



**Prospect Heights School District 23
Community Relations Committee
Information Item**

Date: February 19, 2021

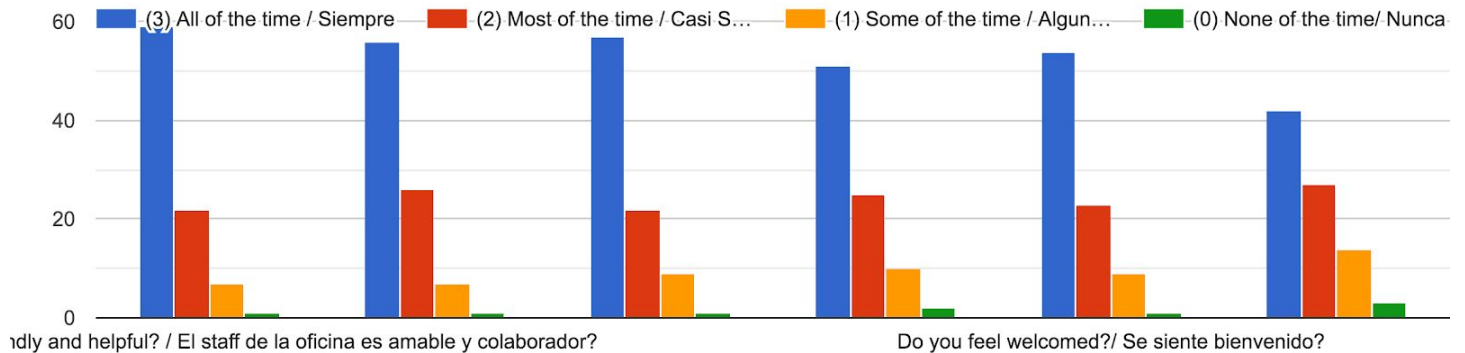
Subject: Family Engagement Survey Summary

Prepared by: Dr. Amy M. Zaher, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

This is a summary of the responses to a Family Engagement Survey that was sent to the families via school newsletters in January of 2021. Duplicate items and responses with identifying information were removed. There were a total of ninety-one responses which is only 6% of our population, so we must refrain from claiming broad generalizations from such a small sample size. .

We are, however, discussing this survey with our leadership team and considering the themes and trends presented within the data.

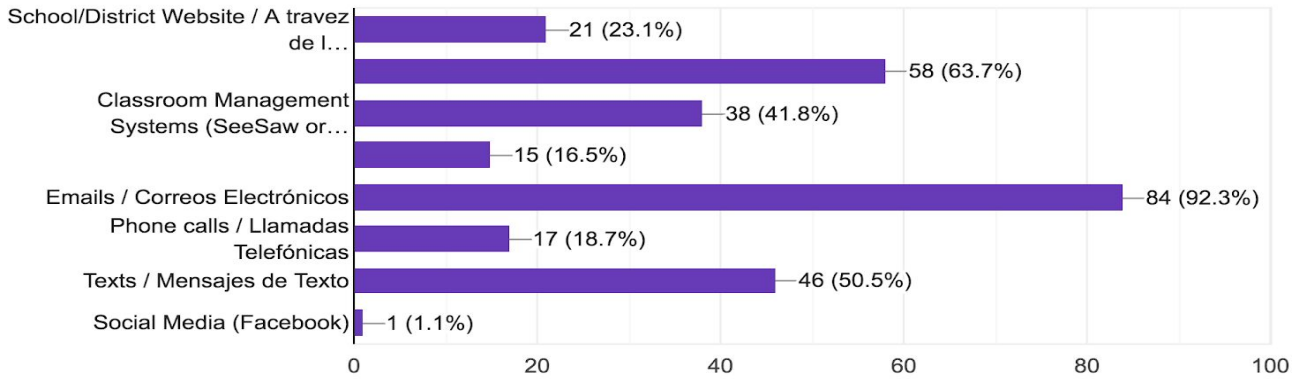
When you contact the school, / Cuando usted necesita hablar a la escuela,



Questions connected to graphs above:

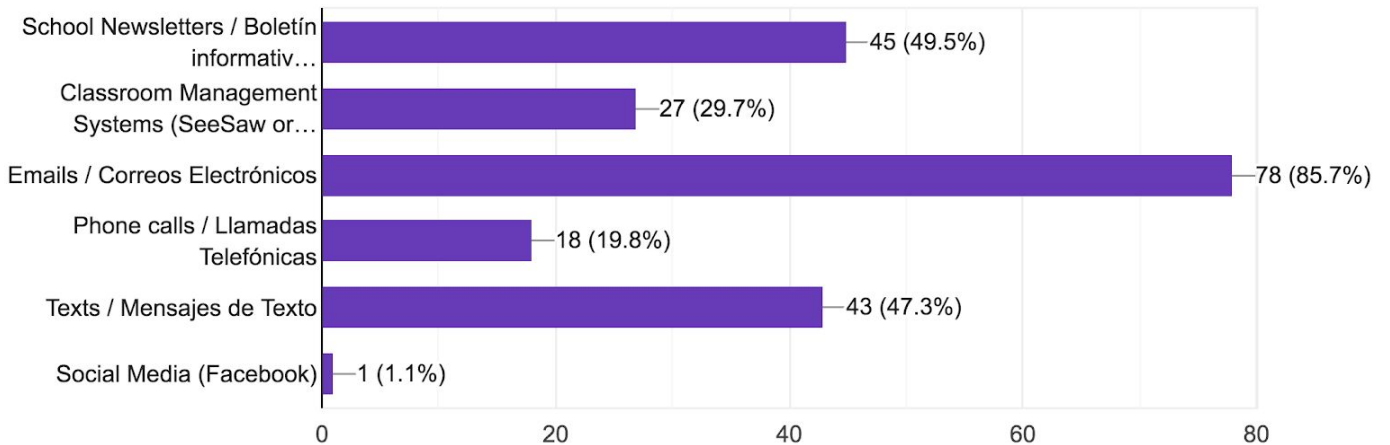
Is the office staff friendly and helpful?	Are the teachers easy to talk to?	Are the administrators easy to talk to?	Do you feel comfortable sharing your concerns with the school leadership?	Do you feel welcomed?	Do you feel your voice is valued?
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What is the best way the school communicates information with your family? (check all that apply).
 Cúal es la mejor manera que la escuela se comunica...ted y su familia? (Marque todas las que apliquen)
 91 responses



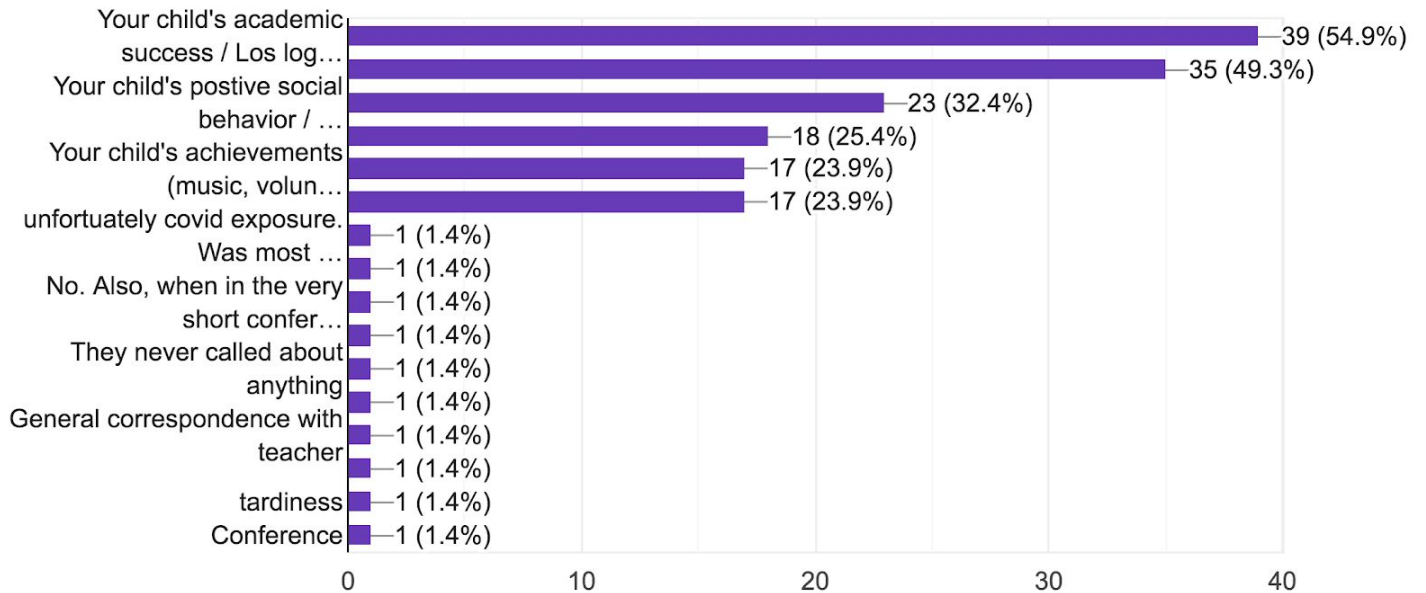
How do you prefer to receive information from the school? / Como prefiere recibir información de parte de la escuela?

