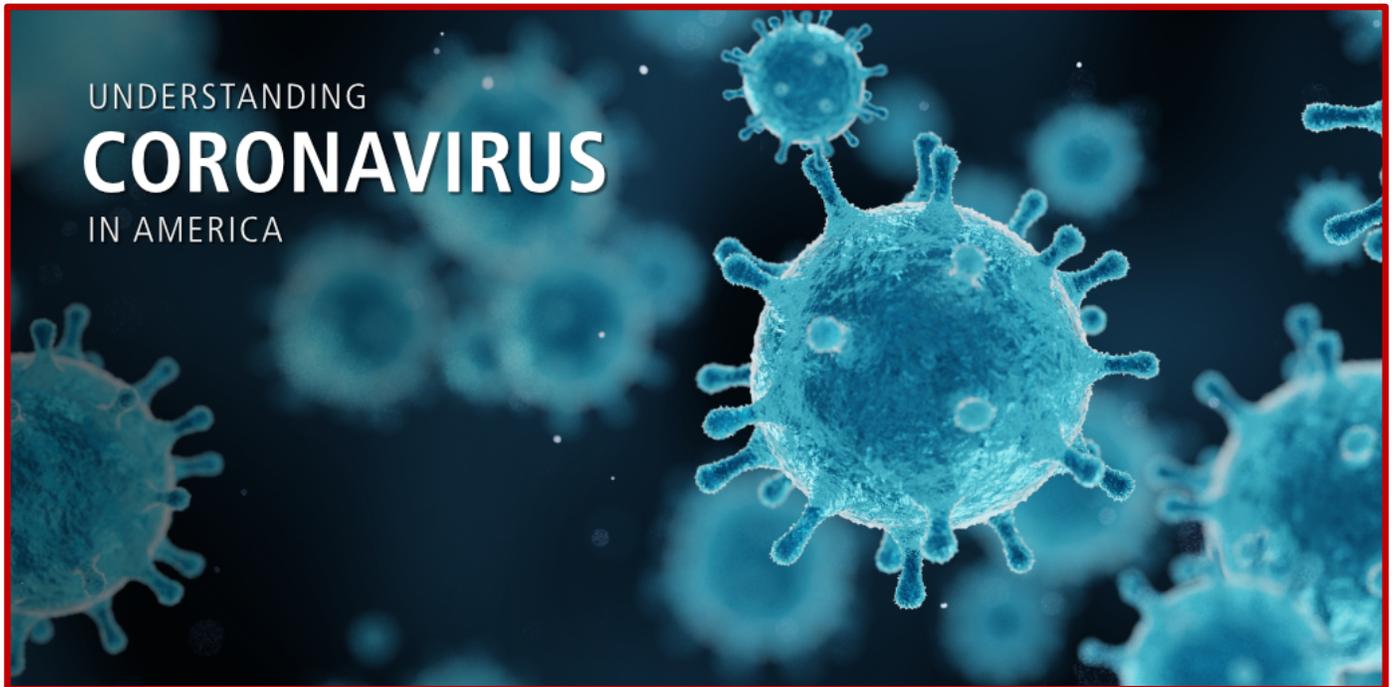


**Center for Economic and Social Research  
Understanding America Study**



**Coronavirus Tracking Survey  
K-12 Education Methodology and Topline Results**

**UAS346 – Wave 20  
May 12 – June 22, 2021**

**July 16, 2021 Release**

# Methodology

On April 1, 2020, USC’s Center for Economic and Social Research (CESR) invited all active members of CESR’s Understanding America Study (UAS) probability-based internet panel to participate in an ongoing coronavirus tracking survey. The panel includes participants with and without household members in K-12 or higher education. This document describes the methodology used to identify households with members who were eligible to receive questions from the education modules included in the UAS.

This methodology and topline is associated with participants in Wave 20 of the UAS tracking survey, administered from May 12, 2021 to June 22, 2021. A total of 2702 panel members were eligible to be included in the full weighted sample, resulting in a participation rate of 64% for this wave. See the methodology and topline for the full tracking survey [here](#).

## Education Sample Information

A total of 1719 adult US residents with household members (usually their children) in preK-12 participated in this wave and are included in the final UAS346 data file. After unduplicating households with multiple respondents (see below), UAS346 includes responses from 1473 households. This sample is similarly-sized to those from previous administrations of the education portion of the UAS (see Table 1).

The margin of sampling error for the full sample of unduplicated households with children is +/- 2 percentage points. For questions with smaller sample sizes than the full sample, margins of sampling error are wider. All margins of sampling error are specified by question in the topline and crosstab results.

