



GPPSS Community Satisfaction Survey Summary 2020-21 School Year

The Grosse Pointe Public School System uses a variety of methods to gather community feedback and allow for citizens to express ideas about school system programs and services.

Among those, according to Board Policy 9251.01, the Superintendent shall conduct an Annual Community Survey in order to receive a comprehensive view of how the district is perceived and the level of satisfaction among its consumers and taxpayers. All individual responses remain confidential, but summary results are shared publicly and used for school improvement planning. Responses may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Please keep in mind this year's results are the first community survey since the March 2020 COVID shutdown and include last year as all schools and families navigated the pandemic.

Demographics

Participation was strong this year with 668 respondents (the last annual survey prior to COVID had 518 respondents). To put that in perspective, we had approximately 7,000 students and 4,000 households at the end of last year. We also had a significant increase in participation of community members without children currently in the school system (18% compared to 8% last year). Of the respondents, 82% were parents with school-aged children. Of the respondents with school-aged children, 84% have them in the GPPSS, 7% in GPPSS and another school, 9% in a private or parochial school or homeschooling. Parents were asked to answer based on the experience of one child, and to specify which school their answers were based upon. All schools and grades were represented (highest response rates were from South 26%, North 13%, OneGP Virtual (8%), Brownell and Defer (each 7%), Pierce and Monteith (each 6%), and the rest between 3-4%). The largest group of respondents fell within the 40-49 age category (37%), followed by 50-59 (26%), then 30-39 (20%). Of those completing the survey, mothers represented 72% (76% in prior survey) with fathers 16%, community members without children currently in school 5%, mother and father together 5%.

Grading the District

When asked to rate the schools using the traditional A, B, C, D, F scale, this is the percentage that earned an A or B in each category (previous years' scores are provided for comparison) for preparing students to:

Category	A or B in 2020-21	A or B in 2018	A or B in 2017	A or B in 2016
Read	67%	85%	85%	85%
Write	61%	78%	78%	78%
Understand Science	62%	80%	80%	80%
Understand Social Studies	60%	79%	79%	79%
Understand Basic Math	69%	82%	82%	82%
Appreciate Fine/Performing Arts	60%	77%	77%	77%
Think	52%	69%	69%	69%
Be Healthy/Physically Fit	51%	67%	67%	67%

For this next section, comparison data from the prior survey is provided in parentheses. Again, a large percentage of respondents (about a third) marked not applicable (NA) when asked to grade how well our school is preparing students to:

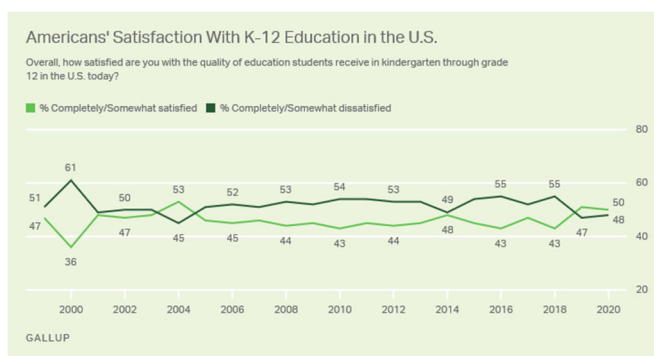
- be accepted at the college of their choice - 42% A or B, 30% NA (45% A or B, 41% NA), or
- succeed at the college of their choice - 42% A or B, 30% NA (43% A or B, 41% NA).

Over half or 61% said they could not respond/NA regarding a grade for how the district is serving special education students (20% A or B), and 43% said NA for struggling learners (24% A or B). When asked about gifted learners, 40% gave an A or B, and 35% said NA (49% gave an A or B last survey). Scores were similar

for “the child in the middle” – 40% (46%) gave an A or B, 24% said NA. Thirty percent (40% last year) gave a grade of A or B for how well we’re preparing students for skills needed for the world of work, 18% gave a C, and 26% marked NA. when asked how well GPPSS is preparing students to learn about jobs and careers, 28% said N/A, 25% (33%) gave an A or B, and 22% gave GPPSS a C (21%). For preparing students to use technology, 61% gave the district an A or B (68%), and 19% (18%) gave a C.

