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School Community Feedback Survey Trend Report

September 2021 - June 2022

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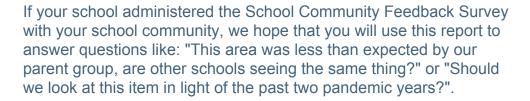
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About the Report

This report summarizes the results of the School Community Feedback Survey conducted with SAIS schools from September 2021 to June 2022.

The following report should be viewed as a baseline for observed trends. All scores and percentages are presented as a ballpark point of reference and should not be considered as benchmarks or goals.

Schools will often ask for some sort of comparison to know where they fall on the continuum. The information in this report should allow schools to see overall results and how their results may be similar. Because all of our schools are all uniquely mission driven, they are difficult to compare in an apples-to-apples sort of way.

If your school administered the School Community Feedback Survey with your school community, we hope that you will use this report to answer questions like: "This area was less than expected by our parent group, are other schools seeing the same thing?" or "Should we look at this item in light of the past two pandemic years?".

If your school has not used this latest version of the survey, we hope that this report will introduce you to the type of information collected and put issues like social-emotional support for students, time management skills, and feeling connected on your radar.

As with any new or reiteration of a survey instrument, we will continue to tweak and modify the format, categories, and items with feedback from our schools.

About the Survey

SAIS has been assisting schools in gathering stakeholder feedback since 2014 with the pilot of the Value Narrative Survey. In the summer of 2021, the Value Narrative Survey was updated to reflect current events and concerns that schools are facing. The new School Community Feedback Survey was launched in the Fall of 2021. From September 2021 through June 2022, 48 schools deployed the survey with their communities. In all, the following responses were received:

- 28,000 responses
- 15,000 parents
- 3,700 faculty and staff
- 9,400 students

Surveys are sent to individual email addresses provided by the school and completed entirely online. Average response rate in the parent group is 41%.

Some schools choose to use a weblink with students instead of the emailed invitation. This allows schools to provide a supervised time during the school day for students to complete the survey. This method results in a greater response rate from the student group. It is suggested that the survey be given to upper school students, however some schools elect to include one or more middle school grades as well.

Schools may choose to add or remove questions as appropriate for their community and culture. Most schools choose to deploy the standard question set, as is. Those that choose to modify are often K-8 or faith-based schools.

Demographics are collected including school division, years in the school community, race/ethnicity, and others. This information helps schools to understand who completed their survey. This identifying information is presented in aggregate only so that all responders remain anonymous.

Respondents are asked to provide feedback in 11 different categories from mission and engagement to safety and security. Within each category are specific items where respondents indicate to what extent the school is meeting their expectations.

Responders also answer whether they would recommend the school and have the opportunity to provide narrative comments. This is commonly known as the Net Promoter Score.

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Top Trends

Areas that stood apart from the rest and
baseline information to watch over the next three years

Parents

- The parent group has maintained a consistent median Net Promoter Score of 59, pre and post pandemic.
- Parents surveyed overwhelmingly agree that the priorities, programs, and actions of the school are in alignment with the school's mission.
- They feel that the care and concern of faculty is more than expected.
- Parents would like to see more emphasis on time management and service-learning opportunities for their children.

Students

- Most students report participating in school clubs, athletics, fine arts, or other extracurricular activities, but they don't always feel connected to the school community.
- Student Net Promoter Scores saw a notable decline of 13 points over the past two years.
- Students see a need for more social-emotional learning in the school program and a need for more support of their social-emotional well-being.

Faculty and Staff

- Faculty and staff report a strong sense of belonging in the school community.
- Net Promoter Scores for this group fell by 5 points over the past two years.
- Faculty see the need for more global learning and environmental education in the curriculum.
- Gender and racial diversity among the faculty/staff is below expectations from the perspective of all three groups surveyed.

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School Community Experience

Parents, faculty/staff, and students receive slightly different versions of the same survey questions, tailored to their role in the school community. Response options are always, sometimes, or never.

It's interesting to note here that the parent group and faculty/staff group gave opposite responses. Parents mark the following statement higher while faculty and staff mark it lower: "Parents, faculty, and staff are respectful of one another."

