

**2009-2010 Parent Survey Report
Needham Public Schools
March 10, 2010**

Introduction

Last December, the Needham Public Schools conducted the fifth system-wide survey of its parent community. The purpose of the survey is to help school personnel better understand what is important to the parent community, to gather information about their opinions on certain issues, and to determine their level of satisfaction with the various aspects of the school system. The questionnaire was first developed and administered in 2001, and this administration is part of a plan to survey the parent community biennially. Since the first administration, a few changes were made to improve the clarity of a few questions, but an effort was made to keep the instrument as similar to the last one as possible in order to track trends reliably over time. With each administration, additional questions are asked about areas that are of particular interest at that time. In this questionnaire, a number of questions were asked about English Language Arts to help inform the ELA Curriculum Review process. (Those results will be included in the ELA Report later this year.) Additionally, several questions regarding transition between buildings and social skill programs were added to inform district-wide procedures and/or initiatives in these areas.

This was the second electronic administration of the survey. Parents received notices about the survey through electronic messages from the superintendent and the principals. Additional notices and reminders were included in school newsletters and bulletins. Parents were asked to complete only one questionnaire for each level (elementary, middle, or high school) at which they had a child or children. The questionnaire included a cover letter with an explanation and instructions.

Following each of the last surveys, school personnel spent considerable time analyzing the data, identifying areas of dissatisfaction, setting goals, and implementing response plans. Because this type of questionnaire is not constructed in a manner that readily identifies the reasons for dissatisfaction, it is often necessary to follow up on the survey results in order to gather more specific information.

Response Demographics

The response rate for the 2009 survey was 23.7%, which is greater than the 2007 survey (20.9%). The breakdown by schools is as follows:

School	# of Families	Survey Count	Percentage of Families
Broadmeadow	420	117	27.9%
Eliot	301	95	31.7%
Hillside	328	88	24.6%
Mitchell	343	111	32.4%
Newman	487	112	23.0%
High Rock School	435	109	25.0%
Pollard Middle School	749	169	22.6%
Needham High School	1262	225	17.8%
Total	4305	1020	23.7%

Three cautions need to be made about the data:

- The return rate of 23.7% is good when compared to most surveys; however, the rate is not high enough to ensure that the results reflect the opinions of the general population. This is particularly true for the high school level where the return rate was less than 18%.
- Surveys do not always produce reliable data. Studies have shown that respondents tend to be somewhat more interested, involved, and have stronger feelings than non-respondents. On the other hand, in most instances these results are very similar to the data gathered during the past four surveys; and consistency of results over time is considered a strong indicator of reliability.
- In many instances the percentages of respondents are not reflective of the general population (see the chart below). For this reason, the opinions of certain populations may be over- or underrepresented. For example, the percentage of respondents from the High School (22.1%) is much lower than its portion of the population (27.4%). Also, the parents of our children of color are underrepresented. These changes in demographics make interpretation of trend data particularly questionable. In past surveys, the Elementary School typically represented about 35% of the respondents; this year that number is 50.3%. For this reason, the opinions of Elementary parents have more weight on overall trend rate numbers when compared to previous years.

Demographic Comparison – Respondents and Population

Student Demographics		% of Respondents	Actual % of Entire Student Population
Level	PreK-2	19.9	25.1
	3-5	31.2	25.2
	Middle School	26.9	22.3
	High School	22.1	27.4
Gender	Male	50.7	51.5
	Female	49.3	48.5
Race	White	87.8	85.8
	Black	0.9	3.5
	Hispanic	1.3	2.3
	Asian	6.5	8.2
	Other	3.6	0.2
Special Education	Special Education	13.3	13.3
	Regular Education	86.7	86.7
METCO	METCO	1.1	2.7
	Non-METCO	98.9	97.3

Results

In answering questions, respondents were given the option of picking “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree,” or “Strongly Disagree.” Because people have different measures for the strength of their opinions, the “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” have been combined, as have “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree.” Parents could also indicate that a question was not applicable to them or that they did not know about the area of questioning. For the purposes of this report, changes of five or more percentage points will be considered significant when analyzing trend or comparison data.

