

GPPSS Community Satisfaction Survey Summary 2021-22 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.

Demographics

Participation was strong this year with 779 (668 respondents last year). 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 (29% compared to 18% last year and only 8% in 2019). Of the respondents, 71% were parents with school-aged children. Of the respondents with school-aged children, 83% have them in the GPPSS, 8% in a private or parochial school or homeschooling, 5% in GPPSS and another school. 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 24%, North 10%, Brownell and Defer (each 9%), Monteith (8%), Pierce (7%) and the rest between 3-5%). The largest group of respondents fell within the 40-49 age category (37%), followed by 50-59 (2%), then 30-39 (19%), then 60+ (15%). Of those completing the survey, mothers represented 67% (72% in prior survey) with fathers 15%, community members without children currently in school 12%, parents/guardians together 3%.

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 2021-22	A or B in 2020-21	A or B in 2018
Read	76%	67%	85%
Write	70%	61%	78%
Understand Science	70%	62%	80%
Understand Social Studies	70%	60%	79%
Understand Basic Math	73%	69%	82%
Appreciate Fine/Performing Arts	72%	60%	77%
Think Critically	60%	52%	69%
Be Healthy/Physically Fit	59%	51%	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:

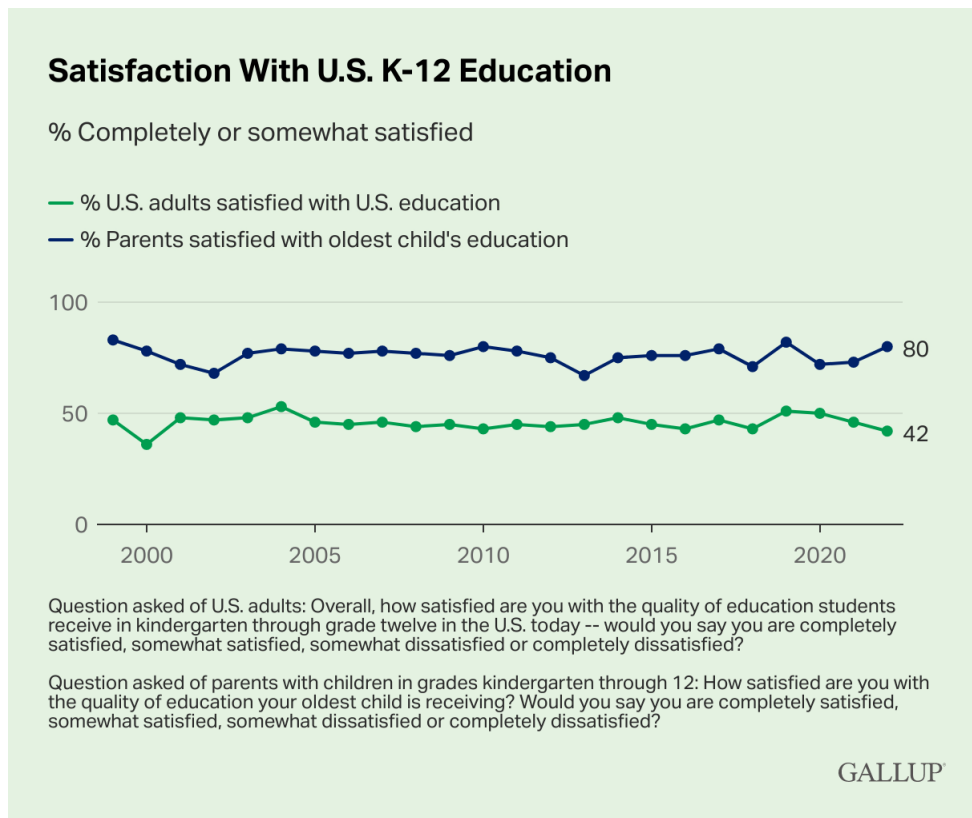
- be accepted at the college of their choice - 47% A or B, 36% NA (42% A or B, 30% NA), or
- succeed at the college of their choice - 45% A or B, 37% NA (42% A or B, 30% NA).

Over 64% said they could not respond/NA regarding a grade for how the district is serving special education students, and 23% said A or B (20% A or B prior year). And 47% said NA for struggling learners 26% A or B (24% A or B prior year). When asked about gifted learners, 41% gave an A or B (up 1% from last year), and 36% said NA. Scores were similar for “the child in the middle” – 43% (40%) gave an A or B, 33% said NA.

