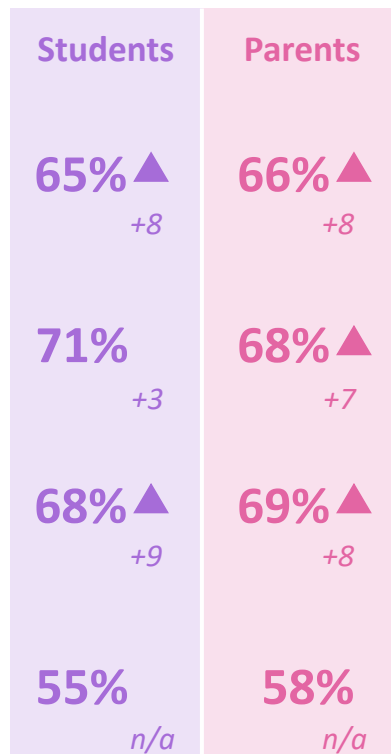
Technology used for school safety

■ Students (n=1,029) | ■ Parents (n=1,018) | ■ Teachers (n=1,005)

Students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan are more likely to report concern:

- IEP or 504 plan (73% vs. 60%)
- IEP or 504 plan (74% vs. 69%)
- IEP or 504 plan (72% vs. 66%)
- IEP or 504 plan (65% vs. 49%)

% very or somewhat concerned



Student data such as grades, attendance, and discipline information being shared with law enforcement (e.g., local police department, immigration enforcement)

Schools monitoring what students post publicly on their personal social media accounts

Student data being analyzed to predict which individual students would be more likely to commit a crime, commit an act of violence, commit an act of self-harm, etc.

Cameras with facial recognition technology being used to check who should be allowed to enter a school building or identify someone who should not be there

% saying school does this today

Teachers

38%

37%

36%

33%

Title I and licensed special education teachers are more likely to report concern:

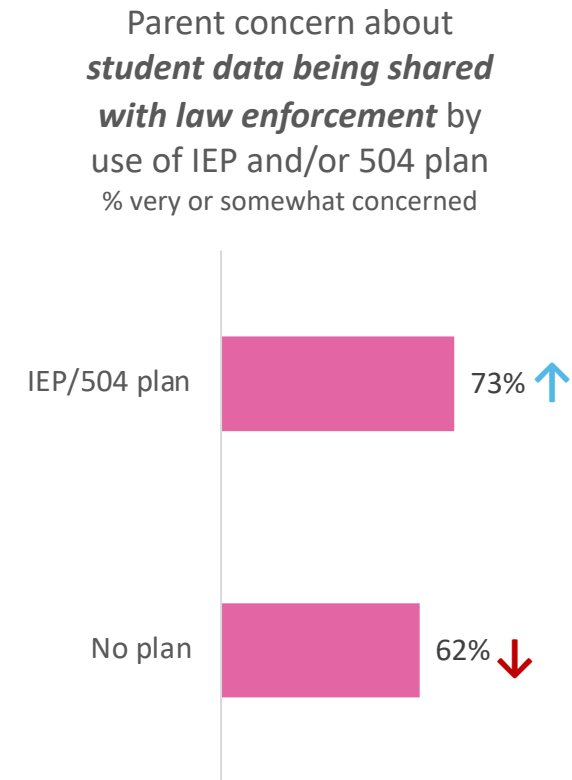
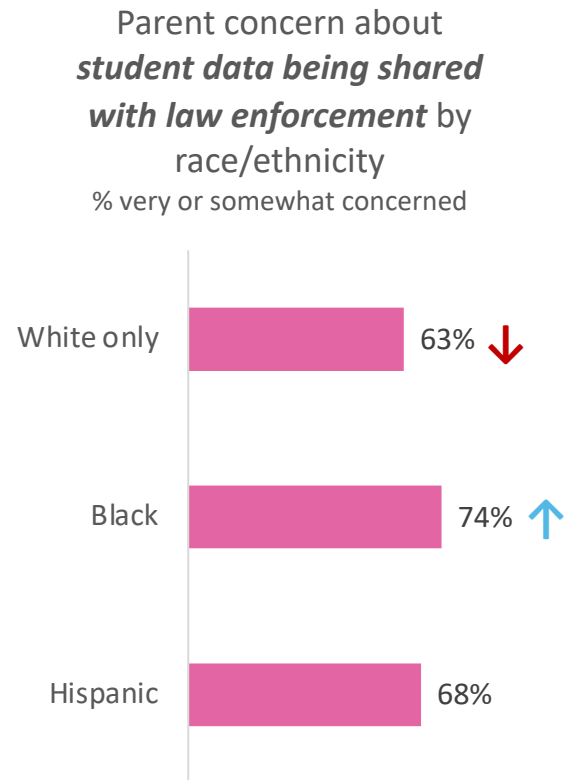
- Title I (48% vs. 24%)
- Special educator (57% vs. 21%)
- Title I (42% vs. 31%)
- Special educator (47% vs. 28%)
- Title I (45% vs. 28%)
- Special educator (55% vs. 21%)
- Title I (39% vs. 26%)
- Special educator (51% vs. 18%)

Data sharing with law enforcement raises disproportionate concern among certain parent groups

- Black parents and parents of students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan are more concerned about sharing data with law enforcement.

Concern about sharing data with law enforcement

■ Parents (n=1,018)

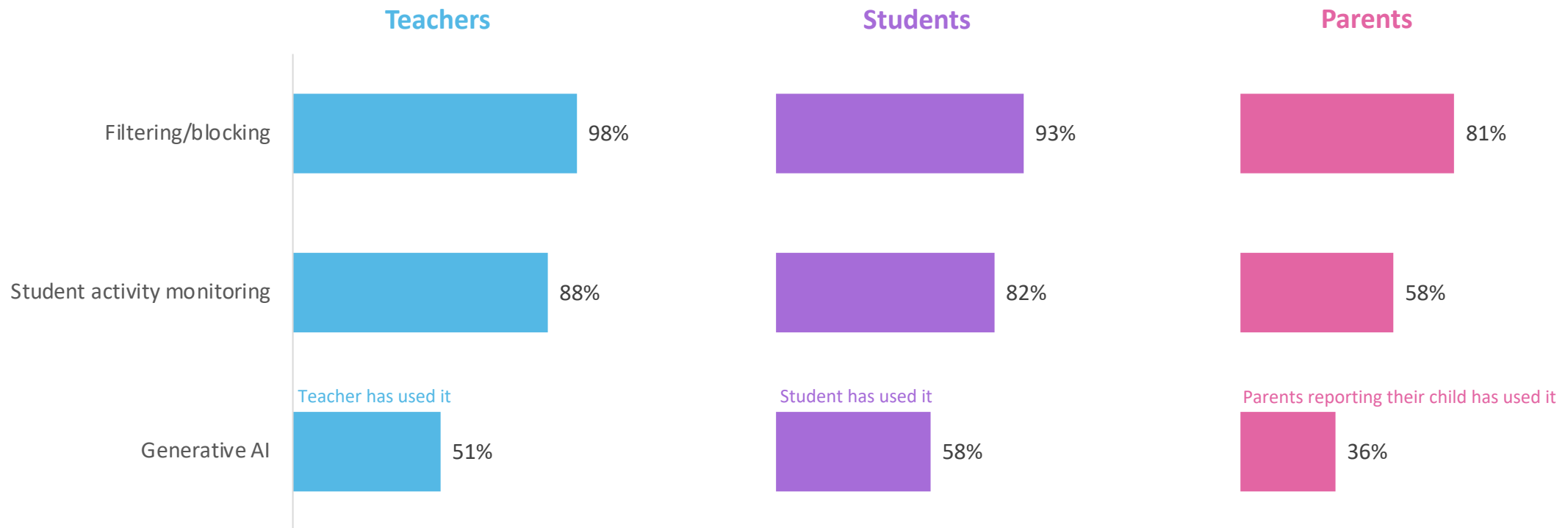


Content filtering/blocking and student activity monitoring are widespread

- Teachers and students both report widespread use of content filtering and blocking and student activity monitoring.
- Majorities of both teachers and students indicate they have used generative AI.

Reported school use of student activity monitoring or filtering/blocking or that teacher or student have used generative AI

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Students (n=1,029) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)



[Teachers_Q20] [Students_Q14] [Parents_Q31] As far as you know, does your (Parents: your child's) school or school district filter or block online content, such as websites or mobile apps, that students can access? Select all that apply.

[Teachers_Q25 (Q42A:2022)] [Students_Q16 (Q42A:2022)] [Parents_Q33 (Q42A:2022)] As far as you know, does your (Parents: your child's) school engage in student activity monitoring? Yes/No/Not sure in 2023 vs. Yes, on Personal/School/Both/No/Not sure in 2022.

[Teachers_Q40] [Students_Q27] [Parents_Q53] Have you (Parents: Has your child) ever used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform, either for personal or school use? Select all that apply.

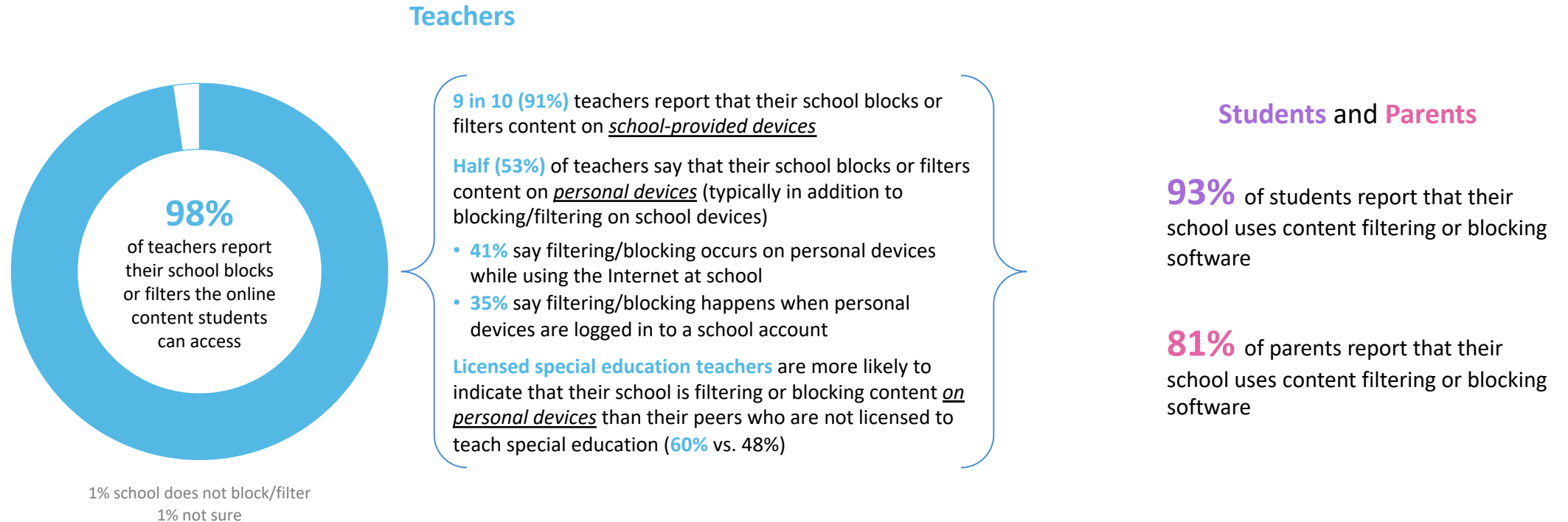
Content Filtering and Blocking: Long-Standing Technology Is Creating New Problems for Students and Teachers

Content blocking and filtering at schools is nearly universal

- Nearly all teachers report that their school blocks and filters the online content that can be viewed by students.
- 53% of teachers report that filtering and blocking also occurs on students' personal devices — and even more licensed special education teachers report this happening.