The survey covers a number of areas, and for ease of analysis responses have been grouped into categories for this report. They were not necessarily grouped in this manner on the questionnaire itself.

Academic Subjects

The questionnaires asked parents to indicate their levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with all of the major subject areas. The system-wide satisfaction average for all subjects was 85.3%. This represents a slight increase over the 2007 results:

2009	85.3%
2007	83.4%
2005	87.2%
2003	87.7%
2001	85.7%

The chart below indicates the percentages of parents who were satisfied in each of the major subject areas. For purposes of comparison, the 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007 results are also included.

Percentage (%) of Satisfied Parents by Subject Area

Subject	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
English	92.6	93.5	89.7	86.6	86.0
Mathematics	81.4	82.8	76.8	74.1	76.8
Science	91.1	92.9	90.0	85.7	85.3
Social Studies	91.9	93.9	92.9	91.8	91.8
Foreign Language ¹	71.1	73.0	79.4	77.4	78.3
Art	91.1	94.4	92.1	88.1	90.6
Music	88.7	89.9	91.0	82.2	84.3
Technology	74.5	80.2	86.8	84.7	87.4
Physical Education	89.1	90.8	86.3	80.5	87.0
Average	85.7	87.7	87.2	83.4	85.3

¹ Middle and High School only

Most of the satisfaction ratings either remained stable or increased since 2007. In fact, 6 of the 9 subject areas showed a level of increased satisfaction. The increase in satisfaction with Physical Education programming is considered significant going from 80.5% to 87% satisfaction.

For the first time, the survey asked parents about their satisfaction with Social Skills Programs (PreK-5 Responsive Classroom; 6-8 Advisory; 9-12 Mentor Homeroom).

Percentage (%) of Satisfied and Dissatisfied Parents and Those Indicating Don't Know/NA, by level

Social Skills Programs	PreK-5			6-8			9-12		
	Satisfied	Not satisfied	DK	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	DK	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	DK
	73.9	8.25	17.9	70.1	17.52	12.4	42.7	16.4	40.9

There are several observations that emerge based on this first year's rating of Social Skills Programming:

- The level of DK/NA answers may indicate numbers of parents are not familiar with the social skills programming at their child's school.

- 70% or more PreK to grade 8 parents indicate satisfaction with the Social Skills programming, 42.7% of High School parents indicate the same.

Support Services / Ancillary Programs

Parents also were asked to indicate their satisfaction with support programs. Again, the chart below compares services for the past three surveys.

Percentage (%) of Satisfied Parents by Service Area

Service Area	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
Guidance	78.0	79.3	81.4	71.2	80.5
Library/Media	85.1	89.1	90.7	92.6	90.8
Transportation	75.6	79.8	80.2	76.0	75.3
Lunch	79.9	80.5	82.1	78.6	78.5
Nursing	96.1	96.6	96.4	96.7	96.6
Athletics ¹	76.2	72.2	72.3	65.0	79.2
School Administration	93.2	93.4	92.4	89.5	87.9
Maintenance/Cleanliness	84.8	79.2	82.7	90.2	93.7
Average	83.9	85.4	86.0	83.0	85.3

¹High School only

Overall, parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with the service areas. Most of the service ratings are similar to previous years; however, a few did have significant changes.

Guidance increased by more than 9 percentage points over 2007 results. This significant increase is tied to high satisfaction levels throughout the district: 90.5% at the elementary schools, 76.4% at the Middle School (increase of 3.9% over 2007 level) and 76.4% at the High School (increase of 14.2% over 2007 level). **Athletics** also improved significantly to 79.2% from 65.0% in 2007. **Maintenance** of the schools continued to receive a very favourable rating with 93.7% parent satisfaction.

