

Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District Parents' and Guardians' Survey Summary ~ Spring, 2014

Participation

- 60 surveys were taken
 - 7 additional parents were generally satisfied with the school and did not complete the survey.
- In 2012/13, 51 surveys were taken.
- In 2011/12, 70 surveys were taken
- 1 response = 2%, 2 responses = 4%, and so on...

Survey Form and Process

- Each year, the survey is changed slightly. This year's survey included a new question to gather parents' responses to our new report card.
- The survey had 35 statements with 5 response choices: "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", "Strongly Disagree", and "Neutral/No Opinion". It had nine statements or questions with written response (comments) boxes for a total of 44 items.
- The statements covered six broad areas: school environment, academic environment, academic performance, school-parent communication, and overall.
- In addition to notes home, and email follow-up efforts, the survey completion time was extended, and additional emails were sent to encourage participation. Teachers also spoke to parents at conference time and encouraged them to participate.

Response Analysis

The following percentage data reflect the survey results from the 60 surveys taken. Consider that another 7 parents/guardians were generally satisfied overall. In general, statement "Strongly Agree/Agree" responses of 80% or higher or "Strongly Disagree/Disagree" responses of 20% or lower indicate no significant issue (see attached sheet "Analyzing Data"). However, the staff will be looking at every area of the survey to determine where improvements can be made, whether or not the "Strongly Disagree/Disagree" responses were more than 20%.

- Of the 35 statements, only one, regarding homework ("The homework adequately supports my child's learning), had a negative response of more than 20% (22% Disagree, 4% Strongly Disagree). Most of the negative responses to this statement were from parents of students in grades 3-6. Answers overall show that a significant majority of parents feel the school is doing well over all.
- Out of the first 16 general school questions, the two with the lowest percentage of agreement were: Number 13, "The homework adequately supports my child's learning"; and Number 10, "Recesses are appropriately supervised", with 16% of parents saying they disagree. Last year, the statement, "Recesses are appropriately supervised", received a "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" rating of 17%. In 2011/12, the negative response was 23%. Although we still need to improve in this area, it is heartening to see that we are making positive progress and seeing improvement.
- Overall, the responses with the highest percentage of "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" and receiving no negative responses were:
 - "The Principal/Superintendent is welcoming and helpful" (70% "Strongly Agree" and 28% "Agree, 2% Neutral or Without Opinion)
 - "My child's classroom experience includes community building" (56% "Strongly Agree", 47% "Agree", and 8% "Neutral or Without Opinion")
 - "The custodial/grounds staff maintains the school well" (53% "Strongly Agree" and 47% "Agree")
 - "My questions and concerns are addressed promptly by the teacher" (56% "Strongly Agree" and 44% "Agree").
 - "My questions and concerns are addressed promptly by the Principal/Superintendent" (63% Strongly Agree, 33% Agree, 4% Neutral or Without Opinion)
 - "I like to receive email communications (announcements, notices, etc.) from the school" (72% Strongly Agree, 26% Agree, 2% Neutral or Without Opinion)

- The questions specifically regarding academic progress also had high agreement rates with a majority of the parents saying they “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” that their child has made significant academic progress in all areas:
 - Reading (96%),
 - Writing/Spelling (92%),
 - Math (90%)
 - Science (98%),
 - Social Studies (92%)
 - Music, Dance, and the Performing Arts (94%)
 - Visual Arts (88%-2% Neutral or Without Opinion)
 - Physical Education (92%)
- In past years, Music, Visual Arts, and Study Skills had much higher numbers of “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree”. It’s nice to see improvement and such positive responses in all areas. Only the statement regarding homework received more than 20% negative responses. Since the Spring, 2009 survey results, which showed six statements receiving “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” responses of 20% or more, the number of positive responses has steadily increased over the last few years.

Discussion and Written Comments

The participation rate was higher this year than in 2013. The emails appear to be effective in encouraging people to participate, although we still need more parents to participate. In general, responses were more positive than last year. This assessment is even more positive considering that 7 of the families that responded were generally satisfied with the school and did not wish to complete the survey. This is not reflected in the response numbers above, and makes the results even more impressive.

While no major issue emerged from the statements presented, we clearly have areas in which to improve.