Current usage: Content filtering and blocking

■ Teachers (n=1,005)

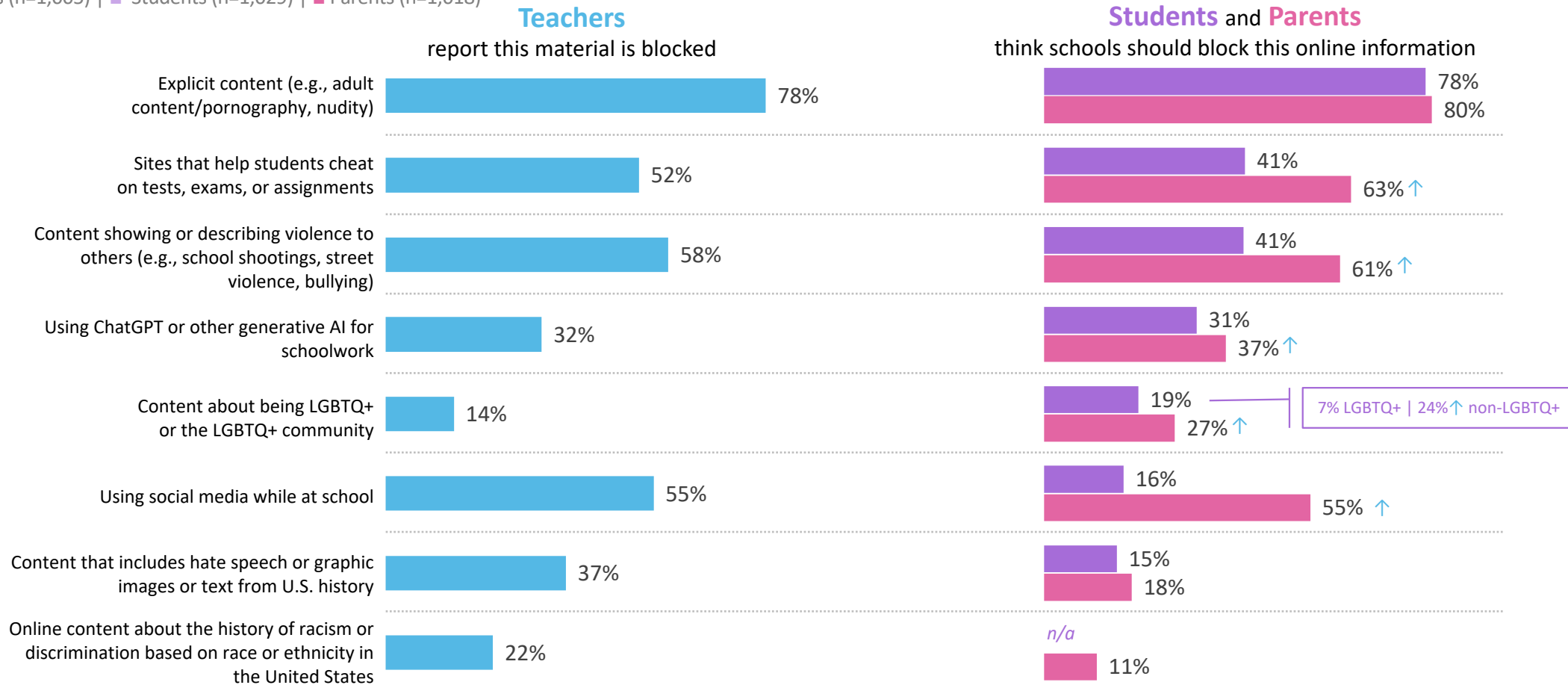


Parents and students are most supportive of blocking explicit online content; teachers say this type of content is filtered or blocked the most by schools

- Parents and students hold diverging views on whether schools should block many of the content areas included in the survey, with the largest difference on blocking access to social media.

Online information that is blocked and student and parent views about what content schools should filter or block

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Students (n=1,029) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)



[Teachers_Q21] What online information does your school or school district filter or block? Select all that apply.

[Parents_Q32] [Students_Q15] Please read the following statements and select what online information you think schools should filter or block. Select all that apply.

Though content filtering and blocking is widely used by schools, teachers lack sufficient training in policies and procedures

- Only 63% of teachers whose school uses this software report receiving substantive training on it.
- Teachers in Title I schools as well as licensed special education teachers are more likely than non-Title I teachers and those not licensed in special education to report receiving training on filtering and blocking and are therefore more likely to receive guidance on important topics related to filtering and blocking.
- Just over half of teachers say they were given opportunities to give input on what is filtered or blocked, and only 1 in 4 parents report being asked for input.

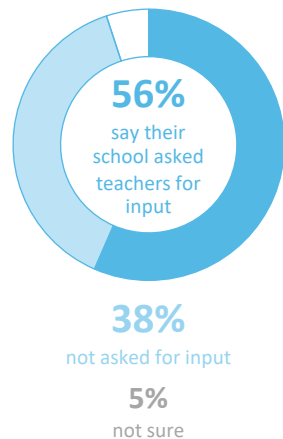
Current capacity: Content filtering and blocking

■ Teachers at schools where content is filtered or blocked (n=982) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)

Among teachers at schools that do content filtering and blocking:

Only **63%** say they were required to participate in training on content filtering and blocking

- Teachers at **Title I schools** (71% vs. 51%) and **licensed special education teachers** (78% vs. 50%) are more likely to receive training



Just **56%** of teachers and only **27%** of all parents say their school has asked them for input about the types of content or websites that should be filtered or blocked

- Teachers at **Title I schools** (65% vs. 44%) and **licensed special education teachers** (76% vs. 39%) are more likely to say they have been asked for input

Guidance on Filtering/Blocking Policies/Procedures	All teachers at schools where content is filtered or blocked	Title I teachers	Non-Title I teachers	Licensed special education teachers	Teachers not licensed in special education
How to respond if a student uses a workaround to access filtered or blocked content	41%	49%↑	28%	55%↑	28%
When and how to discipline students if they attempt to or succeed in accessing filtered or blocked content	41%	50%↑	27%	57%↑	28%

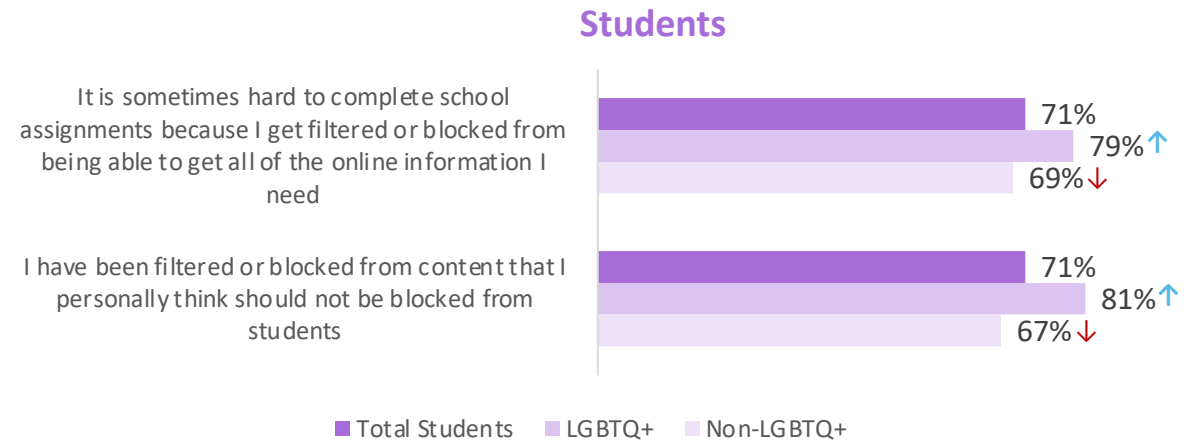
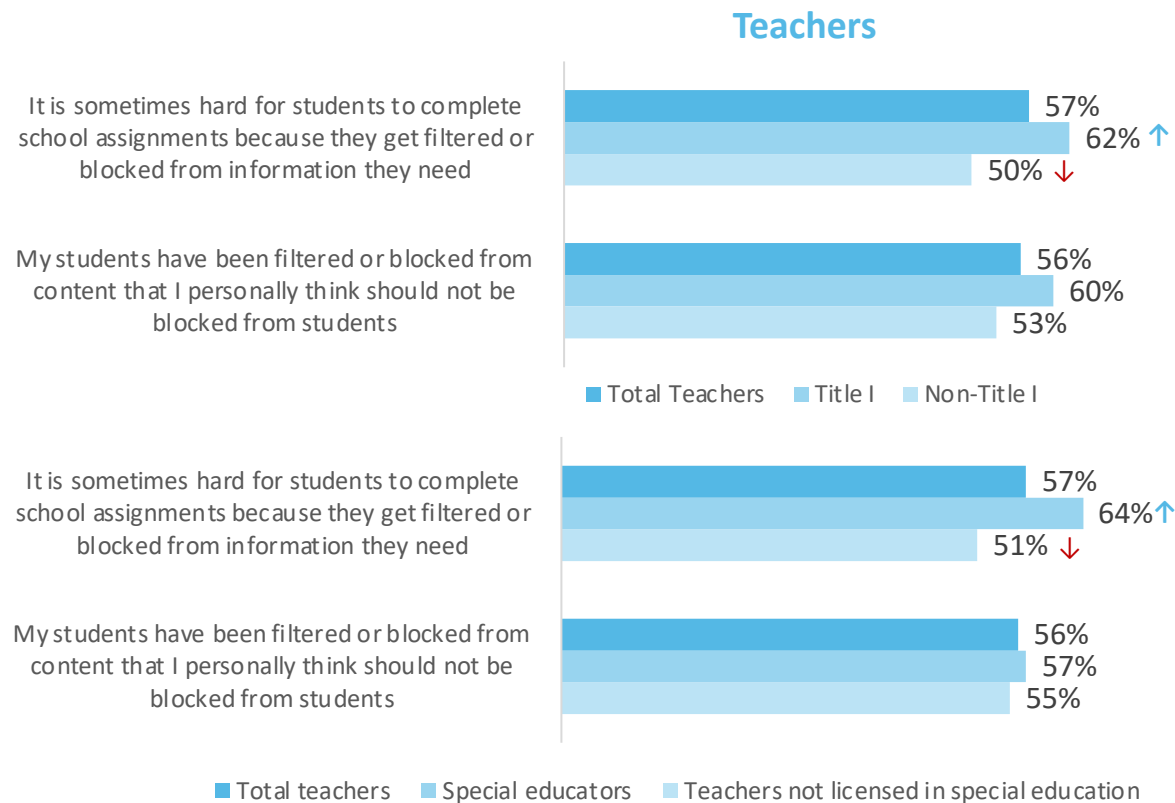
[Teachers_Q22] How, if at all, has your school or district shared content filtering and blocking policies and procedures with you in your role as a teacher? Select all that apply.
 [Teachers_Q23] Which, if any, of the following have been discussed or covered as part of your teacher training about school policies and procedures regarding filtering and blocking? Select all that apply.
 [Teachers_Q24] Has the school asked teachers for input about the specific types of content or websites that should be filtered or blocked by the school?
 [Parents_Q44] Has your child's school or district asked for your input as a parent to inform how or what they monitor, filter, or block?

Teachers and students contend content blocking and filtering can be a barrier to learning

- Majorities of students and teachers say that content filtering and blocking impedes students' ability to complete school assignments.
- Teachers at Title I schools and licensed special education teachers are more likely to say that content filtering and blocking sometimes makes it harder for students to complete assignments.
- LGBTQ+ students report having trouble with school assignments due to content filtering and blocking in greater numbers than their non-LGBTQ+ peers.

