Methuen Public School District

2025 Culture Survey Report

Prepared By:

CBIZ

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Summary

The 2025 Methuen Public School District survey presents findings from a mixed-method analysis of survey responses from the students, parents, and staff of the Methuen Public School District including qualitative feedback and corresponding quantitative ratings across 22 focus areas.

The survey is comprised of 2,683 responses from the following locations: Comprehensive Grammar School, Methuen High School, Early Childhood Center, Marsh Grammar School, Tenney Grammar School, Timony Grammar School, and the Central Administration Building.

As is the case in many studies, open ended questions tend to elicit feedback from the most vocal participants who take the survey and more often lean to a negative sentiment. Nonetheless, it is valuable feedback to help identify existing problem areas experienced by the students, parents and staff in the district. The following comments are based on anonymous survey responses and interviews. They reflect participant perceptions and do not constitute verified findings or official statements of the Methuen Public Schools or the City of Methuen. Please also note that quotes used from these responses may contain spellings errors as those have not been altered. Any changes made to quotes were for translation into English and to remove anything that could identify the participant of the survey.

The report identifies strengths such as school environment, general perceptions of safety, and teacher support while also highlighting areas for improvement like professional development, funding constraints, and bullying response. Qualitative insights bring depth to the numeric results, revealing sentiment patterns and concrete suggestions from stakeholders.

Top 3 Focus Areas by School

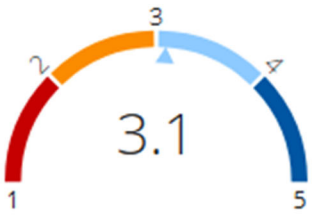
FOCUS AREA	EARLY CHILDHOOD	TENNEY	TIMONY	COMPREHENSIVE	MARSH	METHUEN HIGH
SCHOOL SENTIMENT						
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
ENVIRONMENT						
STUDENT SUPPORT						
PARENT TEACHER RELATIONSHIP	☑					
SCHOOL SAFETY	☑	☑			☑	☑
SCHOOL BUDGET RATING	👎	👎	👎	👎	👎	👎
SCHOOL PHYSICAL RESOURCES RATINGS						
SPECIAL NEEDS						
COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH						
PHYSICAL FACILITIES	👎					
CULTURE						
DIVERSITY			☑	☑		
SOCIAL MEDIA						
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		👎	👎	👎	👎	👎
SCHOOL VISION ALIGNMENT WITH DISTRICT	👎		👎		👎	👎
SCHOOL ADMIN AND STAFF ALIGNMENT		👎				
ADMIN AND STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND STUDENTS						
ADMINISTRATION CARES AND RESPONSIVENESS						
DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR RESPONSE						
RESPONSE TO BULLYING				👎		
EXTRACURRICULAR		☑	☑	☑	☑	☑

INDICATES ☑ TOP 3, 👎 BOTTOM 3

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

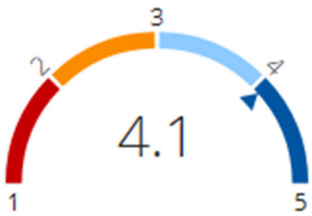
General School Sentiment:

Staff- I am satisfied with the overall work environment at the school.



5- Strongly Agree
3- Neutral
1- Strongly Disagree

Parents- I am satisfied with my child's overall experience at the school.



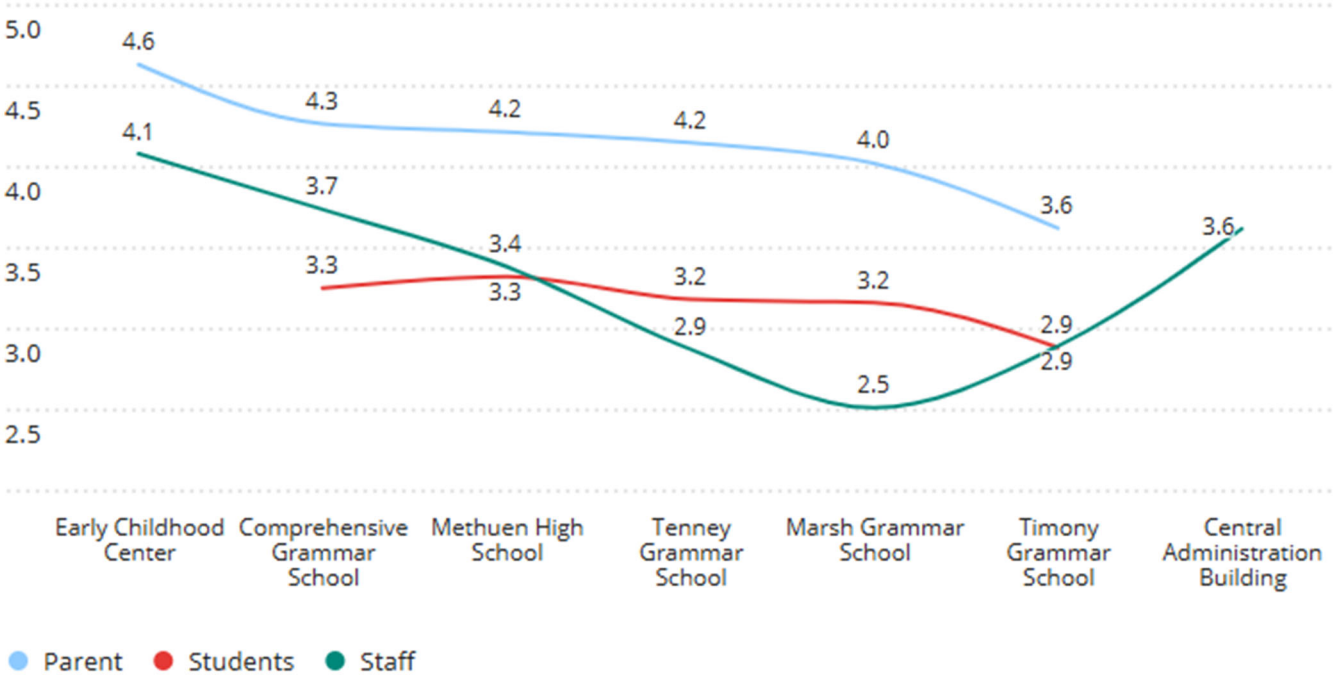
5- Strongly Agree
3- Neutral
1- Strongly Disagree

Students: How much do you like your school?

5- I Really love it!
3- Neutral
1- I really don't Like it.

School Sentiment by School:

(Mean- 5 Excellent, 3 Neutral, 1 Poor)



General School Sentiment Trends:

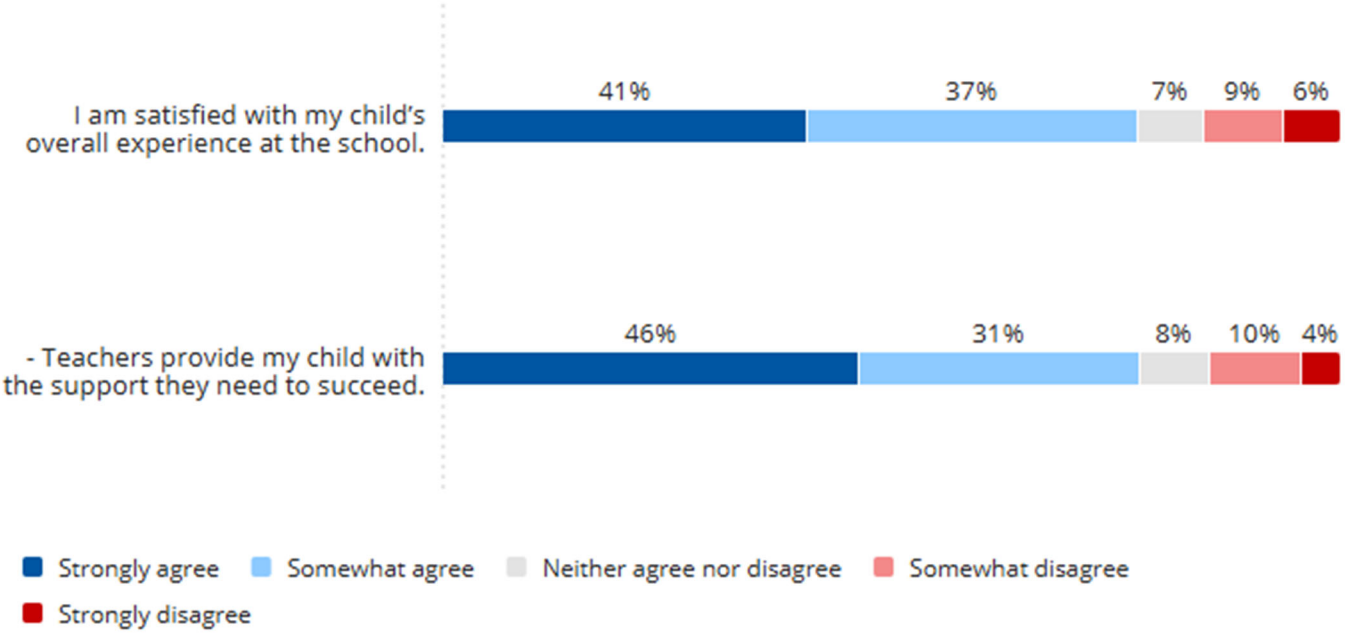
- Feedback varies widely, reflecting diverse experiences across the district.
- Staff concerns often center on administrative disconnect, while parents and students focus on day-to-day experiences.
- Express varied views, from appreciation for supportive environments to frustration with perceived toxicity.

Quotes:

- “The environment is toxic. The intimidation tactics and workplace bullying are very much not welcomed.” (Staff)
- “This school is bad, it’s not good. I might get blamed for something I didn’t do sometimes.” (Student)
- “The school has been extremely beneficial and helping my child with all of her personal goals.” (Parent)

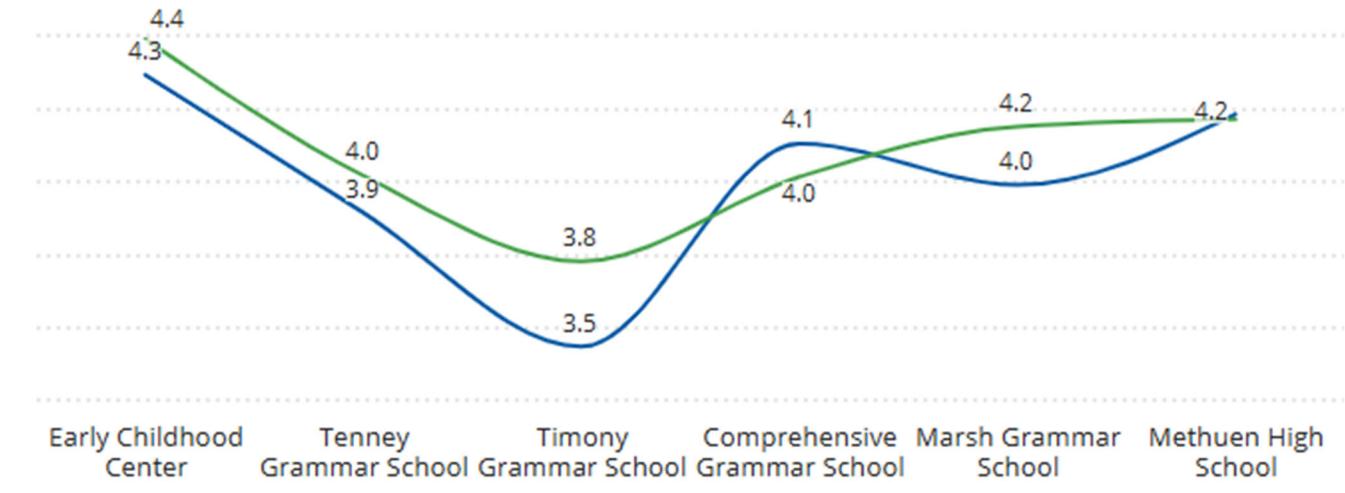
Academic Experience:

(Parent Sentiment)



Academic Experience by School:

(Mean- 5 Excellent, 3 Neutral, 1 Poor)



Academic Experience Sentiment Trends:

- Parents of high-achieving students feel their children receive less attention compared to those with behavioral or special needs.
- Positive experiences are tied to specific programs or teachers.

Quotes:

- “My kids are A students, which is great. However, I feel like the teachers' and schools' attention is aimed towards kids whose first language isn't English.”
- “My child does not enjoy going to school. It isn't fun. Yes, school is meant for learning, but some days should be fun learning as well.”
- “The school has been amazing for my child’s psychological well-being.”

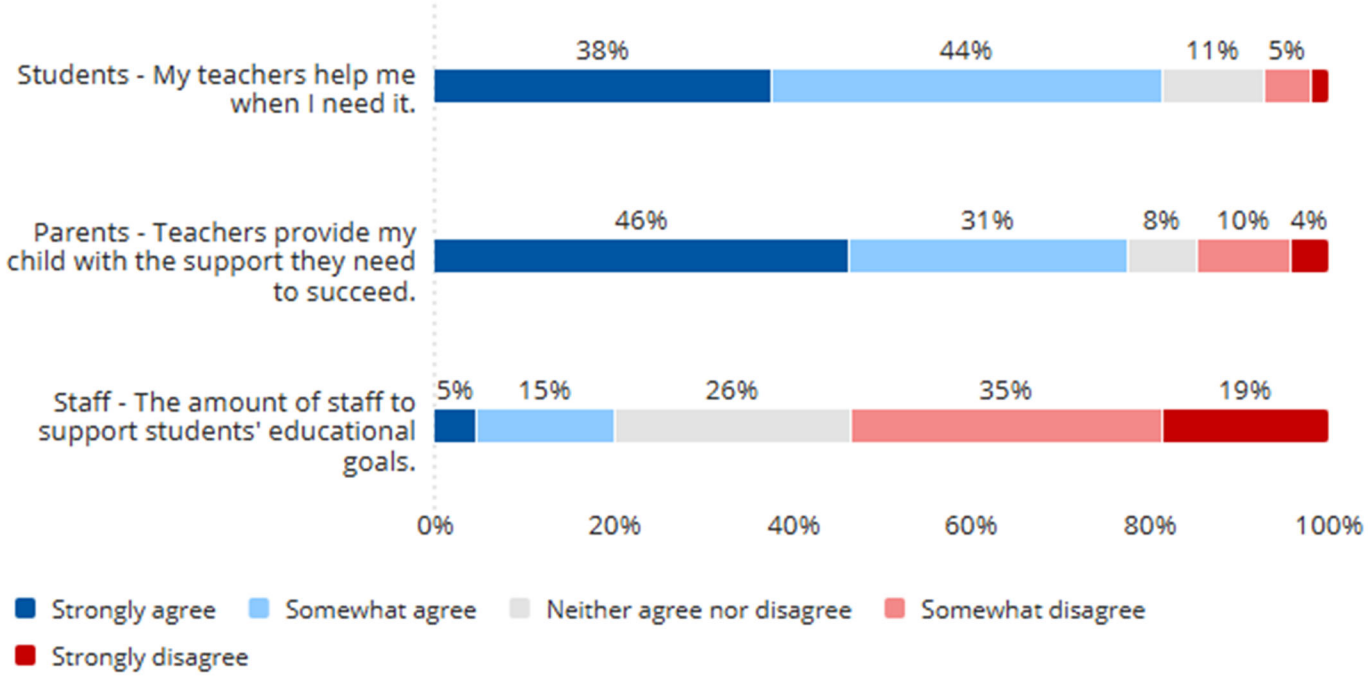
School Environment Sentiment Trends:

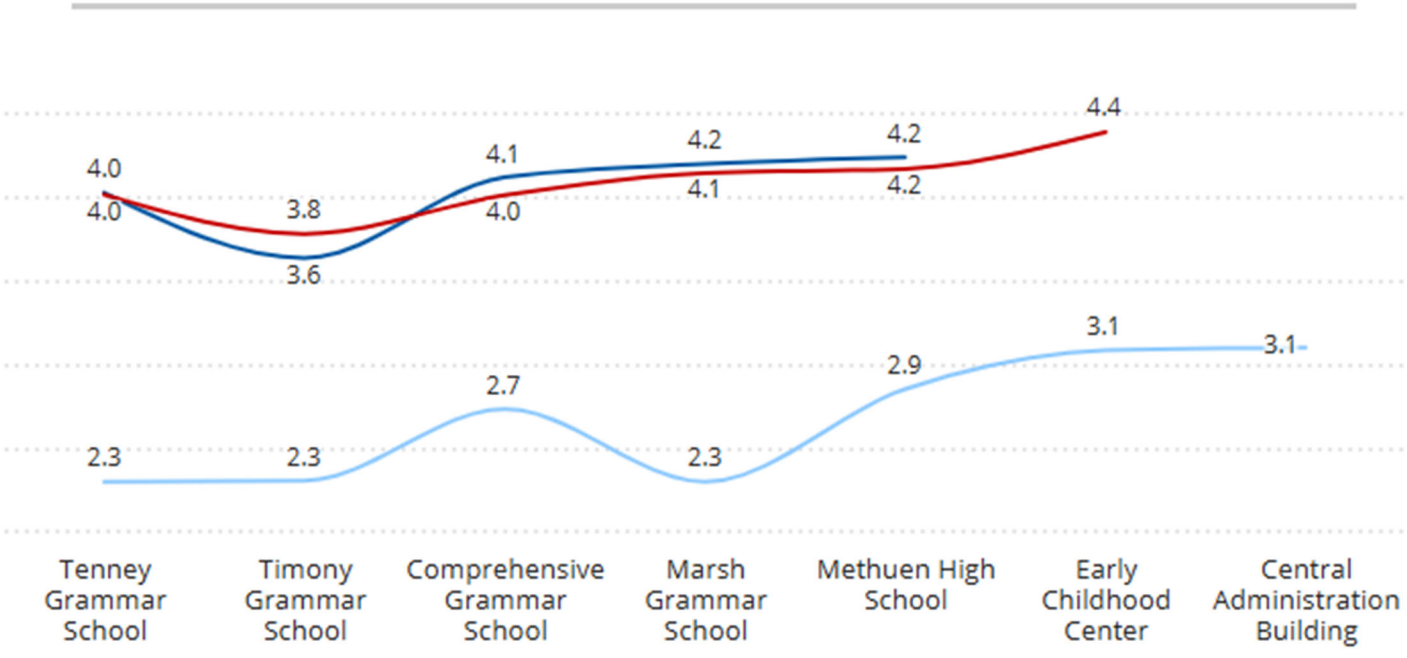
- Facility conditions are a significant concern, impacting health and morale.
- Complaints focus on mold, pests, and neglected maintenance.

