

GREENWICH TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

Parent Survey: Summary of Responses

January 2008

Background Information

The school district regularly seeks input on its programs and services from parents. As part of this process a district-wide survey was conducted of parents. The survey was distributed during parent/teacher conferences in December and collected prior to winter break. The following is a summary of the responses gathered through the survey.

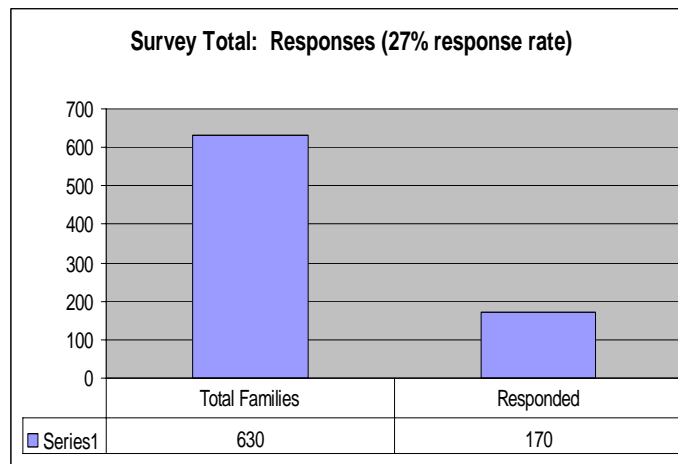
Total Responses

Six hundred and thirty (630) surveys were distributed. One hundred and seventy (170) were returned. The return rate of 27% is considered to be good. Some parents used one survey to address multiple children while others used the separate surveys for each child in their family. The percentages are calculated based on the total number of responses for each item. Since not all respondents answered each item, the total number of responses will vary from item to item. Additionally, the percentages shown are rounded up and therefore may not total 100%.

The data are presented in four sections: Background Information; School Program; Facility Operations; and Communications. Except for the Background/Information section where no respondents' comments were provided, comments and/or suggestions provided by individual respondents are summarized at the end of each section. Conclusions drawn from the data are also provided at the end of each section.

Distribution of Findings

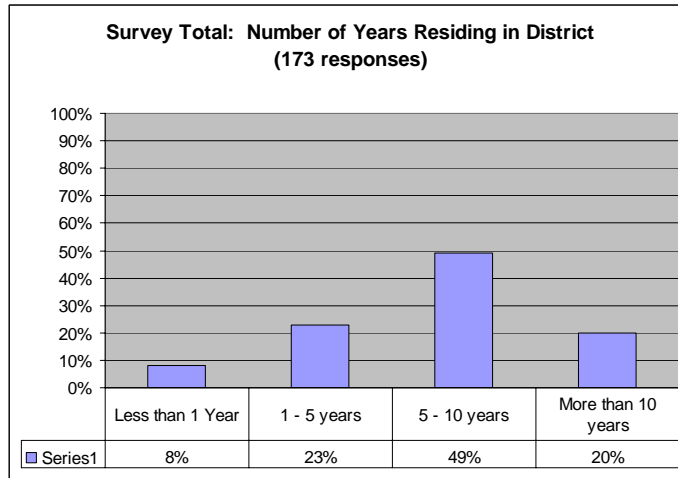
First, a word of gratitude must be shared with the many parents who took the time to complete the survey. Parent input into program development is an essential component to providing meaningful instruction and services. The information gathered through this survey will be presented to the Board of Education at their monthly meeting. It will be available for further consideration by the individual Board committees and by each school advisory committee. It also will be posted on the district's website: www.greenwickschool.org. An announcement of the posting will be made to parents via the district's newsletter. Questions concerning any information related to the Parent Survey should be directed to Dr. Kevin Brennan, Superintendent of Schools at 908-859-2022 or through his email, kb@warrennet.org.



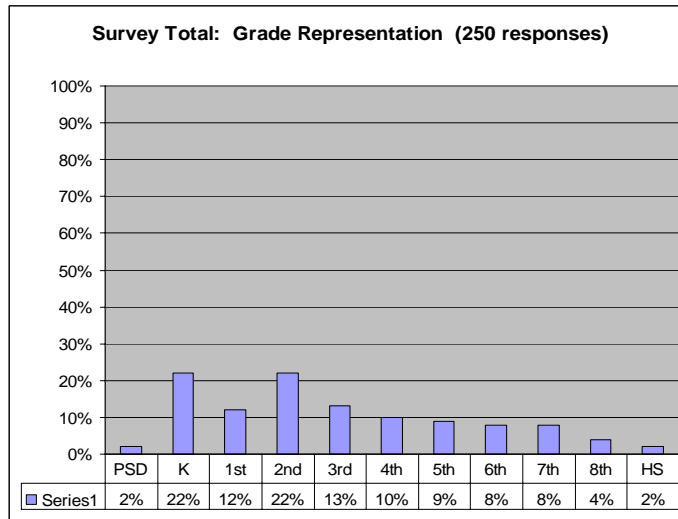
Greenwich Township School District: Parent Survey: 2007-2008

Background Information

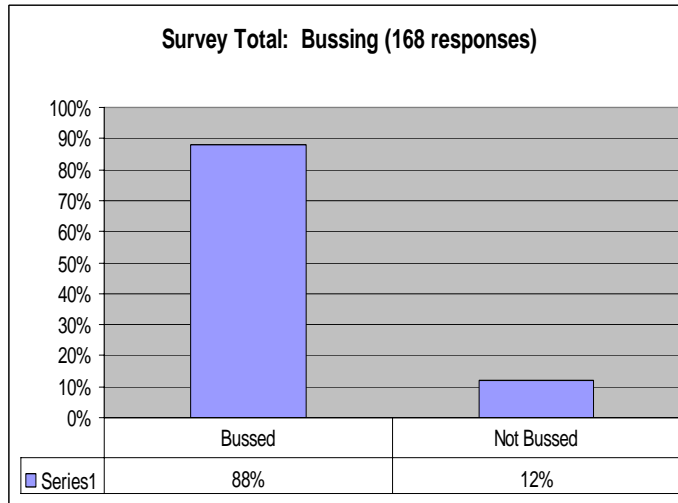
1. I have been residing in the township for:



2. The child/children I am filling this survey out for is/are in the following grade(s):

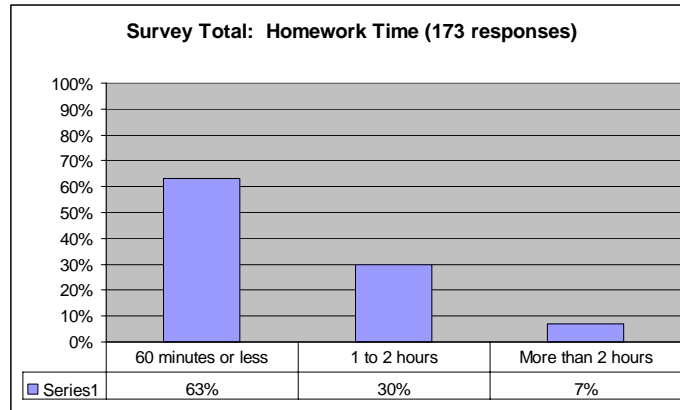


3. My child/children is/are bussed to school:

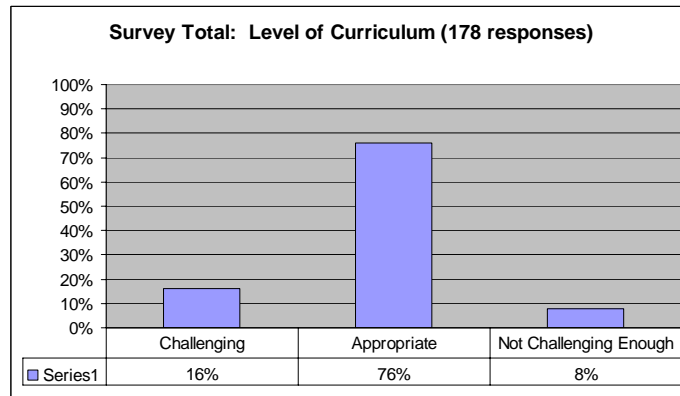


School Program

1. How much time does/do your child/children spend on homework each night?

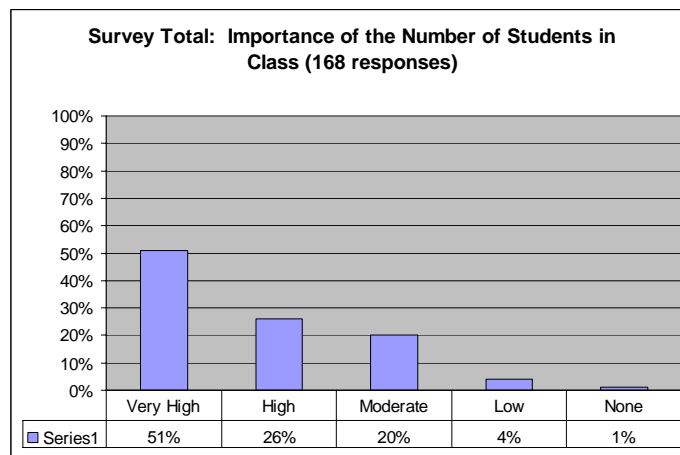


2. The level of curriculum/instruction provided in the classrooms is:



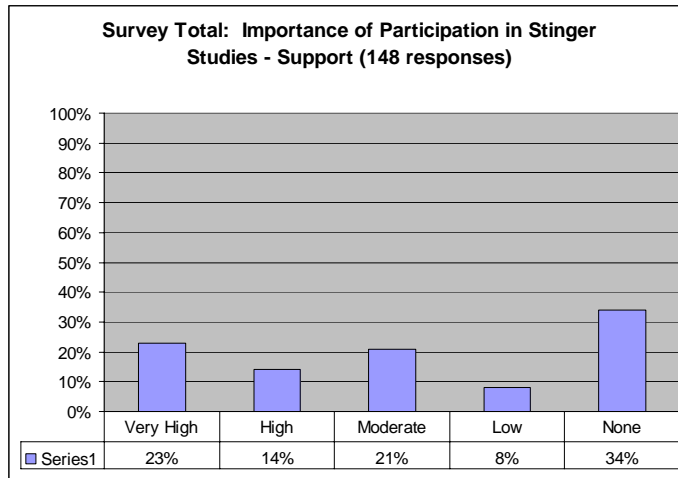
3. Rate the level of importance each of the following has on your child's success in school.

3a. The number of students in class

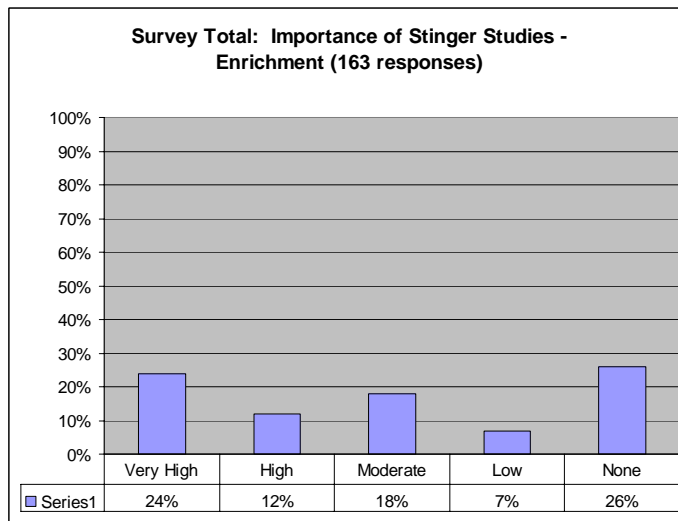


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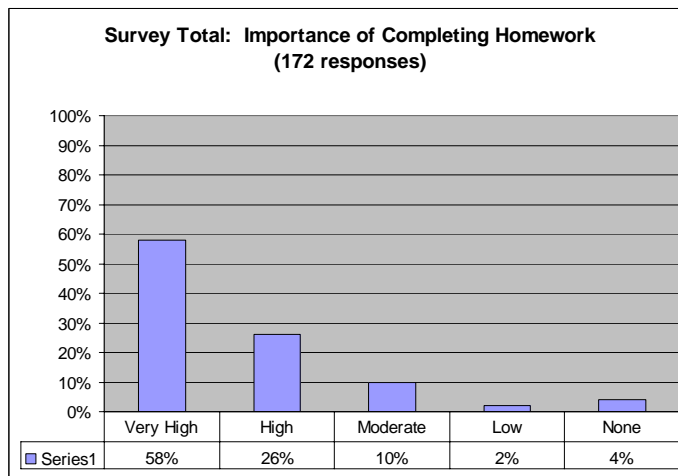
3b. Participation in Stinger Studies (support)



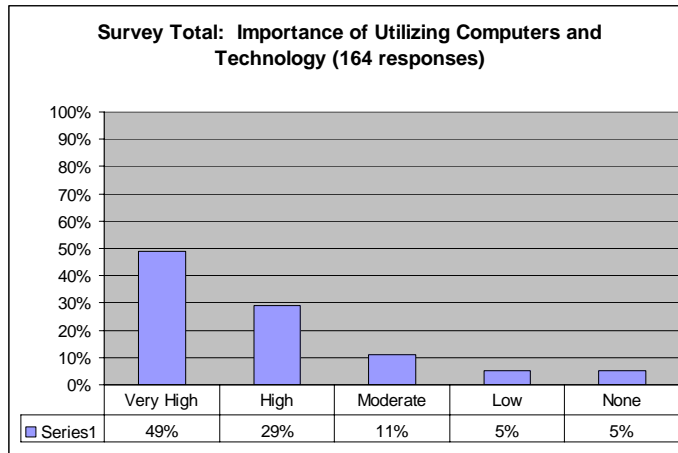
3c. Participation in Stinger Studies (enrichment)



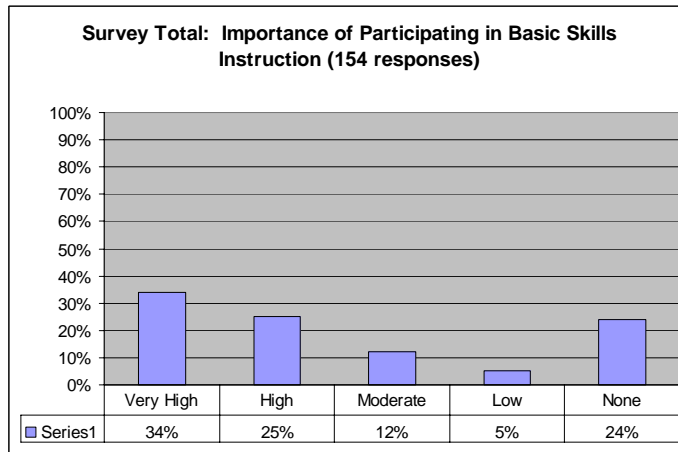
3d. Completing Homework



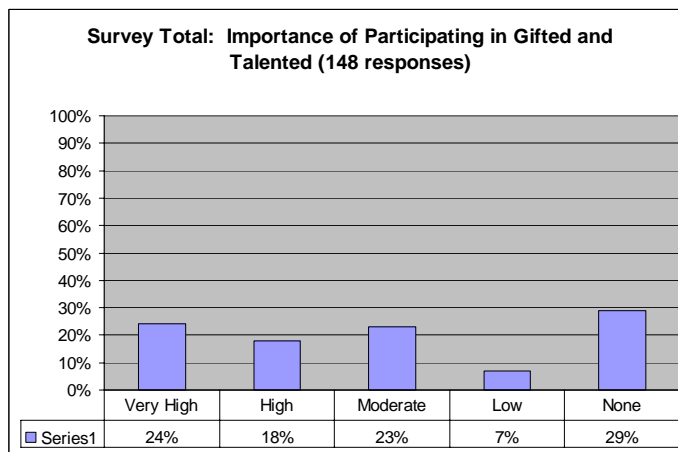
3e. Utilizing computers and other technology



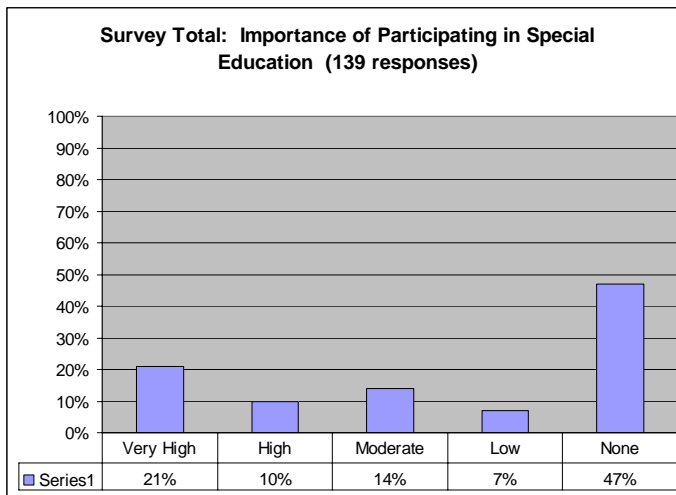
3f. Participation in basic skills instruction