Risks to students: Content filtering and blocking

■ Teachers (n=982) and ■ Students (n=955) at schools where content is filtered or blocked



53% of teachers agree with the statement, "I feel that my students are filtered or blocked from content that will help them learn as a student."

50% of teachers agree with the statement, "I feel that my students are filtered or blocked from content that will help them grow as a person."

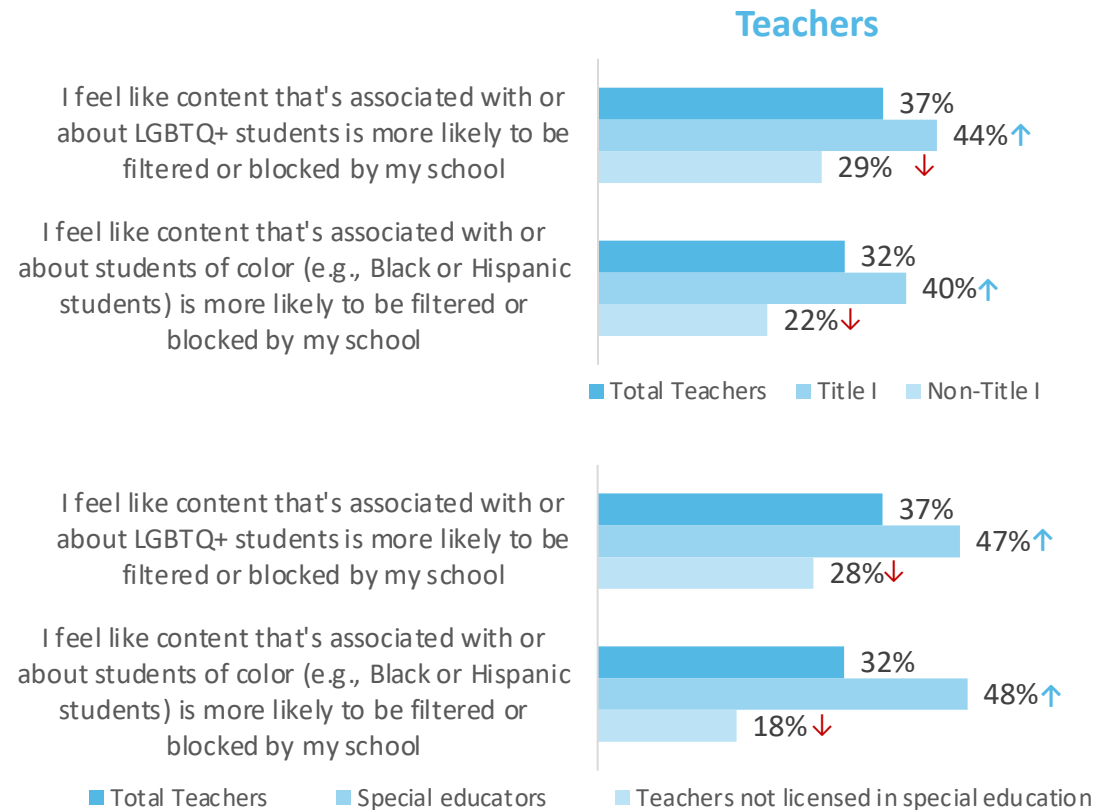
% very or somewhat agree with the statement

Just over one-third of teachers indicate that online content associated with LGBTQ+ students or students of color is more likely to be filtered or blocked

- Title I and licensed special education teachers are more likely to report restrictions of this type of content.

Risks to students: Content filtering and blocking

■ Teachers at schools where content is filtered and blocked (n=982)



47% of teachers agree that *“I feel that my students are filtered or blocked from content that will help them grow as a person.”*

% Very or Somewhat Agree with the statement

Student Activity Monitoring: COVID-Era Technology Continues to Persist and Harm Students

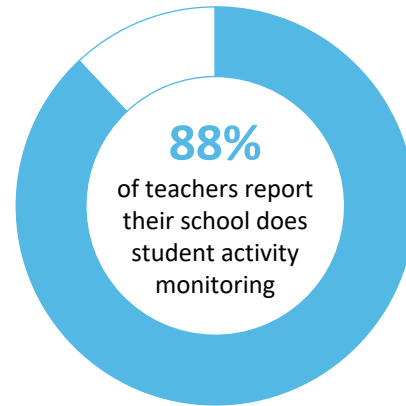
Almost 9 in 10 teachers report student activity monitoring at their schools

- While most schools monitor school-provided devices, 4 in 10 also monitor personal devices.
- Parents have lower awareness about student activity monitoring than teachers and students; 3 in 10 don't know if their child's school engages in student activity monitoring.

Current usage: Student activity monitoring

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Students (n=1,029) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)

Teachers



8 in 10 (81%) teachers report that their school monitors school-provided devices

4 in 10 (40%) teachers say that their school monitors student activity on personal devices (typically in addition to monitoring school devices)

- **28%** say monitoring occurs on personal devices while using the Internet at school
- **27%** say monitoring happens when personal devices are logged in to a school account

Teachers at **Title I schools (46%** vs. 30% non-Title I teachers) and **licensed special education teachers (51%** vs. 30% teachers without special education licenses) are more likely to indicate that their school engages in student activity monitoring of personal devices

Lower awareness of student activity monitoring among students and parents than among teachers

82% students | **58%** parents

89% Students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan
78% Students without an IEP or a 504 plan

30% of parents "don't know" if their child's school does student activity monitoring

[Teachers_Q25 (Q42A:2022)] Does your school or school district engage in student activity monitoring? Select all that apply.

[Students_Q16 (Q42A:2022)] As far as you know, does your school conduct student activity monitoring? Select all that apply.

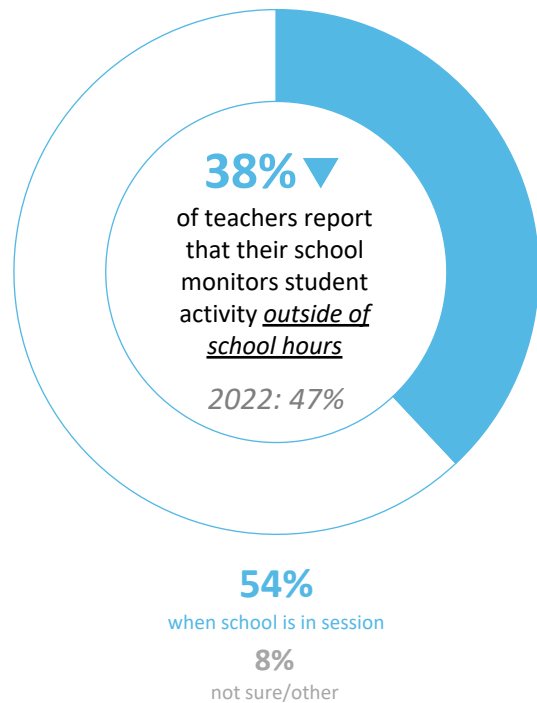
[Parents_Q33 (Q42A:2022)] As far as you know, does your child's school engage in student activity monitoring? Yes/No/Not sure in 2023 vs. Yes, on Personal/School/Both/No/Not sure in 2022.

- 1 in 4 teachers at schools that engage in student activity monitoring outside of school hours report that law enforcement receives alerts.
- Half of teachers say that their school gives parents the option to view a report of their child's online activity at school.

Teacher-reported student activity monitoring implications for students

■ Teachers at schools that engage in student activity monitoring (n=883)

Among teachers at schools that engage in student activity monitoring:



39% report that someone in public safety (e.g., local police, immigration enforcement) receives alerts for follow-up outside of school hours

Teachers at Title I schools (46% vs. 24% non-Title I teachers) and licensed special education teachers (53% vs. 23% teachers without special education licenses) are more likely to say law enforcement receives alerts outside of school hours



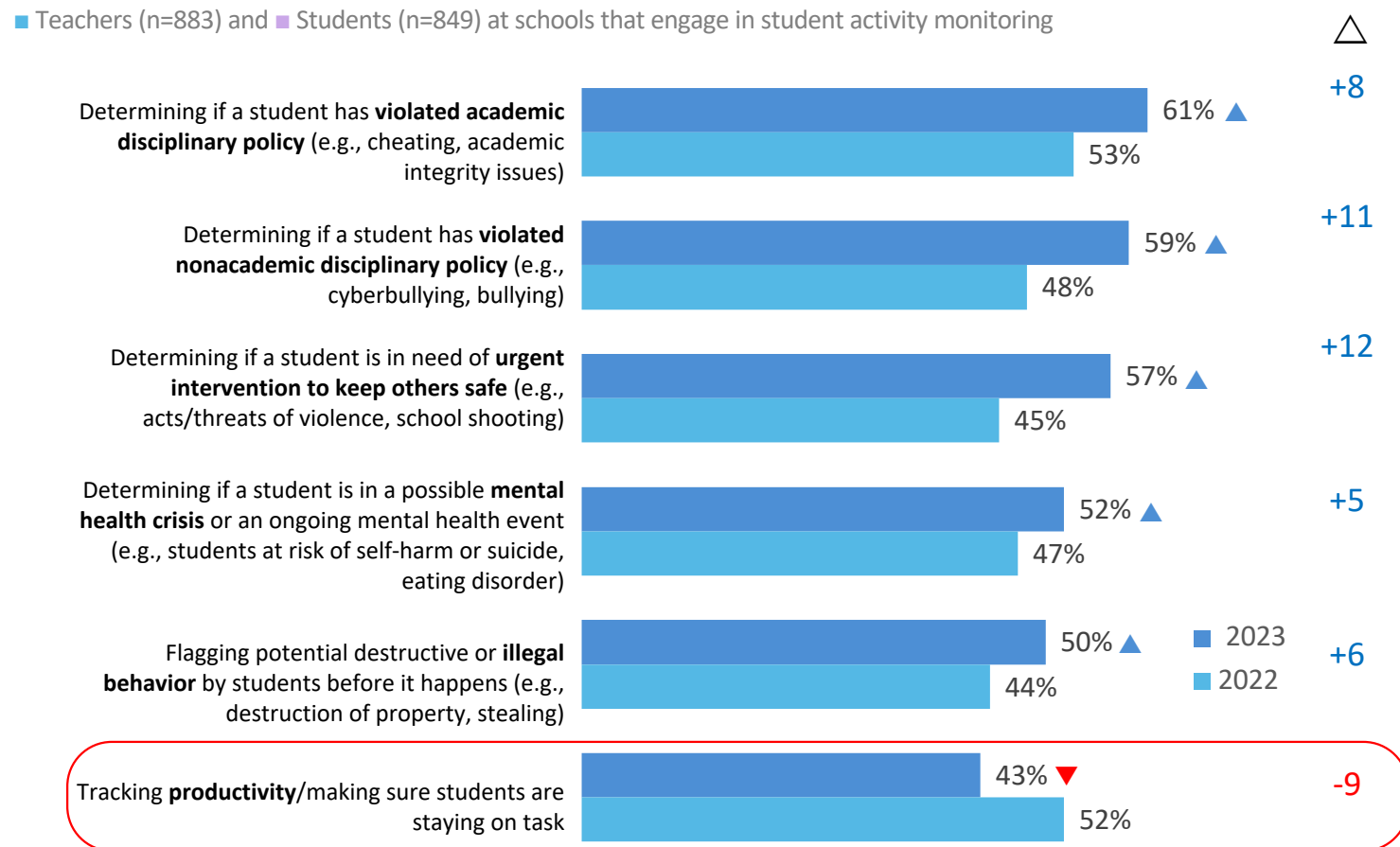
51% report their school provides parents with the option to view a report of child's online activity

[Teachers_Q28 (Q42D:2022)] When is students' online activity monitored? Select one.
[Teachers_Q29 (Q42B5:2022)] Who receives alerts from the student activity monitoring system that happen AFTER SCHOOL HOURS? Select all that apply.
[Teachers_Q31] Does your school provide parents with the option to view a report of their child's online activity at school?