Educational Issues

Parents were asked about a number of issues which went beyond particular academic departments or service areas.

Academic Satisfaction

The chart below indicates the percentage of parents who were satisfied with certain areas related to our schools' academic programs. The satisfaction levels for the previous surveys are also given for comparison purposes.

Percentage (%) of Parents Satisfied

	Elementary					Middle School					High School				
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
High Academic Standards	90.7	95.1	90.1	88.6	90.2	89.0	94.0	89.9	89.4	87.2	95.2	96.3	95.4	93.3	94.6
Curriculum	89.5	92.5	88.4	82.9	84.3	85.1	87.6	85.0	78.0	85.8	90.6	90.4	85.9	83.2	86.5
Class Size	82.4	83.8	76.6	77.9	81.3	29.0	77.0	74.8	75.7	84.5	65.9	74.7	80.7	82.6	79.3
Academic Recognition	73.0	84.9	81.5	71.2	74.3	79.0	81.2	88.3	67.1	71.7	90.7	89.7	89.6	73.2	72.9

In general, parents rated all four of the areas very highly, but there is some variability among the areas as well as among the levels. Parents gave **High Academic Standards** the highest ratings with about 9 in 10 parents indicating satisfaction across the system. The ratings were slightly higher at Elementary and High School this year, and slightly lower at the Middle School. However, the difference is not considered significant.

The **Curriculum** ratings rose at all levels, significantly at the Middle School level. This was the first year of implementation of Curriculum Coordination at the Middle School level with the addition of a Math/Science Curriculum Coordinator and an English/Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator.

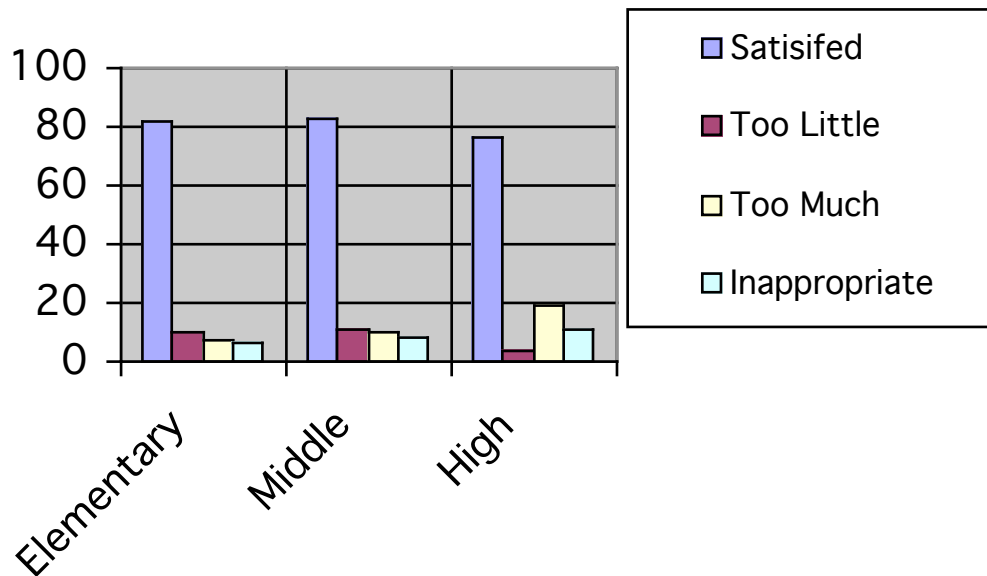
Class Size satisfaction increased significantly at the Middle School, coinciding with the opening of the High Rock School.

Homework Responses

System-wide, almost eight in ten parents (79.4%) reported that they believed that their children were receiving an age-appropriate amount of homework. This is a significant increase from 69.9% satisfaction in 2007. This percentage also compares favourably with the earlier three administrations of the survey (81.8% in 2001, 83.3% in 2003, and 82.5% in 2005.)