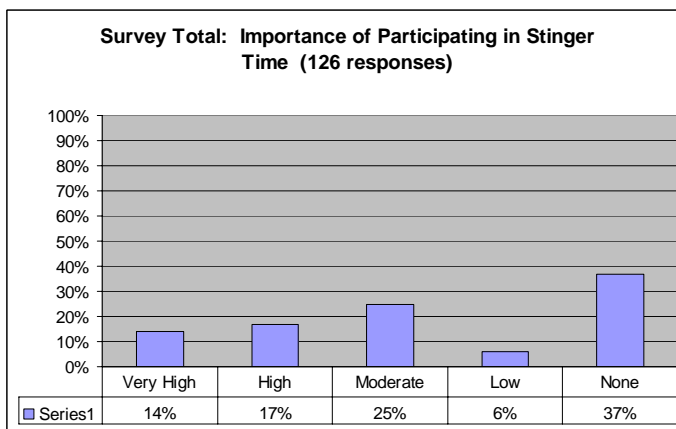
3g. Participation in gifted and talented



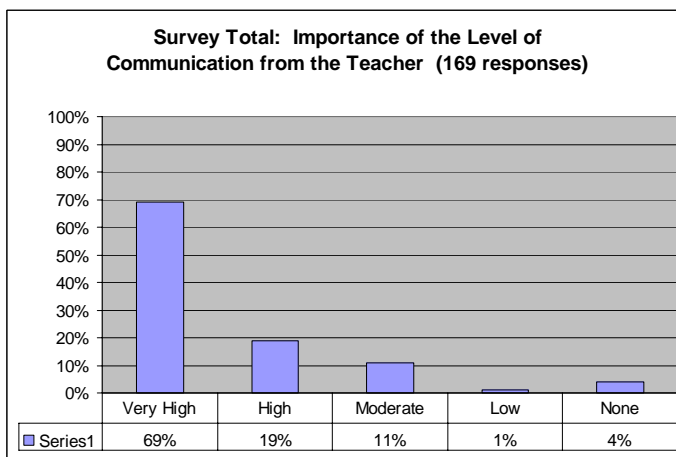
3h. Participation in special education



3i. Participation in Stinger Time (middle school electives)

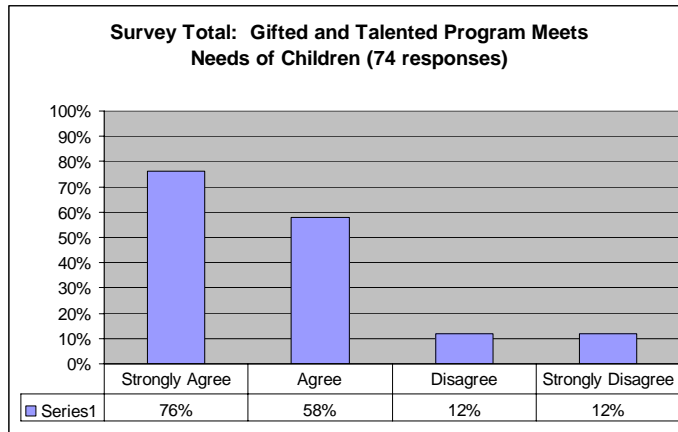


3j. The level of communication from the teacher

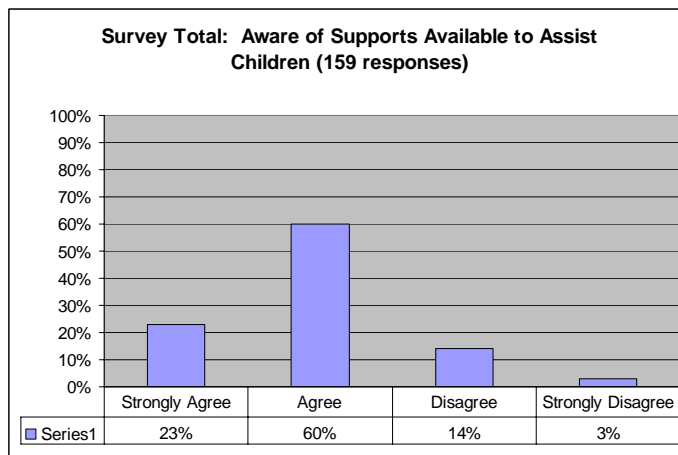


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4. I find the gifted and talented program to be effective in meeting the needs of my child/children.