Nonacademic uses of student activity monitoring have surpassed teaching and learning applications

- Teachers report increases in using student activity monitoring for disciplinary, mental health, and violence intervention, while its use for student productivity and staying on task has dropped.
- Students that know of someone who has gotten in trouble through student activity monitoring report nonacademic violations.
- Students who report law enforcement contact cite a range of reasons for contact.

Ways schools use student activity monitoring



Of the 42% of students who report that they or another student has gotten in trouble through student activity monitoring ...

- 55% say the student visited a **website/online content** that was found inappropriate
- 37% say the student was doing something **off task** or a distraction from learning
- 35% report that the student wrote something in an **email, chat**, etc. that was found inappropriate
- 35% indicate that the student said or did something that was found to be **bullying**/harassing another student

Of the 26% of students who say law enforcement was contacted because student activity monitoring flagged something they or another student said or did ...

- 45% that could be a **threat** to others
- 43% that could indicate possession of an **illegal substance**
- 36% that could indicate **possession of a gun**
- 32% that was found to be **bullying**/harassing another student
- 32% that could put them at risk of **self-harm**

[Teachers_Q27 (Q42C:2022)] In which of the following ways does your school or district engage in student activity monitoring? Select all that apply.

[Students_Q19] You indicated that a student got in trouble when the school's student activity monitoring saw something the student was doing online. What was the student doing that got them in trouble? Select all that apply.

[Students_Q20] You indicated that a student was contacted by law enforcement due to something the school's student activity monitoring saw that student doing online. Why was law enforcement contacted? Select all that apply.

Despite widespread use of student activity monitoring, many teachers have not received training on their school's policies and procedures

- Gaps also exist in training teachers in the school's processes for dealing with student behavior flagged by student activity monitoring.
- Just over half indicate they have been asked for input regarding what content is monitored.

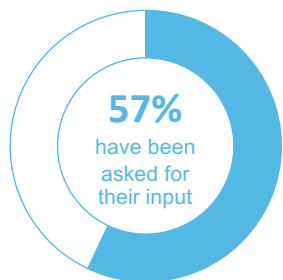
Current capacity: Student activity monitoring

■ Teachers at schools that engage in student activity monitoring (n=883)

Among teachers at schools that do student activity monitoring:

Only **69%** say they were required to participate in training on student activity monitoring

- Teachers at **Title I schools** (**76%** vs. 57%) and **licensed special education teachers** (**81%** vs. 59%) are more likely to receive training



Just **57%** have been asked for their input on what student content is monitored

- Teachers at **Title I schools** (**63%** vs. 46% non-Title I teachers) and **licensed special education teachers** (**71%** vs. 44% teachers without special education licenses) are more likely to say they have been asked for input

	All teachers at schools where activity is monitored	Title I teachers	Non-Title I teachers	Licensed special education teachers	Teachers not licensed in special education
How to use the school's student activity monitoring system or software	36%	41% ↑	28%	43% ↑	30%
What types of online content are monitored by the school and why (e.g., student messages, documents, emails)	44%	50% ↑	35%	53% ↑	35%
Key words or topics for which student activity monitoring is scanning and alerting (e.g., phrases related to mental health, school shootings, or cyberbullying; key words like "bomb" or "gay")	40%	48% ↑	27%	52% ↑	29%
How to protect students' privacy when responding to alerts	37%	42% ↑	30%	47% ↑	27%

[Teachers_Q33 (Q35:2022)] How, if at all, has your school or district shared student activity monitoring policies and procedures with you in your role as a teacher? Select all that apply.

[Teachers_Q34] Which, if any, of the following have been discussed or covered as part of your teacher training about school policies and procedures regarding student activity monitoring? Select all that apply.

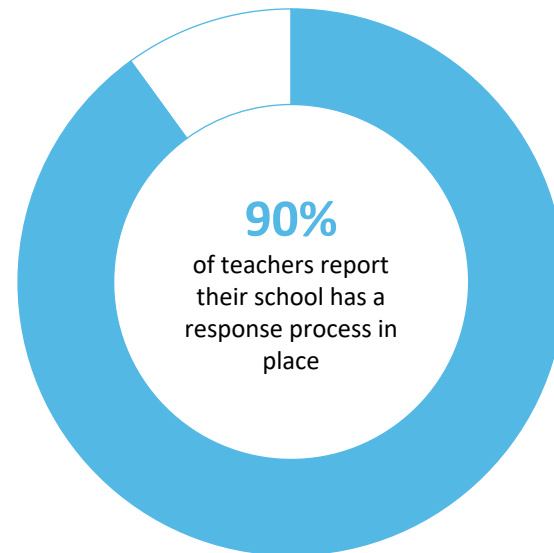
[Teachers_Q36] Has the school asked teachers for input about ...?

While most teachers note their schools have a process in place for taking action, only 6 in 10 say they understand this process

School has a process in place for taking action when student activity monitoring detects student behavior that breaks school rules or policies

■ Teachers at schools that engage in student activity monitoring (n=883)

Teachers



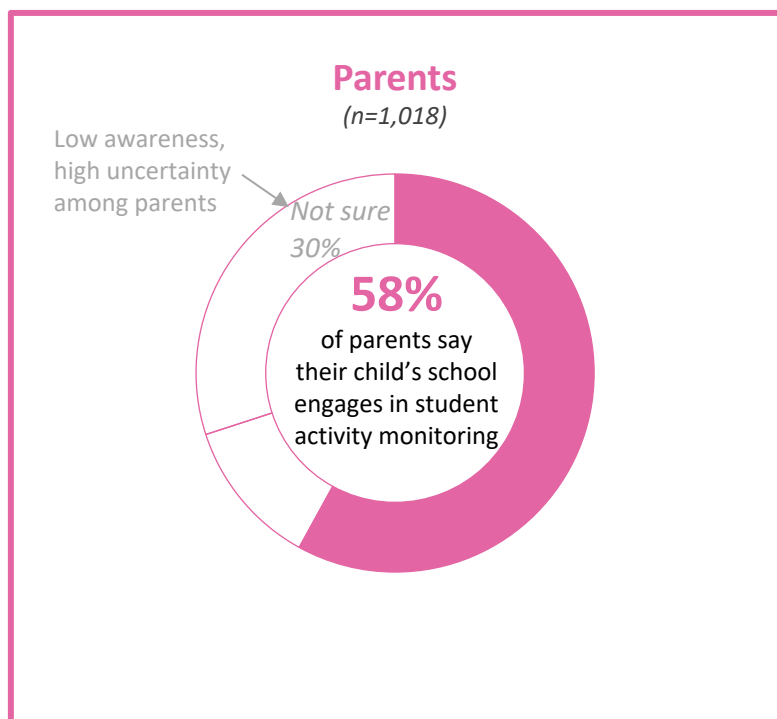
Only **59%** say the school process has been shared with them and they understand what would happen

Parents want to know how student activity monitoring works, yet many are not getting this information from schools

- 3 in 10 parents are uncertain about whether their student's school does student activity monitoring.
- Only 51% of parents know what the school does with alerts outside of school hours.
- Among parents that do know if their school uses this technology, 9 in 10 want the school to communicate how the monitoring process works before an event takes place, and 9 in 10 say they want to be involved when monitoring alerts activity by their student.
- 54% of parents who know their school monitors student activity say they understand what would happen if a student is caught by student activity monitoring breaking a school rule.

Parent information and engagement on student activity monitoring

■ Parents (n=1,018) | Parents with students at schools that engage in student activity monitoring (n=594)



At schools that engage in student activity monitoring:

94% of parents say it is important that the school communicate to them how the monitoring system works before an event takes place

In the event of a student activity monitoring alert, **90%** of parents say it is important that they are consulted before any action is taken with their child

88% of parents say there is a process in place, but just **54%** say it has been shared with them and they understand what would happen when student activity monitoring detects student behavior that breaks school rules or policies

[Parents_Q33] As far as you know, does your child's school engage in student activity monitoring? *Note: changes to question limit the ability to track data*

[Parents_Q41] How important are each of the following for a school to include in its process when its student activity monitoring system signals an alert?

[Parents_Q35] To the best of your knowledge, does your school have a process in place for taking action when student activity monitoring detects student behavior that breaks school rules or policies? Select one.

[Parents_Q19] During the school year that just ended, did your school provide you and/or your child guidance or support on the following technology topics?

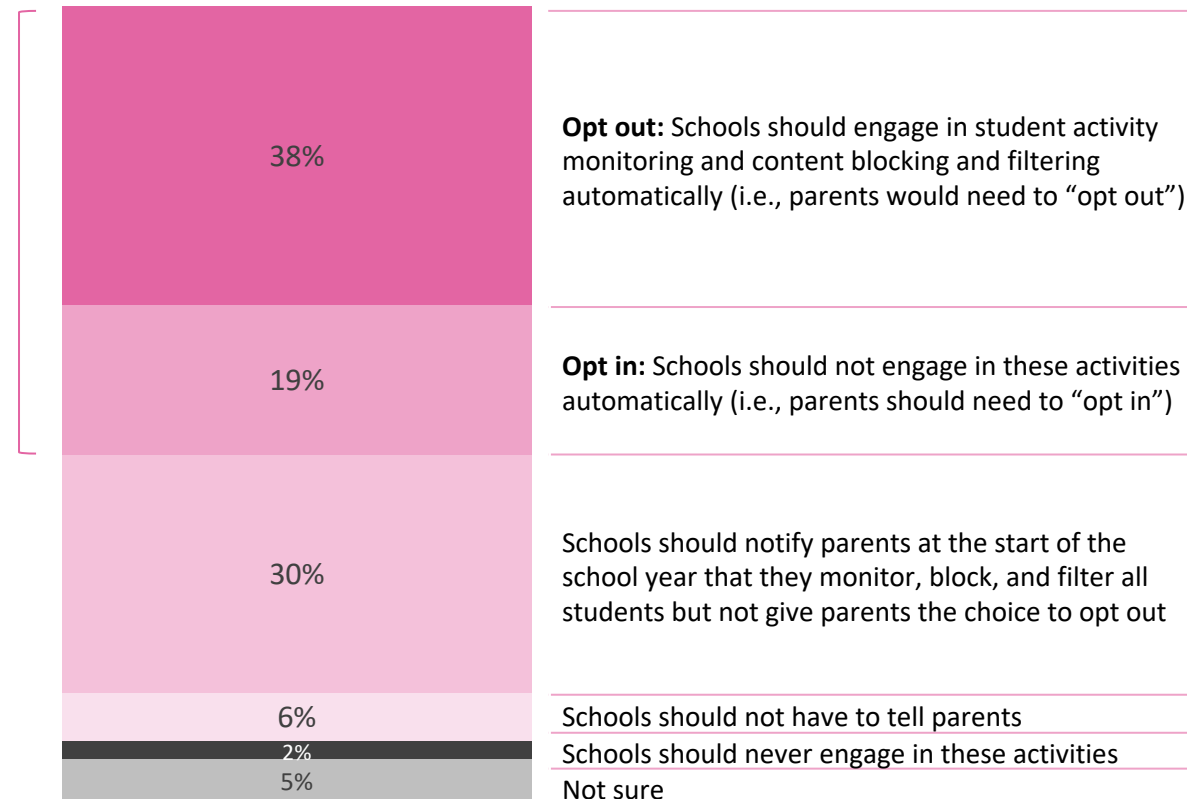
Most parents want a choice in whether their child is monitored or content is filtered or blocked by the school

- 38% of parents think parents should be able to opt their child out of monitoring, blocking, and filtering, and 19% think schools should get opt-in consent from parents to use this technology with their child.
- Just 6% of parents say schools should use this technology without telling parents.