The percentage of dissatisfied parents was relatively stable across levels: 19.5% at the elementary level, 21.5% of middle school parents, and 23.1% of high school respondents. In the 2007 survey, middle and high school parents indicated a 35% dissatisfaction level with homework. Again in this year’s survey it is interesting to see why the dissatisfied parents were dissatisfied. They were given three options, and the results are as follows. (Note: The numbers add up to more than 100% because some parents chose more than one option.)

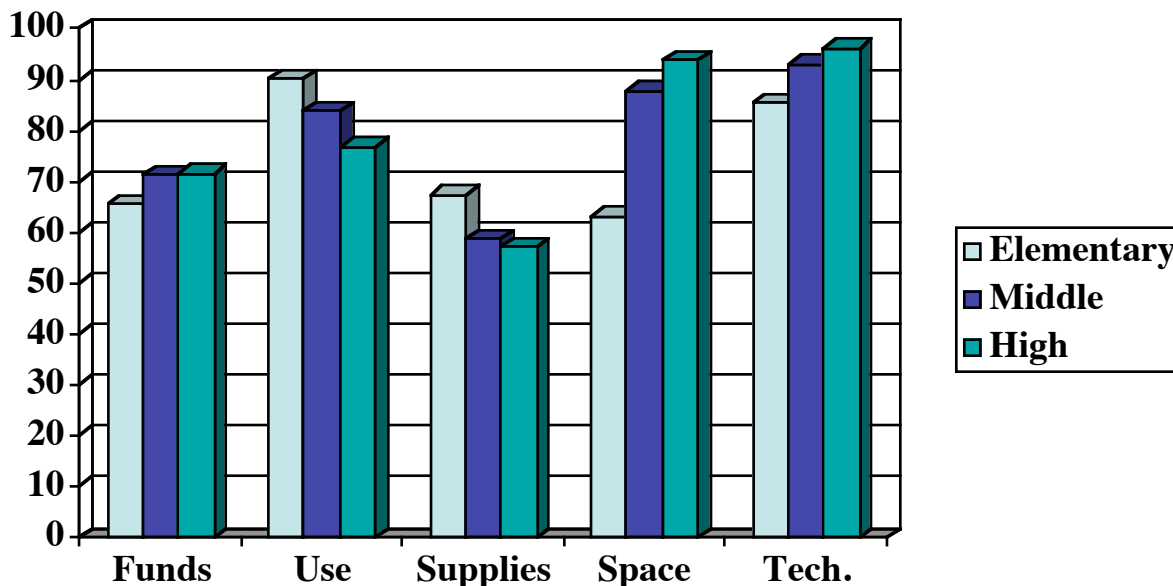
Homework Responses (% of Parents)



While most parents appear to be satisfied with their child’s homework, the reason for dissatisfaction seems to vary by level: parents of high school students are more likely to feel that their children have too much homework. Middle school and elementary school parents were split on the issue.

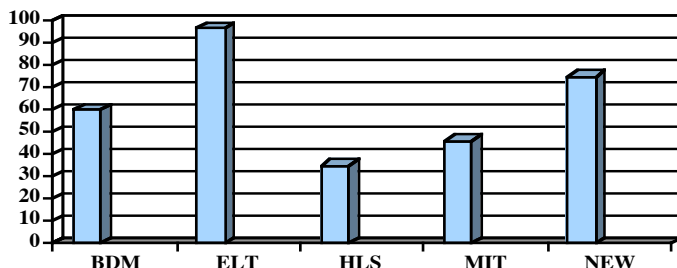
Resources

Several questions were asked about school resources. The chart below indicates the percentage of people with positive responses to each of five issues (adequacy of funding, efficient use of funding, provision of required supplies, adequate space, and adequate technological resources):



