



# Ellington Public Schools

47 Main Street • PO Box 179  
Ellington, Connecticut 06029

(860) 896-2300

To: Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools  
From: Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Re: Spring Survey Climate Results  
Date: June 10, 2022

**Corresponding Agenda Item(s):** Administrative Reports, item 2, a.: Spring Survey Climate Results, Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

**Presentation Type:** FULL Q & A FYI

## 1. Rationale

A strong culture of feedback provides a foundation for continuous improvement across the district. Input from students, parents, and staff, is critical to assess the experience of these stakeholders and to inform strategies to improve engagement and educational outcomes. Soliciting feedback should be done with transparency because transparency builds trust in the process and in the structures for district planning and decision-making.

## 2. Process

The district sent a message in April to all families about the purpose and importance of the upcoming climate survey. Principals reiterated the importance of the survey and encouraged families to participate in their Friday communications. Faculty and staff were given time during meetings and the work day to complete the survey. Students were given time during the school day. Students in grades three to twelve complete the survey.

The following response rates were achieved:

Respondents	Number (n)	Percent
Families	872	38
Students	1471	75
Staff and Teachers	350	67

<b>Breakdown by Group</b>	<b>Number (n)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Elementary Students	686	87
Secondary Students	731	62
Staff	132	49
Teachers	218	87

The student response rates varied by grade level, with higher participation in grades three to eight. Parent participation was similar to last year. Although there are specific areas for improvement, the response rates met our targets and the sample sizes are large enough to be representative of the population.

### 3. Results and Findings

<b>Key Indicators (District Improvement Plan)</b>				
	<b>June 2019</b>	<b>March-June 2021</b>	<b>2021-22 Target</b>	<b>April 2022</b>
<b>Students - Students at my school treat each other with respect</b>	52%	64%	80%	74%
<b>Students - I am taught how to manage my stress</b>	56%	72%	80%	65%
<b>Students - I feel connected to my school</b>	N/A	74%	80%	84%
<b>Teachers - There are clear rules and expectations for student behavior</b>	65%	76%	80%	72%
<b>Families - I know how my child is doing before I receive the report card</b>	76%	84%	90%	88%
<b>Families - I feel connected to my child's school</b>	N/A	84%	90%	83%

Additional details were shared with board members previously and can be viewed here:

 [Panorama Survey Results.pdf](#)

#### **Students**

The key indicators related to peer-peer interactions (respect) and connectedness both show improvements of ten percentage points from Spring 2021. The result for learning stress management is a decline. This aligns with a shift back to greater academic focus and the persistence of stress and anxiety in the student population. Results for having a

trusted adult are about 90%, with a dip in grade nine. The questions about the quality of the learning experience (challenge, discussions, independent work, encouragement) have high results as well (in the 90's), though secondary-level responses about learning being valuable and engaging are lower (70-74%). Most elementary students report being taught how to manage stress (78%), but this drops in middle and high school, as low as 42%. Middle school and high school will need to work on addressing student stress, reminding students of strategies, and rolling out learning around emotional intelligence and the RULER skills. (RULER teacher training runs September to May, with some pilot work with students next year and full implementation in the following year.) Questions aligned with the Seeds of Civility and Vision of the Graduate were added for secondary students. Responses for learning requiring collaboration and solving difficult and relevant problems were lower (74%) than opportunities to share my thinking and be an independent learner (92-95%).

### **Teachers**

Teacher responses on feeling empowered, supported, having access to data, and feeling comfortable approaching administrators are very positive (89-93% favorable). Perceptions of the value of professional learning and student-to-student respect are lower (69-79% favorable), so these include areas for improvement.

### **Families**

Families are generally very pleased with their children's experiences. Parents' responses on children feeling safe, held to high expectations, and cared for range from 91 to 95 % favorable. Parent perceptions of students treating each other with respect are somewhat lower (85%). This figure drops through middle and high school, and those schools will continue to explore and implement strategies to improve peer interactions and climate, including advisory activities and the staff training on emotional intelligence.

### **Open-ended Responses**

Parent responses to the final question, ("Please add anything else you would like the school to know about your experience") mirrored the general multiple choice questions with mostly positive comments, with some specific appreciations and concerns. Two hundred and fifty four (254) parents, 90 students, 58 teachers, and 21 staff answered. Parent responses included 81 comments on how wonderful the staff and experience are; 37 specific suggestions, ideas, or issues; 31 comments on communication (usually asking for more specific communication from teachers on student progress); 23 comments on student behavior, 11 comments on concerns with how staff handled a specific issue or performed, and eight requests for more challenge/rigor.

Teacher responses to the final open-ended question included 13 accolades or celebrations; 12 concerns on technology, data, or facilities; 12 comments on time, stress, and collaboration; ten on voice or communication, and five on curriculum. These comments represent the 58 teachers who completed the open-ended question out of 218 teacher respondents.

Secondary students were asked the open-ended question. Twenty-five comments were accolades or positive responses. Nine addressed curriculum (interest and rigor). Six conveyed concerns about non-inclusive environment. Six comments complained about rules and five about staff or staff decisions. Six were concerns about student behavior and four referenced stress. Most student respondents had nothing to add.

#### **4. Review Process – Continued Stakeholder Engagement**

Schools reviewed specific results with school staff, seeking to understand staff responses better. Communication will go out to parents in the next two weeks. Schools will review findings with students to acknowledge student voice and input in the Fall, before the next survey in November. After the Fall survey, results will be reviewed with staff and students again, and parents will be invited to share additional perspectives in person.