91 responses

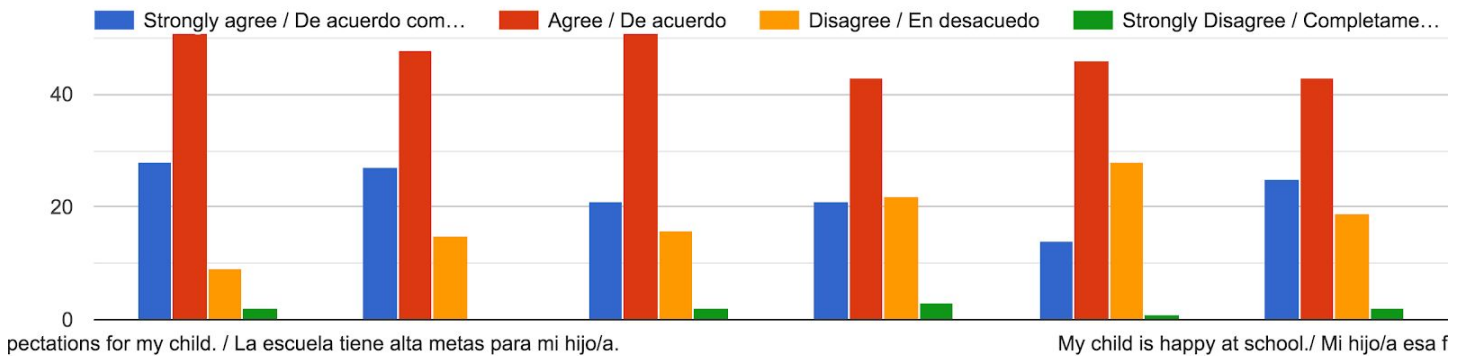


In the past 12 months, were you contacted by someone from the school regarding any of the following? (choose all that apply) / En los últimos ...ción a lo siguiente? (Marque todas las que apliquen)

71 responses



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? / Esta de acuerdo con los siguientes declaraciones?



Questions connected to graphs above:

The school has high expectations for my child.	The school clearly communicates those expectations to me and my children.	My child is learning what they need to know to be successful after graduating.	My child receives assistance when they are having difficulty academically or socially.	The curriculum and activities keep my child interested and motivated.	My child is happy at school.
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What else would you like to tell us about communications from the school to home?