Faculty and staff rated the statement "The school community is a place where I feel like I belong." with the highest level of agreement, while parents and students responded that they did not feel connected to the school community. This will be an area to watch over the next few years to see if the lack of connection may be attributed to pandemic measures that isolated parents from the school campus and community and forced students online and without the usual group events and off campus activities.

Students' most favorable response in this category showed that almost all participate in school clubs, athletics, fine arts, or other extracurricular activities. Opportunity and engagement are often a hallmark of smaller independent school communities.

Strategic Questions:

- In what ways does your school connect parents to the school community? Are there new ways that might be implemented?
- How might you facilitate a discussion with faculty about the need for mutual respect between staff and parents, and what administration might do to support faculty in this area?
- Do your advisors, deans, or counselors identify and intentionally seek out students who do not participate in any extracurricular activities to ensure that they feel welcome and included?

Resource Links:

- **Architects of Belonging** *Carney Sandoe & Associates*
- **Building Safety and Connection in Schools** *Getting Smart*
- **How to Harness the Power of Belonging** *Knowledge at Wharton*
- **The Role of Cooperation Clauses in Ensuring Parent Civility** *Fisher Phillips*
- **We Need to Make Schools Human Again. That Means Treating Teachers With Respect** *Edsurge*

Curriculum and Program

All three stakeholder groups (parents, students, and faculty/staff) agree on the areas where they believe their schools perform even better than expected.

- High academic standards
- Academic support

This speaks well to efforts many schools have put into place over the past 5-10 years in the area of academic support. The staff and programs dedicated to learning support appear to be making a favorable difference.

As expected, and most likely pandemic related, the item **Off campus learning (field trips, travel opportunities)** was marked less than expected most often by all three groups. In the years to come we will look to see if this area rebounds after COVID or could be continually affected by budget constraints.

Areas marked as less than expected for parents:

- **Service-learning opportunities**
- **Global learning** (developing international understanding)

Areas marked as less than expected for faculty/staff:

- **Global learning** (developing international understanding)
- **Environmental education**

Most notable in this section is that students mark **Social-emotional learning** significantly lower than parents and faculty/staff. This could indicate a disconnect between the needs of the students and how parents and faculty/staff prioritize or currently address social-emotional learning.

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 2.82 - 3.48
- Students: 2.40 - 3.63
- Faculty/Staff: 2.97 - 3.49

Strategic Questions:

1. How can we address the social-emotional learning needs of our students and create a greater awareness among parents and faculty?
2. How might we examine current curricula for inclusion of global learning and environmental education? Is there intentional time for either in the existing scope and sequence? What are the suggested best practices or recognized standards for both areas?

Resource Links:

- **5 Ways Education Leaders Can Maximize the Impact of Social-Emotional Learning** *EdWeek*
- **National Environmental Education Foundation** *NEEF*
- **Nurturing a Global Mind** *Harvard Graduate School of Education*
- **Rethink Social-Emotional Learning for Your School** *ISM*
- **Schools Must Connect Learning to Real-World Experience. Service Learning Can Help.** *EdSurge*
- **Teaching Cultural Agility** *NAIS*

Promoting Life and Learning Skills

Perspectives on how well schools perform in promoting life and learning schools vary by stakeholder group.

Highest rated areas for parents:
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Verbal and written communication

Highest rated areas for faculty/staff:
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Leadership

Highest rated areas for students:
- Critical thinking (making logical and informed decisions)
- Leadership

Time management was also rated as a lower-performing area on the previous version of this survey. That trend continues in the updated version, receiving low scores from both parents and faculty/staff. Falling close behind are the skills of **organization** and **self-control**.

Time management also falls to the bottom with students, but **Empathy (ability to understand the feelings of others)** is rated as the lowest-performing item among this group.

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 3.27 - 3.50
- Students: 3.22 - 3.64
- Faculty/Staff: 3.30 - 3.73

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we be more intentional about teaching the skill of time management? How can the skill be incorporated into existing projects and assignments? How could we make parents more aware of our considered efforts?
2. Where might there be space to do more work with students around empathy and understanding the feeling of others? Advisory? School counselor sessions? Classroom norms?
3. What does the intersection of empathy, diversity, and inclusion look like?