Quotes:

- “The school is full of mold. My child has developed a severe allergy.” (Parent)
- “The gym is so gross in there and I feel like it never gets cleaned.” (Student)
- “There have been rooms that have had the same stain on the floor for three weeks. The rooms are not regularly cleaned.” (Staff)

Student Support

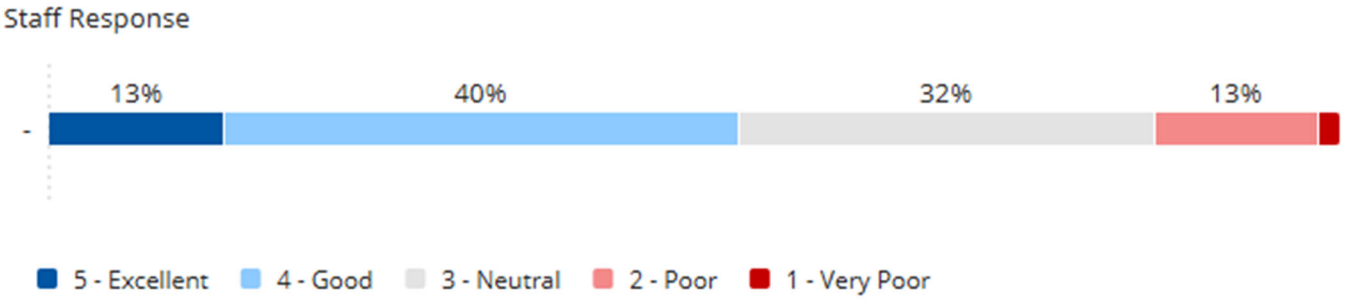


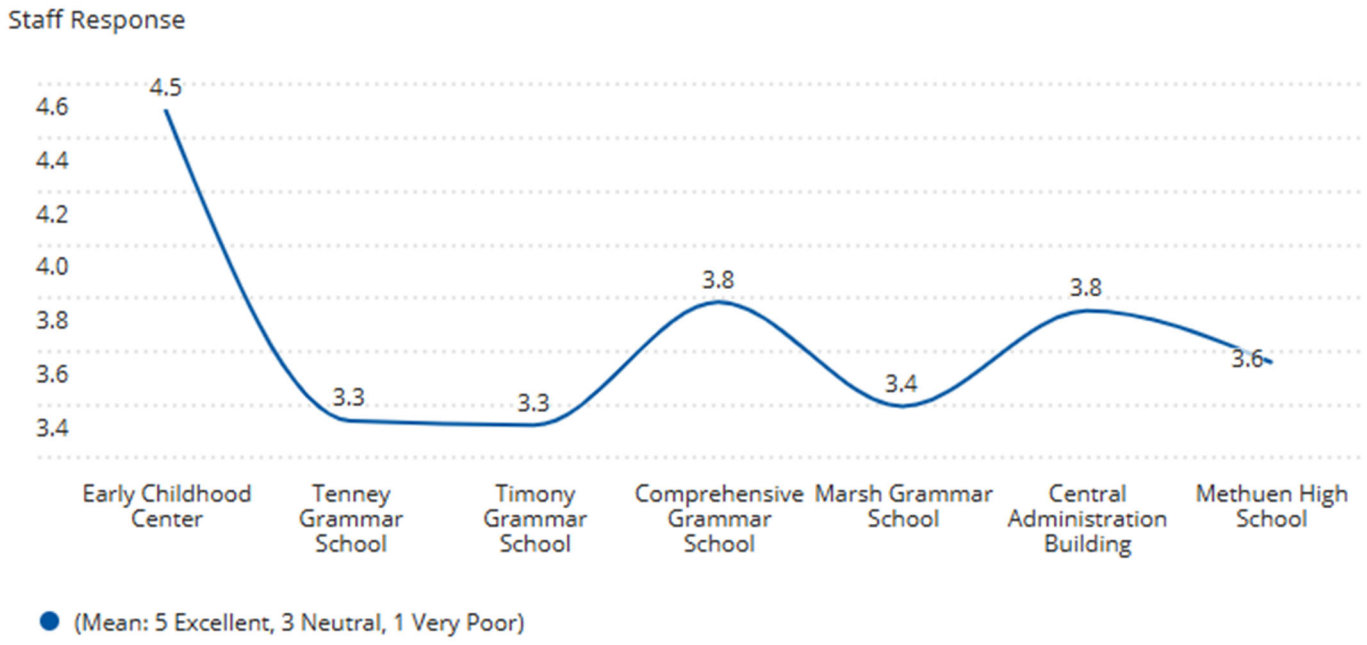


4. Teacher Support for Students

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Praise dedicated teachers but criticize those seen as disengaged.
    - **Students:** Appreciate supportive teachers but feel some are unfair or inattentive.
    - **Staff:** Feel overburdened, limiting their ability to support students.
- Quotes:
    - "Special education teachers have gone above and beyond for my son." (Parent)
    - "The teachers really do a good job on teaching, but they mostly give their attention to the bad kids." (Student)
    - "Teachers are being asked to do more with less, and it is becoming unsustainable." (Staff)

Staff Response of how they view the "Teacher Parent Relationship"





5. Parent/Teacher Relationships

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Seek more proactive communication from teachers.
    - **Staff:** Feel parents undermine their authority, with admin favoring parents.
- Quotes:
    - "I have expressed that I would like more communication between the school, teacher, and myself." (Parent)
    - "Parents rule the world, admins are quick to believe parents before having the school staffs' back." (Staff)
    - "Communication stopped in November with parents on student-specific progress." (Parent)

School Safety:

Parent - I feel that my child is safe at school.

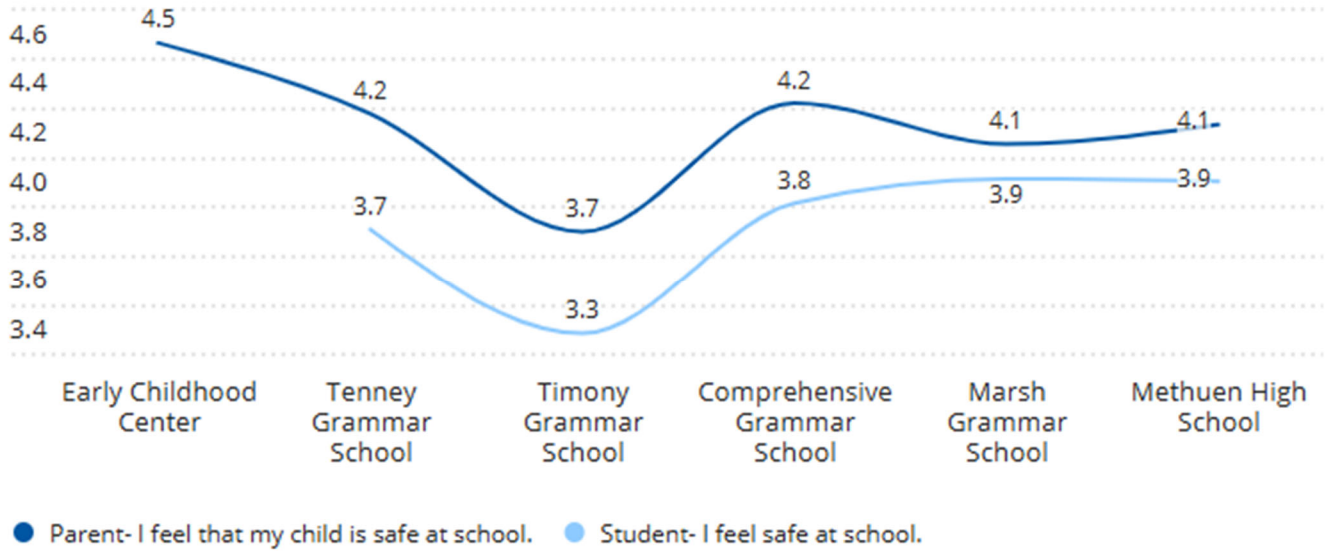
5- Strongly Agree
3- Neutral
1- Strongly Disagree

Student- I feel safe at school.

5- Strongly Agree
3- Neutral
1- Strongly Disagree

School Safety by School:

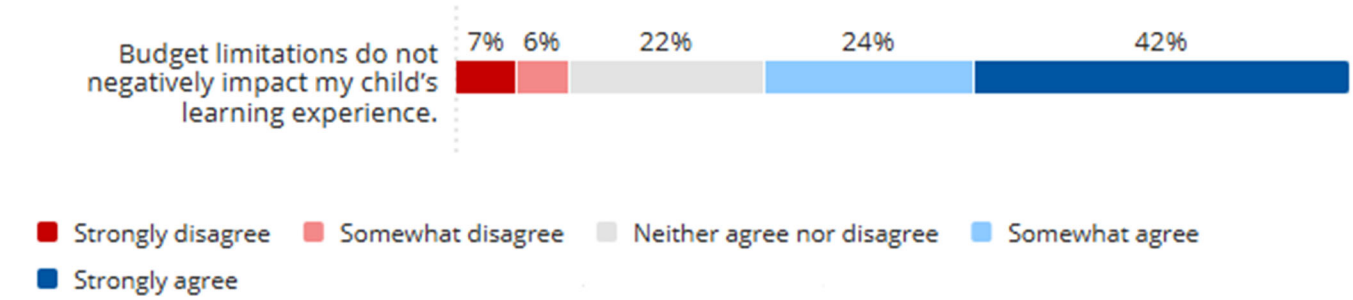
(Mean- 5 Strongly Agree , 3 Neutral, 1 Strongly Disagree)

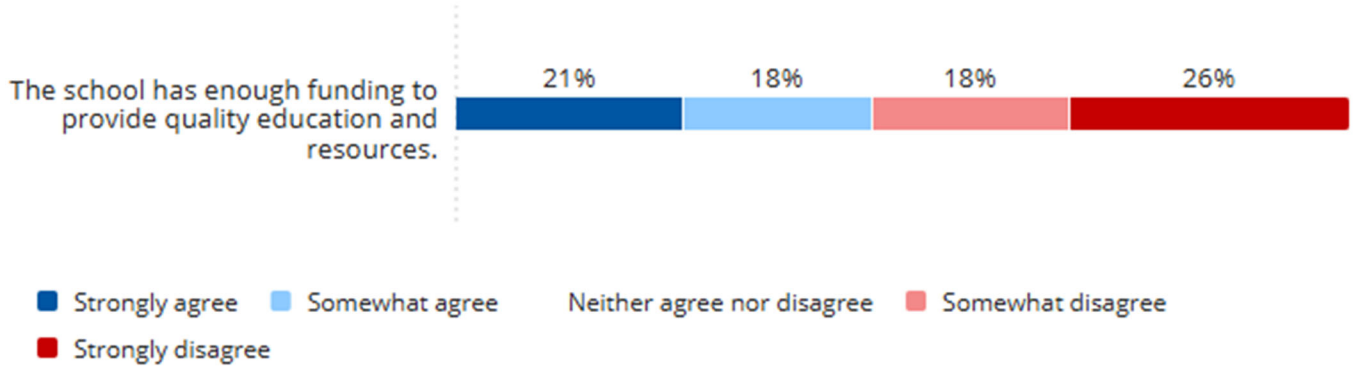


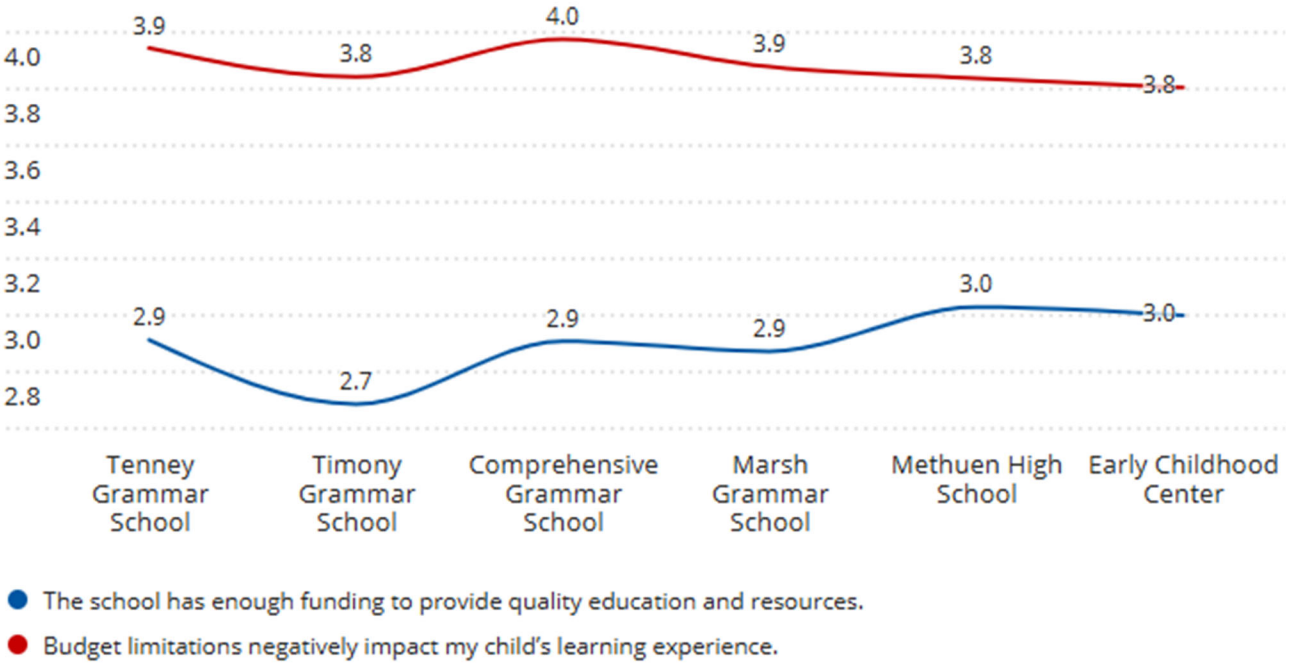
6. Student Safety

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Worry about bullying, fights, and environmental hazards.
    - **Students:** Feel unsafe due to bullying and lax rule enforcement.
    - **Staff:** Frustrated by lack of support for managing unsafe behaviors.
- Quotes:
    - "Bully policy is horrible. When my son is bullied and kicked in the private parts by 3 boys and it's considered conflict, this is ridiculous!!!" (Parent)
    - "There is a significant lack of Tier 1 and Tier 2 behavioral interventions in place." (Staff)
    - "The students who need consequences run the school. When we ask for help, we are the ones being blamed for a student's behavior." (Staff)

School Budget and Funding (Parent response)





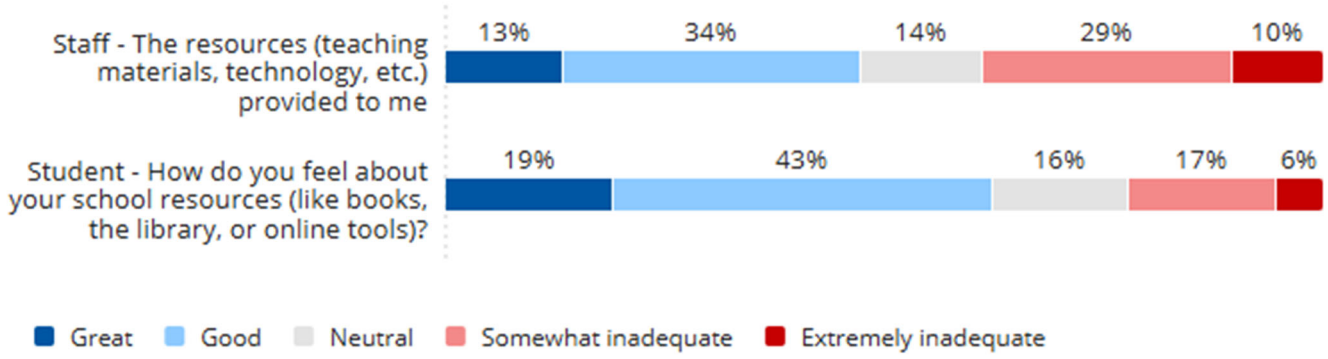


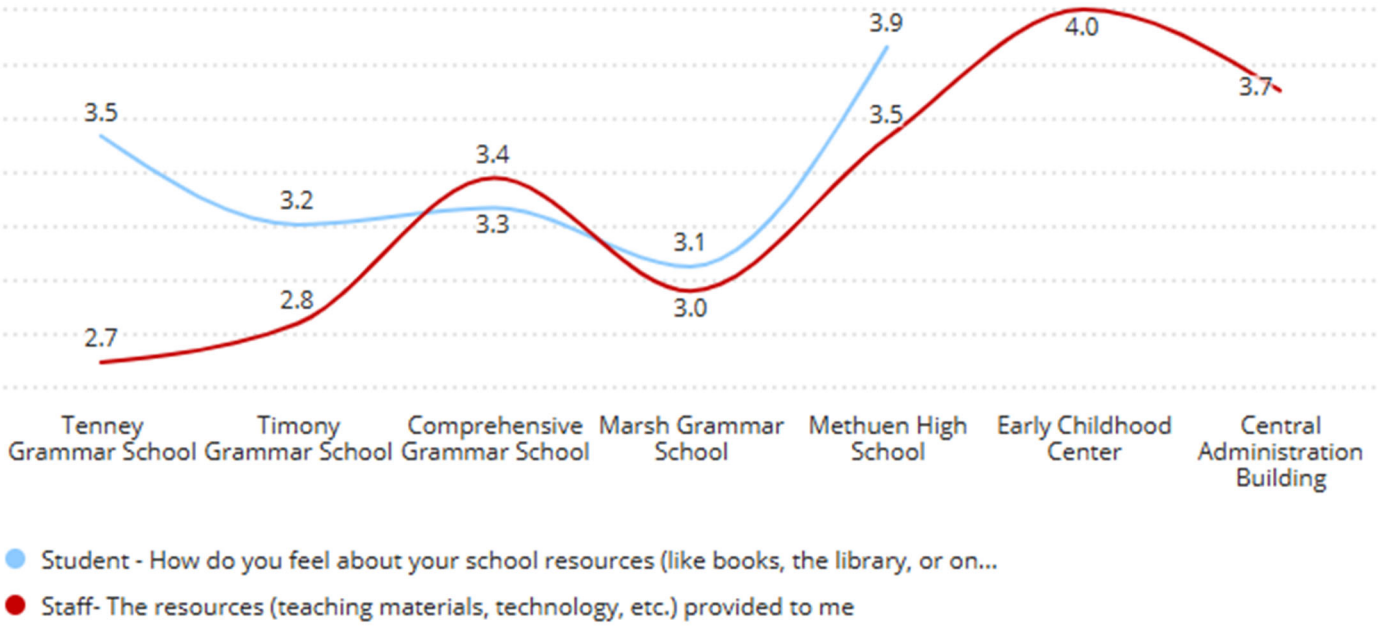
(Mean 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree

7. Budget/Funding Constraints

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Are concerned about cuts impacting programs and staffing.
    - **Staff:** Note limited resources and professional development due to budgets.
- Quotes:
    - "The budget absolutely negatively affects schools. The schools are understaffed year after year." (Parent)
    - "Even basic needs, like classroom supplies, require extensive justification." (Staff)
    - "The lack of current funding is concerning as is knowing that there are major cuts planned." (Parent)

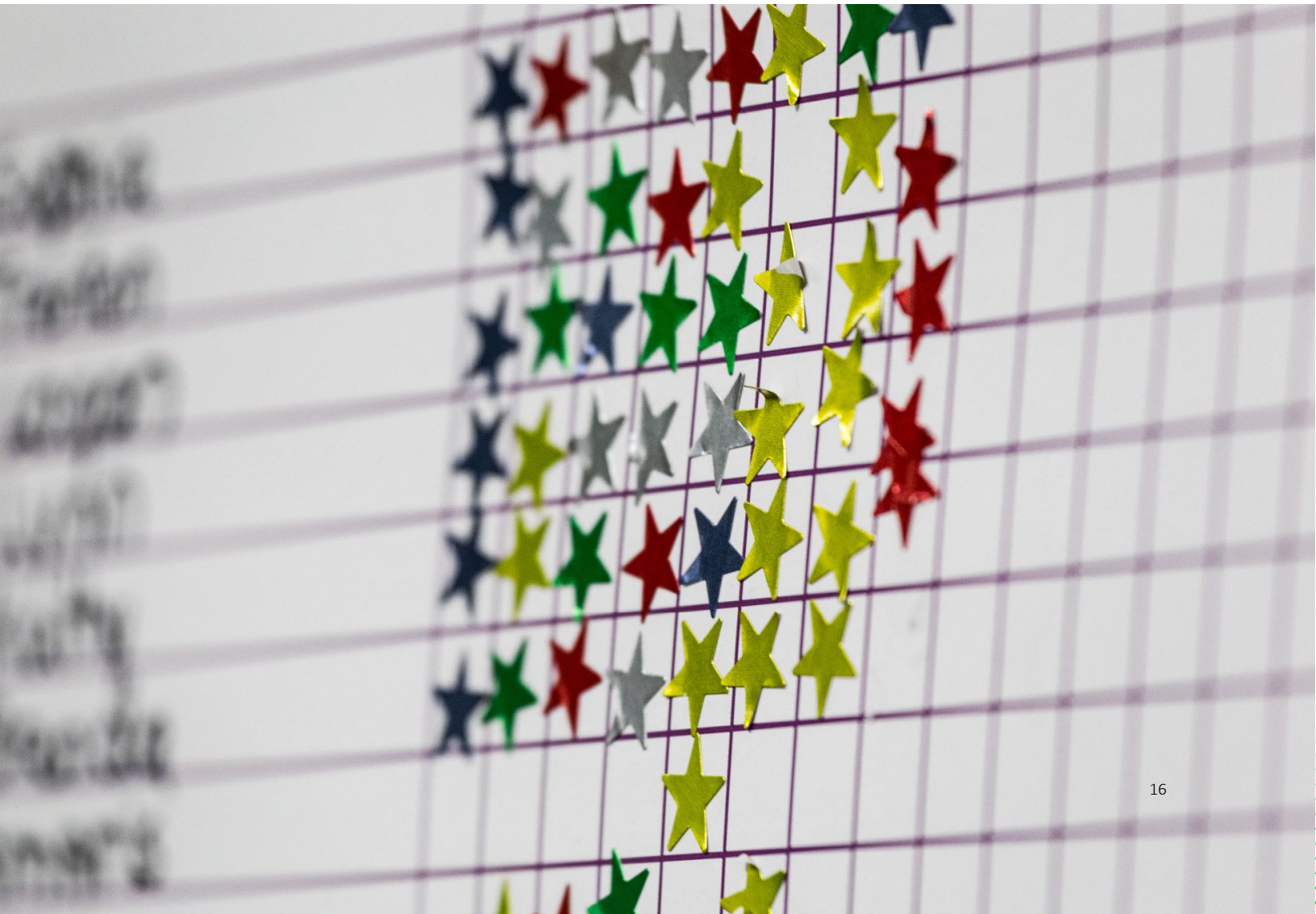
Student & Staff Resources





8. School Resources (Technology, Materials)

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Highlight outdated technology and insufficient materials.
    - **Students:** Note broken devices and limited library access.
    - **Staff:** Report lack of curriculum support and tech maintenance.
- Quotes:
    - “It took seven weeks to get his Chromebook back and there was hardly a time where he could have a loaner.” (Parent)
    - “Improve the lunch and make the library an actual thing for use.” (Student)
    - “Teachers were not even supplied one teacher's manual or student workbook for the ilc curriculum.” (Staff)



ESL and Special Needs Program Sentiment:

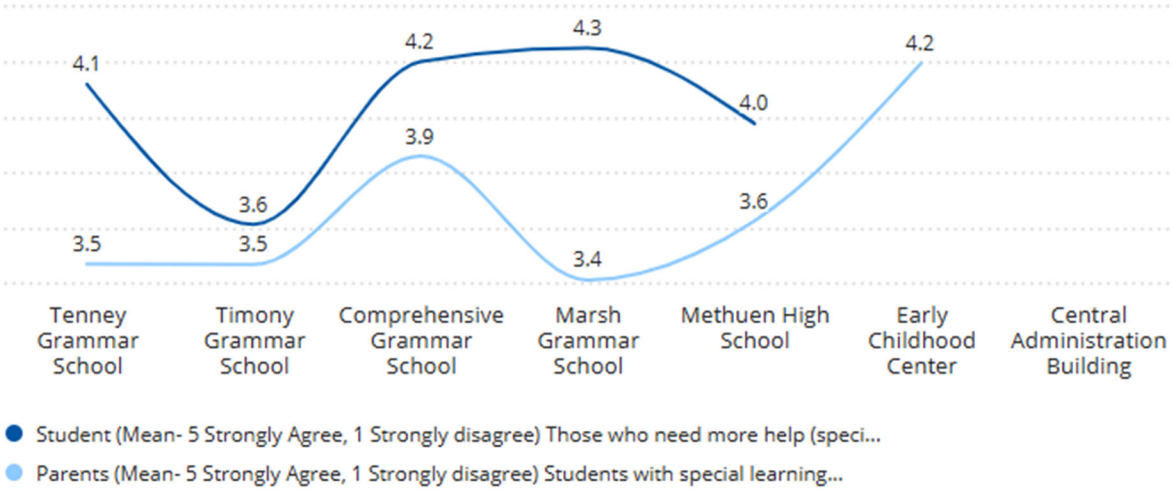
Student: Those who need more help (special needs, ESL, or other learning support) get what they need. (Mean: 5 Strongly agree, 3 Neutral, 1 Strongly disagree)

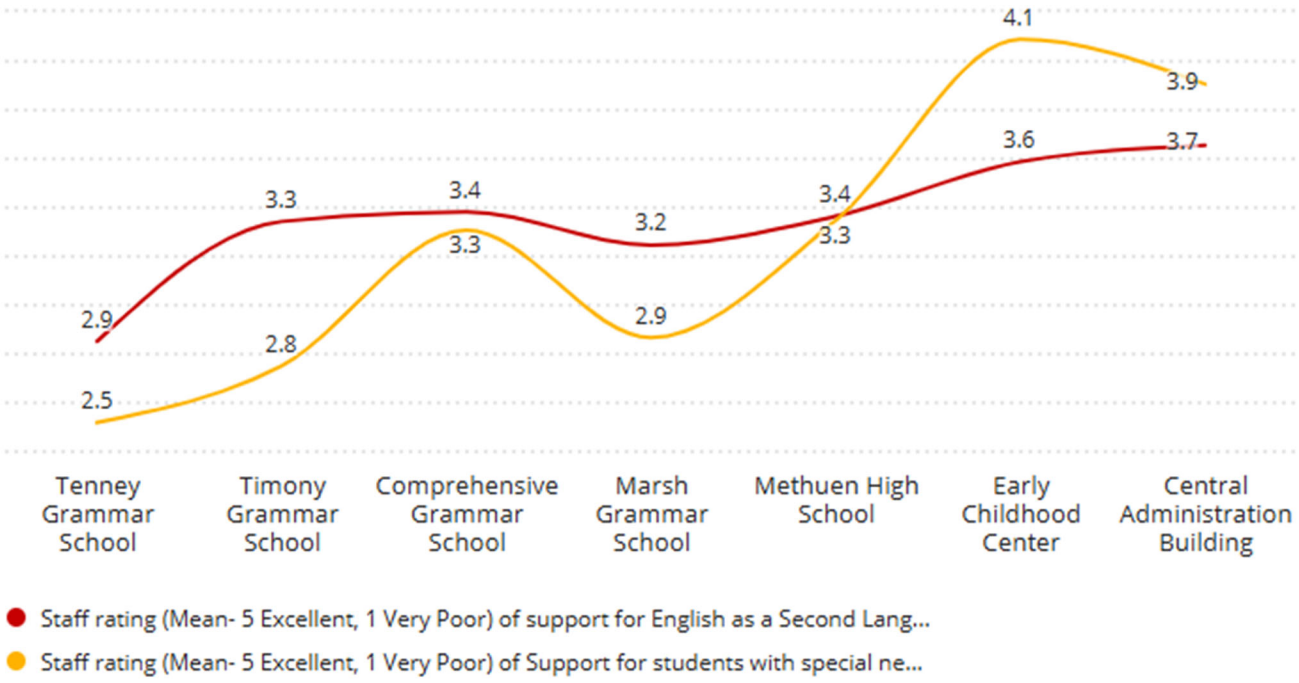
Parent - Students with special learning needs receive the support they need. (Mean: 5 Strongly agree, 3 Neutral, 1 Strongly disagree)

Staff - Support for ESL learners. (Mean: 5 Excellent, 3 Neutral, 1 Very poor)

Staff - Support for students with special needs. (Mean: 5 Excellent, 3 Neutral, 1 Very poor)

ESL and Special Needs Program Sentiment by School:



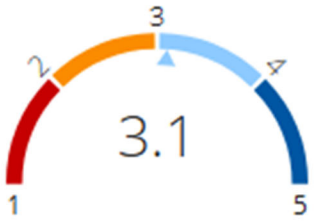


9. Special Needs and ESL Programs

- Sentiment Trends:
    - Special education is a strength but varies in execution.
    - ESL programs are seen as diverting resources from general education.
    - **Parents:** Praise special education but note inconsistent IEP implementation.
    - **Students:** Not directly addressed.
    - **Staff:** Emphasize the insufficient support and institutional scaffolding provided for ELS and special needs students.
- Quotes:
    - "Special education teachers have gone above and beyond for my son." (Parent)
    - "You kick a child with dyslexia off an IEP. She's been in services since she was 3." (Parent)
    - "The program was chosen despite concerns for lacking support for sped and EL learners." (Staff)

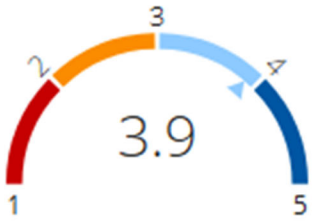
Student Counseling and Mental Health

Staff - Mental health services for students.



(Mean: 5 Excellent, 3 Neutral, 1 Very poor)

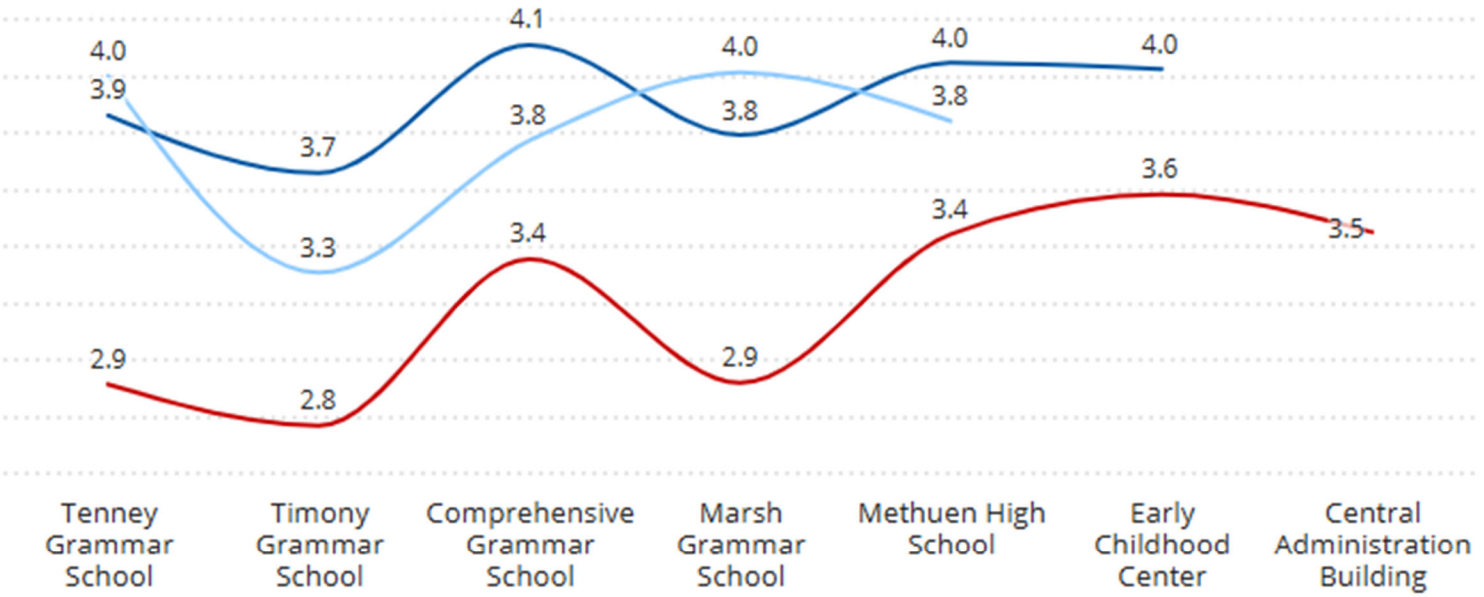
Parents - The school provides helpful counseling and emotional support services.



(Mean: 5 Strongly agree, 3 Neutral, 1 Strongly disagree)

Students - The counselors are helpful when I need them.