- Teachers will need to meet to discuss how to address the issue of homework. We have tackled this before, but it is clear that we need to work on it again.
- Recess: Although we have seen continual improvement in this area, we need to continue to implement changes, which ensure our students’ safety, happiness, and well-being, and we need to communicate those changes to families.
- 14% of respondents said that they were not aware of the school board’s role in their child’s education. 8% said that they disagree that the board effectively governs the district. We need to work to educate the parent community on the board’s role. There were no negative comments about the board in the comment section, so I cannot say what the negative responses are specifically about.
- We will need to review the report card comments and determine next steps.

A representative sample of the comments:

- School Environment:
 - I think overall the staff and teachers at Bonny Doon School do an excellent job.
 - Wonderful
 - A magical setting and very welcoming to parents and visitors
 - Concerns about students cursing at one another at recess, put downs, and insults.
 - Most of the time, discipline is fair.
 - Not much diversity here.
 - The school has a great small school charm to it.
 - Love it!
 - A little overly managed, would like to see the children have more freedom for individual expression and creativity, especially on the playground.
 - I am pleased with the school environment.
 - Pleasant, clean, and supportive
 - I am so grateful for Bonny Doon School.
 - Seems well supervised.

- Homework:
 - Some “busywork” for homework
 - Homework builds strong character and commitment
 - I just hate homework, but Mrs. ____ sends great projects for them to work on (if there HAS to be homework, I think hers is creative and interesting.
 - I LOVE our teacher, but the homework I could do without. I just want them to play when they get home and relax.
 - More time should be given to writing and re-editing rough drafts and final drafts of papers.
 - If they have homework, it should be more meaningful.
 - I do not feel my child is given enough homework. I have asked for more and received it.
 - Homework is not at an independent level, it is at a frustration level.
 - Challenging assignments, but worthwhile
 - Homework is appropriate in both amount and content
 - Homework should be discrete and not include “Write in your journal 2-3 X per week” and “read X amount per day”. Leave that up to the student and the parents.
 - It’s perfect, no more and no less.

- Academic Environment and Performance:
 - Excellent
 - Fund and nurturing
 - She does a great job challenging different levels of learners in her class.
 - She is such an amazing teacher and really gets all the kids.
 - I do not feel my student has been challenged or motivated this year.
 - Strong academic direction – even at the younger years
 - She was so responsive about helping and checking in about math, to make sure my child understood when she was having trouble.
 - I feel it is a stimulating, well balanced environment where academics are developmentally appropriate.
 - Rich and varied
 - Fun ways to learn-I’m impressed
 - My child feels supported and is given good feedback and encouragement.
 - My child has learned a lot thus far this school year.
 - She really manages to get in a lot and still make it fun. It is an amazing challenge-great job
 - I think they can skate by a little as they get older.
 - There should be more attention given to advanced math and writing skills.
 - More exposure to music and art
 - Music is amazing.
 - My child’s classroom instruction provides strong academic performance, which is evident in her grasp of above level concepts.
 - My daughter has exceeded expectations this school year.
 - More time should be spent on foundation work. Mastery of the lessons seems to be overlooked.
 - I’m happy with how my child is improving.

- School/Parent Communications
 - The teacher contacts us in a timely manner
 - I like receiving emails that keep me updated on the latest school activities.
 - Great communication with the teacher and the school
 - Excellent communication
 - Teacher is very open and responsive.
 - The school does a good job of reaching out to parents. I have never felt ignored or like I was not given sufficient information.
 - I should be made aware of deficiencies before conference time.
 - I was surprised at a conference to learn my child was behind. I wish I knew this ahead of time.

- This has been wonderful the whole time we have been at the school.
 - She doesn't take personal offense when I'm concerned about something. She responds calmly and with consideration to my needs.
 - I am not certain of the board's role – but it is a great experience, so it's okay.
- Technology
 - It is good they are exposed to new technologies, and are excited about learning how to use it.
 - Technology improvements have been well received by my child.
 - I support the use of technology as part of my child's education.
 - The use of tablets has been very helpful.
 - I'm not sure if the technology is always beneficial.
 - I have seen some interesting uses of technology.
 - My child really likes Razz reading.
 - I have no idea.
 - Love it all. My child's experiences seem very appropriate.
 - We do not like use of technology in the classroom, especially in K.
 - I'm glad they have access to computers at school.
- New Report Card:
 - Using numbers instead of letters is very upsetting to our student.
 - It is fine, no dislikes.
 - It is getting better. I think teachers are more comfortable assigning marks.
 - Not a fan.
 - It was a hard transition for my child. He loved the grades.
 - The current report card is terrible!
 - I like it. It seems clear. I like that the sections are broken up to explain what makes up a particular subject's grade.
 - I'm getting used to it...better than letter grades.
 - The report cards are very helpful.
 - It is descriptive.
 - Very thorough, seems in line with the Common Core
 - I personally love it.
 - We like the new report cards.
 - They seem to be clear and work with the new standards.
 - The report card is easily understood and we see no problem with it.
 - I would like to see letter grades. I think it inspires the kids to work harder.
- Any Changes You'd Like to See?:
 - No. Just continued emphasis on safety of the children on campus.
 - I wish there was a junior high and less homework.
 - More advanced programs. I like the afterschool enrichment options.
 - Not at the moment
 - More community use of the facilities
 - I would like the school to look into setting a no homework policy. Whole school discussion about language and insults/putdowns would be a good idea as well.
 - No
 - I would like to see Spanish classes again.
 - Web based access for classrooms to streamline communications and homework assignments.
 - The children should have outdoor recess on rainy days.
 - No mixed grades
 - A male teacher
 - The library is seriously underutilized. Have it accessible all day.
 - More recess and time outside.
 - Different eyes on the playground to help with conflict, foul-play, and boredom are needed.