One of the big takeaways from this question is the need for us to streamline our communications from school to home. Many parents are getting multiple emails to read on Fridays. Below are some of the comments:

- *I know this is a lot of work, but it would be nice to see a grade level newsletter monthly or Quarterly to see all of the great things being done by teachers and students.*
- *There's a lot of emails. Can it be consolidated to one a week or all to be released on the same day? Reminders can be sent via text or social media, not email*
- *When information is buried in a video, it is difficult to find. If a response is requested, it should be listed in the heading of the email.*
- *If there is something to respond to like a survey etc. I would like to see it pointed out in the principal's message. I look there first for key information and often skim the rest of the newsletter especially because I have a child at each of the other schools so I'm getting three newsletters every Friday.*
- *There is not much communicated about curriculum and learning objectives from teacher to parent.*
- *On a Friday afternoon, I will receive up to 10 emails from the schools/district. One newsletter from each principal, one newsletter from the district, Seesaw emails from updated work, seesaw emails from each teacher with their newsletter and information about the week. While I appreciate the communication, this is TOO MUCH and leads to me skimming most of the information. If there is key information, it should be bullet-pointed in the principal's message.*
- *The seesaw messaging is overwhelming and needs to be streamlined.*
- *Even though we've signed up for emails multiple times, they do not reach us*
- *Sometimes it seems that important details are deep within a newsletter and not front and center.*
- *For a survey like this and others, send them separately so the focus is on taking a survey. It's more clear.*
- *Newsletters are thorough, and very well organized!*
- *It's hard to keep track of all the different messages for my children in different classes. Email would be easiest as some in SeeSaw and some in email and some on newsletters - it is a lot to track.*
- *I think it's vital that the newsletter becomes one with dedicated pages to each school. With multiple children, we receive too many different emails, seesaw messages, etc. For being such a small district, we should be on one page together instead of multiple messages that get lost. I have heard this from many families since being in the district.*
- *Sometimes information is tricky to find. You need to be constantly checking the superintendent's email, principals email, and teachers email to make sure you're not missing something*
- *Would appreciate communications from the teachers on what is working/ not working.*
- *This communication should have been sent separately rather than in the newsletter. I only saw it because someone forwarded it to me. Newsletters should be informative. Any action needed by students or parents should be its own communication*

What else would you like to tell us about contact regarding your child's successes and areas of growth?

In this section, parents would appreciate hearing both positive and constructive feedback. Communication between the parents and teacher are extremely important during this time. Below are some of the comments:

- *I think the kids and teachers have done a great job being agile and adaptive to being at home, at school, or combo! Kudos to all!!*
- *Frequent feedback from teachers regarding kids' achievements and struggles.*
- *N/A. I'm very happy with the level of communication we receive from Eisenhower and Betsy Ross.*
- *teacher conferences were helpful*
- *There has not been a lot of effort-even the report card comment was extremely short and generic. I'd like to see more specific information regarding my child's strengths and areas to improve.*
- *Never contacted when a positive change is made. They only reach out with something negative to report. It gets really old -not impressed with the administration at all-concerns brought to the attention several times and nothing was ever done.*

- *I haven't been contacted really but I feel like everything is fine. I want to know when there is a concern.*
- *My sixth grader is still learning, even though she has been at home for most of the year. I can tell the teachers are working hard!*
- *My children are doing their best.*
- *Distance/hybrid learning brought up a lot of anxiety. Lack of feedback, willingness to work on unclear/ unlearned questions, rushing through the program has an impact on the learning experience as well as motivation.*
- *Your team is amazing*
- *I am worried that in middle school, my child has not progressed academically.*
- *I would like to hear a little more info regarding growth in academic areas. Conferences are so short in time and I want to know if my child is still making the expected growth even with these unusual circumstances.*
- *It just seems that at this age, the virtual learning environment is extremely difficult and I don't think it's totally indicative of what our kids can do.*
- *This has been a challenging year for X and our family and everyone at Ross has been wonderful to work with. We couldn't have asked for a better team and feel so supported through this unknown journey we're on. Thank you for being there for our family!*
- *District and teachers are doing the best job they can do, despite the circumstances. Thank you to Sullivan for sending my son a few items for his birthday. Was a nice touch.*
- *A private conversation between parents and teachers. Some information, especially if a child is struggling, may discourage a child if they have to listen to all the details as the teacher and parents discuss.*

What activities would you like to see ADDED to our Distance Learning 2.0 Plan?