The percentage of satisfied parents (68.4%) in the funding area was slightly higher than in 2007 (58.2%). This, however, was not the item scoring the lowest satisfaction rating. Only about 63% of parents said that the schools provide their children with the necessary school supplies, making it the area of least satisfaction regarding Resources. A relatively high percentage of parents believe that the schools use their funds efficiently (85.6%), and think that the schools have the technological resources that they need (89.9%). The satisfaction rates regarding space vary widely. With a new High School, a very high percentage (93.8) of parents were happy with the space provided for their children. At the Middle School, where the space expanded with the opening of High Rock this year, this number rose to 87.8% from 2007's rating of 37.4%. While the elementary average is 63%, there is great variability among the schools. (See the chart below).

% of Parents Satisfied With the Space at their School



At Eliot, 96.6% of the parents indicate satisfaction, while the number is 46.1% at Mitchell and 35.4% at Hillside.

Safety, Discipline, and Citizenship

There were several questions relating to safety in our schools.

% Indicating Satisfaction

Statement	Elementary					Middle					High				
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
The school maintains high standards for student behavior.	96.6	96.3	94.6	91.1	93.8	88.8	93.5	92.7	88.8	88.5	91.3	86.6	83.4	86.9	85.5
There are places in the school where my child feels unsafe.	8.8	4.6	4.7	10.3	11.3	14.3	12.0	9.7	17.3	12.5	12.8	14.9	23.7	13.6	8.3
Student discipline issues are handled fairly.	92.1	94.2	92.7	89.6	91.5	83.0	87.5	92.9	85.2	85.3	85.8	88.3	84.5	77.5	77.2
Students are encouraged to be responsible citizens.	97.8	99.6	98.6	95.7	99.0	96.1	95.8	96.8	91.2	94.2	96.4	95.7	94.2	93.3	95.7

Most parents indicated similar levels of satisfaction with the safety, discipline and citizenship ratings this year to those ratings in 2007. Notably, the probe, “There are places in the school where my child feels unsafe,” yielded a lower agreement rating for Middle and High School parents this year than in 2007. This indicates that more of these parents feel the schools are safe for their children than in 2007. This represents a significant change in the High School rating. While not significant, the slight rise in elementary parents’ concerns about safety in their schools continues a trend from 2007. Parents reported that their children are encouraged to be responsible citizens with an overall 97% satisfaction rate.

Parents have a high level of satisfaction with discipline at the elementary level, and this number has remained somewhat stable over time. At the middle and high school levels, the percentage of satisfied parents remained the same this year after a decline was noted in the 2007 survey at both levels.

Communication

A number of questions had to do with communication and relationships between the home and school. The following chart looks at parent/school personnel relationships, decision-making and communication effectiveness in the district.

% Indicating Satisfaction

Statement	Elementary					Middle					High				
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
School personnel are respectful, receptive, and responsive to input from parents.	93.9	95.2	95.4	90.4	93.0	88.4	92.3	89.4	82.4	84.3	88.5	94.1	82.0	80.8	81.5
School personnel are respectful, receptive, and responsive to input from students.	95.2	94.1	94.9	92.1	92.0	86.3	87.9	87.2	76.7	80.4	87.2	87.3	77.1	77.3	78.4
Teachers help me understand the strengths and needs of my child.	94.7	94.9	93.8	91.5	92.1	63.5	68.8	56.7	57.2	54	55.9	52.2	41.9	37.6	35.1
I am involved in decision-making about the education of my child.	72.9	78.2	76.8	72.4	75.7	60.3	67.9	68.2	52.3	59.8	76.7	80.0	74.2	73.2	68.7
I am provided opportunities to volunteer at my child's school.	96.0	96.6	96.2	95.4	96.3	84.2	80.1	66.5	73.8	67.5	75.8	78.8	66.5	64.3	67.0
I feel welcome at my child's school.	96.9	96.6	96.4	92.0	95	87.5	83.3	87.0	73.0	75.3	90.7	87.0	86.9	81.6	85.6
My child's school effectively communicates information to me.	91.3	93.3	93.0	90.4	90.6	75.6	80.8	78.2	86.1	86.0	71.8	78.6	81.1	84.8	75.0
My child's school website provides me with useful information.	-	-	-	86.4	90.2	-	-	-	92.3	94.7	-	-	-	96.2	88.4

