Crosslake Community School District Satisfaction Survey Analysis

Executive Director Report to Board

Executive Summary

Our comprehensive stakeholder survey captured feedback from 193 respondents across three key groups: 31 parents/guardians, 130 students (45 Online School, 85 Seat-Based School), and 32 staff members. This robust response rate has provided valuable validation of current district initiatives while revealing alignment between community needs and our strategic direction. The data strongly supports our ongoing compensation overhaul, extracurricular expansion planning with our leadership team, and the urgent need for our new tri-directional communication protocol and committee restructure.

Survey Findings Validate Current Strategic Initiatives

Compensation Overhaul Confirmation

The survey data strongly validates our district-wide compensation review:

Staff Feedback Highlights: • Multiple mentions of compensation concerns, particularly for paraprofessionals • One staff member noted: "I know it was noted 2.5 years we had a bump, but I nearly been here for 20 years" • Support staff specifically requesting "pay increase for paras" and "enhancing paraprofessional compensation" • General satisfaction with recent pay increase approval for teachers, with staff noting this addressed their primary concern

Board Implication: Our comprehensive compensation analysis is addressing a real and documented need. The compensation overhaul timeline is progressing as planned, with the final components scheduled for Board first reading today, June 16th, 2025.

Technology Infrastructure Overhaul Validation

Survey feedback provides strong support for our comprehensive technology infrastructure overhaul:

Platform Consolidation Urgency: • Parents frustrated with dual Canvas/Edgenuity system: "I DO NOT like the Canvas portion and it is hard for students to navigate back and forth with assignments. It is hard on the parent side as we cannot see Canvas on our end" • Students

requesting streamlined approach: "all classes only on edgenuity would be cool" • Staff noting technology barriers: "Everything was always blocked and it would take days to get it unblocked so I ended up skipping the assignments"

Additional Technology Needs: • Updated laptops for staff providing virtual IEP services • Better science lab equipment and digital resources • Reliable internet access for rural students

Strategic Alignment: Our planned July/August Board report on technology infrastructure directly addresses these documented community needs. Directors Bierce and Klang, working with Technology Manager Will Lyke and Technology Coordinator Jennifer Miller, are coordinating comprehensive improvements across both programs to ensure seamless technology integration and user experience.

Extracurricular Planning Alignment

Our comprehensive leadership team's extracurricular expansion initiative directly addresses top community priorities. Director of Online Learning Rose Bierce, Director of Seat-based Learning Annette Klang, Online Engagement Coordinator Mitch Swaggert, and Seat-based Engagement Coordinator Heidi O'Brien are collaborating on this expansion:

Parent Requests Include: • Sports programs (recreational and competitive) • Arts programming (music, visual arts, cooking classes) • STEM and technology offerings • Environmental education expansion • After-school and summer programming

Parent feedback emphasized the desire for expansion while maintaining CCS's core identity: "That it is seat based and on the smaller side. I would like to see 9-12 seat based even if its a separate building. I'd rather send my kids to crosslake and graduate from there then have to send them to pequot or somewhere else."

Student Voices: • Consistent requests across all grade levels for more activities • High school students specifically requesting career exploration and real-world skill development • Strong interest in virtual clubs and optional in-person activities for online students

Students consistently praised the supportive environment: "The teachers are great and mitch swaggert is great as well" and "Unlike being in public school, is actually implemented and respected by my teachers. I don't feel outcast for personal reasons here, I feel very welcomed and wanted which is a nice change."

Strategic Opportunity: The survey provides clear direction for our collaborative leadership team's planning process, with Rose, Annette, Mitch, and Heidi positioned to address specific program needs across both schools.

Communication Protocol Urgency

Survey feedback directly supports our tri-directional communication overhaul:

Documented Communication Gaps: • Parents: "Earlier notice on events and schedules, most event notifications are only given like a week or less in advance" • Staff: "Last-minute changes are difficult" and concerns about "rush to add new district-level positions without detailed audit of needs" • Multiple requests for "clear structure, accountability, transparency" • Parents wanting more volunteer opportunities with adequate notice

Committee Structure Validation: Staff feedback shows desire for meaningful input: "Teacher representation on the board" and "input is not welcomed or appreciated" in some cases. However, staff also noted positive leadership approaches: "The leadership team approaches decisions as a group. Input is welcomed and valued. When possible, we seek input from full staff."

Critical Infrastructure and Operational Needs

Transportation Efficiency Crisis

Survey data reveals transportation as a significant barrier to student experience and family satisfaction:

Documented Concerns: • Bus ride times of 1.5 hours cited as "too long for little people" • Parents stating this affects their children's daily well-being • Potential enrollment impact as families consider other options

Immediate Need: Transportation route analysis and efficiency improvements to reduce student commute times.