There were several comments about Flex Mondays and the need for more social interaction. The feedback from this question are below:

- *Monday's seem to be too light. Teacher planning is very important, but could it be an asynchronous day with some expectation? Having every other Monday completely free for the kids does not seem necessary. What is the reason for it? Can the teachers have a work plan for the kids that day that is independent if they need the whole day to plan?*
- *More social emotional learning opportunities. More socialization with peers.*
- *I love the break out sessions with students grouped together so that the kids have time to socialize, collaborate, and learn to be good team members and leaders!*
- *Social emotional assemblies or check in's. I haven't seen one social worker "come to class" to do a group presentation. Teachers should get extra stipends for all the extra work they do in the "classroom."*
- *Add Mondays back (drop flex Mondays)*
- *Add more in-school days along with an outdoor recess break (at middle school and Sullivan), and more movement breaks when in person.*
- *More paper and pencil activities, there is no reason math needs to be turned in on the iPad, taking a picture of ones homework that is done in the book or on paper would be beneficial to use hand and eye coordination to reinforce learning, (6th grade especially)*
- *More after-school activities*
- *more updated info- the information he just received info from 2004 on the top ten cities and top producers of coal- they are all wrong - please keep teachers updated and keep things current! Not so much iPad work*
- *Mandatory weekly one on one check -ins (few minutes) about school work with each teacher*
- *As many social and relationship-building activities as you can fit in. I think you're doing a marvelous job, but I know how MacArthur usually focuses heavily on school pride and school spirit. It's not easy to do over a screen, but if you have opportunities, seize the moment!*
- *More activities and projects. I haven't really seen any hands-on projects (excluding kinder) for my kids to do this year and share with their class. More small group work with their peers.*
- *Independent work assignments could build in formal classroom setting. My first grader doesn't understand the importance of assignments and doesn't like to do it. If they can do it together with the teachers and other students, it would be more beneficial.*
- *More social interaction between children, maybe small breakout groups.*
- *While remote- or hybrid- Required one on one touch points with the teacher and the student. Perhaps every two weeks? Doesn't have to be long meeting. But important.*

- *I would love to continue to see more opportunities for small group work/collaboration and opportunities to socialize. I understand there are issues of monitoring being virtual, but the kids need time to just talk and make friends.*
- *Math small group support*
- *I think the kids would really benefit from more social interaction with their peers. It's already difficult enough for them without being in person together, so I think it would be good for them to have some time to socialize even for a few minutes.*
- *My child is not challenged in the current curriculum. Anything that is an open-ended challenge (i.e. an engineering task, a creativity challenge, etc.) would be great.*
- *More time for open discussion for the kids.*
- *A break from routine a little more often*
- *Core plus literacy should be added. more engagement for children that excel academically*
- *A social period that's not quite lunch for them to just hang out?*
- *Paper books! We have plenty at home but less screen time is always appreciated. Can you send home the materials students are reading in small groups with their teachers?*
- *Any activity/ club that enhances academic knowledge*

What activities from our Distance Learning 2.0 Plan would you like us to CONTINUE in our physical classrooms? Why?

In summary, the use of Seesaw and other communication tools were beneficial. Parents had many suggestions on what we should continue. See the comments below:

- *I think the breakout groups have been a great experience for the kids. I think they handle those "meetings" better than some of the employees at my company!*
- *continue to post assignments to Seesaw, a great real time way to keep track of what my kids are doing in class.*
- *Use of Epic*
- *Mrs.X has a secret student of the day and this is such a great idea and so exciting for my child. Also, having extra time in class to complete assigned work has been beneficial.*
- *For EC, the SeeSaw updates are fantastic to see what they are working on in class. Movement activities would be great since they were a huge challenge for this grade during distance learning. My son would not always participate when distance learning. So if there was in person instruction/help for movement break, that would be beneficial. The in person therapy sessions have been helpful for my son vs. all remote since he doesn't always want to participate during the class meeting*
- *The Kindergarten singing and some of the attempts for fun*
- *Pet therapy in school. Some of the kids happiest moments were when they saw another student/teachers pet come on screen. Many schools have therapy animals. We could too.*
- *virtual conferences*
- *Anything reiterating positive self-confidence. I hear Both my kids repeat words/phrases that are positive daily.*
- *Continue to use Seesaw to communicate with parents about students assignments*
- *One on one check in's and a period that's allowed for questions, catch up*
- *Our children love that they can see everything in writing, not just from listening. Clear instructions and tutorials are key. Also, patience and repetition if need be, without scolding child.*
- *I like that the children's work is all posted online so that we can view it. I prefer less paper coming home. Also like the aspect of having the work available if school is missed for whatever reason, that we can just pick up and get it done.*
- *Recess*
- *I like seeing some of the assignments posted to Seesaw so that I can know some of what is be accomplished by my child in class.*
- *I really like the use of SeeSaw as a formative assessment platform. I like seeing artifacts of what my children are learning/doing, and I know they like getting quick feedback from their teachers and then being able to make corrections, learn from their mistakes, and resubmit. It's a nice connection to school for parents and has the ability to be a powerful formative assessment tool for teachers and students.*
- *continue to utilize seesaw to submit some work so that parents can see what students are doing*