Thirty-five percent (30% 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% again gave a C, and 29% marked NA when asked how well GPPSS is preparing students to learn about jobs and careers, 30% (28%) gave an A or B, and 23% (22%) gave GPPSS a C. For preparing students to use technology, 68% gave the district an A or B (61%), and 14% (19%) gave a C.

I would give the school system a grade of				
	2021	2020	2018	2017
A or B ALL	74%	61%	81%	83%

Overall, 70% said the educational program at our school is excellent or good (54% last year), and 80% of respondents with school-aged children gave the school system a grade of A or B (60% of those without school-aged children gave an A or B). For comparison, here is a chart from the annual GALLUP poll 9/22:



Source: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/399731/americans-satisfaction-education-low-side.aspx>

Finances

The district's grade for how well the district handles taxpayer dollars to support students and programs was:

	2021	2020	2018	2017
A or B	48%	32%	56%	54%

C	20%	23%	23%	20%
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However, when questions later in the survey instrument asked about finance, there was a large percentage (often 25-35%) that marked neutral. Sixty percent (57% 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 third 35% (27%) said the district does a good job of prioritizing building and repair projects (34% neutral, 31% disagree/strongly disagree). Fifty-nine percent (67%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “understanding the budget process is important to me,” (31% neutral). Fifty-seven percent (57%) again said they would like to know more about school finance in general (29% neutral, 14% disagreed). Forty-three percent (32% last year) agree that the district provides adequate communication with the community about building and repair projects (31% disagreed down from 41% last year, and 26% again 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 now inserted into Pointe Magazine, 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:

	21-22	20-21	18-19
I feel reasonably well informed about how well my child is doing in school	76%	68%	78%
Parent-teacher conferences are informative	70%	67%	71%
Report cards help me understand how well my child is doing in school	66%	58%	70%
Schoology helps me understand how well my child is doing in school	49%	40%	n/a
School staff welcomes questions and suggestions from parents	67%	60%	70%
The principal keeps parents well informed	64%	63%	63%
My child’s academic achievements are recognized at school	55%	48%	64%

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 (46%), 28% (25%) were neutral, and 26% (29%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Where people get their news from also shifted to a more heavy emphasis on the school newsletter (60%), the weekly e-blast (57%), and district social media (49%).The district website (43%) and print newsletter (36%) also remain important tools.

Discipline and Environment

Again, the majority of responses were positive in this category, with this percentage agreeing/strongly agreeing:

	21-22	20-21	18-19

I believe that my child is safe at school	73%	68%	71%
Students at our school exhibit good citizenship	68%	62%	69%
The discipline policy is fair	56%	50%	59%

There were additional interesting neutral responses. For example, a question about bullying typically does not elicit a neutral response; however, 42% (43% last year) marked **neutral** toward the statement “Bullying is dealt with effectively,” and 20% (25%) marked neutral toward the statement “My child knows how to resolve conflicts with others” (70% agreed their child knows how to resolve conflicts with others compared to 63% last year). To put these in perspective, here is the percentage that agreed or strongly agreed with each statement:

	21-22	20-21	18-19
My child is treated with respect by members of the school staff	78%	76%	82%
Most students are considerate and well mannered	70%	68%	70%
My child is learning the skills needed to work with others	69%	63%	72%
Most students at our school accept people with different beliefs and values	63%	61%	68%
My child is learning about other countries and cultures	66%	56%	64%

Learning Environment

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

Regarding buildings and grounds, 80% (69%) agreed/strongly agreed the school is clean and well maintained. Seventy percent (61%) said the school is well run (17% neutral). Only 27% (40%) said school lunch is acceptable, 11% (20%) said good or excellent. The district is watching this closely as we move away from pandemic lunches and into a new contract resuming regular hot lunch. Parents also requested a calendar question be asked. Knowing the calendar is part of the teacher contract, if asked about a preference for future years, 42% (40% last year) would maintain the recent break pattern if possible, 35% (32% last year) would reduce Midwinter break in February, and 8% (10%) said to seek a State waiver to start prior to Labor Day.