Parent involvement in decisions to monitor, block, or filter content for their child

■ Parents (n=1,018)

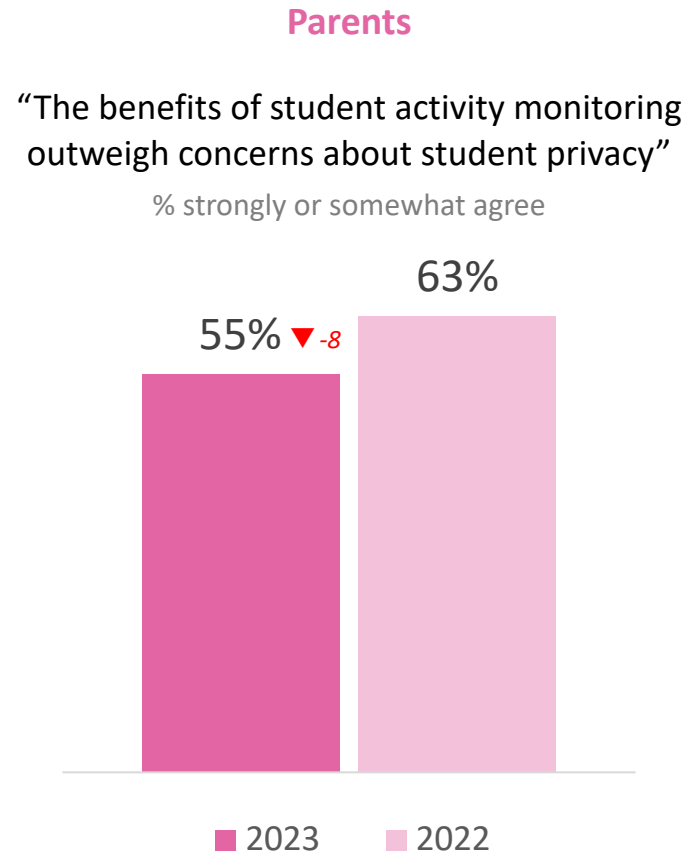
57% of parents want to be able to opt their child in or out



Among parents, the cost–benefit of student activity monitoring has declined since 2021–22

Risks to students: Benefits of student activity monitoring versus concerns about student privacy

■ Parents (n=1,018)

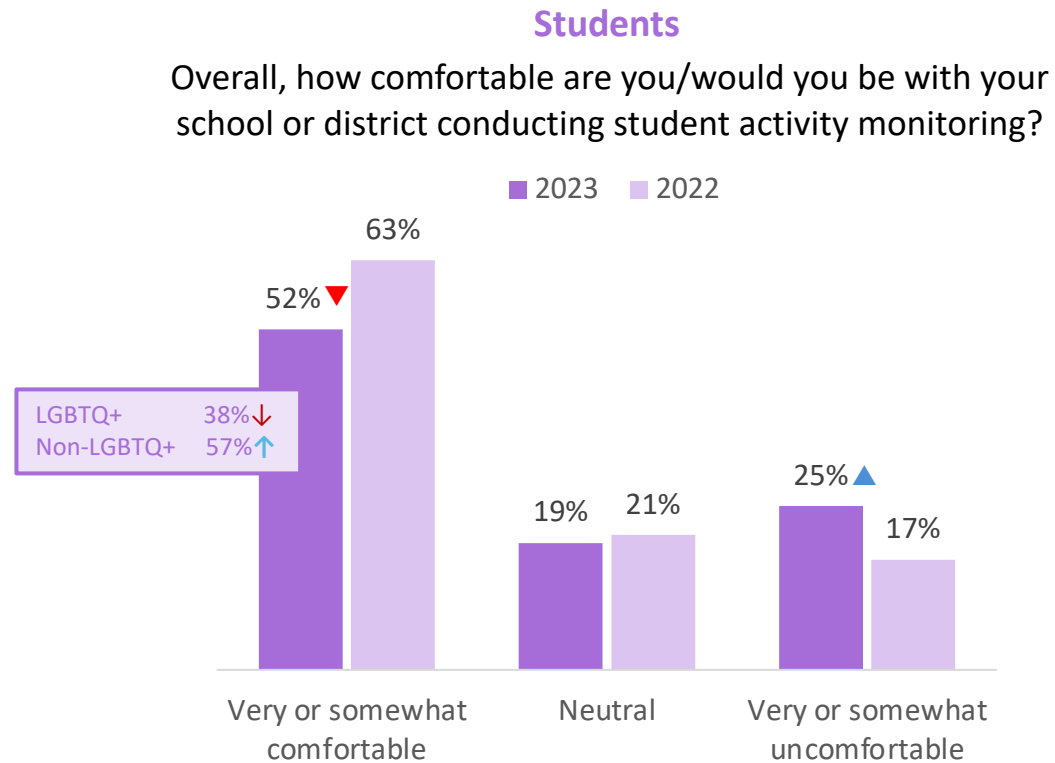


Student comfort with student activity monitoring has declined

- LGBTQ+ students are less comfortable with student activity monitoring than their non-LGBTQ+ peers.

Risks to students: Student comfort with student activity monitoring

■ Students (n=1,029)



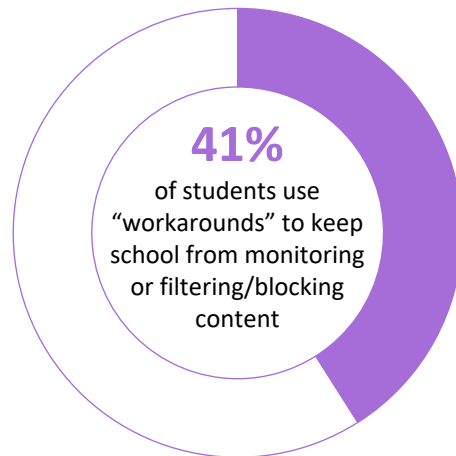
Student use of workarounds and inadvertent data downloads when devices are plugged in suggest that the technology is not working as intended

- 4 in 10 students use “workarounds” to circumvent school content filtering and blocking.
- 7 in 10 students say they have plugged their smartphone in to a school device, and about half of these say their device automatically began syncing or downloading to the school device.
- Black and Hispanic students, as well as students with IEPs and/or 504 plans, are more likely to say they charge their personal device via a school device.

Workarounds and students plugging in their smartphone to a school device

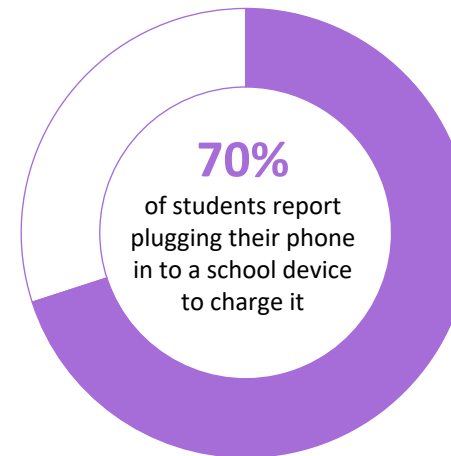
■ Students

Among students at schools that filter or block content:
(n=955)



55% of students with IEP and/or 504 plan use workarounds (vs. 29% of those who do not have these plans)

Among students at schools that monitor student activity:
(n=849)



69% ↓ of white students
79% ↑ of Black students
77% ↑ of Hispanic students

76% ↑ of students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan
66% ↓ of students without an IEP or a 504 plan



51% of students that plugged in say that information from their smartphone automatically began syncing/downloading to the school device

[Students_Q26 (Q42K:2022)] Do you use “workarounds” to keep your school from monitoring what you’re doing online or filtering or blocking your access to certain content?

[Students_Q23] Have you ever plugged in your smartphone to a school device (e.g., the USB port of a school laptop, Chromebook, etc.) to charge your phone?

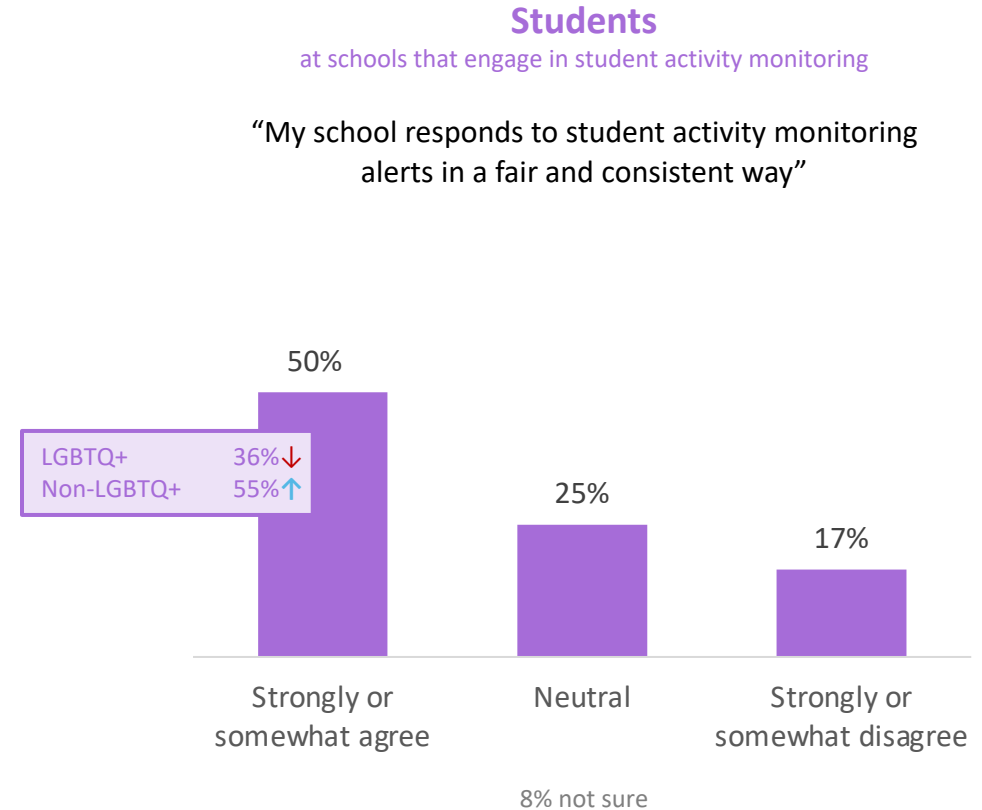
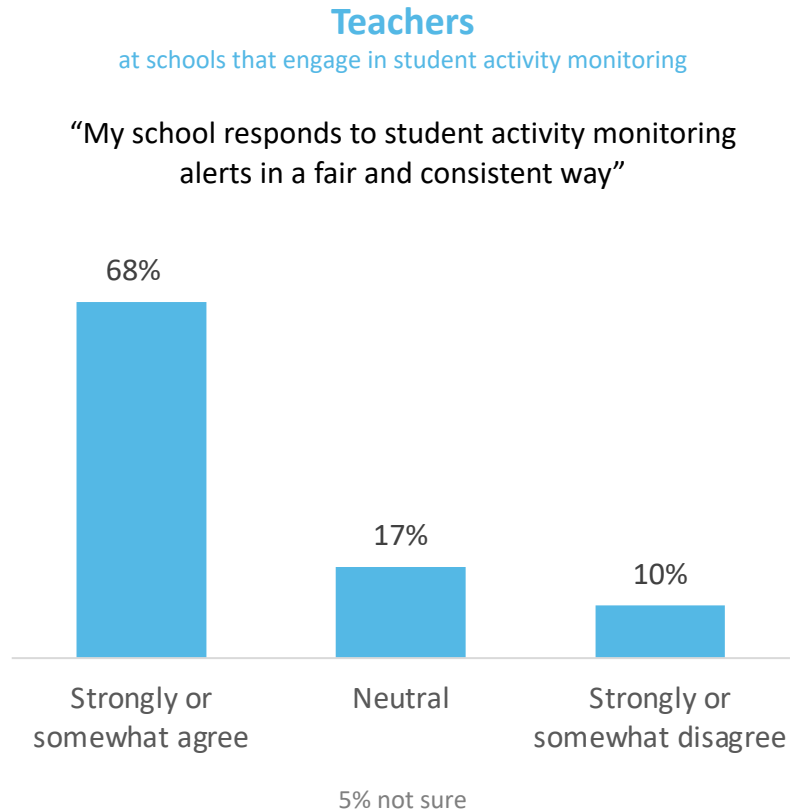
[Students_Q24] Did any information from your smartphone (e.g., photos, contacts, chats, etc.) automatically sync or begin syncing/downloading to the school device?