At the elementary level, parents rated most areas of communications and relationships very highly, with over 9 in 10 parents indicating satisfaction. The one area rated lower than the others has to do with involvement in decision-making where 75.7% reported that they felt adequately involved, which, despite being lower than the other responses, still represents increased satisfaction over 2007.

The Middle School ratings are somewhat lower than the elementary level; however, some areas of the middle school improved (responsiveness of staff to parent and student input and involvement in decision-making) while others declined (helpfulness of teachers to understand my child and opportunities to volunteer). Significant in these changes is the significant increase in parent satisfaction with involvement in decision-making at 59.8% this year.

At the High School, most of the areas remained similar to the previous survey. The only area of significant change had to do with parents' ratings of "the school effectively communicates information to me, which was rated at 75%,

a decrease from 84.8% in 2007. The rating of 35.1% for “Teachers help me understand the strengths and needs of my child.” was a slight decrease from the 2007 rating and was the lowest single rating on the entire survey.

After-School/Co-curricular Activities

The survey asked parents at all levels about extended day opportunities for their children.

% Indicating Satisfaction

Statement	Elementary					Middle School					High School				
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
Teachers are available beyond the school day.	83.2	85.7	81.2	79.7	78.9	95.8	96.3	96.8	94.4	94.1	93.2	95.7	91.5	87.5	90.9
My child is provided with ample after school opportunities.	54.9	66.0	59.8	61.0	71.2	58.1	80.8	70.9	67.7	64.3	86.6	85.1	79.2	77.4	77.7
After school programs meet the needs of my child.	58.9	74.2	61.5	70.2	75.6	57.7	79.4	72.6	67.6	65.0	79.1	77.8	71.9	72.8	78.6

Parent satisfaction with teacher availability beyond the school day remained stable, with middle and high school parents indicating higher satisfaction than at the elementary level. About 71% of parents at the elementary level say that their children have ample after-school opportunities, and 76% indicate that the programs meet the needs of their children. Parents in 2009 are more satisfied that after school programs meet the needs of their children at the elementary and high school levels. There was a slight decline in the satisfaction of middle school parents regarding the provision of ample after school programs and regarding whether they meet the needs of their children.

District Initiatives

A number of questions related to district level initiatives:

Percentage (%) of Parents Giving a Positive Response

Question	2005	2007	2009
Are you aware of the district goals?	60.2%	78.8%	75.6%
Are you aware of progress being made to achieve these goals?	49.9%	68.5%	63.6%
Did you look at the 2009 Performance Report?	94.9%	95.4%	91.3%
Did you find the Performance Report informative?	93.8%	89.0%	90.0%
Are you satisfied with system-wide administrative services?	91.5%	90.1%	88.7%
Do handbooks clearly convey school policies?	97.0%	96.3%	96.6%

There were no significant changes in parent responses to questions regarding the district goals, Performance Report and handbooks. However, there is a decline in awareness of district goals and the progress towards these goals as well as a decline in parents who looked at the Performance Report and are satisfied with system-wide administrative services. Parents remain satisfied with school handbooks.

Opinion of Subgroups

In addition to looking at results by level, the answers of two particular groups - parents of Black and Hispanic students and special education students - were analyzed. It is important to make sure that the feelings of smaller subgroups do not get lost in the overall averages. One must be very circumspect in interpreting the data associated with both groups of parents because of the limited number of returns. Only 22 parents or 7.1% of the Black and Hispanic families returned their questionnaires, as compared to 23.7% return rate for the general population. The 136 responses from parents of special education students represent 19.9% of their population.