Overall, 61% said all things considered they would give the school system a grade of A or B (81% in 2018, 83% in 2017), and 54% said the educational program at our school is excellent or good (17% acceptable, 22% needs some improvement, 7% poor). For comparison, here is a chart from the annual GALLUP poll.

Source: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/317852/parents-satisfaction-child-education-slips.aspx>



Finances

The district’s grade for how well the district handles taxpayer dollars to support students and programs was as follows: 32% A or B, 23% C (56% A or B, 23% C in 2018; 54% A or B, 20% C in 2017; 65% A or B, 20% C in 2016). However, when questions later in the survey instrument asked about finance, there was a large percentage (often one third) that marked neutral. Over half or 57% (63% last year) said they know where to go on the district website www.gpschools.org to find budget information (click the [Transparency Report](#) pop-up). Over a quarter 27% (34% in prior survey) said the district does a good job of prioritizing building and repair projects (33% neutral, 40% disagree/strongly disagree). Sixty-seven percent (68%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “understanding the budget process is important to me,” (26% neutral). Fifty-seven percent (60%) said they would like to know more about school finance in general (27% neutral, 15% disagreed). Thirty-two percent (39% last year) agree that the district provides adequate communication with the community about building and repair projects (41% disagreed, 26% neutral). The district will continue to work with the local press to increase coverage, and use Town Halls, social media and weekly emails to share budget and building project updates, in addition to the monthly updates at televised and [Livestreamed board meetings](#) (www.gpschools.org – click School Board – Watch the Meeting), the district newsletter inserted in the fall and spring full run issue of the Grosse Pointe News that goes to all homes, and the [postings updated regularly on the website](#).

Communication

When asked to rate the schools on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree, this is the percentage that earned “agree” or “strongly agree” in each communication category (prior year scores provided in parenthesis for comparison):

- I feel reasonably well informed about how well my child is doing in school – 68% (78%)
- Parent-teacher conferences are informative – 67% (71%)
- Report cards help me understand how well my child is doing in school – 58% (70%)
- *New this year* – Schoology helps me understand how well my child is doing in school – 40%
- School staff welcomes questions and suggestions from parents – 60% (70%)
- The principal keeps parents well informed – 63% (63%)
- The principal encourages parent involvement – 53% (63%)
- My child’s academic achievements are recognized at school – 48% (64%)

Please keep in mind the impact of COVID on participation and recognition opportunities. The most disagree or strongly disagree responses to a statement in that section were to the statement, “teachers regularly give suggestions for improvement about my child’s school work”– 46% agreed or strongly agreed (44%), 25% (28%) were neutral, and 29% (28%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Discipline and Environment

Again, the majority of responses were positive in this category, with:

- 68% (71%) agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement, “I believe that my child is safe at school,”
- 62% (69%) agreeing/strongly agreeing that students at our school exhibit good citizenship, and
- 50% (59%) saying the discipline policy is fair (30% neutral on the policy).

There were additional interesting neutral responses. For example, a question about bullying typically does not elicit a neutral response, however 43% (35% last year) marked **neutral** toward the statement “bullying is dealt with effectively,” and 25% (22%) marked neutral toward the statement “my child knows how to resolve conflicts with others” (63% agreed). To put these in perspective, here is the percentage that agreed or strongly agreed with each statement:

- My child is treated with respect by members of the school staff – 76% (82%)
- Most students are considerate and well mannered – 68% (70%)
- My child is learning the skills needed to work with others – 63% (72%)
- Most students at our school accept people with different beliefs and values – 61% (68%)
- My child is learning about other countries and cultures – 56% (64%)

Learning Environment

Responses in this section covered communication, management, and buildings and grounds. Seventy-eight percent (83% last year) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child experiences success at school, 71% (78%) said their child usually enjoys going to school, and 74% (79%) said they felt that school staff care about their child. **Even in a pandemic, 70% (74% last year) agreed/strongly agreed that their child’s teacher is meeting their child’s learning needs, and 81% (84%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Most teachers at my child’s school are dedicated and enthusiastic.”**

Regarding buildings and grounds, 69% (82%) agreed/strongly agreed the school is clean and well maintained. Sixty-one percent (73%) said the school is well run (20% neutral). Forty percent said school lunch is acceptable, 20% said good or excellent. Parents also requested a calendar question be asked and knowing the calendar is part of the teacher contract, if asked about a preference for future calendars, 32% (49% last year) would reduce Midwinter break in February, 40% (36% last year) would maintain the recent break pattern if possible, and 10% said to seek a State waiver to start before Labor Day.