Note that topline and crosstab results are only reported for items with at least 100 responses, unduplicated. If certain items are missing (especially for particular subgroups, in the crosstab document), it is likely that there were fewer than 100 responses to that item from that group in UAS346.

Table 1. Education Sample Size Across Waves		
Wave	Dates in the field	Unduplicated SA sample size
UAS235	April 1 – April 28, 2020	1296

UAS240	April 15 – May 12, 2020	1505
UAS242	April 29 – May 26, 2020	1533
UAS250	June 24 – July 21, 2020	1411
UAS264	September 30 – October 27, 2020	1334
UAS270	November 11 – December 8, 2020	1432
UAS272	November 25 – December 22, 2020	1404
UAS274	December 9, 2020 – January 5, 2021	1449
UAS276	December 23, 2020 – January 19, 2021	1475
UAS278	January 6 – February 2, 2021	1510
UAS280	January 20 – February 16, 2021	1526
UAS282	February 3 – March 2, 2021	1556
UAS340	February 17 – March 30, 2021	1542
UAS342	March 17 – April 27, 2021	1507
UAS344	April 14 – May 25, 2021	1510
UAS346	May 12 - June 22, 2021	1473

## Method and Rationale for Unduplicating Households

Some households in the UAS education sample have multiple respondents who respond about the same individuals in K-12 or postsecondary education. For instance, in a household with two parents and one child, and both parents were included in the UAS panel and participated in a given wave, both respondents were asked the same education questions about their child’s experiences. In UAS346, 246 households (14%) in the sample of respondents with school-aged children had multiple respondents within a household. While the UAS is designed to capture information about American households, for the education modules, we are primarily interested in the characteristics and experiences of individual students, and duplication within households will over-represent the responses of households with multiple respondents. To eliminate this over-representation, we unduplicate households with the goal of maintaining respondent sample continuity across waves. The method is described in more detail below:

1. Most households (1397 households in the UAS346 school-aged sample) already have a flag in the main UAS dataset identifying the “primary respondent.” When the primary respondent flag exists, we defer to that designation by selecting that individual. For more information about the primary respondent flag, see <https://uasdata.usc.edu/index.php> (“default survey variables”).

2. For households in which the flag doesn't already exist, we randomly designated one respondent per household as that household's "primary respondent" in the first UAS administration of education questions (UAS235) and retained those responses for the unduplicated sample.
3. If the "primary respondent" gives a response in any subsequent wave, we retain that response for that wave's unduplicated sample.
4. If that primary respondent is not available in a given wave, we randomly select another respondent from that household to retain for the unduplicated sample.

The unduplicating process yielded an unduplicated household count of 1473 households with school-aged children (Table 1). Similar proportions of responses (available on request) were dropped in other waves.

## Randomly-selected child

Responses to questions asked of parents of preK-12th grade children who have more than one child might differ by child. For questions for which parents may have differing responses by child, starting with uas240 we programmed the survey instrument to randomly select a single child and asked the respondent to respond for that child only. We retained this same randomly selected child over time for these questions, which permitted comparing responses about the same child longitudinally.

Since UAS 264 was administered at the beginning of a new school year, we added a question in UAS264 asking whether the previous randomly selected child was still enrolled in K-12 education. If yes, we retained the same randomly-selected child. If no, we moved that child to the postsecondary sample (no questions in UAS346 pertain to this group) and asked about their current post-high school plans, and randomly selected a different child from that household to be part of the school-aged sample, if applicable. If a household had no randomly-selected child in our system (for example, because their only school-aged child had just started kindergarten this year), then we randomly selected a child beginning in UAS264. Overall, 74% of respondents (n=993) in UAS264 (school year 2020-2021) were responding about the same randomly-selected child as in UAS250 and earlier (school year 2019-2020). We recommend using survey question sl055 to restrict the sample to just these 993 for longitudinal analyses.

## Tracking Survey Design

Each panel member is randomized to respond on a pre-assigned day of the week, distributed so that our full sample is invited to participate over a 14-day period. Respondents have until their next assigned wave day (or 14 days) to complete the survey but receive an extra \$1 incentive for completing the survey on their assigned day.

Survey questionnaires, topline, microdata files, and a press room specific to the UAS education samples are available on our UAS Covid19 data site at [uasdata.usc.edu/page/Covid-19+Home](https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/Covid-19+Home).