High School Programming Retention Risk

The survey reveals urgent need for seat-based high school programming to prevent enrollment loss:

Family Intentions: • Multiple parents indicating they will send children to other districts for high school • Preference for seat-based over online high school options • Risk of losing families after 8th grade completion

Strategic Implication: High school expansion may be critical for long-term enrollment sustainability and community retention.

Professional Development and Staff Support Gaps

Survey identified specific professional development needs requiring immediate attention:

Priority Training Areas: • Neurodivergent learner strategies: "Strategies for teaching neurodivergent learners" • Social-emotional learning: "Mental health support" and "SEL

strategies" • Behavior intervention techniques: "Behavior interventions" and "MTSS" • Technology integration: "AI, mental health support" and digital literacy

Staff Culture Accountability: • Concerns about "staff cliques" and "unprofessional behavior needs to be addressed" • Need for consistent professional standards: "All staff being team players and complying to the same curriculums, programs, and directives"

Survey Validation of Three-Prong Pathway Vision

The survey data strongly validates my district-wide vision for three distinct graduation pathways, ensuring all CCS students can graduate as CCS seniors regardless of their school:

Workforce Ready Pathway

Student Interest: Multiple high school students indicated "Direct entry to workforce" as their post-graduation plan **Parent Alignment:** Parents requesting "real life classes" and practical skills preparation **Staff Recognition:** Staff noted need for "more real life classes and those made for students that learn best by real life situations"

One parent specifically highlighted this need: "I really want to see more real life classes and those made for students that learn best by real life situations. For example, Consumer Math or Construction Math for those interested in the trades."

Career Technical Pathway

Community Demand: Strong student interest in technical/trade school preparation **Skill Development:** Requests for courses like "Consumer Math," "Construction Math," and hands-on learning **Industry Connection:** Survey shows appetite for "Remote internship/work experience programs"

College Bound Pathway

Academic Preparation: High demand for "More advance placement/college credit courses" **Support Systems:** Students and parents requesting enhanced college preparatory resources **Dual Enrollment:** Recognition of PSEO success and desire for expansion

A parent emphasized the importance of multiple pathways: "A full spectrum of choices other than college. The pros and cons for trade work and looking for what is available verses the subjective following your heart with no real aim or plan."

Student Mental Health and Counseling Support

Survey responses indicate need for enhanced mental health resources across all pathways:

Student Needs: • Requests for counseling support and mental health resources • Need for transition courses and post-graduation planning support • Enhanced social-emotional learning integration

Current Support Infrastructure: • School-specific social workers and counselors provide individualized support • District-wide licensed mental health practitioners accessible to all CCS students and staff via Regroup • Comprehensive mental health services spanning both programs

Strategic Integration: Directors Bierce and Klang, working with our school social workers and counselors, are well-positioned to develop pathway-specific programming that serves students across both schools, reinforcing our "one district, multiple pathways" approach while ensuring robust mental health support throughout all graduation pathways.

Current Initiative Momentum

What's Working Well

Our survey confirms several strategic strengths to build upon:

1. **Mission Alignment** - Strong community support for environmental literacy focus. As one parent noted: "What do you value most about CCS as a district? Teaching is based on the Child and not a one size fits all."

2. **Leadership Effectiveness** - Generally positive feedback on administrative leadership across programs. Staff consistently praised leadership: "Rose is a fantastic leader, and I value having her support. Her leadership has guided the online team through many changes this year."

3. **Culture Development** - Staff consistently praise collaborative, supportive working relationships: "The staff are so supportive. When called upon and needed, we all rally to uplift each other, professionally and personally."

4. **Student Safety** - Universal agreement on safe, supportive learning environments. Parents emphasized: "The closeness between staff and students. From the bus drivers, front office, lunch ladies, Mr bud, teachers, helpers and everyone in between. For a student to be known and recognized on a first name basis is truly amazing."

Strategic Gaps Being Addressed

The survey identifies issues our current initiatives are designed to solve:

1. **Communication Inconsistencies** → Tri-directional protocol implementation

2. **Compensation Equity** → District-wide compensation overhaul (Board first reading today)
3. **Technology Infrastructure** → Comprehensive overhaul with Board report planned July/August 2025
4. **Limited Programming** → Collaborative leadership team extracurricular expansion
5. **Pathway Development** → Three-prong graduation pathway implementation
6. **Transportation Efficiency** → Route analysis and optimization needed
7. **Professional Development** → Targeted training in identified priority areas

Implementation Recommendations

Immediate Actions (Next 90 Days)

1. Communication Protocol Pilot • Implement minimum 2-week advance notice for all events • Test tri-directional feedback loops with select committees • Measure improvement in staff and parent satisfaction • Create volunteer opportunity calendar with advance planning