Approximately two-thirds of teachers and only half of students find school response to student activity monitoring alerts to be fair and consistent

- LGBTQ+ students are less likely than their non-LGBTQ+ peers to feel that the school handles student activity monitoring fairly and consistently.

Agreement that “[s]chool responds to student activity monitoring alerts in a fair and consistent way”

■ Teachers (n=883) and ■ Students (n=849) at schools that engage in student activity monitoring

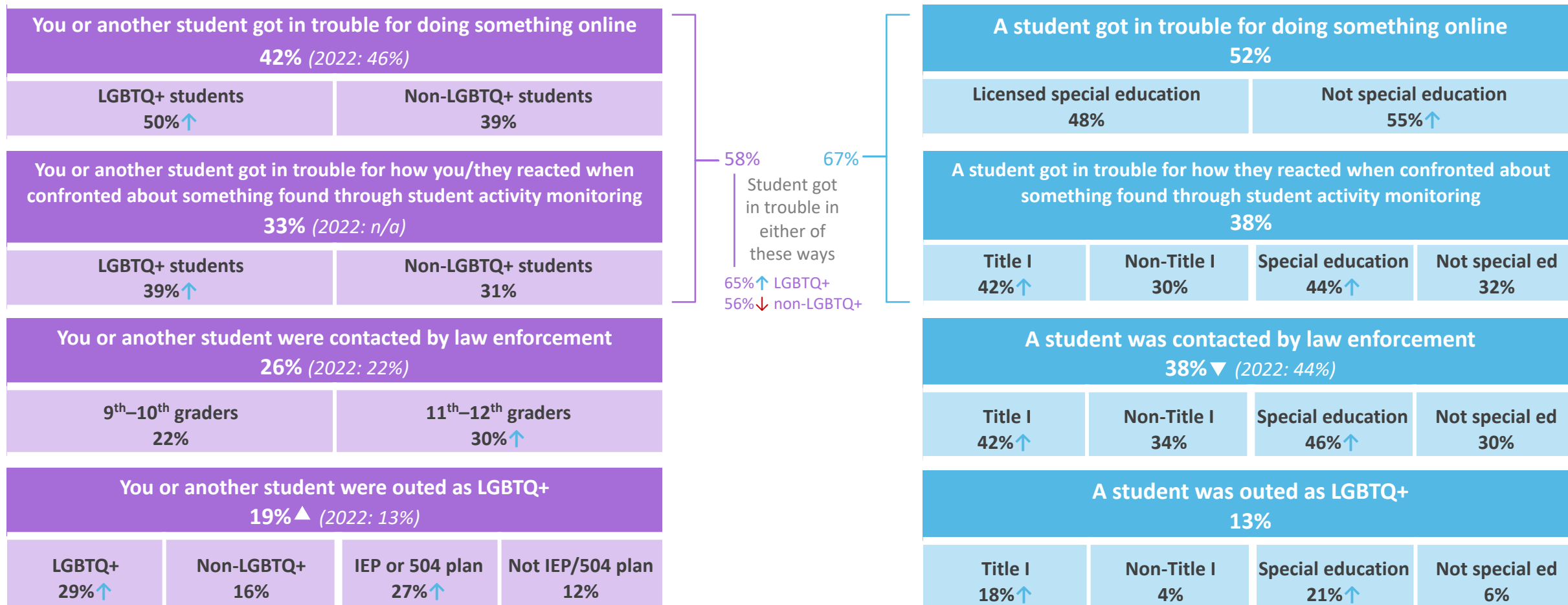


Student activity monitoring leads to students being disciplined; several are outed without consent and/or contacted by law enforcement

- LGBTQ+ and students with IEP and/or 504 plans report experiencing more of the negative consequences from student activity monitoring than their peers.

Student or someone they know had a disciplinary or negative consequence as a result of student activity monitoring

■ Students (n=849) and ■ Teachers (n=883) at schools that engage in student activity monitoring



[Students_Q18 (Q42EE:2022)] Which, if any, of the following have happened to you or another student at your school? Select all that apply.

[Teachers_Q30] Which, if any, of the following have happened to a student or students at your school? Select all that apply.

**Generative AI: New Technology
With Little Guidance Leaves
Parents and Teachers in the Dark
and Students That Are in Trouble**

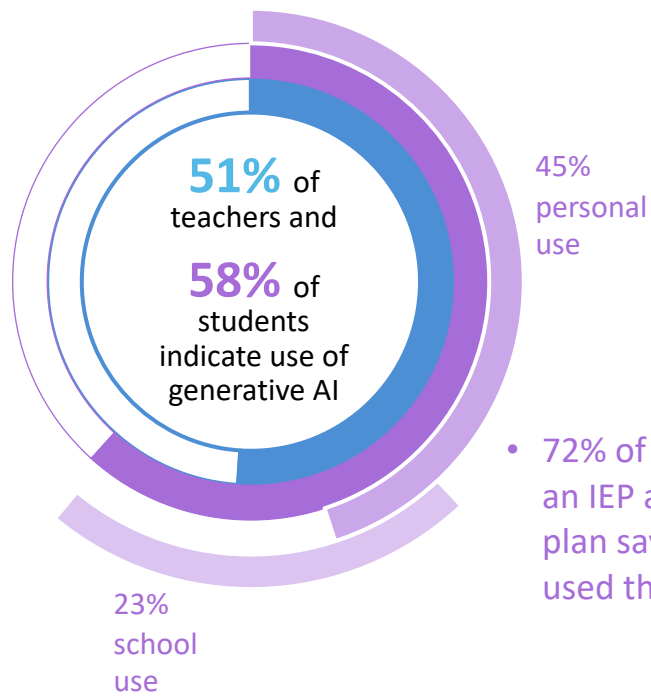
58% of students and approximately half of teachers report having used ChatGPT or other forms of generative AI

- A third of teachers report their schools block the use of generative AI for schoolwork, while 16% are not sure if the technology has been banned or not.

Current usage: Student use of ChatGPT/other generative AI and schools blocking technology

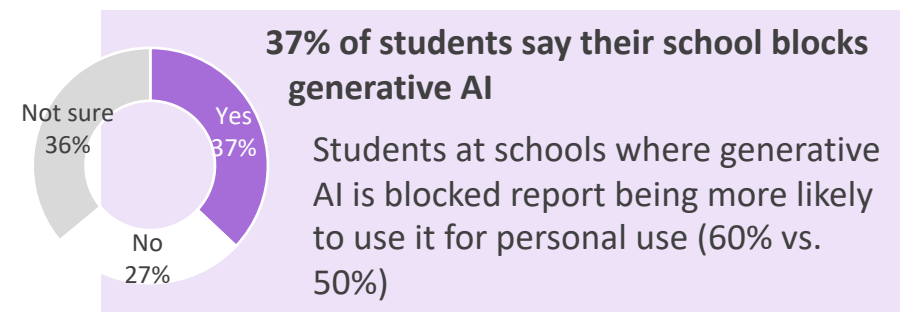
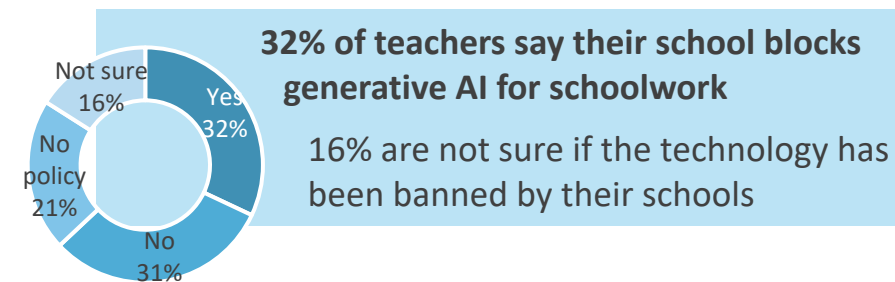
■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Students (n=1,029)

Used generative AI



- 72% of students with an IEP and/or a 504 plan say they have used this technology

Blocking of generative AI by schools



[Students_Q27] Have you ever used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform, either for personal or school use? Select all that apply.

[Teachers_Q40] Have you used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform, either for personal or school use?

[Teachers_Q43] Which best describes your school's policy on the use of ChatGPT or other generative AI for schoolwork?

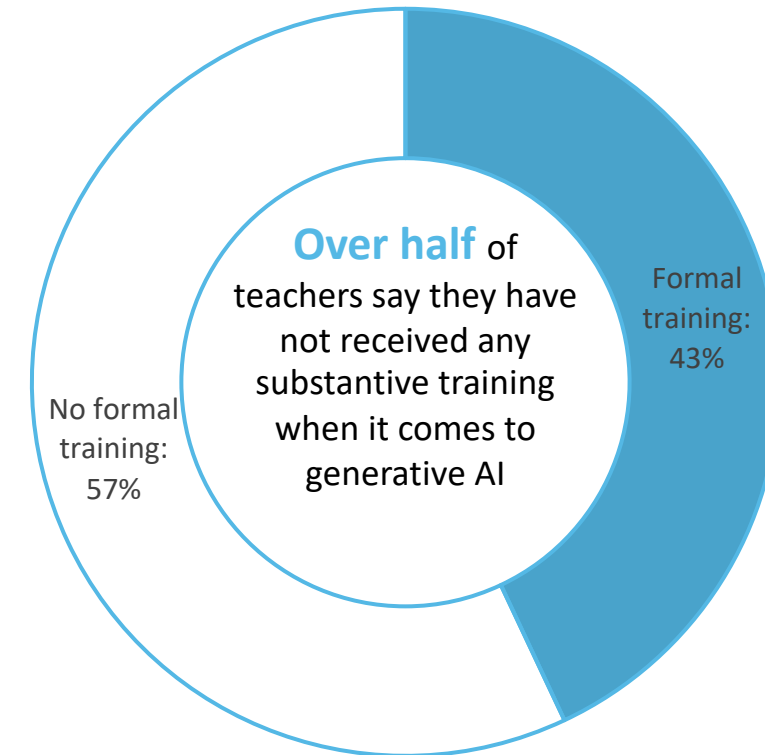
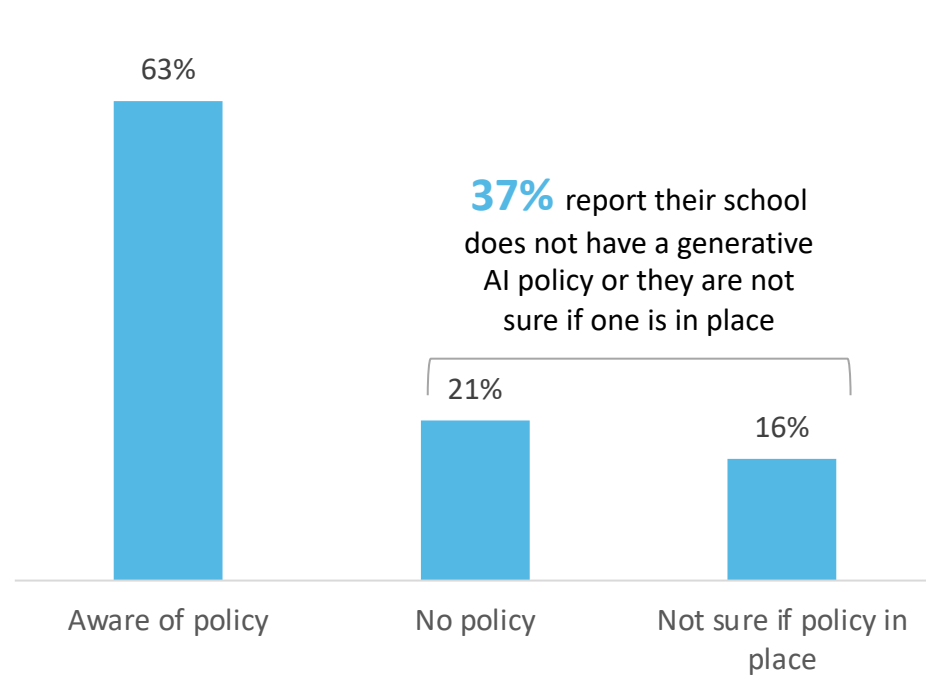
[Students_Q31] Does your school block students from accessing or using ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms while at school?