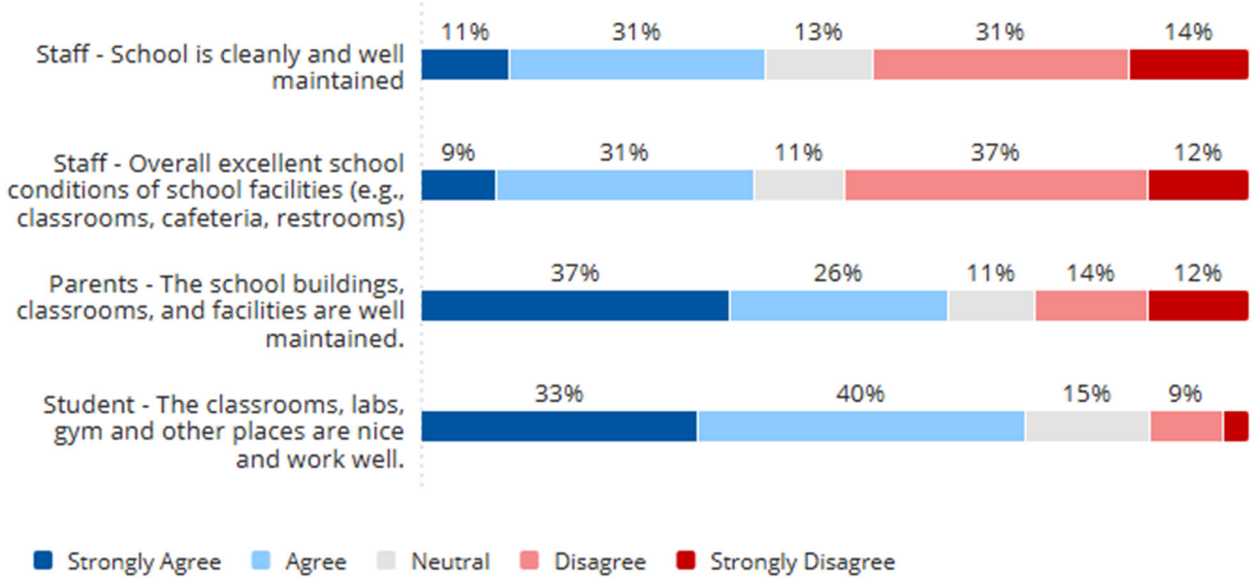
(Mean: 5 Strongly agree, 3 Neutral, 1 Strongly disagree)

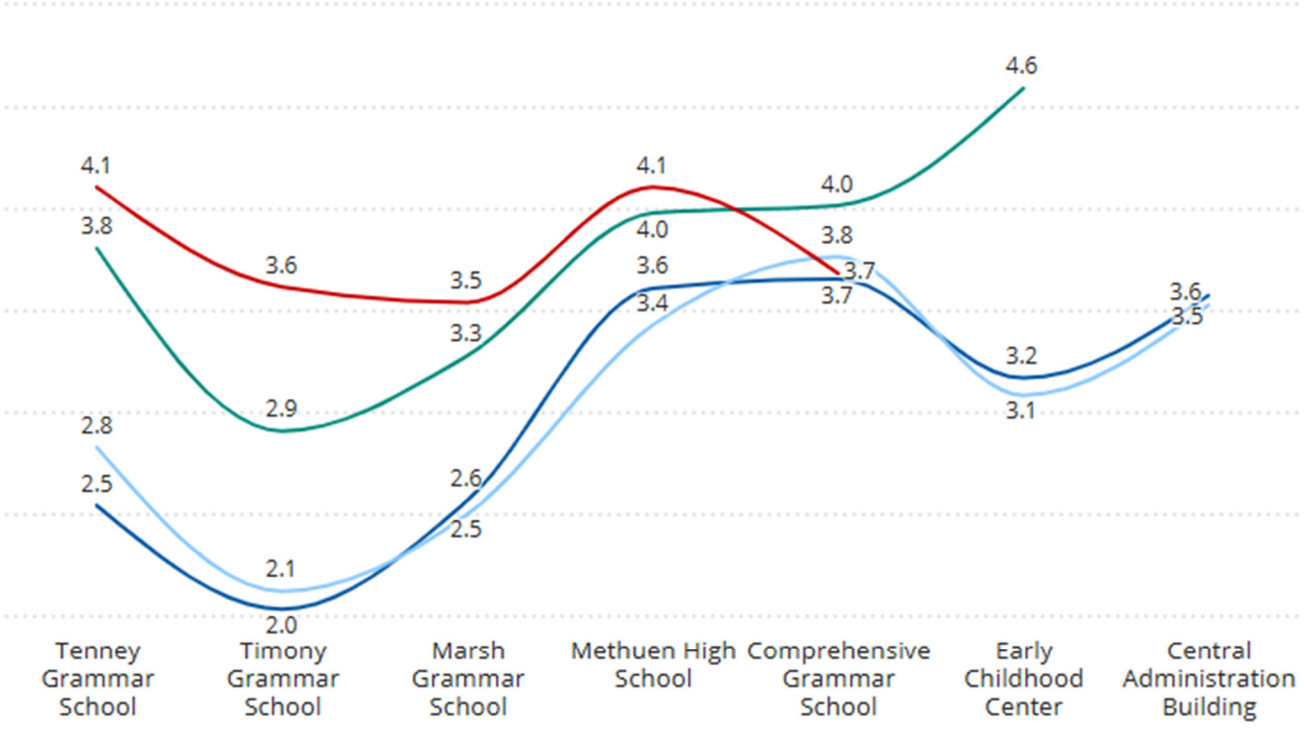


10. Counseling and Mental Health

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Criticize inadequate mental health support for bullying.
    - **Students:** Seek more mental health resources.
    - **Staff:** Feel undertrained and understaffed for mental health needs.
- Quotes:
    - "I think more attention needs to be put on bullying. I have emailed about my son being bullied and only received a response from 2/5 staff members." (Parent)
    - "Counselors are stretched thin with no time to help students who need to talk about stress or bullying." (Staff)
    - "One thing I think can make our school better is taking the mental health surveys more often." (Student)
    - "We have a person in charge of bulling investigations, and she always comes back with an outcome of no bulling." (Staff)

Condition of Facilities:

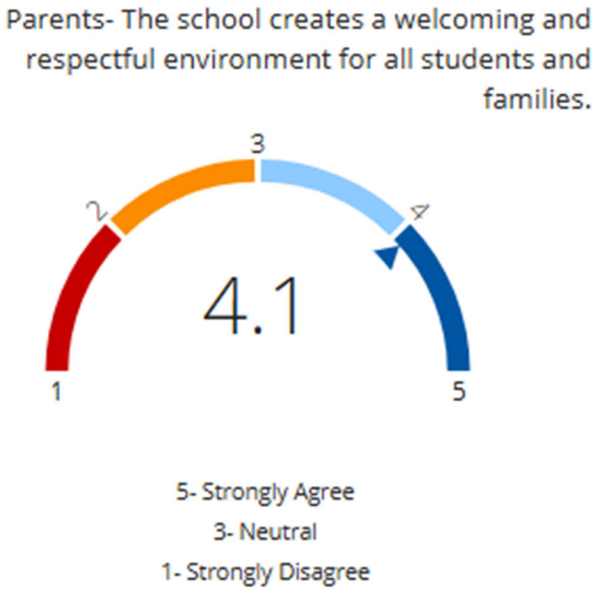


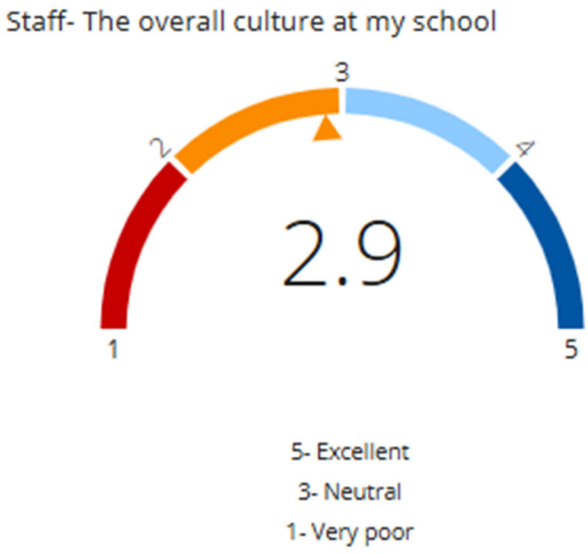


Facility Conditions and Maintenance

- Sentiment Trends:
    - Poor maintenance impacts health and learning environments.
    - Custodial staff are valued but overwhelmed.
    - **Parents:** Report mold, pests, and poor sanitation.
    - **Students:** Describe dirty bathrooms and gyms.
    - **Staff:** Praise custodians but note understaffing and neglect.
- Quotes:
    - "The school has been neglected for years. The state came in and said how bad it was." (Parent)
    - "The gym is so gross and I feel like it never gets cleaned." (Student)
    - "Our custodians are AWESOME! They work hard. When they are short-staffed, our rooms aren't cleaned as well." (Staff)

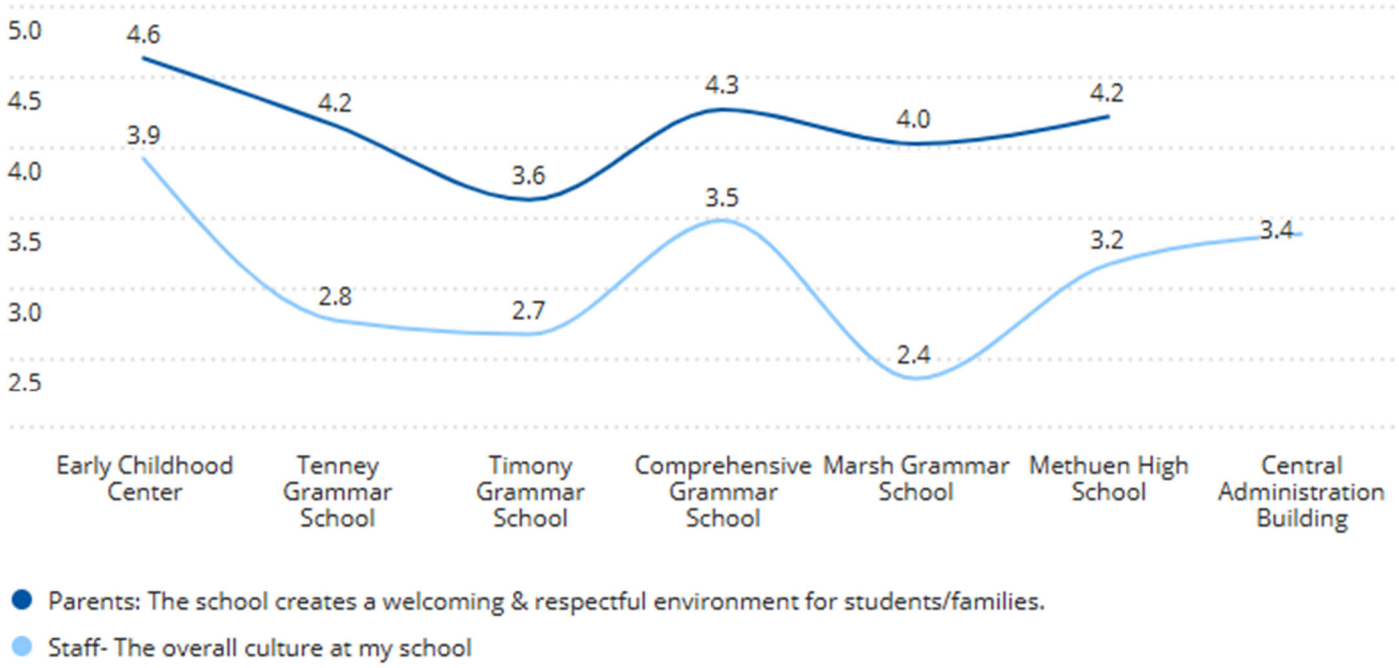
School Culture:





General Culture Sentiment by School:

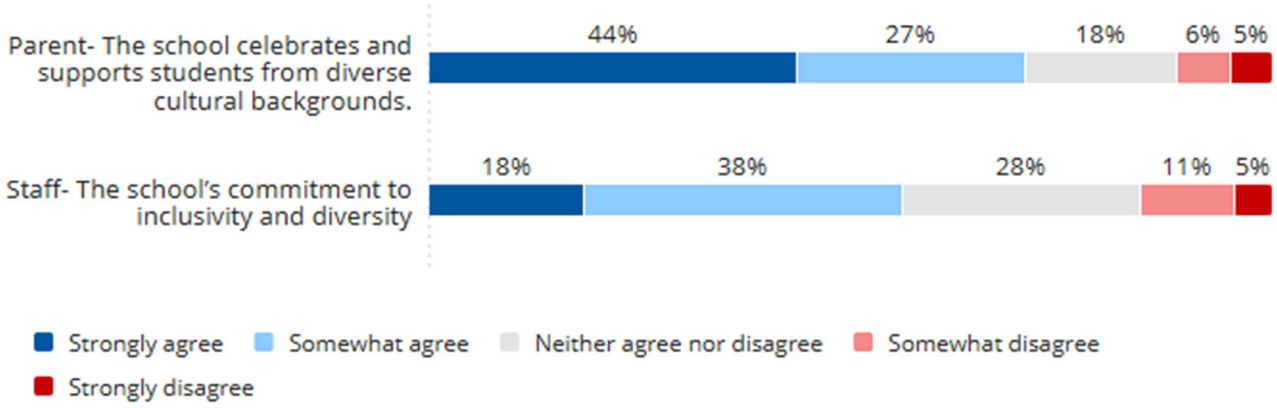
(Mean: 5 Very Positive, 3 Neutral, 1 Very Negative)



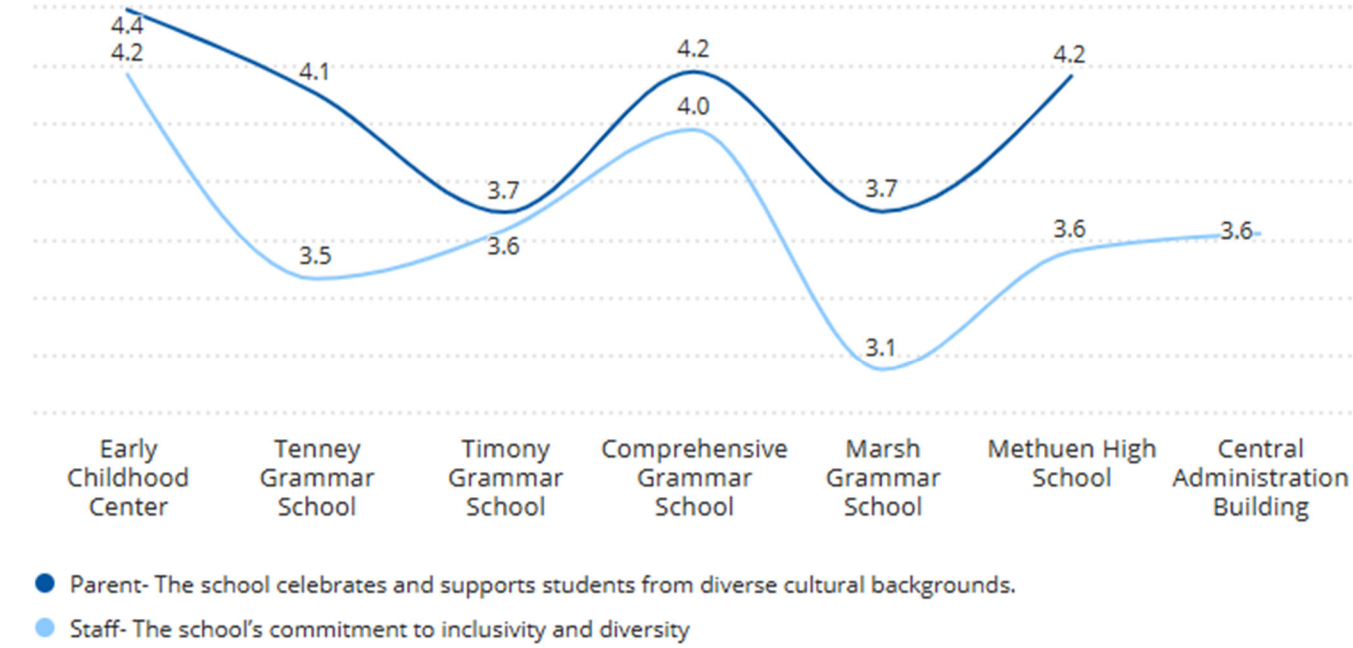
12. School Culture

- Sentiment Trends:
    - Positive culture is tied to community and inclusivity.
    - **Parents:** Value inclusive environments but feel some traditions are overlooked.
    - **Students:** Want more engaging and fun activities.
    - **Staff:** Describe a challenging culture due to admin disconnect.
- Quotes:
    - "Realmente me sentí como en familia, el servicio y apoyo son únicos 😍😍(I really felt like family, the service and support are unique.)" (Parent)
    - "I, and many others, feel left out of input, thoughts, etc. unless you are part of the 'inner circle'." (Staff)

School Culture- Diversity



Diversity Sentiment by School:
(Mean: 5 Very Positive, 3 Neutral, 1 Very Negative)



13. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Perceive selective inclusivity, with some groups prioritized.
    - **Students:** Report unfair treatment or favoritism.
    - **Staff:** Call for cultural competency training.
- Sentiment Trends:
    - Perceptions of inequity create tension among stakeholders.
    - Staff see a need for professional development in inclusiveness.
- Quotes:
    - “Inclusivity is selective. Especially as it pertains to minorities.” (Staff)
    - “Teachers need to stop only listening to the females and not the males. We matter too.” (Student)
    - “I feel that the average student who lives with two parents does not get the same help and consideration as more diverse populations do.” (Parent)

School Culture- Social Media

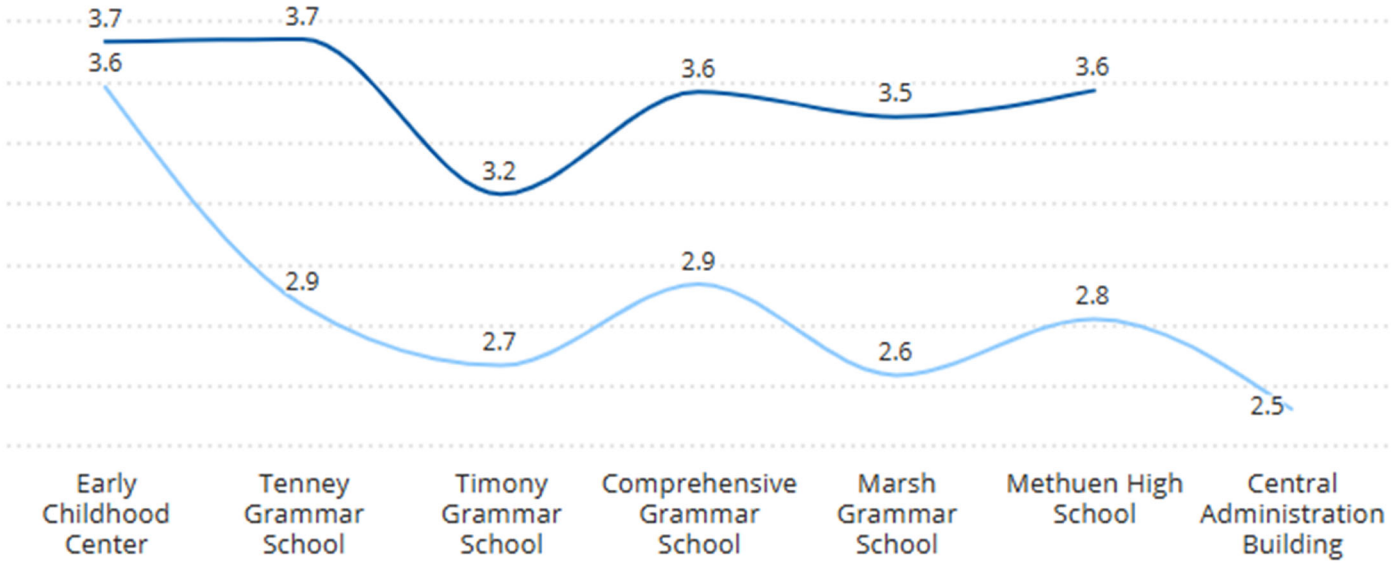
Parent - Social media has a positive impact on school communication and culture.