Resource Links:

- **A Powerful Way to Help Kids (and Ourselves!) with Time Management** *Truth for Teachers*
- **21st-Century Skill That's In-Demand: Empathy** *HigherEd Dive*
- **4 Proven Strategies for Teaching Empathy** *Edutopia*
- **Develop Your Students' Time Management Skills** *AVID*
- **The Age-by-Age Guide to Teaching Kids Time Management** *Scholastic*
- **Teaching Empathy: Essential for Students, Crucial for Humanity** *Waldorf Education*

Student Support

The responses to the section on student support build on two trends previously observed in earlier versions of this survey.

Academic success is the area that most exceeds expectations for all three survey groups. Again, we see a discrepancy surrounding s**ocial-emotional well-being** with students. They rate it as much less than expected while parents and faculty rate it more than expected. Parents and faculty feel that **discipline and behavioral expectations** fall to the bottom in this section.

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 3.20 - 3.51
- Students: 2.76 - 3.75
- Faculty/Staff: 3.05 - 3.77

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we better meet the social-emotional well-being expectations of our students?
2. How might we raise awareness of social-emotional health among our parents and staff?
3. What concerns do our faculty and parents have concerning discipline?

Resource Links:

- **Introduction to Social and Emotional Health: Definition and Research Support** *Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation*
- **Principles of practice to support Student Wellbeing and Mental Health** *AISNSW*
- **Social-Emotional Learning Works. But It Cannot Replace Mental Illness Care** *EdSurge*
- **Strengthening Social and Emotional Health** *Children's Institute*
- **Student Discipline Issues: Designing and Implementing a Fair Process** *NAIS*
- **Well-Being Matters** *Character Lab*
- **You Can't Change What You Don't Measure: Social and Emotional Health in Children** *Enrollment Management Association*

Classroom Experience

The Classroom Experience section asks about faculty, assessment, class size, and faculty diversity. In previous surveys the **care and concern of faculty** was most often rated the highest item in this category. This holds true in this iteration of the survey for the parent group, but both faculty and students rate the item **subject area expertise** of faculty as more than expected.

The lowest rated item in this category is by far the **gender and racial diversity of faculty and staff**. This is an area in which many schools are working to bring about change.

Demographic information collected through the survey and shared on page 18 show that like students and families in the school community, there is very little racial diversity among faculty/staff in most of our schools.

Another area rated low by all three groups is **appropriate assessment and feedback to students**. This is a new survey item across all three groups, and we will continue to gather information surrounding assessment and feedback to students.

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 3.28 - 3.71 (Diversity 2.99)
- Students: 3.24 - 3.53 (Diversity 2.82)
- Faculty/Staff: 3.41 - 3.78 (Diversity 2.63)

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we increase gender and racial diversity among our staff to better represent the school community and the larger geographic community?
2. How can we improve methods of assessment to provide a true picture of a student's knowledge and skills?
3. How could we ensure that formative assessments include constructive and actionable feedback to the student?
4. When should we include a level of awareness in the feedback cycle for parents?

Resource Links:

- **8 Steps to Making Feedback More Effective** *Edutopia*
- **Action, not Words: Creating Gender and Racial Equity at Work** *Wharton*
- **Amplifying Assessment and Feedback** *Education Rickshaw*
- **How to Design a Feedback Ecosystem** *Global Online Academy*
- **Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Faculty and Staff** *SAIS*
- **Using Feedback to Build a Sense of Connection, Purpose, and Ownership** *Learner Centered Collaborative*

Administration

In the latest iteration of the survey, we added new questions about school administration. Three items are included in this section: **welcoming and accessible, responsive to concerns, and communicative on school matters**. As with other sections, it is important to remember that as we emerge from the pandemic, the school community's relationship with administration may have been different over the past three years.

Administration was viewed as performing better than expected in the **welcoming and accessible** area by all three groups. Parents and students marked **responsive to concerns** as the lower-performing area, while faculty rated **communicative on school matters** as lower than expected. It is important to note, however, that all three survey items in this section were ranked highly overall, and that relative to other scores throughout the survey, these scores were not low. See response medians below.