Overall, 66% (59%) said they feel the school’s educational program is “just about right” (25% too easy, 5% too difficult). In regard to the educational program (curriculum) at our school, respondents said they were

- very well informed 13%
- well informed 32%
- informed 30%
- somewhat informed 18%

- not well informed 7%

Two-thirds 66% (57%) said the number of after school activities is just about right, and again 4% said too high.

Are we on the Right Path

There are two areas of significant change in responses the district will be exploring more deeply.

	21-22	20-21	18-19
I always had confidence in the GPPSS	65% (GPPSS parents 67%, non 61%)	78%	75%
I continue to have confidence in the GPPSS	56% (GPPSS parents 60%, non 46%)	27%	65%

Similarly, when responding to the statement: when other parents talk or post about our school, what they say is

...

When other parents talk or post about our school, what they say is	21-22	20-21	18-19
More positive	49%	27%	65%
More negative	36%	53%	19%

When asked what is the **single biggest strength of our SCHOOL**, there were 325 answers written in, and these were the most common responses:

- 197 people list the teachers as the greatest strength
- 39 said sense of community and involvement of families with neighborhood schools
- 36 people said staff and principals
- 17 comments for each Curriculum/educational opportunities and Leadership

When asked what is the **one thing you would change about our SCHOOL**, there were 331 responses, and while many were singletons, these were the most common responses:

- 17 complaints about progressive teaching/woke ideology/politically correct culture
 - 11 comments about needing more diversity, and more training for race, equity and inclusion
 - 10 mentioned better cafeteria food/lunches
 - 9 said smaller class sizes and redistricting to balance school size
- Other comments with fewer mentions include:
- Pick/up drop off, traffic and pedestrian safety
 - Middle school specific ideas - more time for PE or recess in schedule, a few asked to move fifth grade back to elementary school, playground
 - More before and after school opportunities - particularly for STEM, hands-on academics, not just sports
 - Differentiation - Better supports for gifted and talented, the kid in the middle and those struggling

- Consistent and clear discipline for poor behavior/bullying - hallways, bathrooms, and classroom management
- More focus on career and technical education as well as life skills like financial literacy
- More opportunities for parent involvement
- Many unique responses that were very specific - no candy in school store, too much homework, consistency among classrooms in same school/across district
- 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:

- 97 respondents said the district's teachers
 - 63 said involved parents/community members
 - 20 mentioned solid funding/tax dollars
- Other comments with fewer mentions include:
- Historic reputation
 - Walkable schools
 - Communication
 - "Community commitment to educational excellence"

When asked what is the **one thing you would change about our DISTRICT**, there were 312 responses, and while many were again singletons, these were the most common categories:

- 32 said Administration/leadership
 - 30 mentioned changing the Board of Education (BOE)
 - 10 people said move fifth grade back to elementary school
- Other comments with fewer mentions include:
- Need more transparency - including the why behind decisions
 - More inclusion of students with special needs and more special education services and programs
 - Lead instead of follow - more innovation. Have a plan - be proactive, not reactive
 - Address the complex topics of diversity, equity and inclusion
 - Do not teach CRT
 - Focus on education not politics
 - Maintain educational/academic excellence
 - Redraw district boundaries to reduce school size, and reduce class sizes
 - Curriculum suggestions - have more technology at the elementary and high school levels, provide more opportunities for gifted learners and less emphasis on honors were the top three responses in this category, but other singleton suggestions under curriculum included teach civics, handwriting, and personal finance, and reduce technology/phones.

At the end, respondents were offered a chance to share anything they had not yet shared through the survey instrument. Many of the 201 responses were unique. The most common were to focus on academic excellence, that the district isn't perceived as being as good as it once was, that we're headed in the right direction, and variations on the theme of teaching students to think critically, not what to think. Some cited concerns about personal politics of board members, teachers and administration. Several asked to continue work to produce global citizens who are kind and appreciate diversity. Some said the district needs leadership that can increase enrollment and be responsible with taxpayer funds. Some also shared problems with how COVID was handled and reconfiguration – they were upset that schools closed and fifth grade moved to middle school.

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 mission to *Cultivate Educational Excellence By:*

- Empowering Students
- Valuing Diversity
- Inspiring Curiosity
- Pushing Possibilities

Listening sessions will continue this fall, as will presentations to community groups. 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.