Overall, 59% (77%) said they feel the school’s educational program is “just about right” (30% too easy, 5% too difficult). Fifty-seven percent (65%) said the number of after school activities is just about right, and again 4% said too high. There are two areas of significant change in responses the district will be exploring more deeply. Seventy-eight percent (75%) agreed/strongly agreed with the statement “I always had confidence in the GPPSS,” but only 27% (65% prior survey, 68% in 2017, 74% in 2016) agreed/strongly agreed with “I continue to have confidence in the GPPSS” (20% neutral, 24% disagree, 29% strongly disagree). Similarly, when responding to the statement: when other parents say things about our school, what they say is

- More positive 27% (65% last survey)
- More negative 53% (19% last survey)

When asked what is the **single biggest strength of our SCHOOL**, there were 304 answers written in, and these were the most common responses:

- Overwhelmingly, people list the teachers as the greatest strength (often mentioning staff and principals as well).
- Sense of community/community engagement with neighborhood schools

- Curriculum and educational opportunities
- Reputation

When asked what is the **one thing you would change about our SCHOOL**, there were 298 responses, and while many were singletons, these were the most common responses:

- Many complaints about progressive teaching/woke ideology/politically correct culture
- Conversely, there were also complaints about needing more diversity, and more training for Race Equity Inclusion, etc.
- More training and staff for social/emotional health was also mentioned
- Better board/administration
- More creative learning/hands-on
- Better supports for gifted and talented
- Better cafeteria food/lunches
- Pick/up drop off, traffic and pedestrian safety
- Some asked to move fifth grade back to elementary school
- Enhanced communication
- Better discipline for poor behavior/bullying
- Smaller class sizes
- Many unique responses that were very specific - no chocolate milk, shouldn't have closed schools, wanting half-day kindergarten, more clubs, too much homework.
- Complaints about particular staff members are directed to their supervisor or human resources

When asked what is the **single biggest strength of our DISTRICT**, of the 302 answers, the most common responses were:

- Teachers
- Funding/tax dollars
- Involved parents/community members
- Historic reputation/former reputation
- Walkable schools
- College prep

When asked what is the **one thing you would change about our DISTRICT**, there were 313 responses, and while many were again singletons, these were the most common responses:

- Administration leadership
- Board of Education (BOE)
- Listen to the teachers - they are the experts
- Move fifth grade back to elementary school
- Need more transparency
- Better special education programs
- Lead instead of follow - more innovation. Have a plan - be proactive not reactive
- More diversity
- Address students' social and emotional health.
- Don't push "leftist" ideology
- Need smaller class sizes
- More opportunities for gifted learners
- Do not split Monteith to two middle schools and Brownell to two high schools
- Change leadership

At the end, respondents were offered a chance to share anything they had not yet shared through the survey instrument. Many of the 239 responses were unique. Some said the district has gone downhill, or we are no

longer an elite district. Others said we are losing too many students. Many expressed anger toward the BOE and administration, often for lack of transparency and communication. Bad teacher morale was cited by some. There was a lot of disappointment about how COVID was handled - both by not going back to school sooner and criticism for not being safe enough. Many also shared problems with reconfiguration – they were upset that schools closed and they felt promises were not kept regarding more access to programs/electives.

Two-way communication -- both between the district and school community, and between teachers and parents -- will remain a priority as we continue to work toward our vision of One GP: where *everyone* learns, *every* day. Listening sessions will continue this fall, and the district is also starting the Strategic Planning process. Also, recent social media posts since the school year started, and parent input at back to school nights are showing a positive trend in perception. Again, the district will continue to monitor these.