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 3.50 - 3.66
- Students: 3.15 - 3.58
- Faculty/Staff: 3.48 - 3.89

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we include the staff in discussions on school matters, while also emphasizing that sometimes not all information or details can be shared?
2. What protocols are in place for parents or students to voice concerns? How will they know that they have been heard?

Resource Links:

- **3 Ways Administrators Can Include Teachers in Decision-Making** *Edutopia*
- **Hopes and Fears: Working with Today's Independent School Parents** *Evans and Thompson*
- **Leading Your School as "Chief Empathy Officer"** *ASCD*
- **Listening to Parents: What It Means to Be an Ally** *Edutopia*
- **PGP Parents Working with Schools/Schools Working with Parents** *NAIS*
- **Practical Ways To Improve Your Leadership Communication Skills** *Forbes*

Athletics, Fine Arts, and Co-Curriculars

Responses to questions related to athletics, fine arts, and co-curriculars are very dependent on the specific programs and offerings at individual schools. It would be unfair to compare a large K-12 athletic powerhouse school with a K-12 that doesn't have the enrollment or facilities to support several sports.

Overall, all three groups felt like the **opportunity to participate** in athletics was more than expected. This may be due to the no cut policy found in several schools.

All three groups felt that the fine arts program lacked in the **variety of offerings**. This sentiment is backed up by anecdotal comments on the survey.

This new iteration of the survey redefined clubs and co-curriculars to include after-school and summer activities. As the opportunity to participate in "clubs" usually applies more to older students, this allowed parents and teachers of younger students to comment on offerings outside of the regular school program.

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we audit programs at each level to address gaps, fill needs, and offer programs for all students?
2. How do current clubs and co-curriculars support the academic, athletic, social, and creative pursuits of students?
3. Are there leadership and financial opportunities for faculty members to share untapped skills and expertise by sponsoring a club, teaching an after-school activity, coaching a sport, or facilitating a summer workshop?

Resource Links:

- **Beyond Justification: What Students Learn From the Arts** *Teacher Plus*
- **How Can High School Sports Better Serve Students?** *KQED*
- **How Teaching the Fine Arts in School Benefits Students** *College Raptor*
- **National Core Arts Standards** *NCCAS*
- **Participation in High School Athletics Has Long-lasting Benefits** *NFHS*
- **Principles of Good Practice - Athletics** *NAIS*
- **The Social and Academic Benefits of Team Sports** *Edutopia*

Campus Safety and Security

Campus safety and security was separated out as its own category in the latest version of the survey. Responses from all three groups were better than expected in all areas: **Facilities and grounds safety, security during athletic and other after-school events, and transportation safety (carpool, bus, parking lot).**

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 3.41 - 3.58
- Students: 3.48 - 3.61
- Faculty/Staff: 3.34 - 3.56

Strategic Questions:

1. Is there a monthly safety and security audit of facilities and grounds?
2. Do long-range plans include financial resources to address ongoing maintenance and repair of facilities and grounds?
3. Have school safety plans been reevaluated given recent active shooter incidents?
4. How are parents made aware and assured of their child's safety while at school?
5. Have arrival and dismissal plans been recently evaluated to consider changing traffic patterns and number of student drivers?

Resource Links:

- **K-12 School Security Guide**, *CISA*
- **Playground Safety Tips** *ISM*
- **School Safety Assessment Checklist** *Joffe Emergency Services*
- **School Safety: Statistics and Guidelines** *ISM*

Welcoming and Inclusive Community

As many schools have taken on intentional diversity and inclusion efforts, this new section was added to the survey to gather feedback on how welcoming and inclusive the school is to a variety of families and students. Survey respondents could mark items in this section as: Welcomed, included, and supported; recognized; or not welcome or supported.

