

Portage Schools Survey Finds Continued Satisfaction; Parents Identify Areas to Increase Academic Achievement

Portage Public School parents responding to the fall annual parent survey say they are “very satisfied” with the academic reputation of the District, receive sufficient information and customer response from the District, and prioritized academic offerings to increase student readiness for college and the workplace.

Survey results were the same or higher than last year’s survey.

“We greatly value this feedback from our parents as we strive for continuous improvement in our academic achievement and service to the community, and also look forward to input from our community-wide survey in January,” said Superintendent Marsha Wells.

Academics

70% were “very satisfied” and 25% “somewhat satisfied” with the academic reputation of the District.

92% say it is “very important” and 8% “somewhat important” for the District to prepare students to be competitive in a global economy and society.

Responding to ways for “graduates to have every competitive edge possible in a high-stakes world,” the following areas were the top three picks for the District to focus on as it prepares students for the future:

- Maintain small elementary class size
- Expand attention given to individual student needs
- Expand initiatives that focus on communicating verbally and in writing

Information & Customer Service

71% say they “often” receive sufficient information from the District, while 23% say “sometimes” and 5% “rarely.”

87% say “yes” to having contact information they need, while 10% says “sometimes” and 3% do not.

82% say they “often” receive a timely response when contacting the District, with 17% reporting “sometimes” and 1% “rarely.”

Background

A total of 3,711 surveys were sent randomly to Portage School parents during November, with an 18.5% response rate (our highest return rate). Last year’s survey was sent out in May to 3,000 parents with a 16% response rate.

See results with last year comparisons.

2010 Fall Parent Survey:

3,711 sent with 18.5% response rate

1. Do you receive sufficient information from the school district?

Often: 71% | Sometimes 23% | Rarely 5%

2. Do you have the information you need to contact someone when you have a question?

Yes: 87% | Sometimes: 10% | No: 3%

3. Is the response you receive:

A. Timely: Often: 82% | Sometimes: 17% | Rarely: 1%

B. Helpful: Often: 81% | Sometimes: 18% | Rarely: 1%

4. How satisfied are you with the academic reputation of Portage Schools?

Very satisfied: 70% | Somewhat satisfied: 25% | Neutral: 4% | Somewhat dissatisfied: 1% | Very dissatisfied: 0%

5. How important is it for PPS to prepare students to be competitive in a global economy and society?

Very important: 92% | Somewhat important: 8% | Not very important: 0% | Not important at all: 0%

6. We want our graduates to have every competitive edge possible in a high-stakes world.

As we prepare our students for the future, we need your thoughts on prioritizing these areas:

The District should (please check your top 3 responses): Listed from the top in highest order:

Maintain small elementary class size (392)

Expand attention given to individual student needs (297)

Expand initiatives that focus on communicating, both verbally and in writing (297)

Expand the variety of challenging curriculum at all grade levels (273)

Expand initiatives that focus on Math and Science (256)

Expand elementary and middle school world language (198)

Increase the use of student laptop computers and other technology (139):

at the: Elementary level (23), Middle School level (10), High School level (14), All three levels (84)

Increase Advanced Placement courses at high school level (96)

Expand the International Baccalaureate Program from the current high school level down (74)

at the: Middle School level (30), Elementary level (4), Both middle and elementary levels (30)

Portage Public Schools

8111 S. Westnedge, Portage, Michigan 49002
www.portageps.org

News Release

Contact Tom Vance: 323-5167 (cell 998-7869)
tvance@portageps.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Survey Finds Continued Parent Satisfaction With Communications and Customer Service

PORTAGE, Mich. -- Parents from Portage Public Schools responding to the annual Parent Communications & Customer Service Survey say they receive sufficient information from the District, have the contacts they need to obtain information, and receive timely and helpful responses from school offices.

A total of 71% “often” had sufficient information from the District, with 24% “sometimes,” and 5% “rarely.” Meanwhile, 85% responded “yes” to having the contact information they needed, while 12% said “sometimes,” and 3% “no.” Commenting on timely and helpful responses from their contacts at the schools or District offices, 78% said this occurred “often,” 20% “sometimes,” and 2% “rarely.”

When asked for the two most important sources of school information, parents listed “school newsletter” and “District/school web site” (with counts of 401 and 263 respectively) followed by the *Kalamazoo/Portage Gazette* and “other” (including teacher/classroom newsletters and e-mail messages, flyers, and PTO information).

A total of 3,000 surveys were sent out during May, with a 16% return rate (2,000 surveys sent home at staggered grade levels throughout the eight elementary schools, and 1,000 mailed to randomly-selected homes of middle school and high school families). Last year’s survey, also consisted of 3,000 surveys, had a 12% response rate.

Findings were down slightly from the 2009 survey: 77% saying “often” and 20% “sometimes” for receiving sufficient information; 88% responding “yes” and 10% “sometimes” to having necessary contact information; and 85% saying “often” and 14% “sometimes” on timely and helpful assistance.

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