- More music, more art, more P.E.
- What Do You Like Most?
 - Sense of community, smallness of school and classes
 - Supportive community
 - The staff, the wonderful teachers, the mixed grades...
 - I love the outdoor field trips
 - Dedicated teachers and administrator and staff
 - My child is thriving in this school. He's in a safe environment.
 - Lucky to have so much parent involvement
 - Good teachers
 - Campus, faculty, academic curriculum, music, science, the list is long :)
 - Art, music, small setting, principal
 - Friendly and open to parents and students as well as academically challenging and broad scope in its approach.
 - Clean campus, mostly kinds kids and staff. Attentive, helpful, enthusiastic teacher sand other support staff. My child feels comfortable there.
 - Everything.
 - The staff is friendly and caring.
 - The grounds are beautiful.
 - Diverse programs and a beautiful campus
 - It feels like a supportive community. I like the buddy system.
 - My child feels safe at school.
 - I like the multi-age classrooms, I like the welcoming outdoor spaces and the Life Lab.
 - The size, the campus, and the families. Also, those amazing teachers.
 - The approachability of the administration and staff.
 - The importance of having music, science and P.E. We also like the after school classes that are available.
 - Small and homey yet progressive and sophisticated.
 - Community, pretty campus, responsive sup/principal, the bus
 - The community has a shared goal and from my experience that is refreshing. Everyone involved with the students seems engaged and positive.

Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District **Students' Survey Summary ~ Spring, 2014**

Participation

- 114 surveys were taken (kindergartners did not take the survey this year)
- 52 were boys, 60 were girls
- 60 were K-2, 52 were 3-6

Survey Form and Process

- There was a survey for K-2 and a slightly different survey for 3-6.
- This year's surveys were almost identical to last year's surveys. The wording on two questions was changed slightly for clarity, although the questions essentially remained the same.
- The K-2 survey contained 16 statements with four response choices: "Almost Always", "Sometimes", "No", and "Not sure". The statements covered two broad areas: academics and school environment/conflict resolution.
- The 3-6 survey had 21 statements with four response choices: "Almost Always", "Sometimes", "No", and "Not Sure". The statements covered three broad areas: academics/homework, safety/conflict resolution, and administration.

- All students took the survey on the library computers. Younger students had help from their buddies or from an adult.

Response Analysis

The following percentage data reflect the survey results from the 114 students that answered the survey questions. In general, statement always/almost always responses of 80% or higher or no responses of 20% or lower indicate no significant issue. However, while this is applicable for adults, it is not necessarily so for children who, among other reasons, are not always able to consider these issues in perspective. Regardless, the staff will be looking at every area of the survey to determine where improvements can be made.

K-2 Survey Results

- Most K-2 students responded positively to all the statements, with an overall average of 92.5% responding “Almost Always/Sometimes” to statements 1-15. No statement received a “No” rating of more than 20%. “I like writing” had the most (15%) “No” responses. Every statement had a higher positive response rate than the previous year.
- Number 16, “Students behave properly on the bus”, has shown improvement every year. In 2009, 40% of K-2 students responded negatively. In 2012/13 17% responded negatively, and in 2013/14, only 8% said that students don’t behave on the bus.
- The statements with the most positive responses (more than 90%) were:
 - I feel safe at school .(94%-5% Not Sure)
 - I like science. (95%)
 - I like music. (94%)
 - I like art. (98%)
 - I like P.E. (97%)
 - I like library. (100%)
 - I feel comfortable talking to my teacher when I have a problem. (98%)
 - I know what to do if I see teasing or bullying. (91%)
 - I feel comfortable talking to a yard duty when I have a problem at recess. (91%)
 - I feel comfortable talking to my teacher when I don’t understand the classwork or homework. (97%)
 - I can do most of my homework. (95%)
- Only the statement “I like writing.” Had a negative response rate of more than 10%. These are by far the most positive student results we have had to date.
- Although we will continue to use the survey results to refine our practice, we also have confirmation that our program is working for the vast majority of our students.