The items in this category include:
- Families from different socioeconomic backgrounds
- Racially and ethnically diverse families
- Differences in physical abilities
- Differences in sexual identities
- Diverse intellectual abilities
- Varied political affiliations
- Varied religious beliefs

More than any other survey category, schools asked to modify this section. Of the 48 schools who administered the survey, two schools chose to remove the entire section. Additionally, six schools chose to remove the item **differences in sexual identities**, five removed **varied political affiliations,** and four removed **varied religious beliefs.**

All three groups felt that their schools were most welcoming and inclusive of **racially and ethnically diverse families.** Students and faculty/staff felt their community was least inclusive of **differences in sexual identities**, while parents felt the school community was least welcoming to **varied political affiliations**. Anecdotally, two common narrative survey comments from parents involve concerns over the perceived political leanings of the school overall and of teachers and their personal political beliefs shared in the classroom.

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 3.91 - 4.26
- Students: 3.47 - 3.99
- Faculty/Staff: 3.85 - 4.16

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we create a community where individuals and families feel welcome, connected, and valued?

Resource Links:

- **Celebrating a Diversity of Student Achievement** *NAIS*
- **Diversity Learning Resources and Research** *SAIS*
- **Education and Socioeconomic Status** *APA*
- **What is Neurodiversity?** *Understood*

Uniform and Dress Code

The section on uniform and dress code is another new option for schools. Questions on fit, provider, and value can be asked and vary greatly as uniform providers do. Questions on dress code can be asked if the school requires uniforms or not.

Many parents (88.62%) and faculty/staff (73.97%) agree that the **dress code supports and is beneficial to the learning experience**. Students are not all in agreement, at 33.51%.

Unsurprisingly, very few parents and faculty/staff (7%) agreed with the statement **dress code rules and requirements are too strict**. However more than half of students (60.78%) feel the rules are too strict.

As students have more direct interaction with dress codes enforcement, almost half (48.21%) believe that the **dress code is not enforced equally between genders**. Less than 10% of parents see the inequality, but 24.39% of faculty and staff do see this as an issue.

Almost half of the faculty/staff (45.18%) feel that the **dress code is not enforced equally between divisions, grade levels, or staff.** Less than a third of students (29.09%) share their perspective and even fewer parents (12.15%).

Very few parents (4.06%) or students (6.88%) feel that special dress days are a challenge for their family.

Strategic Questions:

1. How might we include students in a discussion on dress code rules and equal enforcement for all genders?
2. How might we collaborate with faculty and staff to work toward more equal enforcement among divisions and grade levels?

Resource Links:

- **A Curricular Critique of School Dress Codes** *Research Gate*
- **Addressing the Hot-Button Issue of the Dress Code** *NAIS*
- **Do School Dress Codes Discriminate Against Girls?** *EdWeek*
- **School Uniforms: Do they really improve student achievement, behavior?** *Journalist's Resource*
- **School uniforms: What does the research tell us?** *Parenting Science*

Faith-Based Programming

The previous version of this survey included an item on faith-based programming in the general curriculum and program section. In the current version, we have separated and expanded this category and made it an option for schools to include in their survey. The section includes items such as **Biblical foundation, religious course offerings, worship services, opportunities for mission work,** and more. Schools are able to customize this section to fit their particular religious affiliation. An example would be a Jewish school that replaces given areas for Torah study and Hebrew language program, or a Catholic school that includes Catholic identity and Mass and prayer services.

Just as we saw with **off campus learning** in the Curriculum and Program section, pandemic-affected areas like **opportunities for mission work (local and/or abroad)** and **retreats** were rated lower than expected in the faith-based section. We will watch these areas in the coming years to see if this changes as schools are able to venture beyond the campus again.

Faith-based curriculum received the highest marks from parents while **worship and Chapel services** took the top spot for students and faculty/staff. Because each item is rated as more than expected, as expected, or less than expected, it would be interesting to gather additional feedback from students and teachers. Are the worship and Chapel services more in <u>quantity</u> than expected or more in their <u>value</u> and <u>quality</u> than expected?

Response medians, on a 5-point scale, are offered here to provide schools that have administered the survey a ballpark comparison to other schools. These scores should not be viewed as benchmarks. If a school's responses are significantly lower than these medians, it could signal a need for a deeper dive to uncover specific issues or concerns.

- Parents: 2.79 - 3.47
- Students: 2.65 - 3.62
- Faculty/Staff: 2.60 - 3.63

Strategic Questions:

1. When students and staff respond that Chapel service are more than expected: Are the worship and Chapel services more in <u>quantity</u> than expected or more in their value and <u>quality</u> than expected?
2. How might we incorporate opportunities for mission work into current calendars and programming?

