

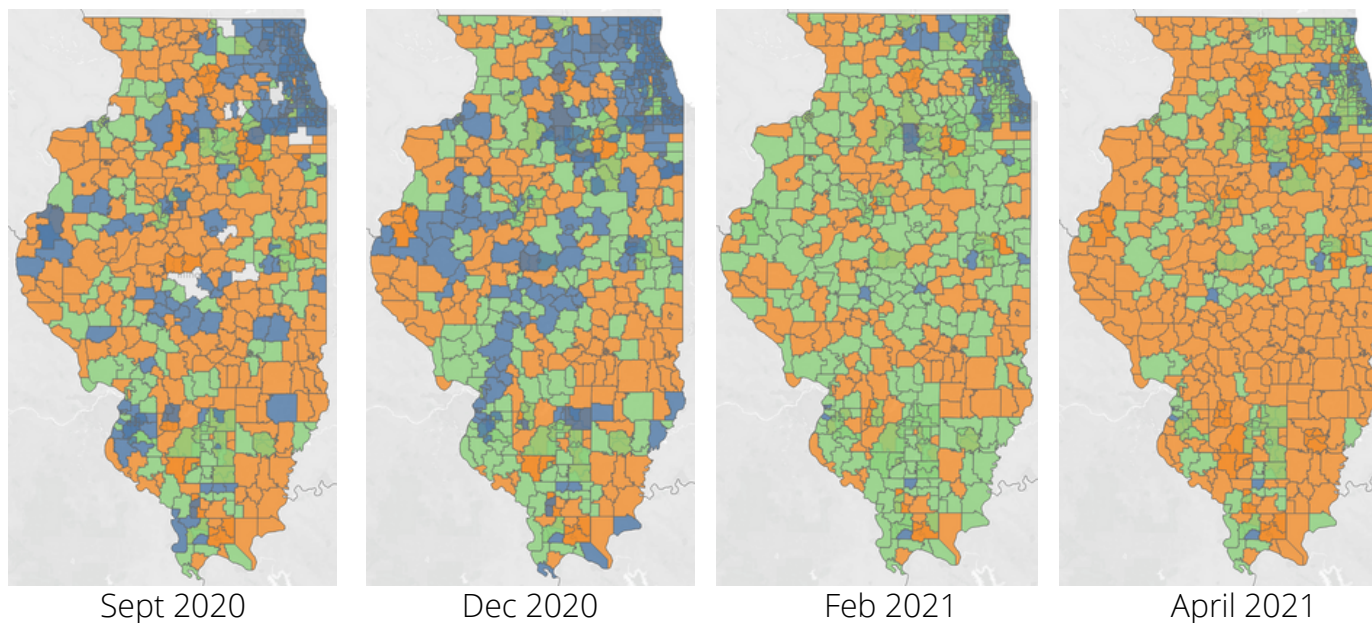
# LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC IN ILLINOIS

## A THREE-PART RESEARCH SERIES

In partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC) analyzed modality of instruction (in-person, remote, or dual—a combination of both) and its relationship with achievement during the 2020-21 school year (SY21). We presented our findings in a three-part series, *Learning During the Pandemic in Illinois*.

