

Kenilworth District 38 – Annual Parent Survey 2011
Executive Summary

At the end of the 2010-11 school year, parent surveys were sent out to 296 households representing 554 registered children. We received responses on behalf of 129 of those children, representing a response rate of 23%. We would like to thank all of those parents who took the time to reply to the survey and we would like to encourage all parents to reply in the future! The full results of the survey are provided to each Board of Education member and are reviewed in detail by the Communications Committee of the School Board. The following summarizes the responses to the annual parent survey.

1. What do you think is especially good about Sears School?

The three main items most frequently mentioned were the high quality of the teaching staff, the JK-8 school model and small class sizes, and the supportive community and its traditions. Of the high quality of the teaching staff, several comments highlighted the faculty of the music department.

2. What would you like to see changed or improved?

There were a wide variety of responses to this question without a clear consensus on any specific areas. The areas for improvement that were most frequently mentioned were: 1) change/improve the lunch program/cafeteria/open campus policy, 2) change/improve the quality of the curriculum, especially in the 8th grade and, 3) change/improve the math curriculum. Although the lunch program/cafeteria/open campus policy topic had the most responses, there was little consensus in those responses. Some were in favor of the open campus policy for all grades, some preferred to move to a closed campus, some wanted a true lunch program with a cafeteria and staff added, while others wanted more supervision for the current lunch program.

Item of note: The math curriculum is currently in the second year of the curriculum renewal process. We will be inviting parents to participate in meetings in the fall of 2011 with the math curriculum renewal committee to give their specific input on concerns they have in regards to the current curriculum and have the opportunity to learn more details about the current program and areas being considered for renewal.

3. If you could set one priority for the Kenilworth School District, what would it be?

Once again, there were a wide variety of responses with no clear consensus on a priority for the Kenilworth School District. The most frequently mentioned priorities were to continue with a focus on academic excellence, focus on strong discipline and bullying issues, and to attract and retain a high quality faculty.

4. For junior high school, are you in favor of a closed campus model?

One-third of respondents indicated they were not in favor of a closed campus model for the lunch period. For the other two-thirds of respondents, there was an almost even split between supporting a closed campus model and being unsure of their support. Most comments requested more information about how students would spend their time during the lunch period if a closed campus model was implemented.

Item of note: A pilot period for a closed campus for the junior high is in the initial phases of discussion. Details of how students would spend their time during the lunch period would be provided prior to the implementation of the pilot should it come to pass.

5. Please indicate your child's recently completed grade level.

The survey participation rate was highest for parents of 6th grade students.

6. How well informed do you feel about what is happening in the School District?

Only 5.6% of respondents felt that they were not well informed about what is happening in the School District.

Item of note: The District's website has information including the school calendar, minutes and agendas for school board and committee meetings, and an archive of all communications to parents. Please visit the website at www.kenilworth38.org.

7. The Board of Education is reformatting the Board information page in the Sears to Home. What information would you like to have included?

The board information respondents indicated they most wanted to see in Sears to Home publication are board meeting briefs and curriculum renewal efforts. Areas of focus for the board, district finances and board policies were listed in that order following the first two items. Some comments indicated that parents would like to have more notice of when topical issues are discussed at the board meetings.

Item of note: All board committee meetings and full board meeting agendas are posted on the District's website. In addition, all minutes are posted as well, although there is a lag in posting due to the necessity to have minutes approved at each committee and board meeting. Please visit the website and go to the "District 38" tab.

8. Have you noted improvement in the Social Emotional Learning experience for your child(ren) during the last two school years?

Two-thirds of respondents indicated that they had seen improvement in the Social Emotional Learning experience for their children during the last two school years. Some comments indicated a need to make this a continued area of focus.

Item of note: The details of the Social Emotional Learning plan can be found on the District's website by going to the "District 38" tab, then to "Curriculum", then to "Social Emotional Learning Action Plan"

9. In regards to the instruction your child(ren) received this past school year, do you feel it targets the individual needs of your child(ren)?

While two-thirds of respondents indicated that their child's individual needs were met, the rest of the respondents were split between feeling their child's needs weren't met or that they were unsure their child's needs were being met. There were few comments on this question with no consensus among the comments received.

Item of note: The details of the Response to Intervention (RtI) program can be found on the District's website by going to the "District 38" tab, then to "Curriculum", then to "Response to Intervention Plan"

10. Have you seen any evidence in your child(ren)'s instruction during this school year that would reflect any or all of these 21st Century Skills?

About 40% of respondents felt they had seen evidence that 21st Century Skills were in their child's instruction, with 60% of respondents indicating that they were either unsure or had not seen any evidence. Comments indicated that technology integration seemed most evident in their child's instruction, while several comments indicated that more work needed to be done to introduce a global-oriented perspective to their child's instruction.

Item of note: A summary of the 21st century skills committee's work can be found on the District's website by going to the "District 38" tab, then to "Philosophy and Vision", then to "21st Century Skills Committee"

11. How do you rate the Joseph Sears School overall?

Respondents rated the school as follows: 65% excellent, 28% good, 7% fair.

12. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Most of the comments mirrored responses to previous questions on the survey. For new comments received in response to this question, there was no consensus other than to express parents' thanks to the faculty and staff of the school for their child's positive experience.

Once again, we would like to thank those parents who participated in the survey. Your comments are read and do help provide direction to the Board of Education. The more parents that participate in the survey, the better able we are to respond to consensus concerns and determine the true priorities parents have for the children of the Joseph Sears School.

Best regards,
Communications Committee-Board of Education
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Betsy Moerschel
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