5- Strongly Agree
3- Neutral
1- Strongly Disagree

Staff - The role of social media in shaping school culture

5- Excellent
3- Neutral
1- Very Poor

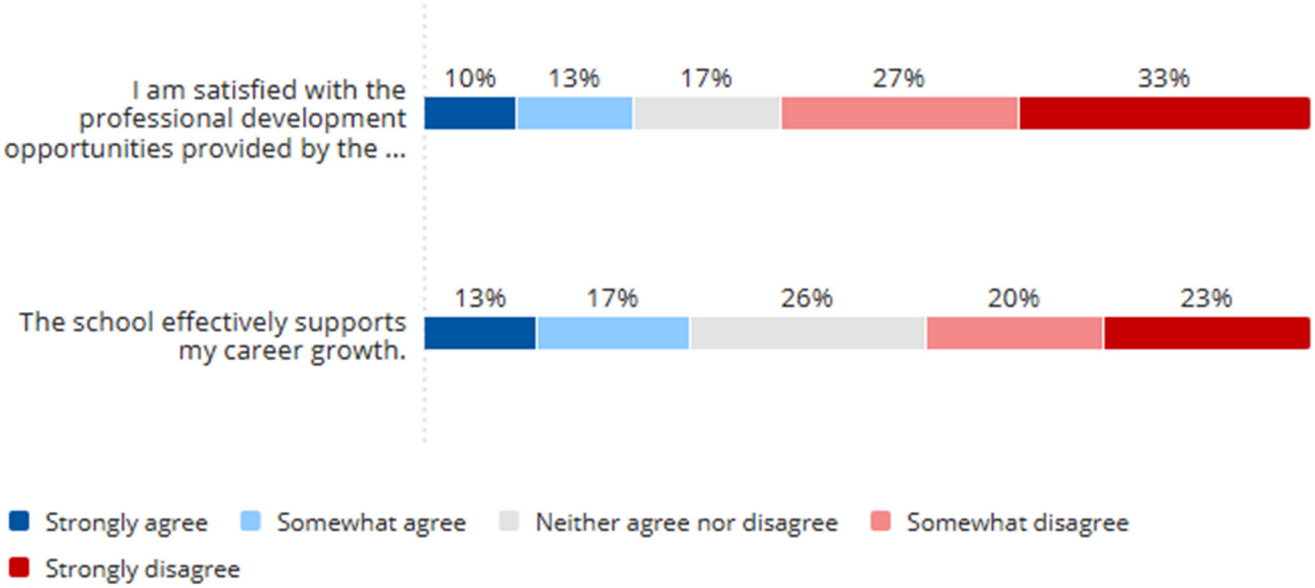
Social Media Sentiment by School:
(Mean: 5 Very Positive, 3 Neutral, 1 Very Negative)

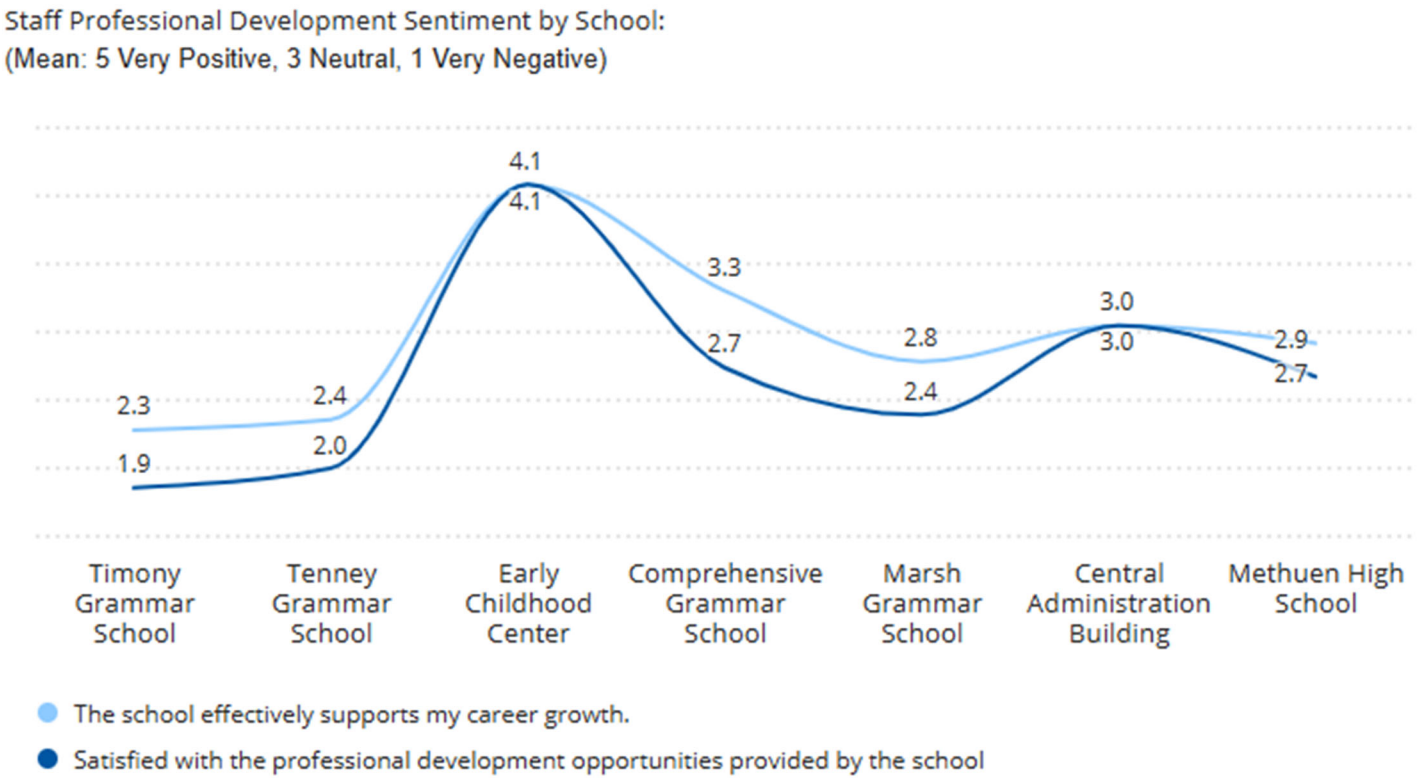


14. Impact of Social Media

- Sentiment Trends:
    - Phone and social media policies are contentious.
    - Social media amplifies bullying concerns.
    - Students want flexible phone policies for emergencies.
- Quotes:
    - “Let students use phones in dismissal hours, if photos are taken of people or other things, without the other person allowing it, they should be given a warning.” (Student)
    - “Social media is a big problem—students use phones during class to record videos and post them online.” (Parent)

Staff and Professional Development



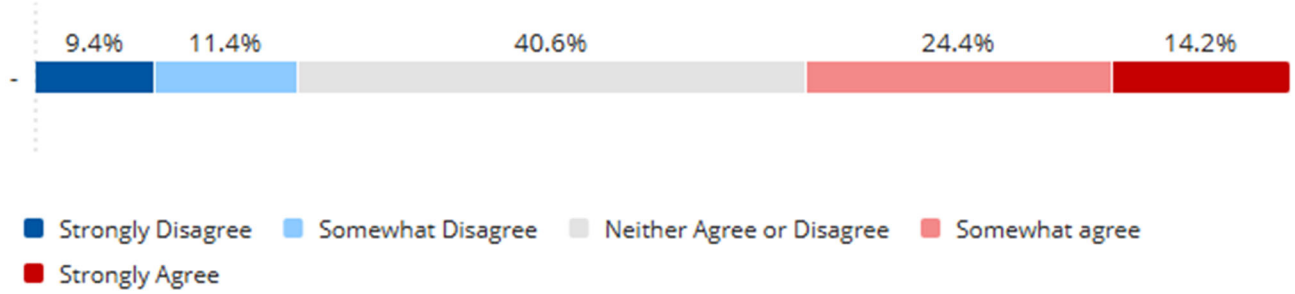


15. Staff Professional Development

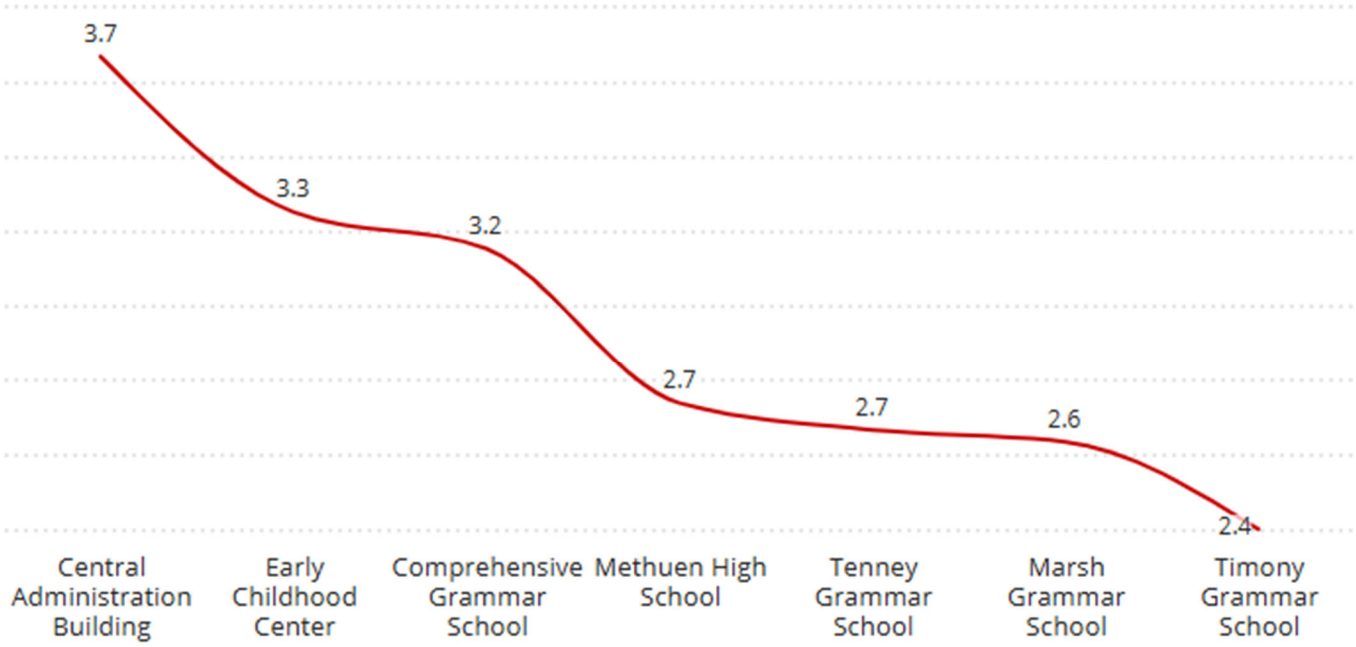
- Sentiment Trends:
    - Professional development lacks relevance and teacher input.
    - Staff seek subject-specific and practical training.
- Quotes:
    - “The current approach to professional development (PD) lacks intentional planning and relevance.”
    - “There are very few subject specific PD opportunities (besides in ELA). The trainings feel generic.”
    - “In the 15+ years I have worked for MPS, I have only received one professional development.”

Administration: School & Central Office

Staff Sentiment: Do you agree with the following statement?
"There is a disconnect between my school's administration and the central office's vision and priorities."



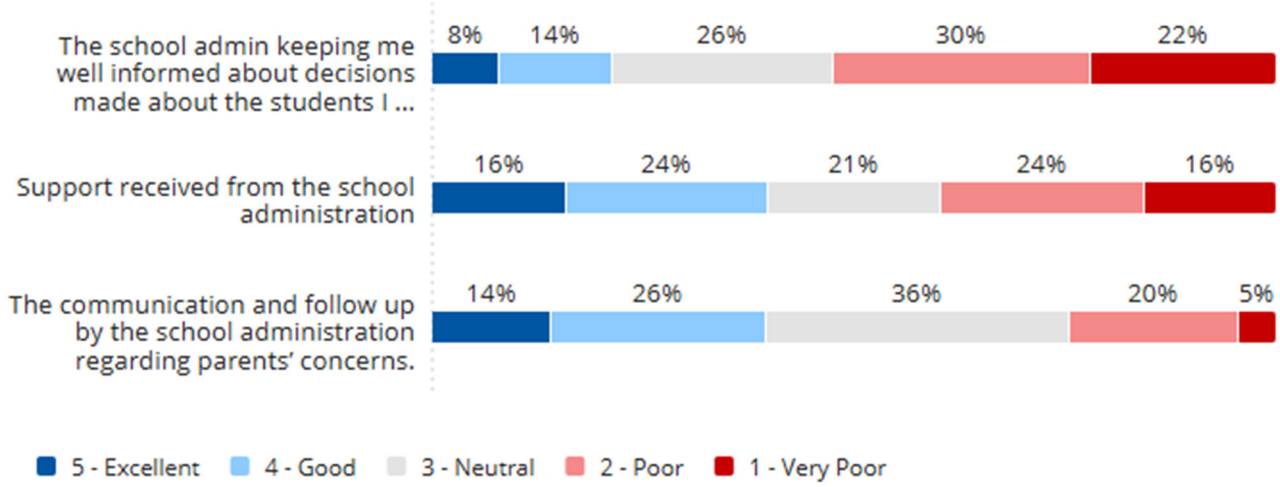
Staff
Mean: 1 Strongly Agree (Disconnected), 5 Strongly Disagree (Well connected)

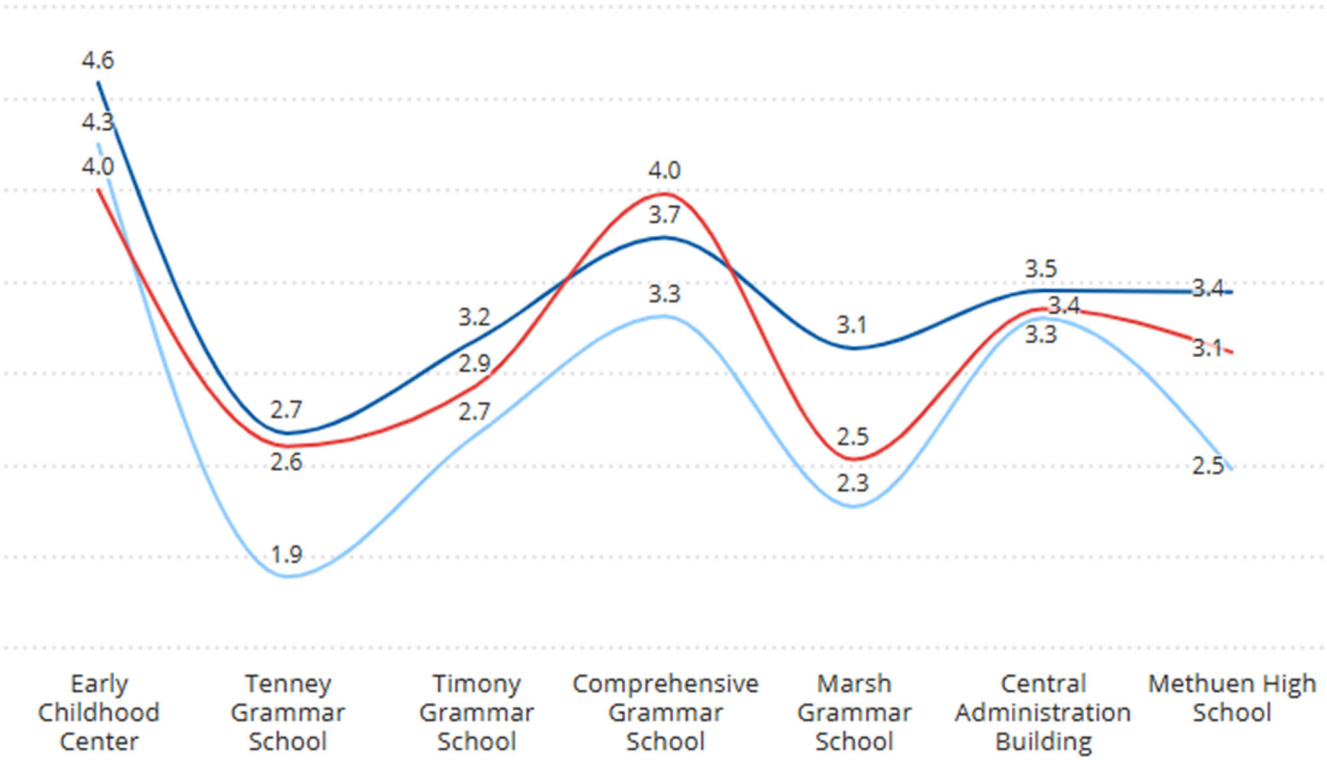


16. School–District Coordination

- Sentiment Trends:
    - District priorities (e.g., cost-saving) conflict with school needs.
    - Lack of collaboration frustrates staff and parents.
    - Criticize central office for overriding teacher input.
- Quotes:
    - “Our professional opinions and expertise are many times not taken into account or asked for.” (Staff)
    - “Stop taking away from Methuen kids. Arts, field trips, supportive stuff.” (Parent)