- *Specials have been wonderful!*
- *Choice boards are a good structural way for the students except when used for Flex Days.*
- *I really like that the teacher keeps the kids engaged through the meets for most., if not all, of the day. While I don't love how much screen time my child is experiencing, it is helpful to have him held responsible throughout the day. I also like the Breakout groups so the kids can keep up their skills of group work.*
- *More time in the classroom*
- *Having the same set of kids in class all day together was a good transition into 6th grade.*
- *More play, even if socially distanced.*
- *Math and Seesaw: I enjoy seeing what my child is learning. It allows me to continue conversations and build in real life learning experiences that are connected to school (whenever possible)*
- *Math club*
- *Structure, clear schedules, home communication. Love the opportunity for virtual meetings.*

What activities would you like to see DROPPED from our Distance Learning 2.0 Plan? Why?

In this section, many commented about Flex Mondays and scheduling suggestions. The comments from this question are below:

- *For EC, the daily meetings is torture since my child usually does not want to participate in the activity 90% of the time. I would rather do the activities on our own and upload pictures/videos to SeeSaw or have a touch base meeting with the teacher/therapists without trying to have my son participate.*
- *For 2nd grade, we are pretty happy with the curriculum.*
- *Day off Mondays for teacher planning. The kids should have something 5 days a week. There's no reason they should get a day off. There has to be a plan for them that is academic and held accountable for.*
- *Flex Days. I have a student who keeps up with his work, so Flex Days end up being a wash. If we are going to keep Flex Days new work should be introduced for those students who are not behind.*
- *If in person, limit screen time as much as possible.*
- *Drop Flex Mondays!!*
- *I can't think of anything that needs to be dropped.*
- *You're doing the best you can in light of the situation.*
- *I feel like specials are really hard to do over the computer. Not sure if they should be all together dropped but my kids don't seem to be getting too much out of it.*
- *Flex Days...they are very difficult for younger children*
- *5th grade clarinet sectionals were moved from 3:15 to 2:45. Not fair for students that are scheduled to take the bus home that is scheduled to arrived at 3:19 pm.*
- *There are a significant number of breaks that I cannot keep track of and make sure my children are returning in time. I get the need for breaks, but unless I am sitting next to all 3 of my kids and listening to the class I have no idea why or if they are really on break and when they should go back. A quick post in SeeSaw could help with this as I would get an alert and know when to send them back.*
- *Less focus on how the kids are sitting virtually*
- *Role call. This is a waste of 15min of the day and can easily be achieved by the teacher looking on zoom.*
- *All Good!*

What activities would you like us to change in either our physical classrooms or remote classrooms? Why?

There were some comments in this section about the need to keep up with the routine and suggestions about specials. The comments are below:

- *For 2nd grade, we are pretty happy with the routine.*
- *For EC, no daily meeting for remote classrooms. Even when in person, prefer not to meet on the flex day or make the meeting optional. Maybe change it to a 2x/week touchbase meeting instead. My child just really has difficulty participating in these meetings.*
- *Less screen time for students who are in person*
- *My son said clubs or options to do something different or of interest they can choose from on a certain day of the week would be a nice switch up.*