The satisfaction rates for both of these subgroups were very similar in most areas to the overall results. Similar to the previous survey responses, there were no significant differences with regard to the specific departments or the support services. Some of the other questions did generate some differences.

% Indicating Agreement

Statement	System		Special Education		Black/ Hispanic	
	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009
The school has high academic standards.	90.7	90.5	90.3	93.9	93.3	100
The school maintains high standards for student behavior.	88.8	90.6	89.1	90.1	86.7	95.5
Student discipline issues are handled fairly.	84.1	87.4	82.9	84.3	93.3	95.0
My child’s school seems adequately funded.	58.2	68.4	77.5	69.0	80.0	86.4
Teachers help me understand the strengths and needs of my child.	61.5	70.0	79.0	86.0	86.7	95.4
I am involved in decision making about the education of my child.	67.9	69.9	80.6	92.5	80.0	95.5
There are places where my child feels unsafe.	13.8	11.0	22.7	16.7	26.7	20.0
The school fosters an appreciation of student diversity.	88.4	93.2	84.1	89.3	53.3	76.2
Instructional materials are representative of diverse cultures.	86.9	91.6	76.6	92.4	46.7	73.3

Parents of special education and Black and Hispanic students were very similar to the general population in believing that their schools had high standards for academics as well as for behavior. About 9 in 10 of the respondents in each of these areas indicated satisfaction. Parents of Black and Hispanic as well as special education students indicated their satisfaction with discipline being handled fairly, indicating a slight increase from 2007.

While the district-wide rating for satisfaction with school funding improved since 2007, the parents of special education students indicated a significant decline in satisfaction in school funding in the 2009 survey.

Both Black/Hispanic and special education parents indicated a significantly increased satisfaction in the areas of “teachers are helpful to me in understanding the strengths and needs of my child” mirroring the general population data. Both groups of parents indicated significantly increased satisfaction with their “involvement in decision-making”.

Parents in both populations report that their children are more likely to feel unsafe in school than is reported by parents in the general population, although this number has significantly decreased since 2007.

Parents of students with special education needs rated the school’s efforts in diversity and multiculturalism very similarly to the System-wide ratings. Black/Hispanic parents, while significantly more positive about these two items than in 2007, were still significantly dissatisfied compared with the System-wide ratings.

There are several other items on the Parent Survey that can provide further insight into the satisfaction level of parents in these smaller subgroups.

% Indicating Agreement

Statement	System	Special Education	Black/Hispanic
School personnel are respectful, receptive and responsive to input from parents	88.4	88.9	90.9
My child’s school effectively communicates information to me.	90.6	83.1	86.4
I am satisfied with the social skills program (e.g. PreK-5 Responsive Classroom; 6-8 Advisory; 9-12 Mentor Homeroom)	84.0	71.6	83.3

While almost 9 out of 10 parents in these sub-groups responded similarly to the general population regarding school personnel being receptive to their input, satisfaction is not as high in the areas of effective communication and, for parents of special education students, the area of social skills programming.

Technology

In addition to issues of satisfaction, this parent survey was used to gather information about technology. The information gathered included the following:

Do you have a home computer?	Yes - 99.8%	No – 0.2%	
Does your child have access to a computer at home for schoolwork?	Yes – 97.8%	No – 2.2%	
For parents of children in grades 7, 8, or 9, would you be interested in your child having access to a laptop to use for school-related projects both in school and at home?	Yes – 71.7%	No – 29%	
For parents of children in grades 7, 8, or 9, would you be interested in participating in a program that would enable you to purchase a laptop at a reduced rate over a period of 3 to 4 years?	Yes – 65.0%	No – 35.0%	
I regularly access PowerSchool to check my child’s school progress.	Yes – 48.4%	No – 38.2%	N.A. – 13.3%
My children have sufficient time on the computer at home to complete homework assignments.	Yes – 97.9%	No – 2.1%	
I have regular conversations with my child about internet safety.	Yes – 79.6%	No – 17.3%	N.A. – 8.1%