School Administration & Staff





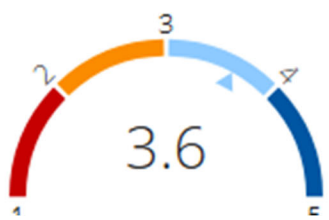
(Mean: 5 Excellent, 3 Neutral, 1 Very poor)

17. Admin–Staff Dynamics

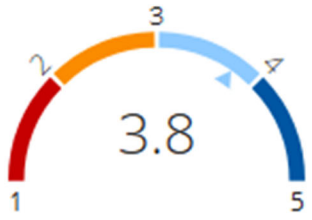
- Sentiment Trends:
    - Admin are seen as disconnected from staff and students.
    - Lack of trust hinders collaboration.
    - Feel unsupported or micromanaged by admin.
- Quotes:
    - “Admin. does not value our years of experience and knowledge from being in the classroom.” (Staff)
    - “Sensitive information shared with administrators is not handled professionally.” (Staff)

School Administration Communication with Parents & Students

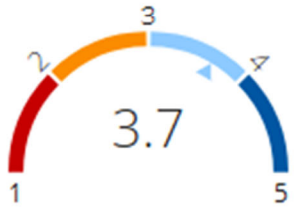
Parents - School leadership listens to parents and takes action.
(Mean- 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree)

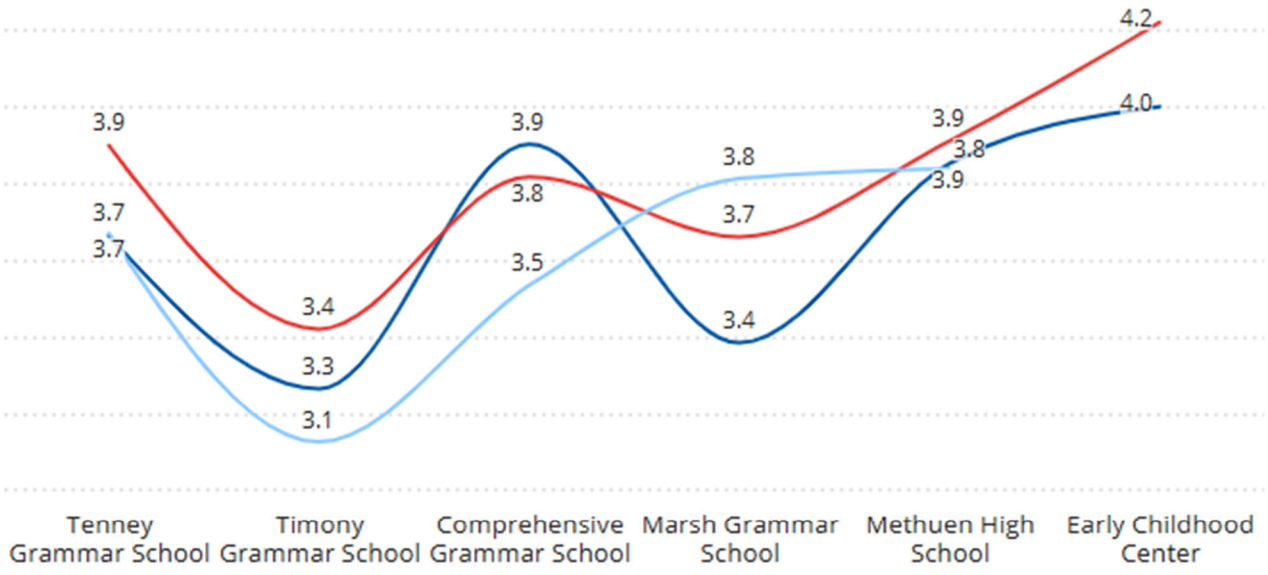


Parent- The school communicates well with parents about their child's progress.
(Mean- 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree)



Students: School leaders (Principal and office) listen and talk to students well.
(Mean- 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree)





(Mean- 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree)

18. Admin Communication to Parents/Students

- Sentiment Trends:
  - **Parents:** Seek more consistent and proactive communication.
  - **Students:** Feel unheard by admin.
  - Parents and students want more engagement from admin.
  - Communication tools are underutilized.
- Quotes:
  - "I would appreciate if the leaders in our school would listen a little more to what the students have to say." (Student)
  - I'd love to see more consistent, inclusive family engagement and open communication where school leaders are more welcoming. (Parent)
  - "My son was recently bullied before April vacation started. I was told I was going to get a phone call on the steps they're going to take… I have yet to hear anything back." (Parent)

Administration Care and Responsiveness

Sentiment Trends:

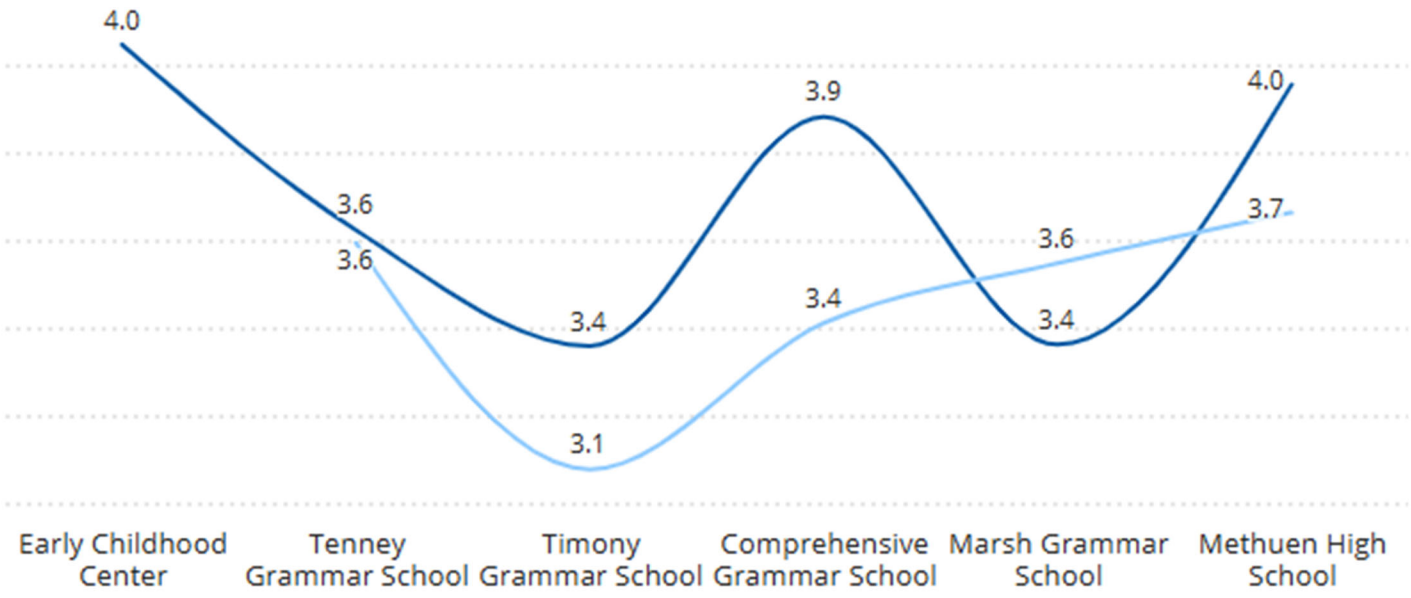
- Responsiveness varies across stakeholder experiences.
- **Parents:** Perceive admin as unresponsive or distant.
- **Students:** Feel admin are unfair or absent.
- **Staff:** Report lack of follow-through on concerns.

Parent - The school handles parent concerns in a fair and timely manner.
(Mean- 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree)

Quotes:

- "The principal should be walking in every classroom! Where is she?" (Parent)
- "Admin kisses their feet and teachers are blamed. We were called names and admin just sat there." (Staff)
- "The principal picks favorites, it's unfair." (Student)

Student- The school leaders (Principal and people in the office) care about what I think and my opinions are valued.
(Mean- 5- Strongly Agree, 3- Neutral, 1- Strongly Disagree)



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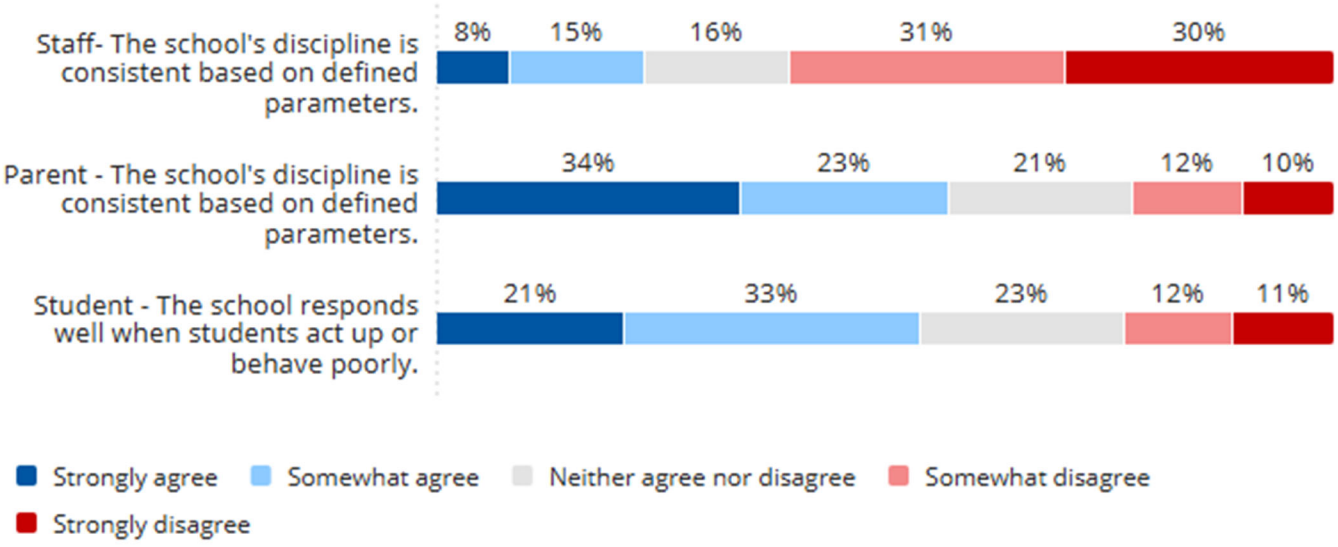
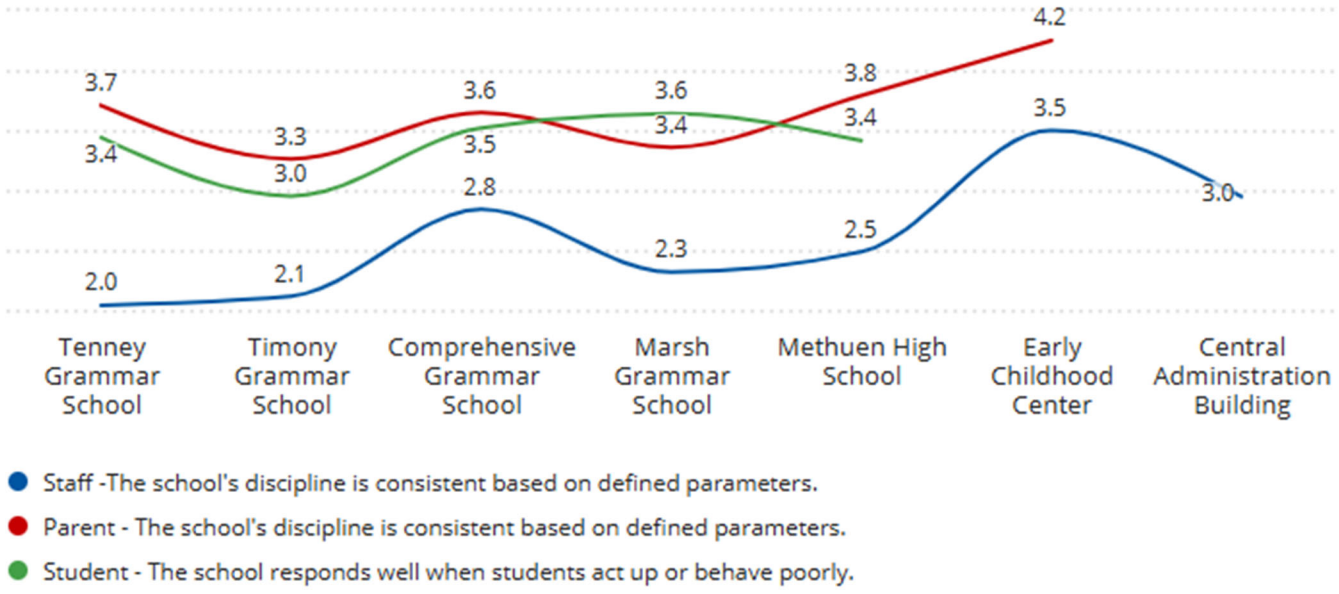
Discipline and Student Behavior

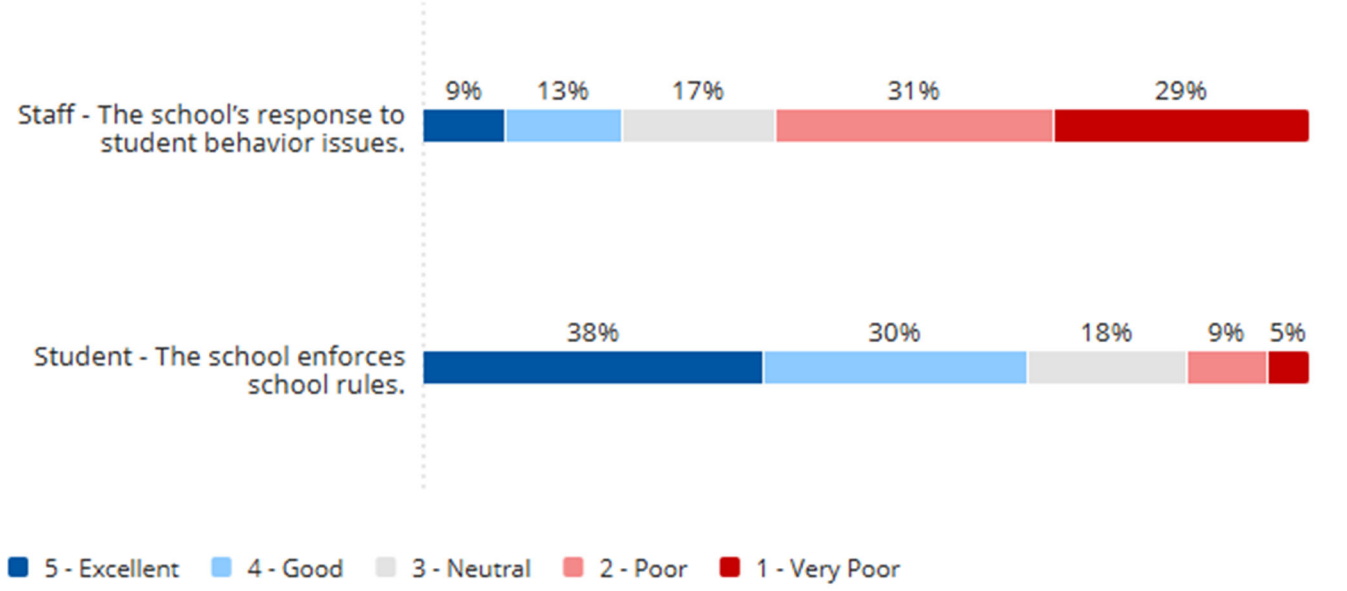


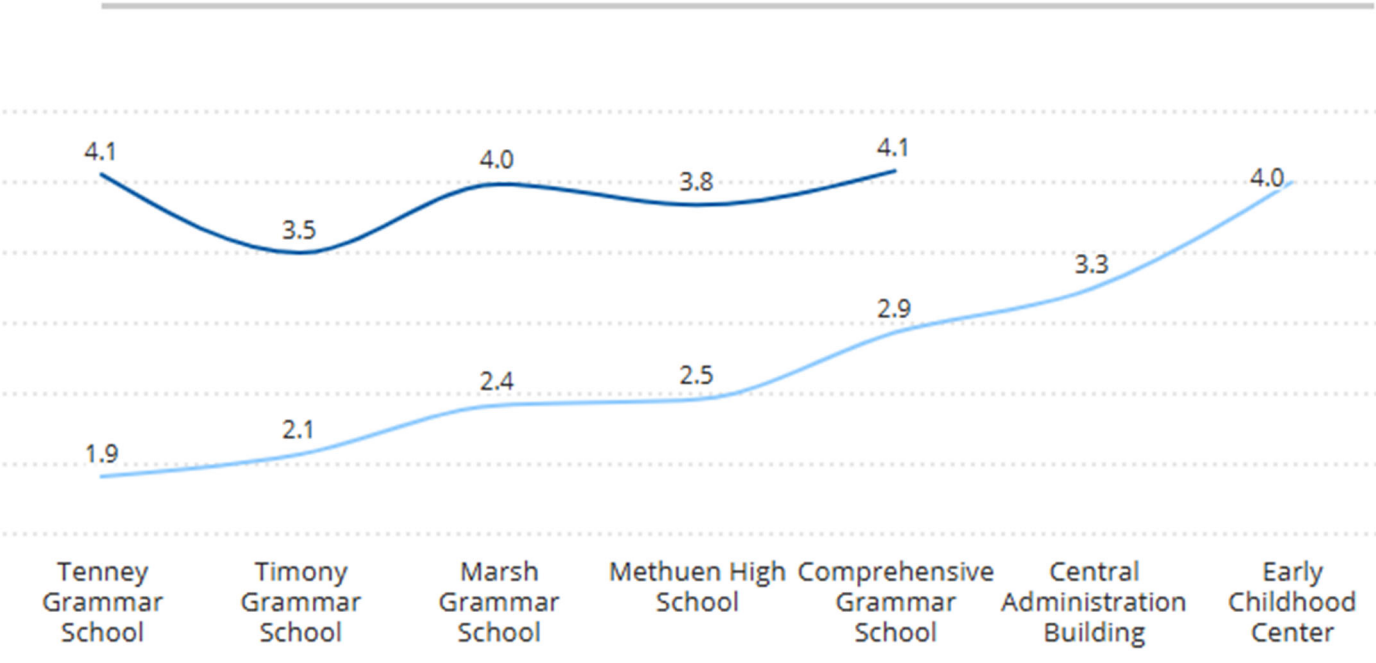


20. Discipline and Behavioral Issues

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Frustrated by inconsistent consequences for disruptions.
    - **Students:** Want stricter rule enforcement.
    - **Staff:** Feel unsupported in managing behaviors.
    - Inconsistent discipline undermines classroom management.
    - All groups seek clearer policies and support.
- Quotes:
    - "Poor mgmt of behaviors of other kids prevent teachers from actually teaching." (Parent)
    - "Just enforce the rules better and not let people make other people feel small." (Student)