Nearly 4 in 10 teachers say their school does not have in place a generative AI policy for schoolwork or they are not sure if there is one

- More than half of teachers indicate they have not received substantive training on generative AI.

Current capacity: Awareness of generative AI policy for schoolwork and training

■ Teachers (n=1,005)



[Teachers_Q43] Which best describes your school's policy on the use of ChatGPT or other generative AI for schoolwork?

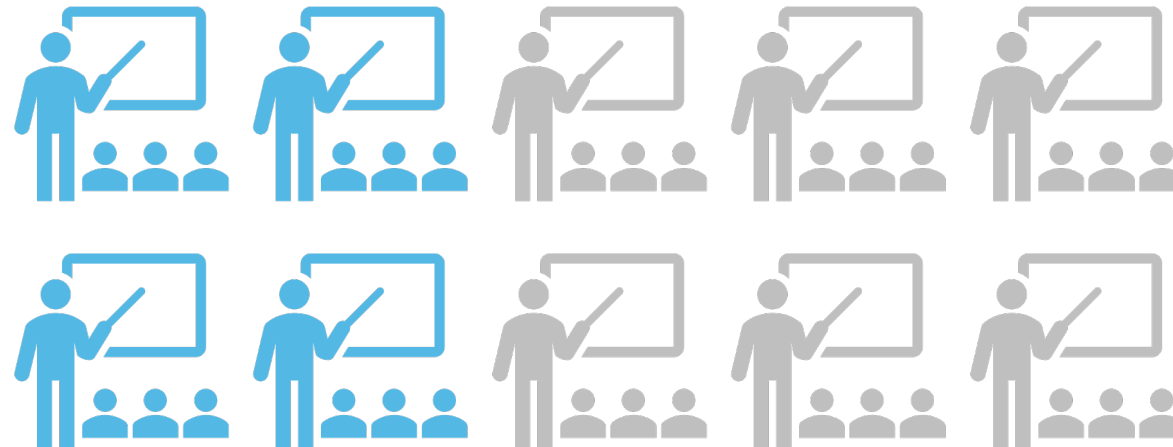
[Teachers_Q44] How, if at all, has your school or district shared policies and procedures about the use of ChatGPT or other generative AI with you in your role as a teacher?

Most teachers are not being engaged by schools for their input on policies and procedures regarding students' use of generative AI

Current capacity: School's engagement of teachers regarding generative AI policies and procedures

■ Teachers (n=1,005)

Only **4 in 10**
teachers say their
school has asked for
their input on
students' use of
generative AI



Few teachers, parents, or students report receiving guidance about student use of generative AI

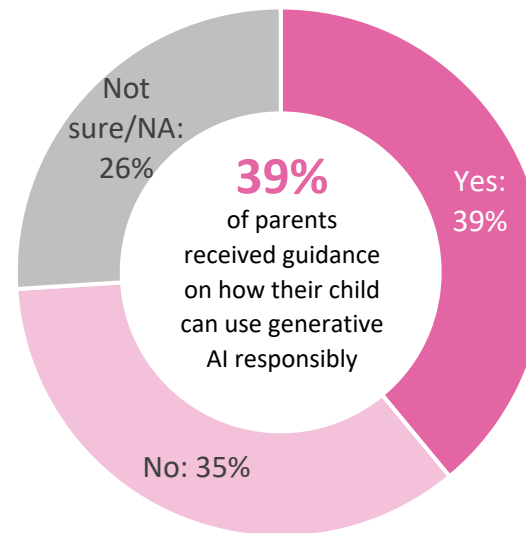
Current capacity: Guidance on using generative AI responsibly and within the rules

■ Parents (n=1,018) | ■ Students (n=1,029)

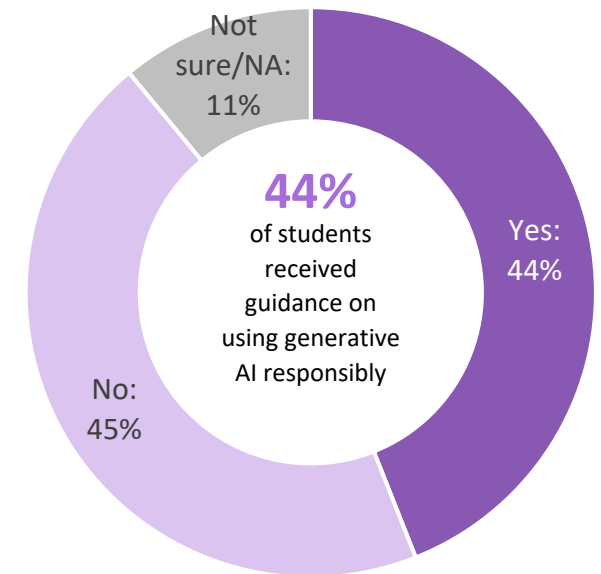
1 in 4 (23%) teachers say they have received training or guidance to detect student use of generative AI when submitting school assignments

1 in 4 (24%) teachers say they have received training or guidance about how to respond if they suspect a student has used generative AI in ways that are not allowed (e.g., plagiarism)

How child can use generative AI responsibly



Using generative AI responsibly



[Parents_Q19] During the school year that just ended, did your school provide you and/or your child guidance or support on the following technology topics?

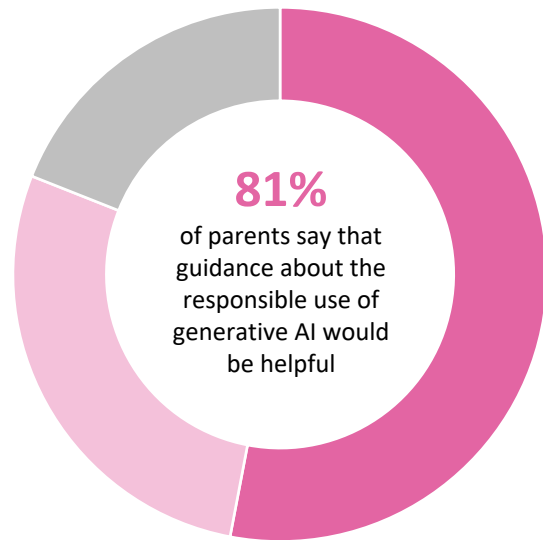
[Students_Q08] During this school year, did your school provide you guidance or support on the following?

[Teachers_Q45] Which, if any, of the following have been discussed or covered as part of your teacher training about school policies and procedures regarding generative AI? Select all that apply.

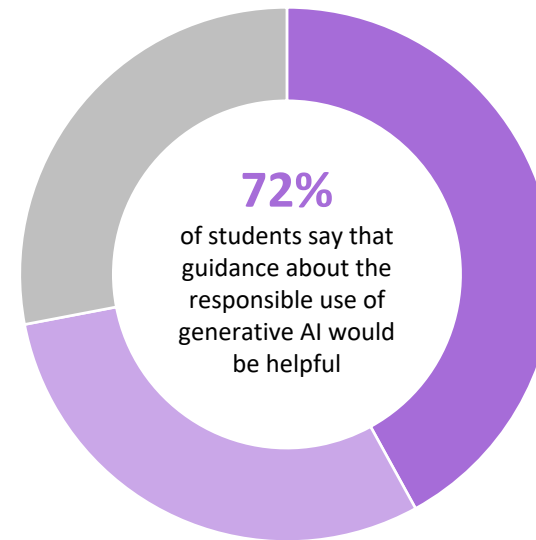
8 in 10 parents and 7 in 10 students feel that guidance about the responsible use of generative AI would be helpful

Current capacity: Perceived helpfulness of guidance about the responsible use of generative AI

■ Parents (n=1,018) | ■ Students (n=1,029)



Darker shading = stronger intensity



Darker shading = stronger intensity

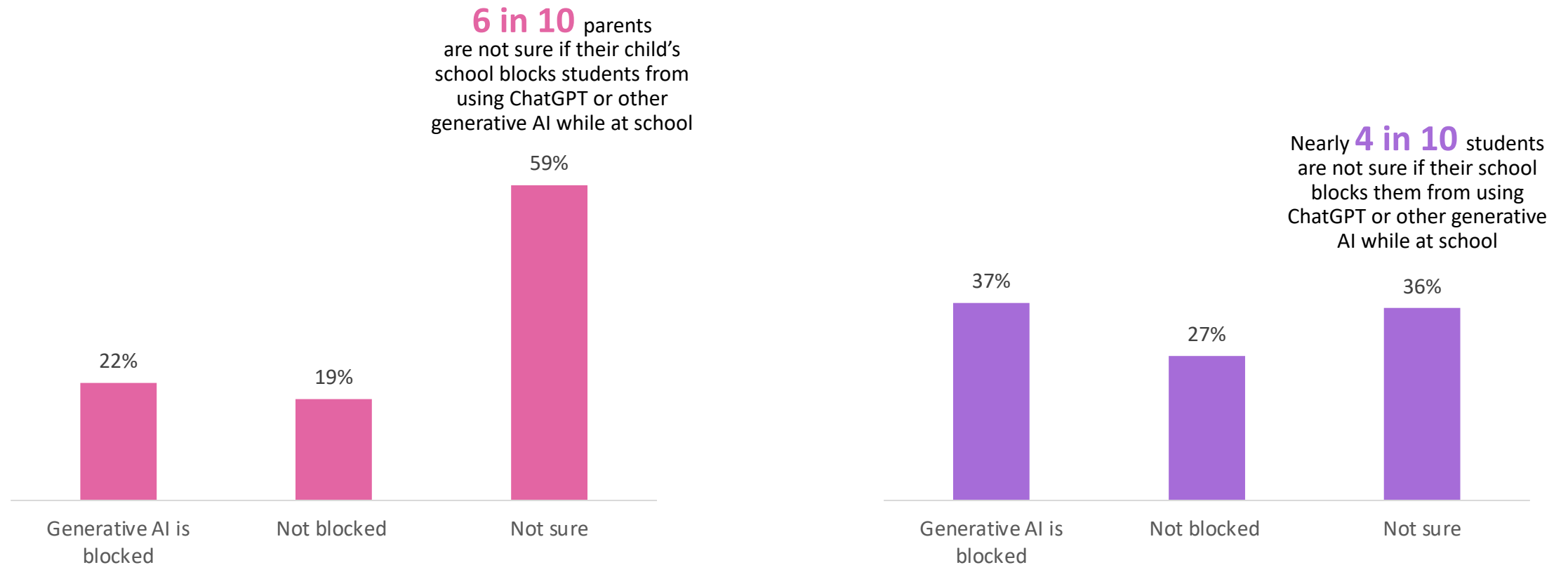
[Parents_Q20] Listed below are those same technology topics high school students could learn about. To what extent do you feel it would be helpful for your child's school to provide guidance or support to students on these topics?