Transitions between buildings

% Indicating Agreement

Statement	To Kindergarten	To Grade 6	To Grade 9
My child had a positive experience during his/her preparation to transition.	94.1	97.1	89.0
My child received enough information about the new school to prepare him/her for the transition	90.4	91.0	87.9
I was provided with enough information so that I could support my child during and after the transition.	86.7	91.4	76.1

With the opening of High Rock School in September 2009, we wanted to determine how effective our transition process was for High Rock and for all major school transitions. The data indicates a high level of satisfaction for students transitioning into Kindergarten, grade 6 and the High School. The one area that High School parents identified as less satisfactory was that of receiving enough information so that they could support their student during and after the transition.

Summary and Conclusion

Overall, the parental satisfaction ratings continue to be very positive. As with past surveys, the highest ratings are given for the academic areas, with an average of 85.3% of parents indicating approval. All subject areas improved in their ratings since 2007, with physical education increasing significantly. School support services also received high satisfaction rates, with guidance and athletics improving significantly since 2007. While there was some variability depending upon the area, 85.3% of parents were satisfied with the support services. A significant majority of parents also believed that the schools have high academic (90.5%) and behavior (90.6%) standards.

One area of significantly increased satisfaction is that of funding for the schools. This year 68.4% of parents indicated satisfaction with funding, as compared to 58.2% in 2007. Middle and High School parents also rated “adequate space” satisfactorily at 90.8%. However, elementary parent satisfaction with space ranged from 35.4% at Hillside to 46.1% at Mitchell to 96.6% at Eliot.

Several areas of the district’s performance were surveyed for the first time: satisfaction with social skills programming and with building transitions. 84% of parents system-wide indicated satisfaction with social skills programs and 93% indicated their child had a positive experience transitioning to Kindergarten, grade 6 or grade 9.

The School System has goals and objectives that provide guidance for program development. 7 out of 8 parents indicated awareness of the goals, which is similar to 2007. The number of parents indicating awareness of progress towards meeting the goals declined from 68.5% in 2007, to 63.6%.

While most of the results are very positive, the survey results raise a number of questions and concerns for further study or consideration:

- 1) There is variability within the subject areas and the school resource areas. Subject areas or specific resource areas may want to further inquire about parental satisfaction in order to understand the ratings. Questionnaires or focus groups might help us understand why these satisfaction levels are either remaining flat or trending downward.

- 2) There was a slight decline in parent satisfaction regarding after school opportunities at the middle school level. With the opening of the High Rock School, the provision of after-school programming was adjusted to account for the two campuses. It is not possible to tell from this survey whether parents were dissatisfied with the offerings, location or quality of the services. However, the decline in this rating warrants further study.
- 2) While Middle and High School parents indicated that school is an increasingly safe place for their children, elementary parents indicated concerns in this area. Special education and Black/Hispanic parents indicated even more concern about “places in the school where my child feels unsafe.” Comments from parents indicated concerns with their children’s safety at recess during the school day. Further probing of these parent groups through surveys or focus groups should be considered to gather specific information about this concern.
- 3) Parents indicated similar or improved satisfaction in almost all areas related to communication and relationship since 2007. However, some discrepancies from this positive pattern exist. The High School parents indicated a significant decline in satisfaction in effective communication from the school since 2007. Another area needing further investigation is that of declining middle and high school parent satisfaction in the area of teachers helping them understand the strengths and needs of their child. It would be important to determine why parents have indicated this dissatisfaction and how communication might be improved.
- 4) The dissatisfaction among Black/Hispanic parents about safety and attention to diversity is an ongoing concern. Efforts to address these issues should be revisited.
- 5) Special Education parents are less satisfied with the social skills program than the general population of parents in the district. Further probing of this rating will occur in a survey to be administered later this spring to parents of students with special education needs.

Submitted by:
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