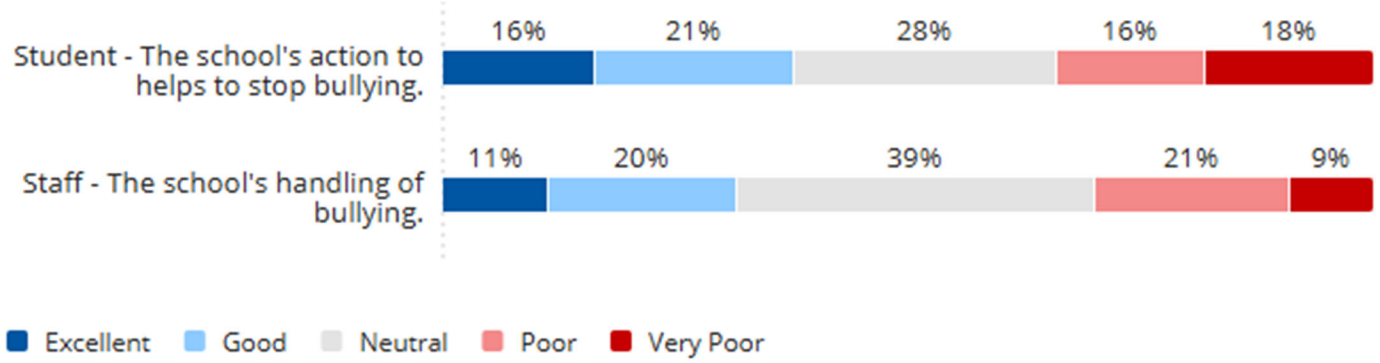
School Response to Behavioral Issues

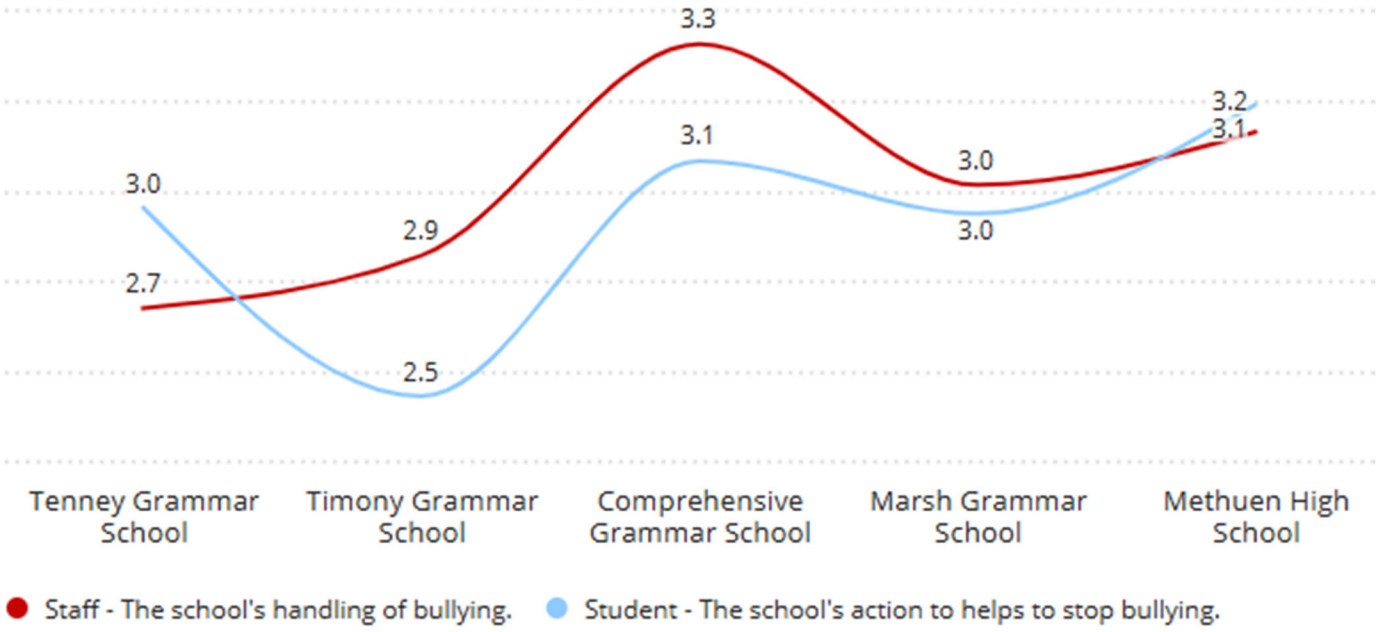




(Mean- 5- Excellent, 3- Neutral, 1- Very Poor

School Response to Bullying





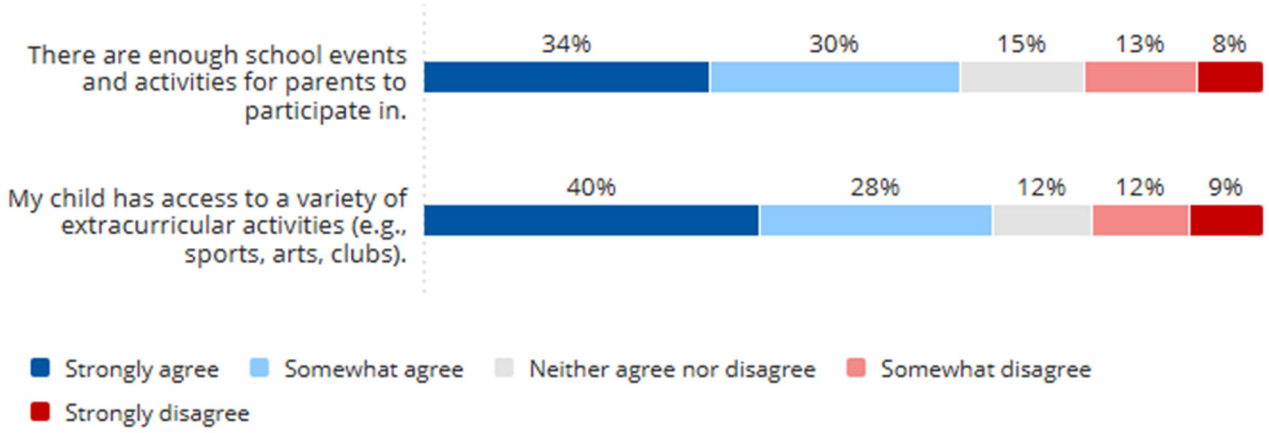
(Mean- 5- Excellent, 3- Neutral, 1- Very Poor

21. Bullying Response

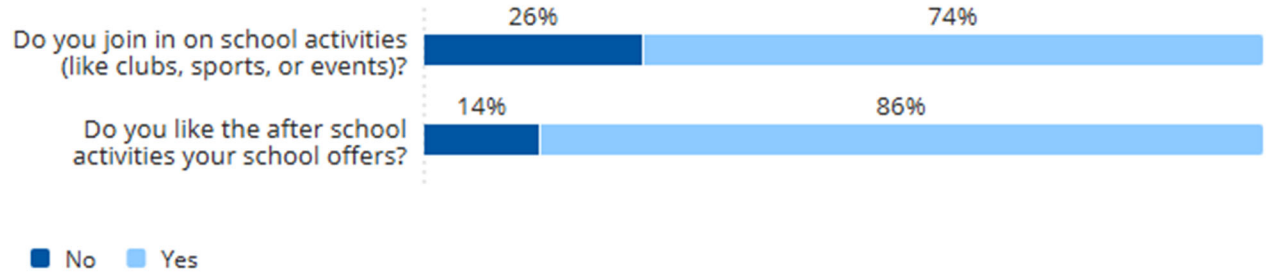
- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Report inadequate responses to bullying.
    - **Students:** Feel bullying is ignored or mishandled.
    - **Staff:** Note lack of effective interventions.
    - Stakeholders feel unheard or dismissed.
- Quotes
    - “I have a big problem with my son being bullied and the response that I get from teachers in the building.” (Parent)
    - “Bullying is making people giving up on life especially the popular kids with their roasts.” (Student)
    - “Disruptive and violent behaviors need to be better dealt with. The violent behaviors are not dealt with in accordance with the student handbook and they are sometimes not even required to leave the classroom so that safe and calm learning can continue.” (Staff)
    - “Discipline is inconsistent. Challenging for AP to handle it all. Not enough meaningful consequences.” (Staff)

Extracurricular Activities

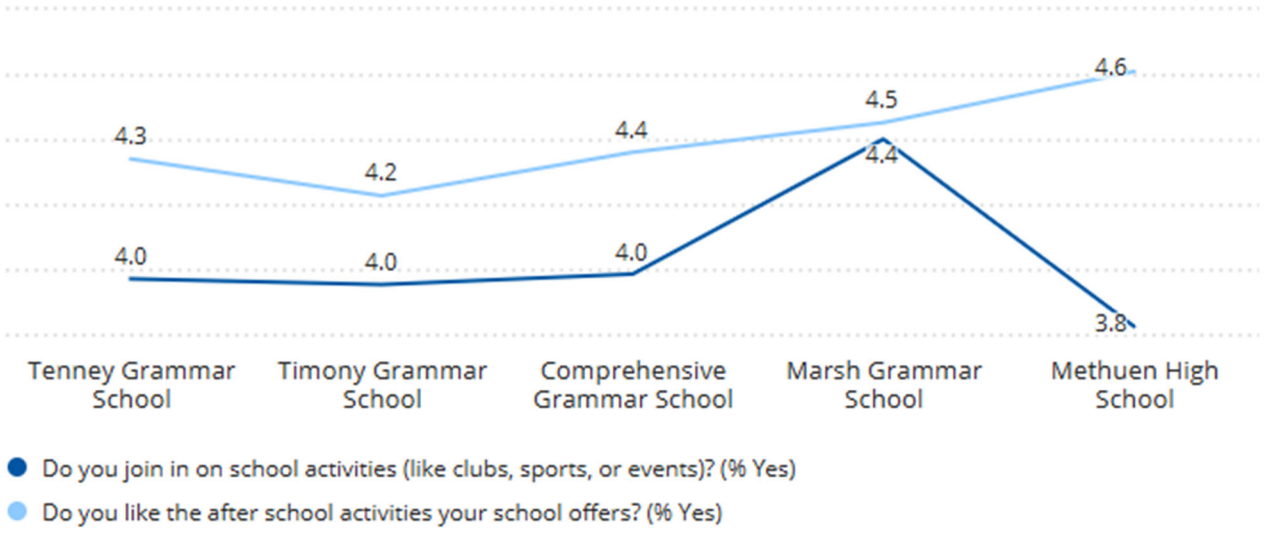
Parent Sentiment



Student Sentiment



Student Sentiment



22. Extracurricular Activities

- Sentiment Trends:
    - **Parents:** Want more activities, especially for younger students.
    - Extracurriculars are limited, particularly for lower grades.
    - Students and parents see activities as boosting engagement.
- Quotes:
    - “I wish there were more afterschool activities.” (Parent)
    - “I think it would be great if the school could have a school talent show.” (Student)
    - “Las actividades escolares extracurriculares solo están disponibles para niños de la escuela intermedia. (Extracurricular school activities are only available to middle school children.)” (Parent)

Notable Recommendations Based on Open Ended Questions

1. **Strengthen Discipline and Bullying Policies:** Develop consistent behavioral interventions and train staff in de-escalation.
2. **Enhance Communication:** Implement regular parent and student updates via platforms like Talking Points.
3. **Improve Facility Maintenance:** Address mold, pests, and sanitation through increased staffing and funding.
4. **Support Staff Development:** Provide relevant, subject-specific PD based on teacher feedback.
5. **Expand Extracurriculars:** Offer inclusive activities for all grades, including arts and clubs.
6. **Advocate for Funding:** Address budget constraints to support staffing, programs, and resources.
7. **Foster Admin–Staff Collaboration:** Build trust through active listening and shared decision-making.

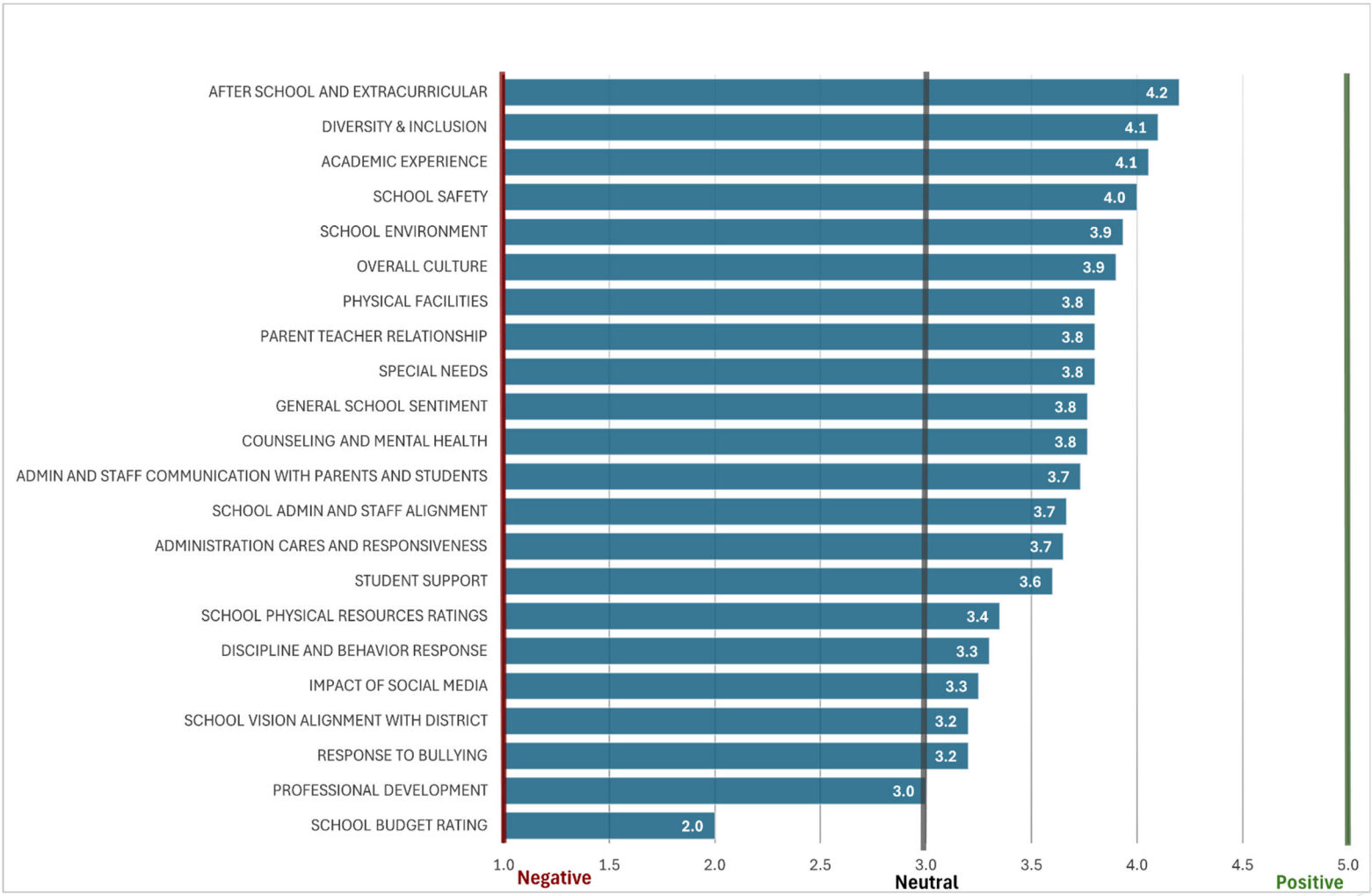
Comprehensive Grammar School

Overall Score: 71.9%

Summary

This report presents findings from a mixed-method analysis of survey responses from the students, parents, and staff of the Comprehensive Grammar School (CGS) including qualitative feedback and corresponding quantitative ratings across 22 focus areas. Quantitative ratings provide context for understanding areas where CGS is performing well and where improvements are needed.