## Questionnaire

Survey wording and question text are provided in this topline release, but for full wording including context, please refer to the associated codebook and questionnaire. For most questions, we rotated the order of response options, and/or questions to average out order effects. Respondents participated via computer, mobile device or tablet, at any time of day or night during the field period. When households selected as UAS panel members through Address-Based-Sampling did not have a tablet and/or internet access we provided them. The survey was conducted in the respondents' choice of English or Spanish.

A few survey questions experienced slight changes across UAS administration waves, summarized in Table 2.

Question	Changes starting in	Description of Change
cl006b, cl010aa, cl010bb, cl011b, cl013	UAS242	New answer option added: “[NAME]’s institution does not plan for in-person enrollment in the fall.”
sl012, sl014	UAS250	New answer option added: “A national service program (e.g., Americorps, City Year)”
sl045, sl046	UAS250	In UAS250, a coding error affected data for these questions (description and recommendations for how to proceed are below)
ed015 / sl038	UAS250	This question asks about support for cancelling all standardized tests for the 2020-2021 school year. When asked prior to UAS250 (as part of sl038), respondents answered on a 5-point scale, with a neutral midpoint option. When asked in UAS250

		and beyond (as part of ed015), respondents answered on a 4-point scale, with no neutral midpoint option.
cl005ddd	UAS250	Prior to UAS250, respondents were instructed to pick one way their employment status had changed. Starting in UAS250, they were instructed to check all options that apply. (The set of options does not change across waves.)
sl076, sl077	UAS264	“Other” is not an answer option for these, but was an answer option for the analogous questions in school year 2019-2020, sl012 and sl014.
cl005	UAS264	“Unsure” answer option is new as of UAS264.

## Two further notes specific to time-use questions (sl045 and sl046)

UAS 250 asks respondents to report on activities that SA children engaged in on a typical day in the last week. However, 10% of the SA sample (n=153) were still in school at the time they responded to the survey. We removed students still in school from the analyses of these questions and recommend other researchers do the same if examining how children spent time during “the summer.” (SI039 indicates whether school is in session during UAS250 administration).

There was also a programming error for these questions early in the administration of UAS250, such that any response greater than 7 hours in the last week was coded as 1-2 hours in the last week. Therefore, the “1-2 hours in the last week” category contains some responses of 1-2 hours in the last week and some responses of 7-8, 8-9, and 10 or more hours in the last week. While the error was fixed during the administration window, we recommend using only the categories unaffected by the error, for example by using a binary indicator for “0 hours in the last week” versus “more than 0 hours in the last week.”

## Weights

The method for creating sample weights for the tracking survey follows the general procedure for UAS surveys described in CESR’s online methodology documentation. Sample weights are constructed in two steps. First, we calculate a base weight that corrects for unequal probabilities of selection of different households into the UAS. Second, we generate poststratification weights, which align sample distributions of key demographics, namely gender, race/ethnicity, age, education, and geographic location, with their population counterparts. Population benchmarks are derived from the Basic Monthly Current Population Survey (CPS). The sample weights bring

the sample in line with the U.S. adult population. Note that we did not recalculate weights to align to the characteristics of U.S. households with students in K-12 or higher education in particular.

## About the UAS Internet Panel

The Understanding America Study (UAS) is an ongoing national research panel that started in 2014. We recruit panel members in waves from Marketing Systems Group frames of all household addresses in the United States. To ensure full coverage of the U.S. population, we provide internet-connected tablets to households that were not already online. Our panel includes U.S. residents who have cell phones, landlines, or no phone at all. It also includes a small number of respondents recruited from a listed sample, these participants are not included in weighted samples. Panel members are compensated for their participation.

For more information about the UAS panel, including weighting details; panel sampling procedures; recruitment protocols, survey and recruitment response rates; panel attrition rates; panel management protocols; and microdata files (including nonresponse and paradata), please visit the Understanding America Study panel website at <https://UASdata.usc.edu>.

## About CESR

The Center for Economic and Social Research (CESR), part of the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, conducts basic and applied research in economics, psychology, demography, education, and sociology. The center's name signifies the breadth of the research, which encompasses numerous disciplines, topics and methodologies. The Center's multi-disciplinary philosophy fosters a productive and innovative research environment focused on understanding and informing important societal issues.

## Survey Team

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For questions about this survey, please contact [uas-l@usc.edu](mailto:uas-l@usc.edu)

The USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research is a proud member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research's Transparency Initiative. The survey was funded by the USC Dornsife College of Arts, Letters and Sciences.

