



Parent and Guardian Survey 2016-2017 – Executive Summary

June 2017

What follows is a summary of the main findings from the 2016-2017 Patrick Henry School of Science and Arts Parent and Guardian Survey. The questions on this survey covered a range of topics including curriculum, school culture, communication, leadership, parental involvement, facilities and resources, and overall satisfaction with the school.

The survey was sent as an email link (with a paper survey version for those without email on record) to approximately 260 families. 129 surveys were completed for a response rate of 50%. Accounting for families with multiple children attending PHSSA that completed the survey, the parents or guardians of 155 students total are represented in these results. By grade level the parents of 36 Kindergartens are represented, 38 1st graders, 25 2nd graders, 31 3rd graders, 12 4th graders and 12 5th graders. Also worth noting, 10% of the families that responded were completing their 6th year at Patrick Henry, 4% were finishing their 5th year, 14% were finishing their 4th year, 14% were finishing their 3rd year, and 31% were finishing their 2nd year and 27% were finishing their 1st year.

The response rate for this survey is relatively strong for this type of survey, however it is important that extreme caution is used when making any inferences from these findings. The “margin of error” is very wide and no evaluative decisions about teachers, school staff, or programs should be made from these results. That said, there is still a lot of valuable information in these results that reflect a wide range of parent perspectives. The school community should use these survey results not to draw any conclusions, but rather to raise further questions and spark critical discussions about the strengths and weaknesses of our school.

Key findings

- **On Choosing Patrick Henry** – When parents were asked to indicate the importance of various reasons for choosing the school, the following reasons came out on top
 - 92% identified *the proposed curriculum* as “important” or “very important”
 - 90% identified *outdoor classrooms and activities* as “important” or “very important”
 - 89% identified *the diversity of the student body* as “important” or “very important”
 - 79% identified *was dissatisfied with my child’s zoned school* as “important” or “very important”
 - 78% identified *the PHSSA mission statement* as “important” or “very important”
- **General Satisfaction with the Curriculum** – Many items on the survey showed an overall satisfaction with the curriculum of the school. Some highlights include:
 - Most parents either “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that they were “happy with the quality” of the following subjects: Music (92%), Art (97%), Physical Education (95%), and Environmental Education (95%).
 - 84% of parents believed that their son or daughter was “being taught at a level that realizes his/her potential.”
 - 99% of parents agreed that the school promotes “environmental awareness” and 95% that it promotes “social responsibility.”
- **Concerns about Curriculum** – With other items related to curriculum, there were was a significant percentage of the parent population that voiced concern. For example:
 - Only 65% were satisfied or very satisfied with the student teacher ratio.

- 31% of the parents thought that classes did not spend enough time in the park and other outdoor spaces.
- 35% felt there was too much emphasis on preparation for standardized testing such as SOLs and PALs.
- 70% felt there was just the right amount of homework, 85% felt the homework was appropriately challenging, but 38% felt that it was only “somewhat connected” or “not at all connected” to what is being taught in the classroom.
- **School Communication** – When asked about different levels of school communication:
 - 81% were satisfied with level of feedback about the child’s academic performance, and 86% were satisfied with the overall quality of communication with the teacher. These are both increases from the previous school year.
 - The percentage of parents that felt positively about the responsiveness of other school staff (87%) and the resolution of questions and concerns (89%) both increased from the prior year.
 - In the overall rating of how the school communicates with parents and guardians, 25% found it “excellent,” 48% found it “good.”
- **Opinions on Discipline** – 92% of the parents felt that “behavioral expectations are clear;” and 81% agree that “consequences are clear and administered consistently.” This is an improvement from last years results.
- **Improved Satisfaction with School Lunches** – For families that participated in the school lunch program, 88% of parents were satisfied with the nutritional quality of the school meals, and 84% were satisfied with the variety and tastiness of the food. These are both significant increases from the prior year.
- **Intersession** – 80% of parents were satisfied with the quality of Patrick Henry’s intersession programs; a slight decrease from last year.
- **Parental Involvement** – 85% indicated that they were “involved” or “very involved” in the school. 99% said they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the level of opportunities for involvement. This was a significant increase from last year.
- **Overall Experience** – Several questions were asked to capture parents overall feelings about the school. In those, a number of the items were generally positive. For example:
 - 97% believed there is a strong sense of community at the school (up from 88%).
 - 96% believed their child is proud to be a Patrick Henry student (up slightly from 94%).
 - 98% agreed that their child had made friends at the school (up slightly from 97%).
 - 92% said their child is happy is to go to school each day (up slightly from 90%).
 - 88% of parents indicated that the school had met their expectations.
 - When asked if they would recommend the school to other parents, 88% said they would “recommend it” or “strongly recommend it,” These numbers are significantly higher than the prior year results.
- **Mixed Opinions about Meeting the Mission** – Although many parents felt that the school was meeting its mission “completely” (28%) or “to a large extent” (44%), others felt that it was only meeting it “somewhat” (23%), or “a little” (5%). These numbers are an improvement from the prior year.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact the Patrick Henry Board of Directors.