2. Compensation Implementation • Board first reading scheduled for today's meeting • Communicate implementation timeline to staff following Board approval • Acknowledge survey validation of compensation priorities

3. Technology Infrastructure Update • Continue comprehensive overhaul planning with Technology Manager Will Lyke and Technology Coordinator Jennifer Miller • Address Canvas/Edgenuity consolidation as priority • Prepare detailed Board report for July/August presentation • Address website blocking issues immediately

4. Transportation Analysis • Conduct comprehensive route efficiency study • Explore options to reduce student commute times • Consider cost-benefit analysis of additional routes

5. Extracurricular Planning Acceleration • Directors Bierce and Klang coordinate with Engagement Coordinators Swaggert and O'Brien • Use survey data to prioritize cross-program offerings • Develop pathway-specific programming aligned with three-prong vision

Strategic Integration (Next 6 months)

1. Committee Restructure Rollout • Use survey feedback to refine committee purposes • Implement tri-directional communication training • Establish clear escalation and feedback protocols

2. Resource Allocation Alignment • Prioritize technology platform consolidation (highest impact need) • Address transportation efficiency improvements • Plan facility needs for extracurricular expansion

3. Three-Prong Pathway Development • Formalize workforce ready, career technical, and college bound tracks • Ensure programming serves all CCS students regardless of school

enrollment • Establish clear pathway requirements and student support systems • Integrate mental health and counseling support across all pathways

4. Professional Development Implementation • Launch neurodivergent learner training for all staff • Implement social-emotional learning professional development • Address staff accountability and professional standards • Provide technology integration training

5. High School Programming Feasibility • Conduct comprehensive analysis of seat-based high school demand • Explore partnership opportunities and facility requirements • Develop timeline for potential implementation

Board Considerations

Budget Implications

Survey findings support current budget priorities while identifying new investment needs: • Compensation overhaul nearing completion (Board action today) • Technology infrastructure overhaul underway (summer 2025 report) • Transportation efficiency improvements require analysis and potential investment • Three-prong pathway development requires strategic investment • Extracurricular programming expansion across both schools • Professional development funding for identified priority areas

Staff appreciation for recent improvements was evident: "Our pay increase, which was recently approved, will help a lot of teachers! The pay was the only negative I had before." However, ongoing needs remain: "Enhancing paraprofessional compensation would not only recognize their invaluable contributions but also help retain experienced staff."

Policy Development Needs

1. **Communication Standards** - Formalize advance notice requirements and volunteer opportunity protocols
2. **Committee Charter Updates** - Reflect tri-directional communication model
3. **Compensation Framework** - Ensure ongoing equity monitoring
4. **Program Expansion Guidelines** - Establish criteria for new offerings
5. **Technology Use Policies** - Address platform consolidation and access issues
6. **Transportation Efficiency Standards** - Establish maximum commute time guidelines
7. **Professional Development Requirements** - Mandate training in identified priority areas

Success Metrics

Moving forward, we should measure: • Communication satisfaction improvements • Staff retention rates post-compensation overhaul • Student participation in new extracurricular offerings • Parent engagement levels with new notification protocols • Technology platform user satisfaction scores • Transportation efficiency improvements (reduced commute times) •

Professional development completion rates and effectiveness • High school pathway planning and retention rates

Conclusion

This survey data provides powerful validation that our current strategic initiatives address real community needs and concerns, while also revealing additional critical areas requiring immediate attention. The alignment between stakeholder feedback and our ongoing work on compensation, communication, and programming expansion demonstrates strong strategic direction, enhanced by newly identified priorities in transportation, technology consolidation, and professional development.

Key Message: We are on the right track with strong momentum, but the survey has illuminated additional urgent needs that require immediate action alongside our planned initiatives. Our challenge now is execution across multiple fronts - delivering on planned improvements while addressing newly identified critical gaps in transportation, technology integration, and staff development.

The depth of community appreciation was captured in one parent's reflection: "My child enrolled in Crosslake Community School Online the last 2 months of her senior year. The staff she worked with welcomed her with open arms. They supported her, guided her and most of genuinely cared about her success. She was reluctant about getting started and drug her feet all the way to the end but with the dedication of the staff she made it. They never gave up on her and because of that she is a proud graduate of Crosslake Community School and I am a proud parent of a graduate of Crosslake Community School."

However, we must also heed concerns about operational challenges that could impact this positive culture. Transportation inefficiencies, technology platform confusion, and professional development gaps all threaten our ability to maintain the personalized, supportive environment that defines CCS.

The board should view this data as both confirmation of our strategic direction and a call to expand our scope of immediate action to address critical operational needs that support our mission and values.