## Topline Report

Survey dates: May 12, 2021 to June 22, 2021

Respondent Characteristic	Sample Proportion (N=1719 before unduplication)	
	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (%)
Male	41%	48%
Age 18-34	16%	23%
Age 35-54	37%	38%
Age 55-64	21%	17%
Age 65+	26%	21%
Education (HS degree or less)	20%	38%
Education (some college)	36%	27%

Education (BA or more)	44%	35%
HH income (\$24,999 or less)	19%	22%
HH income (\$25,000-\$49,999)	21%	22%
HH income (\$50,000-\$74,999)	19%	19%
HH income (\$75,000-\$149,999)	29%	26%
HH income (\$150,000 or more)	13%	11%
Non-Hispanic White	67%	62%
Non-Hispanic Black	8%	12%
Non-Hispanic Asian	5%	5%
Non-Hispanic Other	5%	4%
Hispanic/Latino	15%	17%
Has child in elementary (PK-5)*	46%	50%
Has child in middle school (6-8)*	20%	19%
Has child in high school (9-12)*	34%	31%
Public (district/magnet/charter)*	80%	80%
Private (religious/independent)*	8%	6%
Other (includes home school)*	12%	14%

\*these indicators are not mutually exclusive

NOTE: Questions about school type were only asked of respondents whose schools were still in session as of UAS 346 (May-June 2021), so certain school types (e.g., home school) may be overrepresented relative to other waves.

## Education Survey Items: Toplines

sl056: In what grade is [NAME] this year?

	Kindergarten	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade	Obs	MOSE
sl056: grade of selected child	13.0	8.6	8.5	5.8	6.5	8.8	5.2	8.2	6.9	5.4	7.3	7.2	8.6	1389	+/- 3

sl057a: Is [NAME] enrolled in a public, private, charter or virtual school for the 2020-21 school year (even if currently attending school from home), or are they homeschooled, or does some other situation apply?

	Enrolled in School	Homeschooling	Neither enrolled nor homeschooling	Other	Obs	MOSE
sl057a: enrolled in any type of school	87.3	7.4	2.1	3.2	1397	+/- 3

sl083: [if sl057a = yes] Is name's school still in session for the 2020-2021 school year?

	1 Yes	2 No	3 Unsure	Obs	MOSE
sl083: school still in session	67.6	30.8	1.6	1243	+/- 3

se008: [if sl057a != 2 OR (sl057=2 AND se008a = 2) (not homeschooling or homeschooling and not planning to homeschool next year)] Are you planning to send [NAME] to school in-person at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year?

	1 Yes	2 No	3 Unsure	Obs	MOSE
se008: plan to send to school in person	84.0	8.6	7.4	1191	+/- 3

sl058a: [if sl057a = yes] What kind of school is [NAME] enrolled in?

	1 Public school	2 Private school	3 Charter school	4 Virtual School	5 Other	6 Unsure	Obs	MOSE
sl058a: kind of school enrolled in	84.1	7.6	4.5	3.4	0.0	0.2	887	+/- 3

sl060a: [if sl057=yes] Approximately what percent of the students at [NAME]'s school are currently attending school in person?

	Mean	Obs	MOSE
sl060a: percent currently attending in person	62.8	885	+/- 3

sl061a: [if sl057a = yes] How is [NAME] currently attending school?

	1 In-person only	2 Remote only	3 Both in-person and remote (hybrid)	4 Other, please specify: sl061a_other	Obs	MOSE
sl061a: how currently attending school	50.9	28.2	20.7	0.2	887	+/- 3

**sl062a: [if sl057a = yes] Given the state of the COVID-19 pandemic in your area and your school's safety protocols, how would you prefer [NAME] to attend school right now?**

	1 In-person only	2 Remote only	3 Both in-person and remote (hybrid)	4 Other, please specify: sl062a_other	5 Unsure	Obs	MOSE
sl062a: how prefer attending school	53.7	24.1	20.1	0.1	2.0	886	+/- 3

**sl063: [if sl060a > 0 or sl061a= in person or sl061a= hybrid] Is [NAME]'s school using any of the following COVID-19 mitigation strategies?**

	1 Yes	2 No	3 Unsure	Obs	MOSE
sl063a: School policy requires students to wear masks at all times	81.5	11.4	7.1	827	+/- 3
sl063b: School policy requires teachers to wear masks at all times	84.6	7.7	7.7	830	+/- 3
sl063c: School policy requires everyone on campus to have their temperature taken	49.0	27.1	23.9	830	+/- 3
sl063d: School policy requires that everyone on campus remain six feet apart	63.2	20.7	16.1	830	+/- 3
sl063e: Hand sanitizer is available in classroom(s)	81.2	3.2	15.6	830	+/- 3
sl063f: School policy requires contact tracing if cases arise in the school	71.5	6.4	22.2	830	+/- 3