Students’ Reflections on Returning to School after Covid-19

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Dataset


Total posts = 315
Research Questions (RQs)

1. What do students in different states say about their school experiences and expectations during the pandemic?

1. What feelings (positive or negative sentiment) do students hold about going back to in-person school?
Methods

**NCoder**
Identified posts that mentioned “school” (n = 235) → Parsed into sentences
*(Keywords: school, education, learning, teacher, class)*

**Codes:** Learning mode (Online Learning; In person school); “back to school” sentiment (positive; negative); Reason (social interaction; grades; freedom)

**ENA Models for RQ1**
**Units:** Location > Post ID
**Conversation:** Sentence (Whole Conversation)
## Codebook (Part 1: Learning Mode & Sentiment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online</strong></td>
<td>Mentions online or hybrid mode of learning</td>
<td>Virtual, zoom, online, remote, remotely</td>
<td>I have been doing fine doing online classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-person</strong></td>
<td>Mentions going back to school for in-person class</td>
<td>back to school, school environment, in person, return, in-person, resuming, regular</td>
<td>Indeed, going back to school every day of the week will upset my routine.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Positive</strong></td>
<td>Mentions positive feeling about going back to school</td>
<td>enjoy, excited, happy, looking forward, comfortable</td>
<td>I will be excited to be able to go back to school and do things I could do before the pandemic. I am looking forward to seeing more of my friends, spending more time in public, and, more importantly, resuming normal school again.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
<td>Mentions negative feeling about going back to school</td>
<td>nervous, stress, worried, terrified, upset, sad,</td>
<td>It has definitely been easier for me at home because I don’t have to deal with the often stressful environment at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Classifier/Keywords</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Social interaction</td>
<td>Mentions interacting with others in school</td>
<td>introvert; extrovert; interact; converse; relationship; social skill; classmate; social anxiety; antisocial; social angst; social aspects; socially anxious; friends; meet *** people; excited *** around people</td>
<td>It is harder to make friends online in school than to make friends in person. I like being able to see my friends all the time and being taught by a teacher in person instead of over the Internet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Mentions academic performance</td>
<td>catch up; performance; struggle ***school; doing test; grade [exact]; grades; harder at school</td>
<td>After doing tests, zoom classes, and classwork in the comfort of my home just the thought of doing a test in school scares me so much. i think returning to a normal life especially in school could be good for my grades because i cant just roll back into bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Mentions freedom, flexibility in schedule and time use (e.g. less time on transportation; more sleep) that is not explicitly linked to learning quality.</td>
<td>flexib; transport; sleep; freedom; wake up; get up; nap; waking; comfort *** home; my *** pace; time at home</td>
<td>I feel like I got used to online school and I have started feeling more comfortable doing school from home and not having to wake up in the morning to take transportation. As I stated before, I am slightly happier that my school routine was much easier, since I was able to gain an extra two hours of sleep on the weekdays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finding 1: Comparison across states

Along the X axis (MR1), Mann-Whitney tests showed that New York (N=41) was statistically significantly different at the alpha=0.05 level from North Carolina (NY Mdn= -0.18; NC Mdn=0.16, N=50 U=1479.00, p=0.00, r=-0.44) and from Pennsylvania (NY Mdn= -0.04; PA Mdn=0.06, N=26 U=767.00, p=0.00, r=-0.44) but not statistically significantly different from Illinois (NY Mdn= -0.10; IL Mdn= -0.10, N=33 U=834.50, p=0.08, r=-0.23).
Finding 1 - Example posts (sentences)

New York

NY: More connections between social interaction and in person school
More connections between social interaction and sentiment (positive and negative).
More connections between online learning and negative sentiment.

E.g.
- Post #129 (part) I did first go to school in person (blended) and I mean at first I was excited because I am a 9th grader meaning new people possible new friends.
- Post #113 (part) I do feel anxious about going back to my pre-pandemic life because it’s been so long since I saw my friends, my school building, and people around me when I’m outside.
- Post #23 (part) Since gyms closed during the pandemic, I lost all motivation to work out from home, and I’ve been struggling with mental fatigue due to complications with online school.

North Carolina

NC: More connections between grades and in person school.

E.g.
- Post #303 (part) i think returning to a normal life especially in school could be good for my grades because i cant just roll back into bed
Finding 2: comparison between positive post and negative post

We made use of a Python package - “vaderSentiment” which enables us to assign each post with a compound sentiment score. If the score > 0, we classify the post as positive and vice versa.

However, certain sentence patterns like “I don’t think ...” cannot be interpreted correctly. And classifying posts containing both positive and negative sentences is also a challenge.
Next Steps and Questions

- How to deal with mixed feelings in the same sentences or posts?