



TO: School Board Members

FROM: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent

DATE: May 18, 2026

SUBJECT: Presentation of 2025-2026 Student, Family, Staff, and SEL Survey Results

BACKGROUND

Each year, School District 197 gathers feedback from students, families, and staff to better understand the experience people are having in our schools. These surveys provide important information about what is working well, what people value most, and where we should continue to strengthen our practices.

At the May 18th board meeting, administration will provide a presentation summarizing key themes from the 2025-2026 family, staff, student, and student social-emotional learning survey data. The presentation will focus on high-level findings across respondent groups, including areas of strength and areas for continued improvement.

Because the presentation will be shared during the meeting rather than included in the advance packet, this background document is intended to provide board members with a brief overview of the topic and the major themes that will be discussed.

Survey Sources Included

The presentation will draw from the following survey sources:

- Family survey data
- Staff survey data
- Main student survey data
- Student social-emotional learning survey data

The survey instruments vary by respondent group and grade level, so the presentation will focus on broad themes and carefully selected metrics rather than attempting to compare every item directly across surveys.

Overall Message

The survey results show a strong foundation across the district. Families, students, and staff point to caring relationships, student support, belonging, learning, and opportunity as important strengths. The data also provide direction for continued improvement, especially around consistency of student support, student engagement, useful feedback for staff, and support for staff in meeting individual student needs.

A central theme across the data is that relationships are a clear district strength. Families highlight caring staff and student support. Students name belonging, friendship, adult support, and learning as important parts of their school experience. Staff identify collaboration, student-centered purpose, and professional growth as strengths.

High-Level Takeaways

- **Families report strong and improving experiences.**

Family survey results show high levels of welcome, safety, happiness, support, and challenge. Families also identified caring staff, individual student support, academic learning, and future readiness as major strengths in their open-ended comments.

At the same time, families asked the district to keep strengthening many of those same areas, including academic challenge, individual student support, future readiness, and communication. This is best understood as a consistency message: families value the district's core work and want those strengths to be experienced consistently across schools, classrooms, and levels.

- **Students highlight support, belonging, learning, and opportunity.**

Student survey results show that students value relationships, belonging, adult support, and opportunities to connect with school. Elementary students reported strong positive responses around teacher support, care, and expectations. In grades 6-12, students identified belonging, inclusion, activities and future opportunity, and class engagement as important parts of their experience.

A key area for continued attention is student engagement. Student feedback suggests that learning is strongest when it feels interesting, relevant, appropriately challenging, and connected to students' lives and futures.

- **Staff are centered on students and connected to one another.**

Staff survey results show strong positive responses around respectful relationships between staff and students, belonging, school climate, and inclusive practices. In open-ended responses, staff most often highlighted relationships, collaboration, collegial support, student-centered purpose, and professional growth.

Staff also identified areas where continued support would help them do their best work. Two themes will be highlighted in the presentation: strengthening useful feedback for staff and supporting staff in meeting individual student needs. These themes connect directly to the district's broader goals around instruction, student support, and continuous improvement.

- **SEL data adds a student support lens.**

The student SEL survey provides additional insight into student skills, support, and classroom experience. The results suggest that many students report a strong base of social-emotional skills and support, while also continuing to build consistency and confidence.

When students described what helps them feel supported, their responses formed a practical picture of what strong classroom support looks like: adults explain clearly, help is available when students are stuck, students experience flexibility when needed, and classrooms feel respectful, manageable, and supportive.

Strengths to Celebrate

The presentation will highlight several strengths that emerged across the survey results:

- 1. Strong relationships across the district**

Families, students, and staff all point to relationships as a key strength. Families highlight caring staff and student support. Students name adult support, belonging, and friendship as important parts of school. Staff identify collaboration, collegial support, and student-centered purpose as strengths.

- 2. Positive and improving family experience**

Family survey results show strong levels of welcome, safety, happiness, support, and challenge, with improvement across comparable scaled items from the prior year.

- 3. Student support and belonging**

Students identify adult support, peer connection, belonging, and opportunities as important parts of their school experience. Elementary students report especially strong teacher support, care, and expectations.

- 4. Staff commitment to students and colleagues**

Staff responses show strong relationships with students and colleagues, along with a clear sense of student-centered purpose and professional commitment.

- 5. A strong foundation for continued growth**

Across the surveys, the district has a strong foundation to build from. The most consistent message is not that the district needs to start over, but that we should continue making the best parts of the District 197 experience more consistent for every student, family, and staff member.

Areas to Keep Strengthening

The presentation will also identify several areas for continued growth:

- 1. Make student support more consistent**

Continue strengthening adult connections, academic support, and follow-through, so more students experience strong support every day.

- 2. Make learning more engaging and relevant**

Continue building classrooms that students find interesting, appropriately challenging, and connected to their lives and futures.

- 3. Strengthen useful feedback for staff**

Continue improving feedback systems, so staff receive timely, actionable information that supports reflection, growth, and instructional improvement.

- 4. Support staff in meeting individual student needs**

Continue strengthening systems, collaboration, and support practices that help staff respond well to the range of student needs.

Additional details, data highlights, and commentary will be shared during the board presentation on May 18th. The presentation will include selected metrics, high-level themes from open-ended responses, and a summary of what the district is celebrating and what it will continue to strengthen.

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

For informational purposes only. No resolution needed.