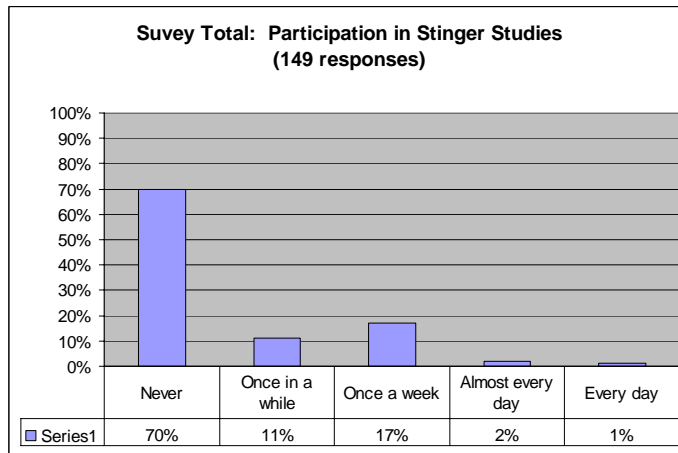


5. I am aware of the various supports available to assist my child in school.

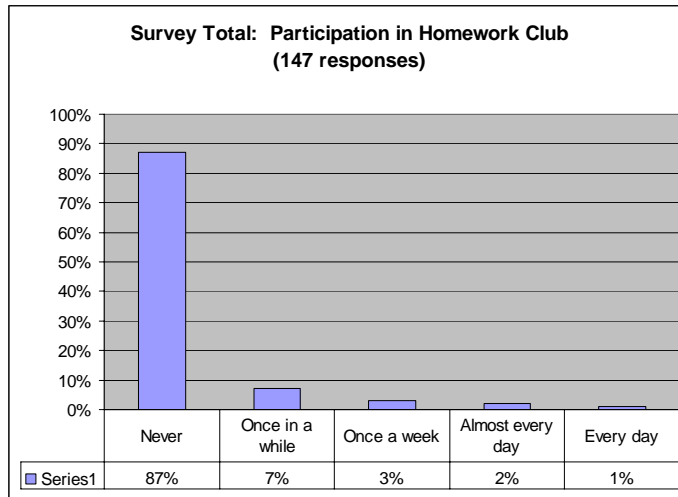


6. How often does/do your child/children participate in the following:

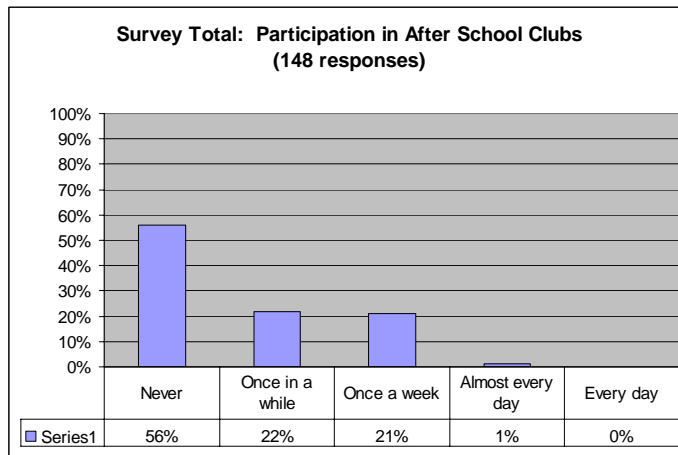
6a. Stinger Studies



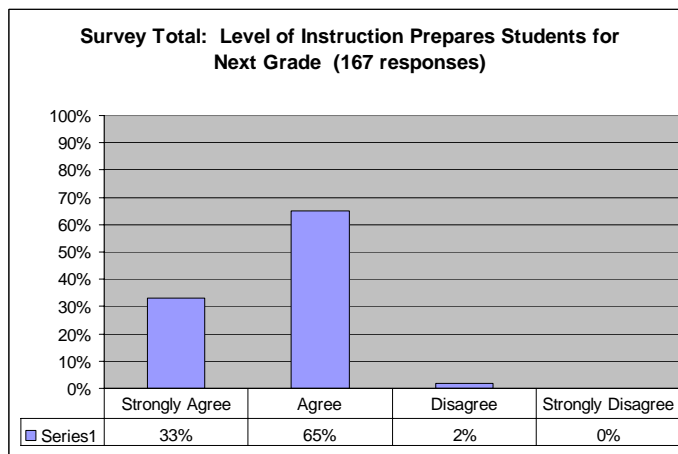
6b. Homework Club



6c. After School Club

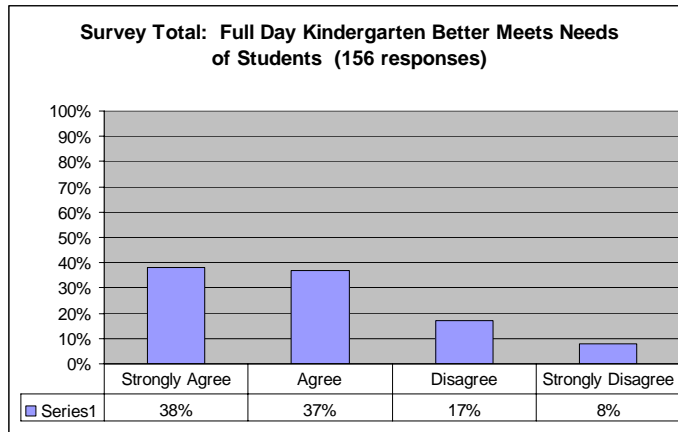


7. I feel that the level of instruction my child receives is meaningful and prepares him/her for the next grade.

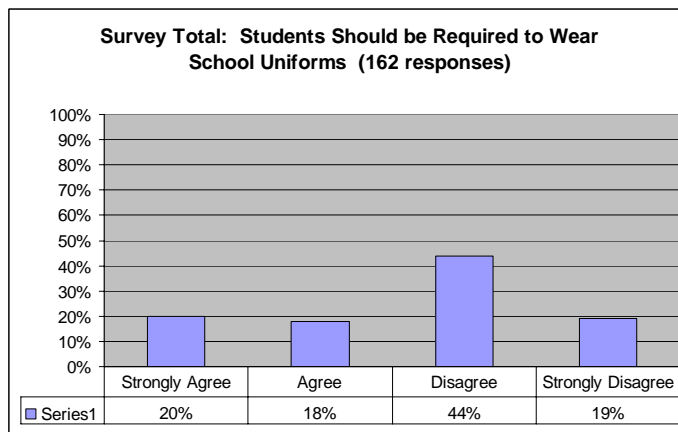


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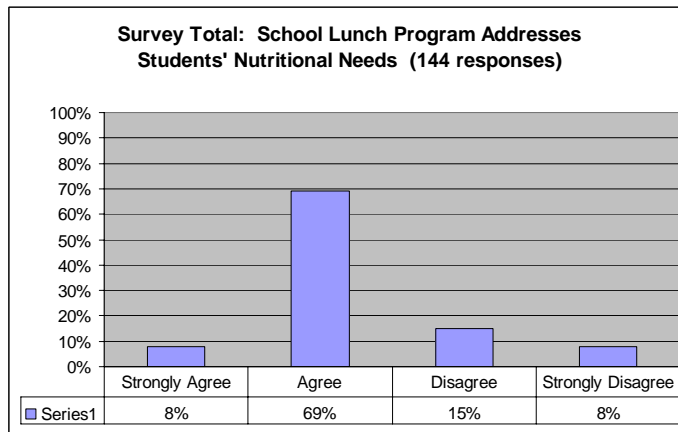
8. I feel that a full day kindergarten would better meet the needs of our younger students.



9. I feel that students should be required to wear school uniforms.



10. The current school lunch program effectively addresses my child/children's nutritional needs.



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Parent Comments: The following is a summary of the comments and suggestions provided by individuals who completed the survey.

Concerning the curriculum:

- Spanish needs to be improved to better prepare the students for high school. More attention to grammar and vocabulary.
- Students not prepared for math at the high school.
- I am pleased with the advanced math class opportunity offered through the middle school.
- I feel Stinger Time electives should be replaced with more instructional time in core subjects.
- Need a study hall period in the middle school.
- Break the middle school teams in to smaller teams similar to the fourth grade.
- Eighth grade writing needs to include instruction in writing research projects.
- Provide a classroom for instrumental music.
- Don't grade music or art it stifles the students' creativity.
- More reading and writing would be beneficial. Like the dedicated writing classes in the middle school.
- More focus on the mechanics of writing in elementary school.
- Include research papers in the fourth and fifth grades.
- Include the dangers of technology in the technology class.
- Better test preparation should be emphasized.
- Go back to basics and teach skills not tests.
- More time for technology, math and science
- More physical education time.
- Gear course work to schools other than Phillipsburg HS.
- Replace study skills with a writing class in the fifth grade.
- The school has a good instructional program
- Have teachers change their plans year to year. Change projects and novels.
- Use the internet for classes
- Include criteria for admission into honors classes in the handbook
- More challenging activities in class
- Spanish program needs to be further developed
- Recess should be part of each day

Concerning the kindergarten program:

- Have a full day of kindergarten to prepare them for the other grades of school.
- Kindergarten orientation needs to be more comprehensive for both parents and children. More information about the program is needed.
- Longer kindergarten hours.
- I like the kindergarten program. I look forward to my kids entering future grades.
- Consider expanding to a full day kindergarten.

Concerning homework:

- Give homework for Spanish and more communication with parents
- More homework for the special needs students.
- Post homework on line.
- Minimizing the amount of spelling homework in grades three and four.
- Too much homework in the fourth grade.
- Homework is too long. Too much busy work.

Concerning support services:

- All students should have the opportunity to participate in the Gifted and Talented program.
- Free tutoring before and after school for students.
- Don't remove students from Gifted and Talented once they are placed there.
- Add a gifted and talented program for the kindergarten
- More attention paid to students who bully other students in school and on the bus.
- Stinger Time should be divided between an elective and extra help.
- Special education students in regular class is a disruption to the other students
- Clarify the Gifted and Talented program – admission procedure
- Basic skills needs to include more extensive remedial instruction

Concerning class size:

- Keep class size less than 18-20.
- The school is very organized. I prefer smaller classes.
- Low class sizes, i.e., 20 max, are best.
- Class size of 22-23 students is adequate.

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Concerning communications with parents:

- Clearer communication with parents about acceptance or rejection policy in Gifted and Talented is needed.
- Parents should be notified of every behavioral incident. Punishment is too lax which allows some students to continue the behavior.

Other comments:

- I like school uniforms. Promotes a sense of belonging and reduces competition.
- I am satisfied with the district programs.
- Post Honor Roll on website for the entire semester.
- Ski club is a great program. I am disappointed about the cancellation of the ski club.
- More guided reading seminars for parents.
- The high school issue is a concern. Could we convert the old school into a high school?
- Use more parent volunteers in the classes to assist the students.
- Can't change what's right. All fine.
- I am pleased with the programs my children are receiving. Teachers are very supportive and communicate with the parents.
- I feel Greenwich provides a strong foundation for high school. Bravo to your staff!
- I want my children to have a safe, clean and caring learning environment which I strongly feel we have.
- I love Greenwich and I believe the school is doing a great job
- Greenwich is a great school and should be a model for other schools

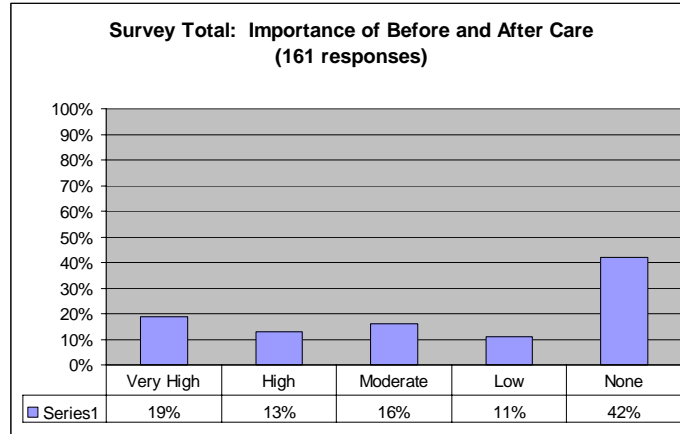
Conclusions: The following are preliminary conclusions are based on data received. As noted, information from the surveys will be shared throughout the school system. Additional conclusions and actions will be made following discussions with the Board of Education, faculty and advisory committees.