Net Promoter Score

The following information is provided to help schools put their Net Promoter Scores into context with other SAIS schools. Net Promoter Scores from the Value Narrative Survey 2016 – 2021, Net Promoter Score Survey 2020 – present, and the School Community Feedback Survey 2021 – present are included in the data below. A total of 260 surveys have been deployed from August of 2016 through June of 2022.

Stakeholder Group	Net Promoter Score Medians 2016-present	Net Promoter Score Means 2016-present
Parents	59	57
Faculty/Staff	68	64
Students	10	8
Trustees*	90	85
Alumni*	33	31

*The School Community Survey no longer separates or collects trustee and alumni NPS. Schools that opt to give the Net Promoter Only Survey may still collect data from these two groups.

Schools that Administered the Survey, by Size		
4% Under 100 students	24% 301-500 students	11% 901-1200 students
13% 101-200 students	12% 501-700 students	9% 1200+ students
11% 201-300 students	15% 701-900 students	

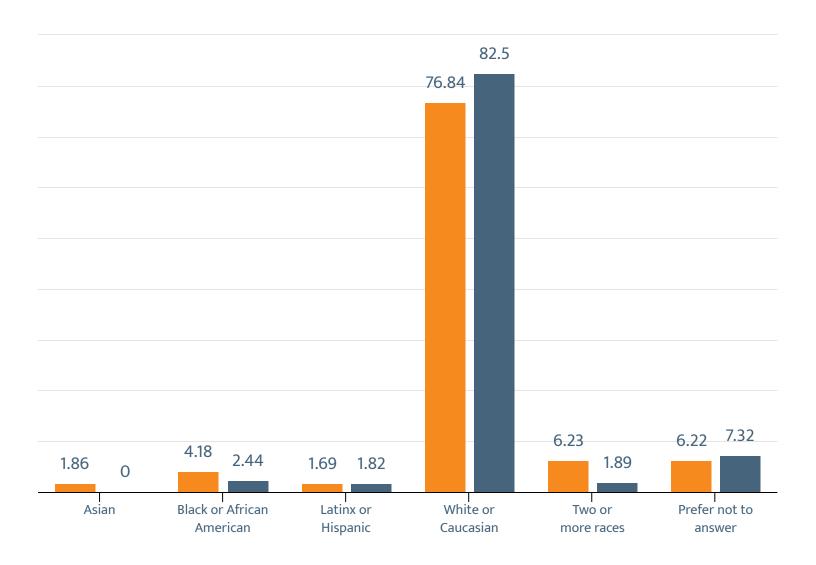| Schools that Administered the Survey, by Grades Served		
67% PK-12	6% Lower	13% Lower/Middle
9% Middle/Upper	6% Upper	

Pandemic Considerations
- Parent Net Promoter Scores stayed steady from before the pandemic to today.
- Student and Faculty/Staff Net Promoter Scores both changed pre- and post-pandemic. Student median scores changed from 13 to 0. Faculty/staff median scores changed from 70 to 65.

Race/Ethnicity

Families and faculty/staff were asked to self identify their race/ethnicity.
Median **percentages** are shown in the chart below.

	Asian	Black or African American	Latinx or Hispanic	White or Caucasian	Two or more races	Prefer not to answer
Families	1.86	4.18	1.69	76.84	6.23	6.22
Faculty/Staff	0	2.44	1.82	82.5	1.89	7.32

● **Families**   ● **Faculty/Staff**

In the Classroom Experience section of the survey, stakeholders are asked about the gender and racial diversity among the faculty and staff: Is it more than expected, as expected, or less than expected? This category was consistently marked significantly less than expected by all three survey groups, supporting the need and current efforts in many schools to hire and retain a more diverse faculty.

The Survey Instrument

The School Community Feedback Survey is offered through SAIS. Many schools choose to use the survey as a way to collect stakeholder feedback in preparation for developing goals during the school improvement and accreditation process.

You may find additional information, samples, and ordering information for all SAIS surveys at sais.org/surveycenter/