[Students_Q09] Listed below are those same technology topics high school students could learn about. How helpful would you find learning about each of the following?

There is little clarity among parents and students about school policies banning generative AI

Current capacity: Awareness of schools' generative AI blocking policies

■ Parents (n=1,018) | ■ Students (n=1,029)



[Parents_Q55] Does your child's school block students from accessing or using ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms while at school?

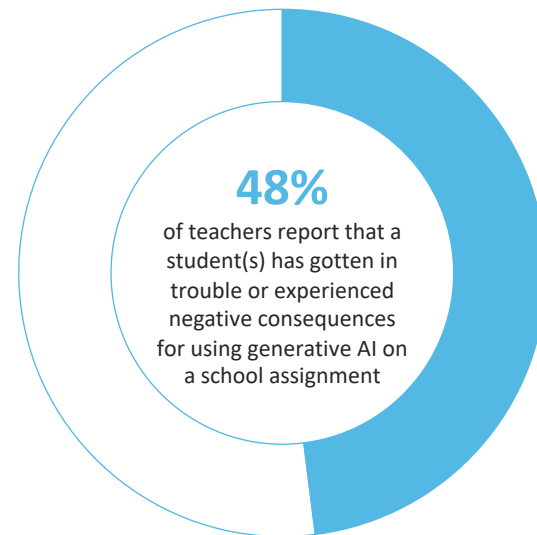
[Students_Q31] Does your school block students from accessing or using ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms while at school?

Students are being disciplined for AI use with no guiding policies

- Half of teachers report that a student at their school has gotten in trouble or experienced negative consequences for using or being accused of using generative AI on a school assignment, and half of teachers report that students who use school-issued devices are more likely to get in trouble for using the technology.
- Title I and licensed special education teachers report higher rates of discipline among their students for generative AI use.

Risks to students: Student got in trouble or experienced negative consequences for using generative AI on a school assignment

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Parents (n=1,018)



Half (50%) of teachers agree with the statement, “Students that use school-provided devices are more likely to get in trouble or face negative consequences for using generative AI.”

Teachers at **Title I schools (53% vs. 39%)** and **licensed special education teachers (58% vs. 40%)** are more likely to say they know of a student who has gotten in trouble or experienced negative consequences for using generative AI for a school assignment.

Nearly **1 in 4 (23%)** parents overall say their child has gotten in trouble or experienced negative consequences for using generative AI for a school assignment — and this number is higher among parents of a child with an **IEP and/or a 504 plan (31% vs. 18%)**.

[Teachers_Q47] Have student(s) at your school gotten in trouble or experienced negative consequences for using or being accused of using generative AI on a school assignment? Select all that apply.

[Teachers_Q49] How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms? • Students that use school-provided devices are more likely to get in trouble or face negative consequences for using generative AI

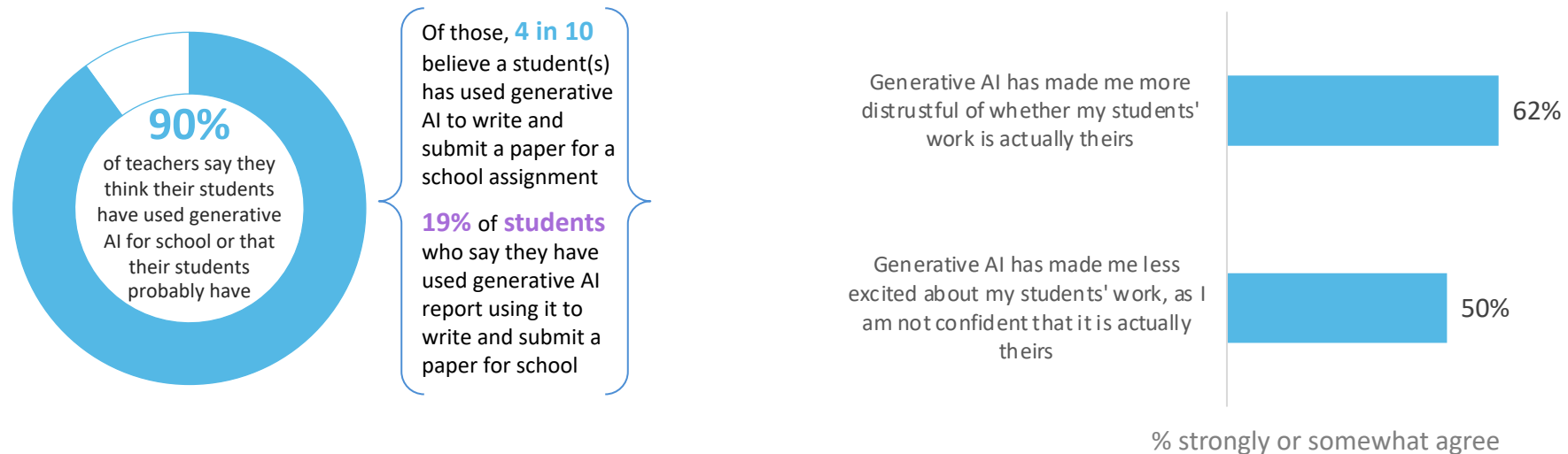
[Parents_Q58] Has your child gotten in trouble or experienced negative consequences for using or being accused of using generative AI on a school assignment? Select all that apply.

Perceived widespread academic use of AI leads to mistrust

- 9 in 10 teachers report that they think their students have used generative AI for school.
- Nearly two-thirds (62%) of teachers agree with the statement that “generative AI has made me more distrustful of whether my students’ work is actually theirs,” and half of teachers agree with the statement that “generative AI has made me less excited about my students’ work, as I am not confident that it is actually theirs.”

Risks to students: Student use of generative AI for school

■ Teachers (n=1,005) | ■ Students who say they have used generative AI (n=602)



[Teachers_Q41] To your knowledge, have your students ever used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform for school use? Select one.

[Teachers_Q42] To your knowledge, have your student(s) used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform in any of these ways? Select all that apply.

[Students_Q28] Have you used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform Select all that apply.

[Teachers_Q49] How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms?

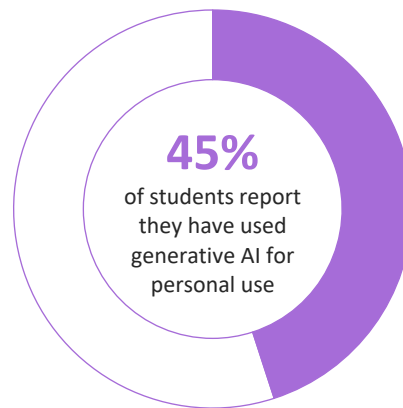
- Generative AI has made me more distrustful of whether my students’ work is actually theirs
- Generative AI has made me less excited about my students’ work, as I am not confident that it is actually theirs

Use of AI for personal reasons highlights high stakes of inaccurate generative AI responses

- Nearly half (45%) of students have used generative AI for personal use.
- Of those, 1 in 3 (33%) have used it to explore a topic for personal reasons or of personal interest.
- Among students who say they have used it to learn about a topic for personal reasons, 3 in 10 (29%) report using it for dealing with anxiety or mental health issues.

Risks to students: Student use of generative AI for personal reasons

■ Students (n=1,029)



(n=602)

Personal reasons cited by students who have used generative AI for personal uses:

Hobbies	53%
Career information or advice	41%
College information or advice	34%
Dealing with anxiety or mental health issues	29%
Relationship questions	25%
Trivia	25%
Dealing with issues with friends	22%
Family issues	16%

(n=200)

[Students_Q27] Have you ever used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform, either for personal or school use? Select all that apply.

[Students_Q28] Have you used ChatGPT or another generative AI platform Select all that apply.

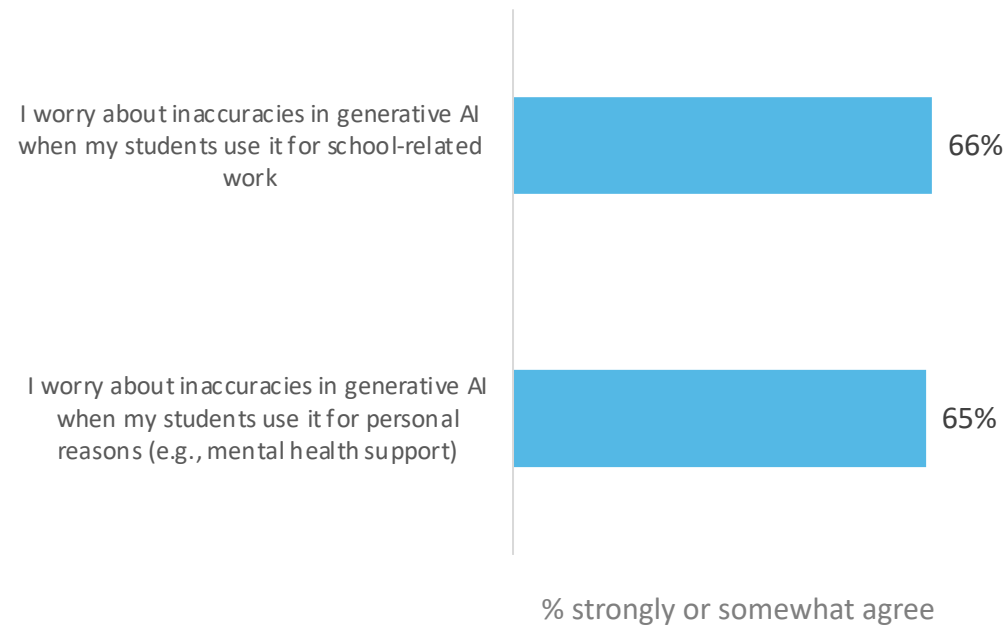
[Students_Q30] What personal topics of interest did you explore using ChatGPT or generative AI? Select all that apply.

Teachers express concern about inaccuracies in generative AI

- Two-thirds of teachers report concern with student use of generative AI for school use, and about the same percentage report concern for personal use.

Risks to students: Teacher concern about inaccuracies in generative AI

■ Teachers (n=1,005)



[Teachers_Q49]: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms?

- I worry about inaccuracies in generative AI when my students use it for school-related work
- I worry about inaccuracies in generative AI when my students use it for personal reasons (e.g., mental health support)

Contact Us

*Center for Democracy & Technology,
Equity in Civic Technology Project*

CivicTech@cdt.org

The Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) is the leading nonpartisan, nonprofit organization fighting to advance civil rights and civil liberties in the digital age. We shape technology policy, governance, and design with a focus on equity and democratic values. Established in 1994, CDT has been a trusted advocate for digital rights since the earliest days of the internet. The organization is headquartered in Washington, D.C. and has a Europe Office in Brussels, Belgium.

As governments expand their use of technology and data, it is critical that they do so in ways that affirm individual privacy, respect civil rights, foster inclusive participatory systems, promote transparent and accountable oversight, and advance just social structures within the broader community. CDT's Equity in Civic Technology Project furthers these goals by providing balanced advocacy that promotes the responsible use of data and technology while protecting the privacy and civil rights of individuals. We engage with these issues from both technical and policyminded perspectives, creating solutions-oriented policy resources and actionable technical guidance. If you want to learn more about CDT and our work, please visit our website: <https://cdt.org/>.