1. Review the Spanish curriculum to ensure alignment of the curriculum within the Phillipsburg cluster of schools. This process has already been initiated and will continue.
2. Review the admission procedures for the Gifted and Talented program. Review and expand the information being disseminated with parents about the program.
3. Continue to emphasize writing at the elementary and middle schools.
4. Although it is currently possible to post assignments through PowerSchool, review the possibility of establishing individual teacher webpages for posting of homework, assignments and tests.
5. Continue to work towards maintain smaller class sizes, i.e., 20 on average.
6. Continue to review the feasibility of initiating a full day kindergarten program.
7. Review with faculty the importance of meaningful homework. Additionally, review the need to further enhance the homework guidelines currently in place in the schools.
8. Continue to expand the use of Stinger Studies for both support and enrichment of the instructional program.
9. Continue to foster the refinement of the district curriculum to ensure its meaningfulness for all students.
10. Continue to expand the use of instructional technology throughout the school district.

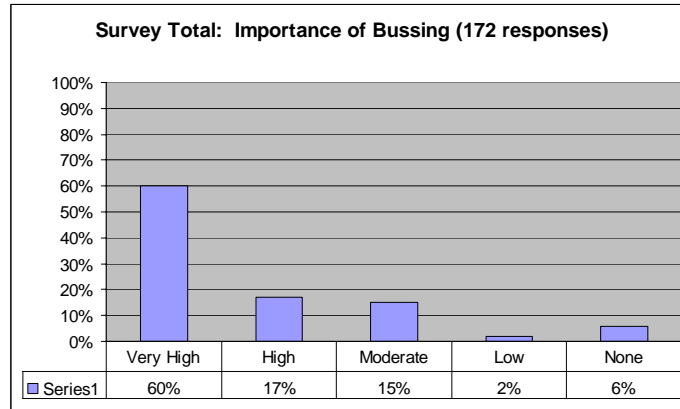
Facility Operations

1. Rate the importance each of the following is to you.

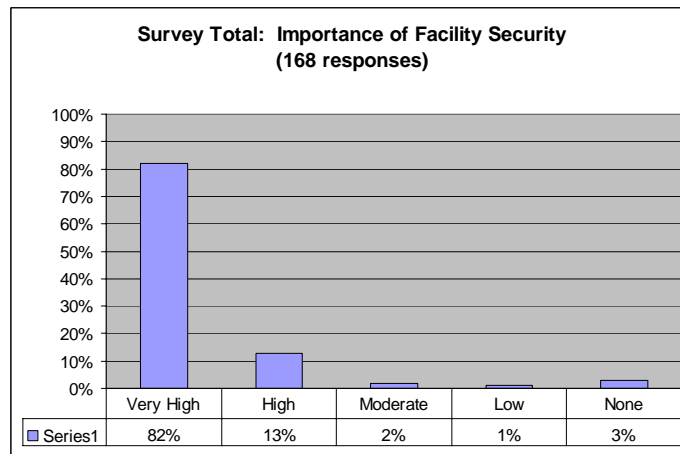
1a. Before and After Care



1b. The availability of bussing to and from school

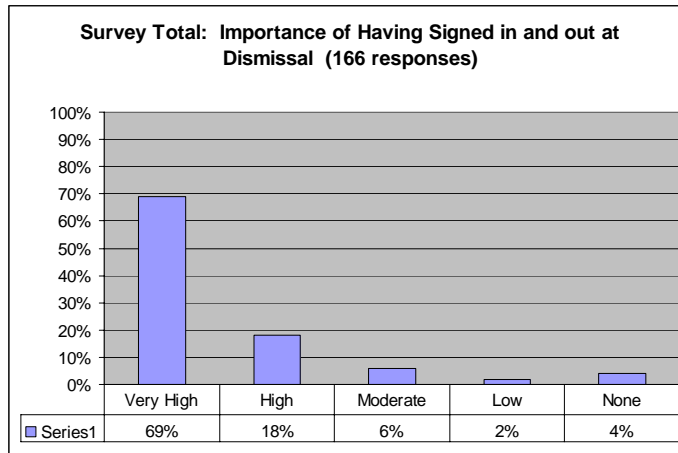


1c. The security of the overall facility

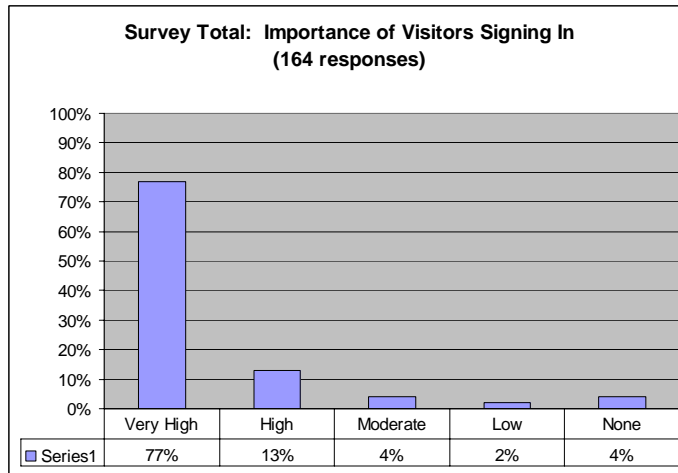


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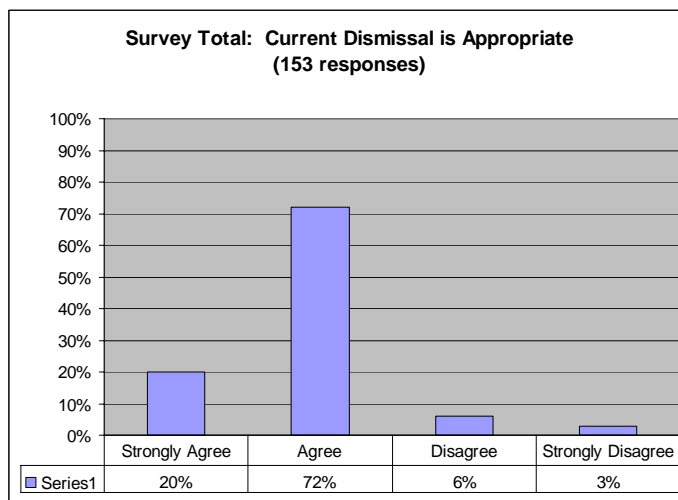
1d. The requirement to sign your child out when you are picking him/her up at the end of the day