3-6 Survey Results

- The majority of 3-6 students (87% on average) responded either “Almost Always” or “Sometimes” on the survey statements. The Statements with the most positive responses (90% or more) were:
 - I feel safe at school. (90%)
 - I know what to do if I see teasing or bullying (96%)
 - I feel comfortable talking to a yard duty when I have a problem at recess. (90%)
 - I know what I am supposed to learn in class. (98%)
 - My teacher has good materials and projects that help me learn. (100%)
 - My teacher talks to me about how I can improve in class. (90%)
 - I feel comfortable talking to my teacher when I don’t understand the classwork or homework. (92%)
 - I know how to review and check my own work. (93%)
 - The technology available to me and my teacher helps me learn. (98%)
- The following statements had a “No” response of 15% or more:
 - Students behave properly on the bus (23% compared to 22% last year)
 - Students who do something wrong are treated fairly by adults. (19%-16% last year)
 - Students are held accountable for their actions and behavior. (15%-5% last year)

- Setting goals for myself helps me do my best work. (18%-21% last year)
- I am given the right amount of homework. (19%-17% last year)
- Homework helps me do better in class. (24%-34%)
- I feel comfortable talking to the principal. (21%-21% last year)

Discussion and Comments

- In general, students responded positively to the school and their personal interactions here. The variability in their responses is to be expected given the differences in ages and the difficulty in considering issues in perspective over the course of a school year.
- The older students are more aware of misbehavior on the bus, as they are usually the ones misbehaving! We have already met to review some changes for next year to continue to improve behavior on the bus. Several years ago, 40% of respondents said that students do not behave on the bus, so although we have a long way to go, we are going in the right direction.
- Each year, homework is an issue for both students and parents. When school reconvenes in the fall, teachers and the superintendent/principal will need to meet to discuss options, including how to communicate the value of homework to parents and students.
- Each year, a number of students report that they think that students who do something wrong are not treated fairly by adults. Although it is not uncommon for a student who does something wrong to be unhappy with consequences, we want all students to feel they are treated fairly. This issue comes up most during lunch recess, where there are several different adults watching over students. The superintendent/principal already spoken with yard supervisors, and we have some ideas for our first meeting of the year in order to talk about all recess issues and develop some strategies to improve students' feeling of safety and fairness.
- Finally, each year about 20% of students say they don't feel comfortable talking to the principal (3-6 grade only). In daily practice, this does not seem accurate. Perhaps when students read the question they think it refers to talking to the principal when they're "in trouble". In any case, we still want all of the students to feel comfortable talking to the principal! We have decided that, next year, teachers are going to send students to the office on a regular basis to: read to the principal, share a special project, a piece of art, or a piece of writing, or anything else the teacher would like the student to share. They will then leave the office with a special pencil or sticker or some other token as well as spend some time have a few positive moments. We would like visits to the principal's office to be routine and positive beginning in TK, so that by the time the students have been here for a while, they will have had very positive interactions experiences in the office.

Actions

- Site Council members reviewed and discussed the results of the survey.
- In the winter of the upcoming year, Site Council members will review the questions and determine what question changes, additions, or deletions should be made.
- Teachers have been given copies of the survey to review.
- All staff members will review the survey results individually and as a group. Together we will determine next steps and put together an action plan.
- Comments about the new report card will be reviewed and discussed by the teachers to determine whether or not changes need to be made.
- The Survey Summary will be posted on the website. Hard copies will be made available in the school office.
- The Survey Summary will be shared at a regularly scheduled school board meeting.
- Actions will be shared and updated in the monthly school newsletters.
- The following years' responses will be reviewed to note progress in identified areas.
- Comments made in all areas will be reviewed to determine whether or not follow up is needed.
- If a survey respondent mentions significant issues with an individual who works at the school, the superintendent/principal will meet with that individual and work to remediate the issues or take other appropriate action.