### Key Takeaways:

1. Illinois schools varied substantially in the modality of instruction students experienced over the course of SY21.

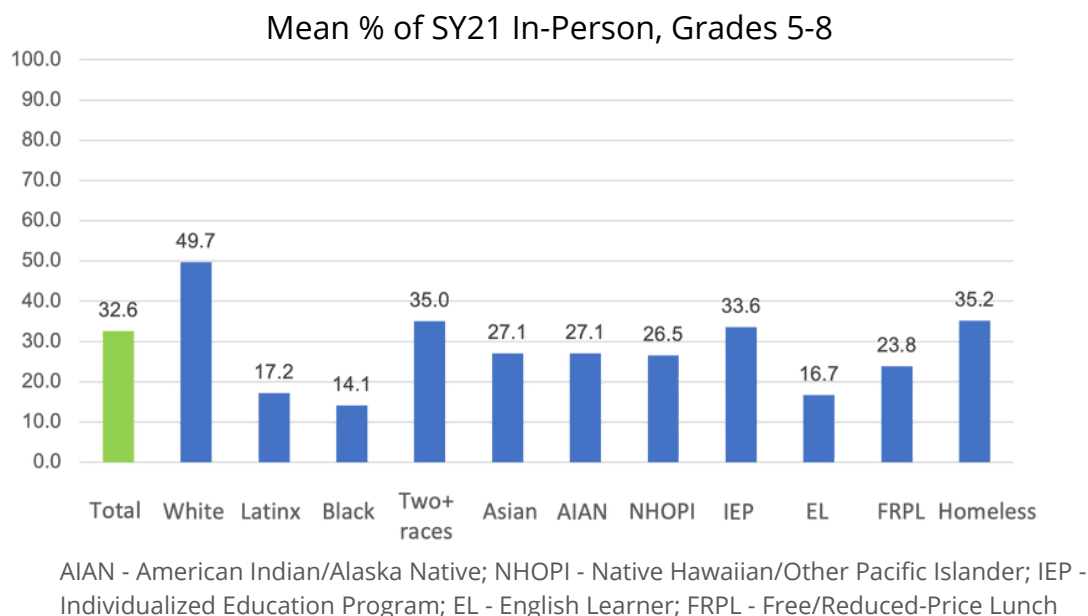


#### Modality

- Mostly remote
- Mostly dual
- Mostly in-person

- Most Illinois schools (53%) began the year in remote instruction. However, just 14% of schools remained remote the entire year. The rest of schools that started the year remotely switched to instructional models with more in-person instruction as the year progressed.
- In another 33% of schools, students attended in-person for the majority of the year.
- About 12% of schools offered modalities that allowed some students to attend remotely and others to attend in-person for most of the school year.

2. The proportion of the year students attended in-person versus remotely varied dramatically across student subgroups.



3. Average school test scores declined from SY19 to SY21 across all types of instructional modality and all grade levels. Whether the severity of decline was related to modality depended on grade level and unit of analysis (Details about school and student-level analyses for middle grades are discussed in Reports 2 and 3.):

| Grade Band      | School-level Analysis  | Student-level Analysis   |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Elementary      | Schools with more in-person instruction had consistently smaller declines than schools where students experienced more remote instruction – by up to <b>14.33 points (0.40 SDs) in math</b> and <b>7.92 points (0.19 SDs) in ELA</b> . | Attending in-person versus remotely all year was associated with higher scores by <b>7.5 points (0.22 SDs) in math</b> and <b>5.4 points (0.15 SDs) in ELA</b> . |
| Middle          | Relationships between school instructional modality and average school achievement outcomes were <b>smaller and mixed</b> .  |  |
| High (Grade 11) | We found <b>no consistent relationships</b> between school instructional modality pathways and school average achievement.   |  |

## Implications

Test scores were just one of many important outcomes of schooling during the pandemic. School leaders, students, and families weighed risks of different instructional modalities for health and safety, both physical and mental, of students and staff. Yet as measures of how instructional modality impacted student learning during the pandemic, test scores provide important information about whose learning was disrupted and by how much.

Patterns of instructional modality across student subgroups likely **exacerbated racial/ethnic and socioeconomic achievement disparities**. Schools serving younger students who spent more time in remote learning may need **additional support** to address learning losses, especially in math.

**Read the full reports in the series, *Learning During the Pandemic in Illinois:***

**Part 1:** *Trends in School Instructional Modality During the 2020-21 School Year*

**Part 2:** *Does School Instructional Modality Predict Average School Achievement?*

**Part 3:** *Does Student Instructional Modality Predict Student Achievement?*