1e. The need to sign in and out of the school when visiting

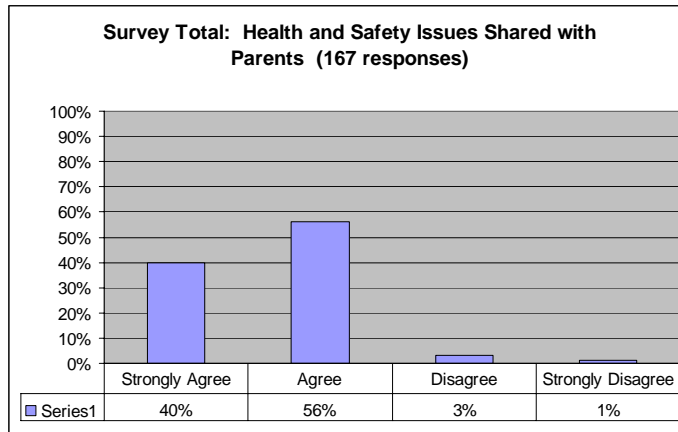


2. The current dismissal procedure for students being picked up by parents is appropriate

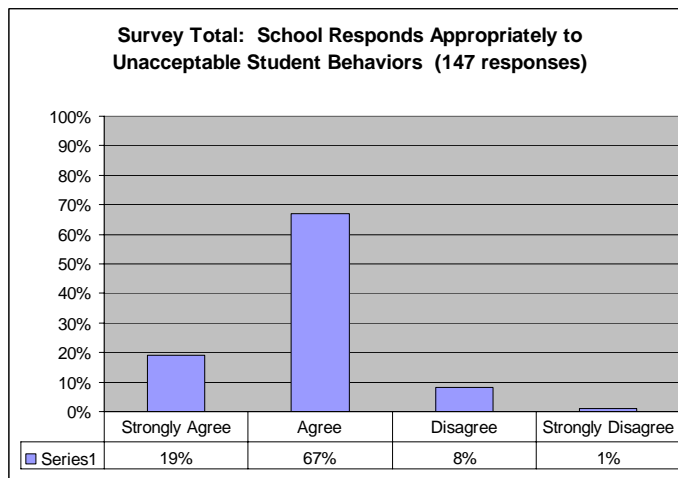


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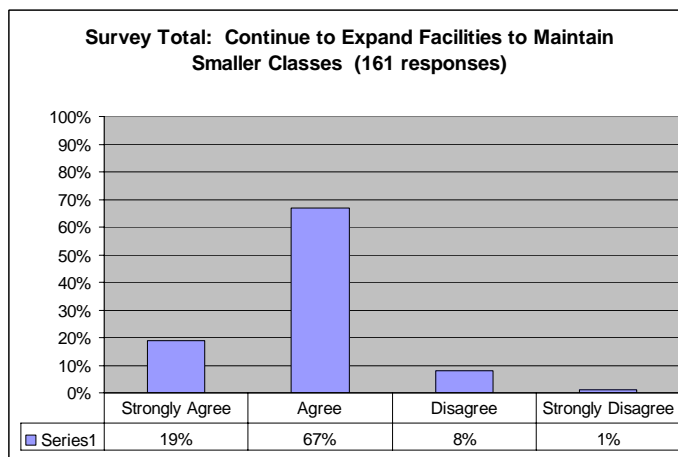
3. Information is regularly provided to parents about emerging health/safety issues in the schools



4. The school's response to inappropriate/unacceptable student behavior is appropriate



5. The district should continue to expand facilities in order to maintain smaller (20 students on average) class size



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Parent Comments: The following is a summary of the comments and suggestions provided by individuals who completed the survey.

Concerning the lunch program:

- Better quality food, discounted lunch tickets for families with more than one child
- Enhance supervision during dismissal in the cafeteria
- Drop the school lunch program. Have students bring their own lunch.
- Replace peanut butter with soy butter or sun butter.
- Lunch period needs to be longer
- Change the lunch menu. Less preservatives.
- Students should have some choice at lunch.
- Introduce new foods into the lunch program.
- Use a nutritionist to improve balance of foods served for lunch.

Concerning building security and student safety:

- Need to ask for identification when entering the building. Security should be tighter.
- Communicate the school's Pandemic Flu Plan to the community.
- Place monitors on the busses or video cameras.
- Lighting needed along sidewalk at Greenwich
- Working lightposts outside the Greenwich School
- Install key pads and keep the doors locked at all times

Concerning student pick up:

- More structure in parent pick up to ensure the safety of the children
- Have parents show identification when picking up their child
- Dismissal from the cafeteria needs to be changed. Too chaotic and students are being pushed and falling.
- Parent pick up should have more staff standing by the exit door to supervise
- Arrange for parents to pick up and drop off kids without getting out of the car. Use numbers to identify the cars.

Concerning school construction and space:

- Need to plan for a larger school population. Plan early.
- Need to expand the middle school.
- Improve the parking lot to enhance traffic flow. Expand the school to help with future enrollment.
- Construct a parking garage

Concerning bussing:

- Allow the bus to change stops when only one student is at the stop
- Shorter bus routes
- Teachers and school staff should be outside at dismissal time to ensure students get on the correct bus

Other comments:

- Bussing is a waste of taxpayers dollars
- Consider adding after school buses for extra curricular activities.
- Give students more time to socialize and unwind
- Learn to use what you have effectively. Too much mismanagement going on
- Consider eliminating Columbus Day and other smaller holidays and give an entire week at Thanksgiving
- Greenwich should follow the Phillipsburg holiday schedule.

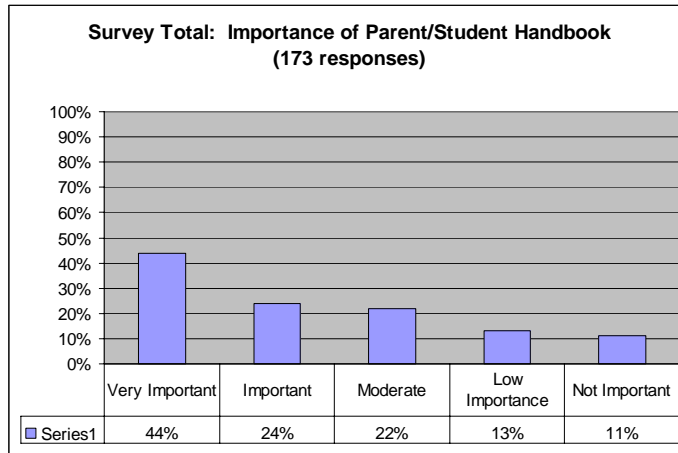
Conclusions: The following are preliminary conclusions are based on data received. As noted, information from the surveys will be shared throughout the school system. Additional conclusions and actions will be made following discussions with the Board of Education, faculty and advisory committees.

1. Continue to review the need for more instructional space.
2. Continue to review the possibility of redesigning the parking lot to enhance traffic flow
3. Continue to review the student dismissal procedure with the goal of student safety and security. Consider establishing a process of having parents show identification when signing out their students.
4. Review the current lunch menu with the district's business office and cafeteria staff with the goal of further diversifying the lunch menu and enhancing the nutritional value of the meals served.
5. Review the procedure for sharing information on school security plans with the public.
6. Continue to work with local law enforcement to review and revise the district's approach to securing school facilities.