- *Eliminating some screen time if at all possible. My son has had more headaches than usual. At the same time, I get it! I am working remote and am a training manager teaching remotely as well!*
- *drop flex Mondays*
- *It would be nice for students to have virtual guest speakers related to their subjects.*
- *There needs to be more differentiation/modifications. Not all students learn the same.*
- *In person - movement not totally in 1 classroom. Mask break (s), maybe outdoors.*
- *Just keep up with the authentic student interaction.*
- *Our son was disappointed that his gym class is on days that he is remote. He says he never gets to leave his classroom. Give those kids a movement break in the gym.*
- *Maybe adding more art lessons or clubs for elementary and middle schools. Maybe some type of hands-on learning.*
- *None that I can think of*
- *All Good*
- *On Monday Flex Days I feel that the students have equal to more work compared to a normal school day. It is not any easier on the kids or the parents. Not sure at all what the difference is. Kids should be done no later than lunch time and not have ALL day for the choice board. Some kids take longer than others. (Second grade)*
- *Very rarely do I see or hear positive things when teachers do Zoom breakout rooms. Kids seem to not turn their mics on, stay silent or goof off. My child is left feeling frustrated and it's not helping learning. I know the reason is to try and get the kids some much needed social interaction, but it's not working. Kids need to be physically in school.*
- *Focus more on core subjects until back to in-person*
- *Gym needs more movement*
- *More play, even if socially distanced.*

What else would you like to tell us about learning at our schools?

Many parents responded positively on the job we have been doing throughout the course of this school year.

The responses are below:

- *Our kids' experience in school is just so important to how they view school for the future years.*
- *The Curriculum Night presentation and materials were fantastic. We especially loved how Betsy Ross put together their materials for meet the teachers and I think this should be available every year.*
- *In 2nd grade, they take FastBridge tests (Math and Reading) but I don't really know how they did or what areas they need improvement. Is that something I should know and provide additional assistance with at home or does the teacher handle this and no additional assistance needed from parents?*
- *You are doing a great job! ** one thing I wonder is when the kids eat lunch at school at their desks, will they have a desk shield? Some more information on that would be great. Thank you!*
- *Kids need to be in the classroom.*
- *Thank you for all of your hard work. Teaching and learning has been seamless!! I do feel for every teacher that has to take attendance multiple times a day or tell kids to turn on their cameras. I wish they all had an assistant to do all of that stuff on the side, so that they could continue on with the class. (I've had to do that with my classes with adults in a corporate setting).*
- *Teachers, students, and parents are working hard in difficult times.*
- *Please give an option for full time Kindergarten. The parent expectation is too high. I'm not a teacher and feel I am responsible for teaching my child after the 2.5 hour school day. If you want my child to learn all of these objectives, have her learn them all in the classroom with a professional. Also, there have been more evaluations on my child then there have been months of school so far. Way too many. Kindergartners have never taken tests before and now mine has taken 5.*
- *I understand the difficulties all of us are dealing with, parents & teachers. It's just not easy with the kids not in the classroom.*
- *The amount of thoughtful planning that has gone into keeping our kids safe and engaged is evident. Thank you so much!*

- *This is a district issue. Bus scheduling is awful. Kids shouldn't be on buses more than 45 minutes. Check your routes from First Student. Also, drop off and dismissal logistics are difficult if you have kids at both Ross and Sullivan.*
- *Most faculty have done an exceptional job. A few teachers could work on how they approach children.*
- *The children should be going 5 days a week like other schools in the area.*
- *My daughter used to LOVE school but doesn't really like it much anymore- but is thrilled to go back to hybrid.*
- *Teachers are great this year with online learning. They are doing a great job.*
- *They need to do more to reinforce concepts. advanced instructions for those who can go faster.*
- *Eisenhower has been the hardest with the expectations of parents during school hours. If the kids can't read the instructions because they are still learning to read, then they need to hear them virtually - maybe record them via audio or video.*
- *Home school been working well for my kids*
- *Thank you for all you do as we realize this is challenging for all. We hope the kids are back full time soon!*
- *We appreciate the creativity and hard work that is going into making this school year work!*
- *School needs some physical improvements - for example, girls bathroom toilet seats are rusted; period supplies are not stocked.*
- *District 23, you're doing awesome!*