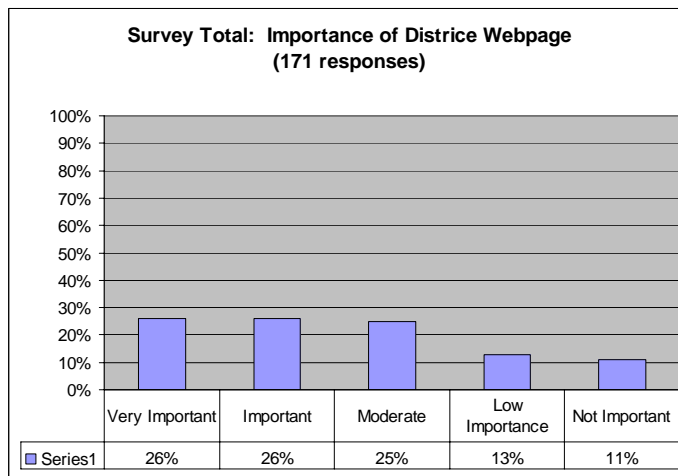
Communications

1. Where do you get you information? Rate each of the following as a source of information about the school.

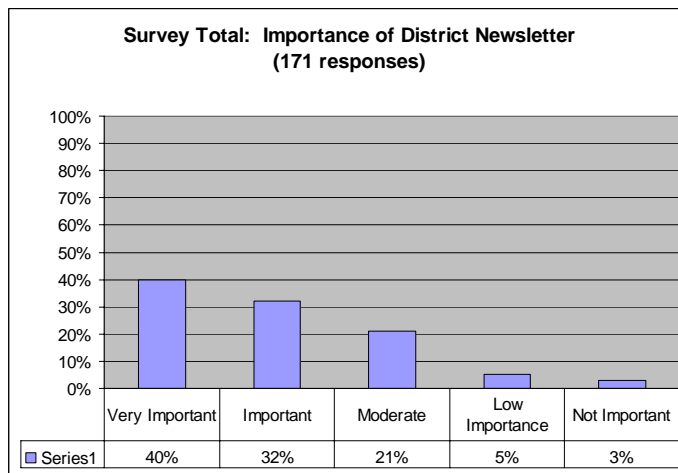
1a. Parent/Student Handbook



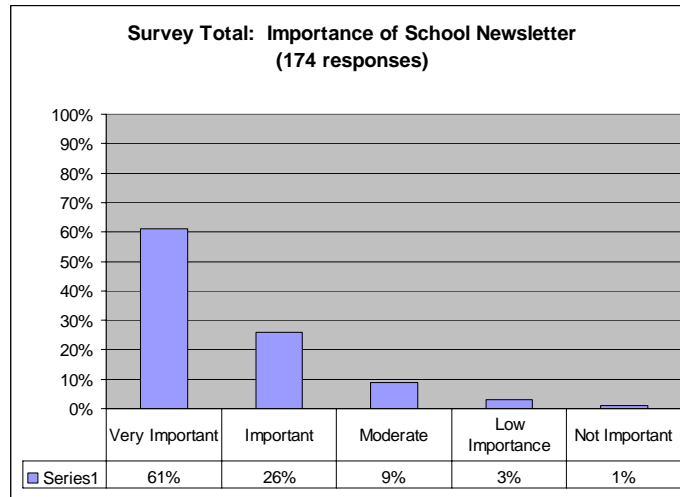
1b. District Webpage



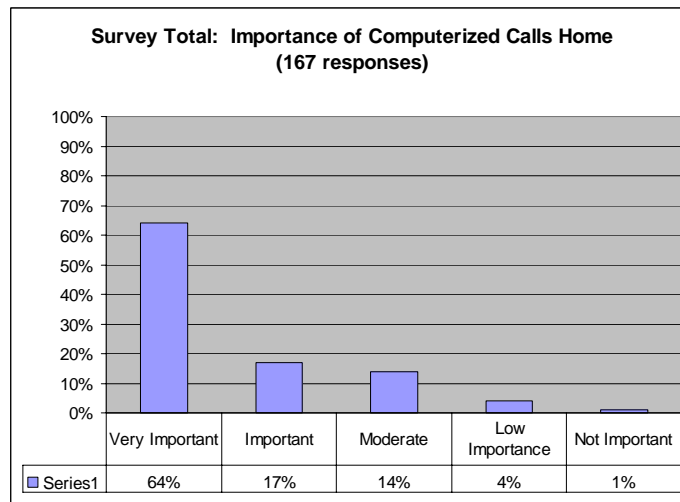
1c. District Newsletter



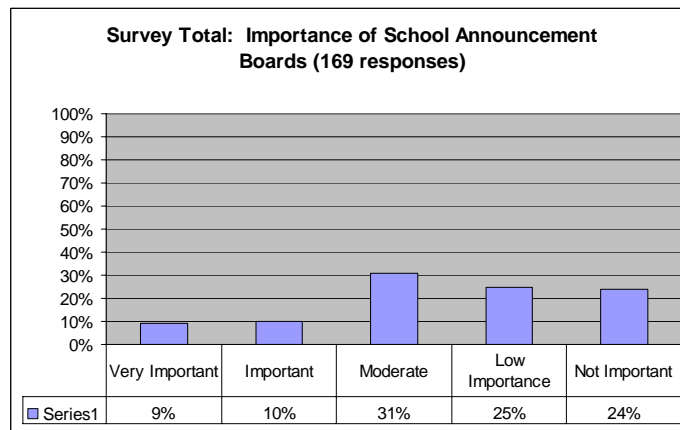
1d. School Newsletter



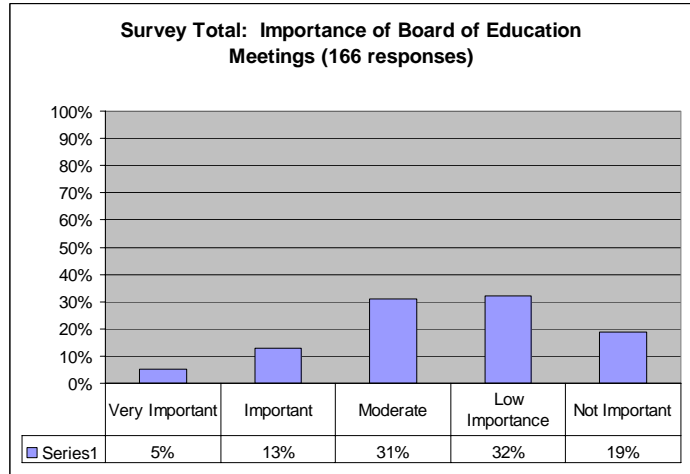
1e. Computerized Calls Home



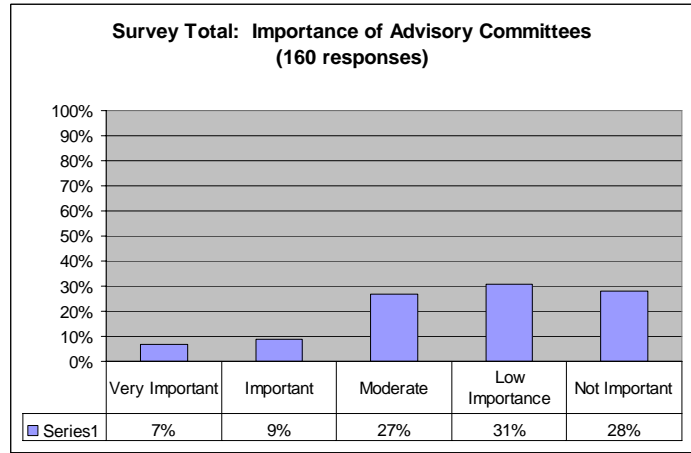
1f. School Announcement Board in Front of the Schools



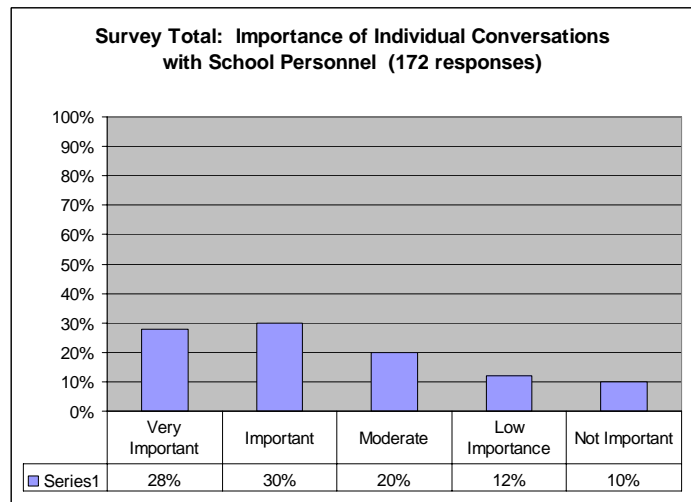
1g. Board of Education Meetings



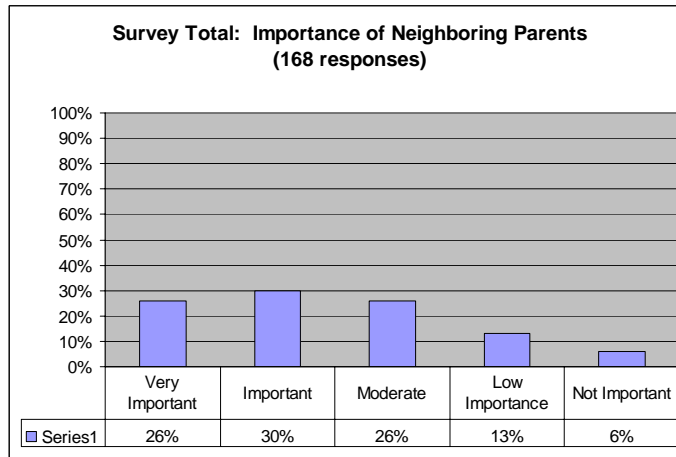
1h. Advisory Committee Meetings



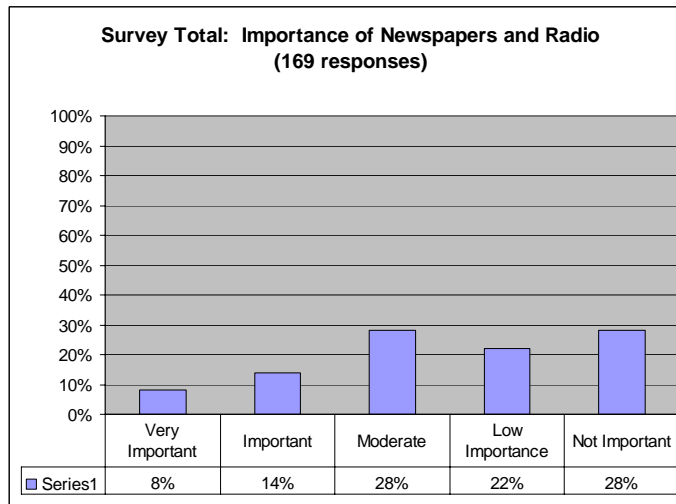
1i. Individual Conversations with School Personnel



1j. Neighboring Parents

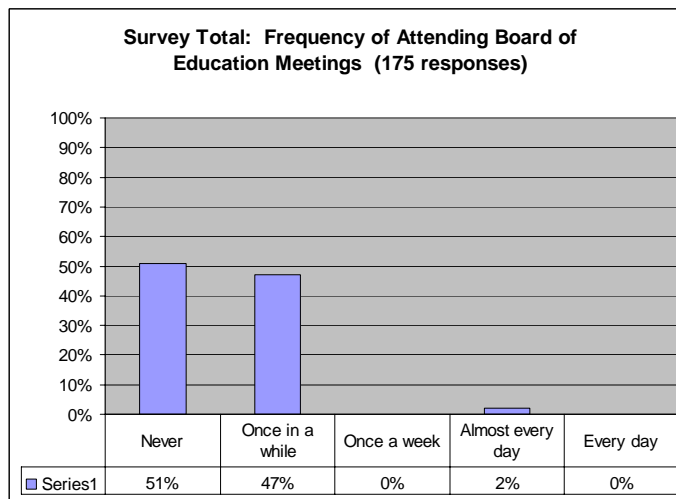


1k. Newspapers and Radio



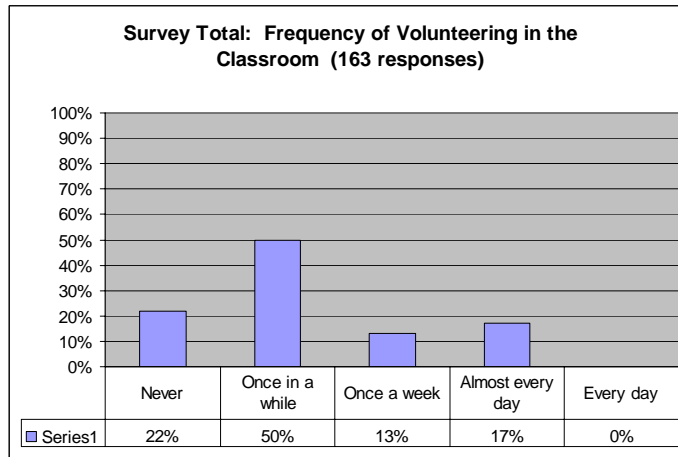
2. How often do you participate in school/district activities?

2a. Attending Board of Education Meetings

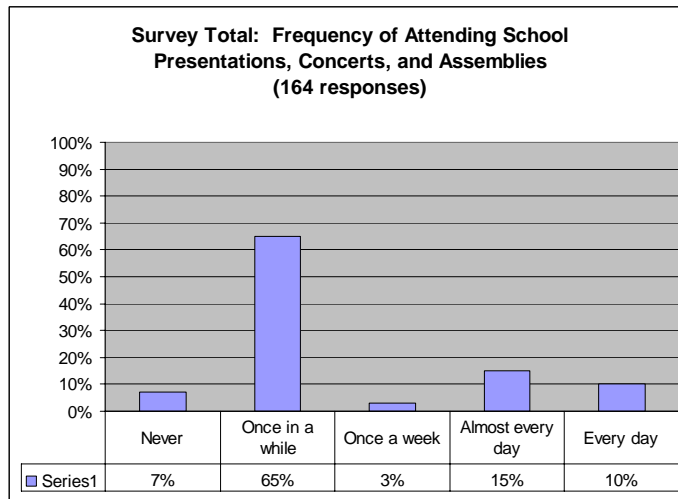


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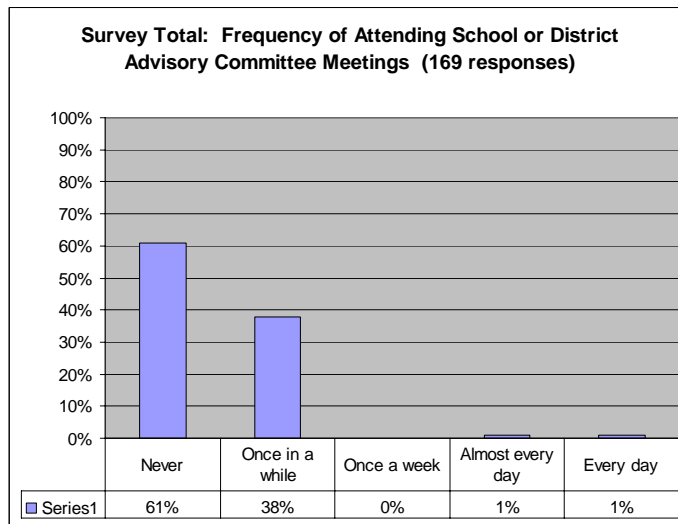
2b. Volunteering in the Classroom



2c. Attending School Presentations/Concerts/Assemblies

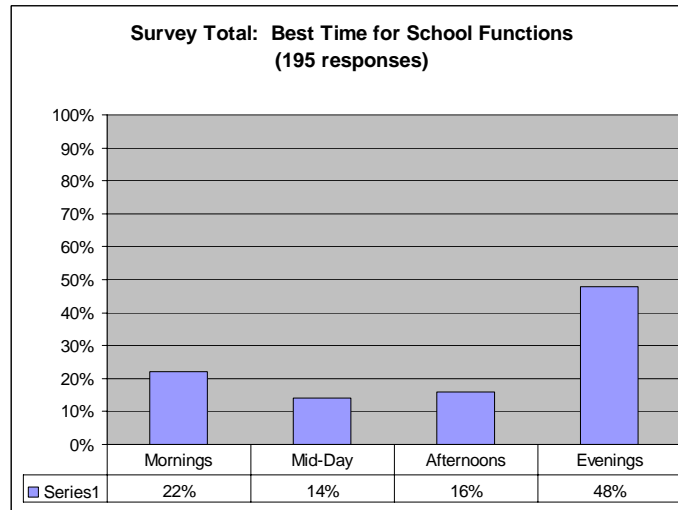


2d. Attending School/District Advisory Committee Meetings



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3. What time of day is best for you to attend/participate in school activities?



Parent Comments: The following is a summary of the comments and suggestions provided by individuals who completed the survey.

Concerning communication with parents and the community:

- I am very happy so far with the level of communication and hopefully it will continue to get better
- Make more use of the email system in lieu of the telephone system
- It would be helpful to have school closing information on the school website
- Need more regular communication from the special instruction teachers. How can parents help more.
- Have cameras in the school so parents could log on and see their children
- I think you have worked very hard to reach out to and include all parents in the functions of the school and our children's programs
- Use less paper to communicate with parents. Use the email system. School wastes too much paper.
- I found the neighborhood meetings helpful and informative last year.
- I think the school to parent communication is exceptional. I wouldn't change a thing.
- Need to make the school offices more friendly
- More emails from teachers to parents
- Board should answer questions from the public during their meetings. Need for more honesty.
- Schedule earlier parent teacher conferences
- The school does its best in many ways to keep families informed. Parents have to read what is sent home.
- More communication between parents and teachers at the middle school
- Have conferences earlier in the school year and longer than ten minutes.
- Reserve the phone message system for emergency functions not for the PTA
- Teachers should share lesson plans with parents two months in advance.
- Add spring parent teacher conferences
- We are incredibly happy. I admire the fact that you reach out to the parents and value our input.
- Communication is fine. No need to increase. Sometimes too many flyers come home.
- Identify a designated mail carrier per family to bring home school mail
- Expand on the use of email to parents
- Board minutes should be up to date on the website
- Update the website more frequently
- Webpage should be updated more regularly and include information about dances and clubs

Conclusions: The following are preliminary conclusions are based on data received. As noted, information from the surveys will be shared throughout the school system. Additional conclusions and actions will be made following discussions with the Board of Education, faculty and advisory committees.

1. Review the use of the computerized phone system for non-emergency functions.
2. Consider expanding the use of the email system to communicate with parents.
3. Continue to monitor the district's webpage to ensure the timely posting of information for parents.
4. Review the scheduling of parent/teacher conferences.