Most respondents highlighted strong extracurricular offerings, a positive sense of diversity and inclusion, and general feelings of safety. However, opportunities for improvement remain in areas such as school budgeting, professional development, and consistent enforcement of discipline and bullying response policies.



General School Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Respondents express a mix of positive and negative sentiments about CGS. Staff praised leadership dedication, while parents and students note declining quality, and inconsistent support.
- Positive feedback highlights staff commitment, while criticism focuses on resource shortages and teacher attitudes.

Comments:

- Staff: "I see the principal's firsthand work. They are 100 percent committed and do an amazing job handling all the situations that arise."
- Parent: "CGS is a good school overall, but over time there has been a decline."

Parent Perspective on Child's Experience

Key Insights:

- Parents report varied experiences, with some praising support for personal goals and others frustrated by neglect of advanced or struggling students.
- Key concerns include inadequate attention to diverse learners and poor communication about progress.

Comments:

- Parent: "The CGS School has been extremely beneficial and helping my child with all of her personal goals and psychological well-being."
- Parent: "My kids are A students. Which is great however I feel like the teachers' and schools' attention is aimed towards kids whose first language isn't English."
- Parent: "When one of my kids was falling behind in class, nothing was brought to my attention until it was well past the chance to fix the problem for that semester."

The Overall School Environment

Key Insights:

- The environment is seen as positive by some, but staff and parents highlight teacher burnout, inconsistent discipline, and facility issues.
- Students note cleanliness and facility concerns as detracting from the experience.

Comments:

- Staff: "I, and many others, feel left out of input, thoughts, etc. unless you are part of the 'inner circle'."
- Parent: "The school is filled with so many children that don't want to learn, and it impacts the kids that do."
- Student: "I feel like this school needs to get better at cleaning."

Teacher Support for Students

Key Insights:

- Teacher support varies widely, with praise for dedication overshadowed by criticism of disengagement, favoritism, and insufficient help for struggling students.
- Students express frustration with teacher's attitudes and lack of care.

Comments:

- Parent: "The staff members have been consistently supportive and receptive, creating a positive and welcoming environment."
- Student: "Maybe the teachers actually cared when the students go up to them with a problem."
- Parent: "Teachers are there to make sure to get the scores for the MCAS and nothing else matters."

Parent/Teacher Relationships

Key Insights:

- Parents seek better communication and engagement, often citing inconsistent or delayed updates from teachers.
- Positive examples exist, but gaps in proactive outreach hinder relationships.

Comments:

- Parent: "I have expressed that I would like more communication between the school, teacher, and myself."
- Parent: "The teachers have always responded within 24 hours to an email or talking points message."
- Parent: "I have found that teachers' communication re: child's progress or lack of is inconsistent."

Student Safety

Key Insights:

- Safety issues include bullying, disruptive behavior, and poor facility conditions like unsafe bathrooms.
- Respondents feel the school inadequately addresses these concerns.

Comments:

- Staff: "Behavior parameters are not clearly defined; classroom teachers are not sure of what we CAN do as a consequence."

Budget/Funding Constraints

Key Insights:

- Funding shortages impact staffing, resources, and programs, leading to widespread frustration.
- Parents and staff link these constraints to declining educational quality and facility upkeep.

Comments:

- Parent: "The lack of current funding is concerning and knowing that there are major cuts planned makes me consider finding another school."
- Parent: “our schools can always use more funding …The past 2 years we have donated fans to our child's classroom, but I worry for the other classrooms where these basic necessities may not be able to be provided by donation or by the school.”
- Parent: “We need to continue to fight to fund our schools. Our education deficit is hurting our children and causing unnecessary stress on our teachers.”
- Parent: “Proposed cuts to teachers and funding would greatly impact my children's experience”

School Resources

Key Insights:

- Some comments focus on outdated materials, insufficient technology, and poor facility maintenance.
- Suggestions include better resource allocation and communication about availability.

Comments:

- Staff: " Methuen public school provides so much more resources to their staff/teachers, more than other surrounding schools."
- Parent: " Libraries should be fully functioning with ability to teach about research and web learning.”
- Student: "Improve the lunch and make the library an actual thing for use."

Special Needs and ESL Programs

Key Insights:

- Dissatisfaction exists with special needs and ESL support, citing inconsistent services and lack of resources.
- Parents and staff demand better training and inclusivity.

Comments:

- Staff: "We are often asked to spend quality time to vet out curricula, etc. only to realize later that decisions are often based on cost of programs vs our professional opinion."
- Parent: "Schools need to have more staff that can support special needs students and have smaller group class settings."
- Parent: "My child's special education is limited due to staff concerns"

Counseling and Mental Health

Key Insights:

- Limited counseling and mental health support frustrate respondents, with calls for more resources and focus.
- Students suggest more frequent mental health check-ins.

Comments:

- Parent: "Need more counselors, real counselors."
- Student: "One thing I think can make our school better is taking the mental health surveys more often."

Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Key Insights:

- Poor facility conditions—unclean classrooms, broken equipment, and unsafe bathrooms—are major concerns.
- Staff and parents demand proactive maintenance and better custodial support.

Comments:

- Staff: "Classrooms are not cleaned every day."
- Parent: " Bathrooms are disgusting esp in boys room and need more monitoring … I hear no locks on some stall doors too...my kids report fearful of using boys room."
- Student: "I feel like this school needs to get better cleaning and definitely get every classroom with rugs out."
- Student: “The gym is so gross in there and I feel like it never gets cleaned."

School Culture

Key Insights:

- Some criticized school culture as unwelcoming and exclusive, with calls for more community-building efforts.
- Leadership tone and student behavior contribute to negative perceptions.

Comments:

- Parent: "It would be wonderful if schools and families could work together to build a community."
- Staff: Incorporating more positive, community-building events — such as friendly competitions between staff and parents — could strengthen school culture and foster better partnerships.
- Student: "I think that they could take people not listening more seriously as well as bullying."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Insights:

- Issues of bias and unequal treatment persist, with cultural recognition lacking.
- Respondents urge more inclusive practices and training.

Comments:

- Staff: "Inclusivity is a big problem at the grammar schools."
- Parent: "Events like African American History month, and other months and days are completely ignored."

Impact of Social Media

Key Insights:

- Minimal feedback, with one parent suggesting better use of communication platforms beyond social media.

Comments:

- Parent: "I have expressed that I would like more communication between the school, teacher, and myself."

Staff Professional Development

Key Insights:

- Staff criticize irrelevant and poorly planned professional development, seeking practical, subject-specific training.
- Lack of teacher input in PD decisions is a recurring issue.

Comments:

- Staff: "Much of our professional development is irrelevant or unhelpful."

- Staff: "Suggestions are made for applicable PD and not listened to."

School–District Coordination

Key Insights:

- Misalignment between district decisions and school needs frustrates staff, particularly around resources and PD.
- District priorities often ignore classroom realities.

Comments:

- Staff: "Our professional opinions and expertise are many times not taken into account or asked for when making decisions that directly affect the students and our teaching."

Admin–Staff Dynamics

Key Insights:

- Staff report strained relationships with administration, citing dismissiveness and poor communication.
- A lack of inclusion and support fosters disconnection.

Comments:

- Staff: "I, and many others, feel left out of input, thoughts, etc.
- Staff: "Sometimes admin can be dismissive. Also, it is frustrating to send emails and not get responses."

Admin Communication to Parents/Students

Key Insights:

- Parents and students criticize inconsistent and untimely communication from administration.
- Calls for clearer, more proactive updates are common.

Comments:

- Parent: "I have expressed that I would like more communication between the school, teacher, and myself."
- Parent: " Supports and communication varies from grade to grade, from teacher to teacher."

Admin Care/Responsiveness

Key Insights:

- Mixed views on admin responsiveness, with some praising commitment and others noting inaction on concerns.
- Visibility and engagement from leadership are questioned.

Comments:

- Parent: "The leadership at the CGS is wonderful from a parent's perspective."
- Staff: "I see the principal's first hand work. They are 100 percent committed and do an amazing job handling all the situations that arise."
- Staff: "I feel our building admin supports us but ultimately too many tasks, initiatives, data collection, etc. are being passed down by central admin to them and then on to the teachers and the amount of "things" we are asked to do makes the profession overwhelming"

Discipline and Behavioral Issues

Key Insights:

- Inconsistent discipline and lenient consequences frustrate respondents, seen as enabling disruptions.
- Clear, fair policies are widely requested.

Comments:

- Staff: "Discipline is inconsistent. Challenging for AP to handle it all. Not enough meaningful consequences."
- Parent: "I think that not enough is done in regard to bullying and bad behavior of students."
- Parent: " I have heard about numerous incidents of bullying and bad behavior that are not dealt with strongly enough or at all."

Bullying Response

Key Insights:

- Bullying remains a significant, poorly addressed issue, leaving students and parents feeling unsupported.
- Stronger, proactive responses are demanded.

Comments:

- Parent: " I think more attention needs to be put on bullying. I have emailed about my son being bullied and only received a response from 2/5 staff members I reached out to. That is disappointing."
- Student: "Yes, actually do something about bullying"
- Student: "Telling the kids to be nicer to me would be great."

Extracurricular Activities

Key Insights:

- Demand for more diverse, accessible extracurriculars is high, with current options limited, especially for younger students.
- Suggestions include sports, arts, and talent shows.

Comments:

- Parent: "I wish there were more extracurricular activities for the lower school."
- Student: "More outside sports."
- Student: "I think it would be great if the school could have a school talent show."

Recommendations

1. Budget and Funding Constraints

Why: This category received the lowest quantitative rating, averaging 2.0 out of 5, indicating a perceived lack of sufficient funding. Comments highlight concerns about outdated textbooks, technology, and limited classroom resources.

Opportunities:

- Conduct a needs assessment to prioritize and advocate for essential funding (e.g., textbooks, facility repairs).
- Increase transparency with staff and parents regarding how budget decisions are made and what constraints exist.
- Explore alternative funding sources such as grants, partnerships, or community fundraising.

2. Staff Professional Development

Why: The mean score for professional development was 3.0, a neutral rating suggesting room for enhanced support. Staff comments requested more relevant training topics and better alignment with team planning.

Opportunities:

- Involve teachers in selecting PD topics to ensure relevance and usefulness.
- Increase collaborative professional learning opportunities, such as team-based planning or peer learning communities.
- Allocate PD time for both district initiatives and school-specific priorities.

3. Bullying Response

Why: The bullying response category averaged 3.2, suggesting a need for stronger enforcement and visible action. Students and parents commented on ineffective interventions and a lack of follow-through.

Opportunities:

- Develop and communicate clear, consistent anti-bullying protocols and consequences.
- Provide training to staff and students on bullying prevention, intervention strategies, and reporting mechanisms.
- Regularly review and revise bullying response procedures with input from students and parents.

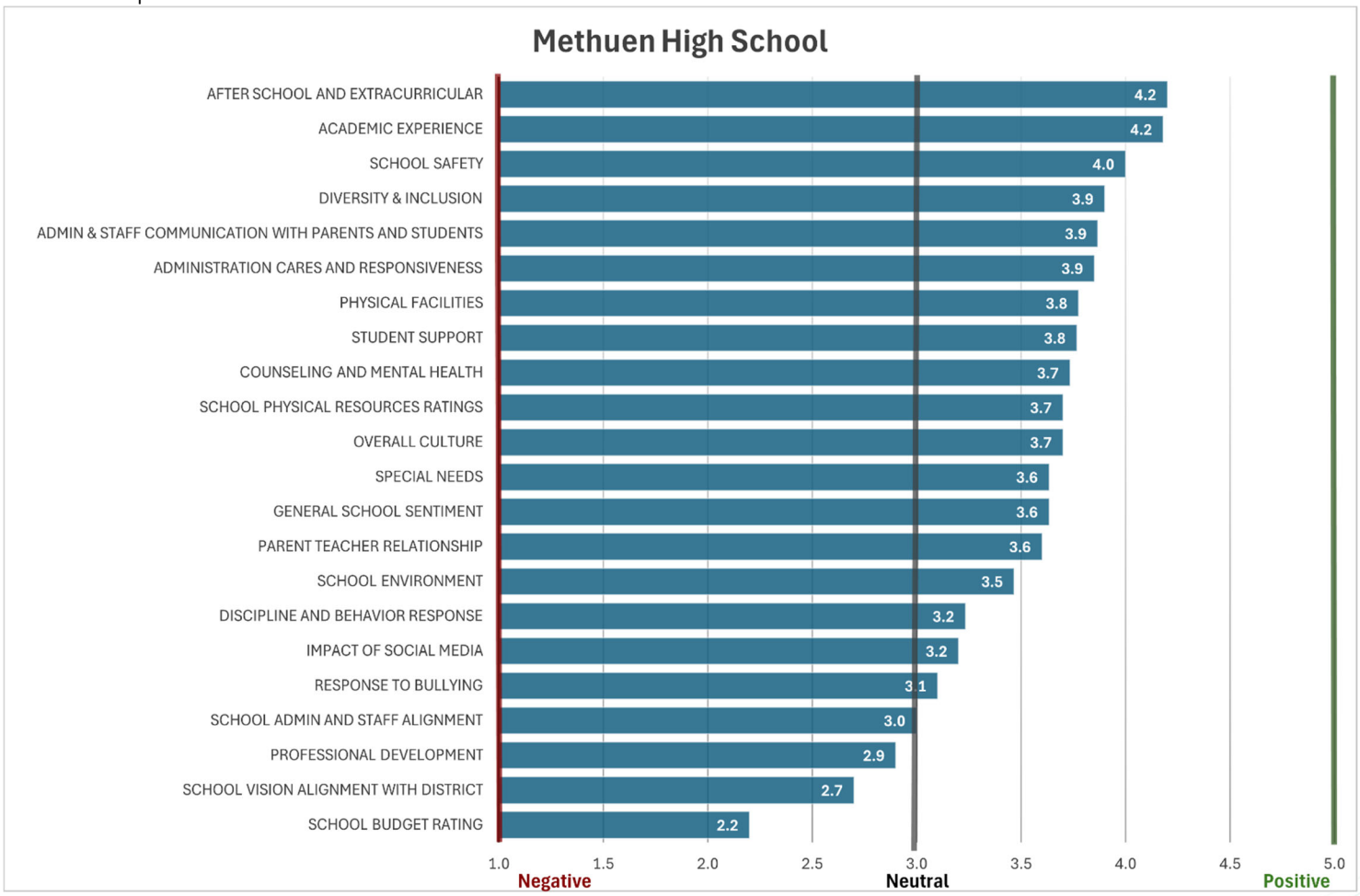
Methuen High School

Overall Score: 70%

Summary

This report presents findings from a mixed-method analysis of survey responses from the students, parents, and staff of Methuen High School including qualitative feedback and corresponding quantitative ratings across 22 focus areas. The school has particularly strong ratings in Academic Experience (4.2), After-School Programs (4.2), and School Safety (4.0). While many respondents express satisfaction with the supportive environment and dedicated staff, there are consistent concerns around budget transparency (2.2), school–district alignment (2.7), and professional development (2.9).

Qualitative responses reveal a vocal subset of stakeholders expressing dissatisfaction, especially regarding communication, administrative responsiveness, discipline enforcement, and support for special education. This analysis aims to highlight both strengths and actionable areas for improvement.



**School Score calculated based on total points (5) for each area divided by the sum of all of the area averages.*

General School Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Many respondents express overall satisfaction with the school, praising its supportive environment and dedicated staff.
- Some staff and parents indicate areas for improvement, particularly regarding communication and resource allocation.
- Students generally feel positive about their school experience, though some express dissatisfaction with specific aspects like facility conditions or administrative policies.

Comments:

- Staff: “Excellent as always!”
- Parent: “It’s a good school”
- Student: “It is a very good school! Not really anything to share in terms of making things better, because it’s pretty good at the moment.”
- Student: “For me, it is going swell, and I hope you guys continue to make it a great environment for other kids in the future!”

Parent Perspective on Child’s Experience

Key Insights:

- Parents appreciate the support provided by teachers and staff, especially for students with special needs.
- Communication between school and parents is a recurring issue, with some parents feeling uninformed about their child’s progress.

Comments:

- Parent: “Both my children are students at MHS and have been excelling academically. We couldn’t be more proud.”
- Parent: “My son is on an IEP and is thriving”
- Parent: “With a child with disabilities and on an IEP, I do not feel like all teachers communicate appropriately or support my child with disabilities”

- Parent: “MHS has been an absolute lifesaver for my child. The staff has gone above and beyond to accommodate my daughter with her struggles.”

The Overall School Environment- Staff perspective

Key Insights:

- Staff express mixed feelings about the school environment, with some feeling supported and others describing it as toxic or unsupportive.
- Issues such as workplace bullying, lack of accountability, and high turnover contribute to a negative atmosphere in some cases.

Comments:

- “The Ascendant: “The atmosphere is toxic and negative, lacking confidentiality and plagued by workplace bullying without accountability.”
- “The overall vibe at the high school is very negative. Morale is at an all-time low.”

Teacher Support for Students

Key Insights:

- Teachers are widely praised for their dedication and support, especially in challenging circumstances.
- Some parents and students report inconsistencies in teacher quality and support, particularly for students with special needs.
- There is a call for more training on disabilities and emotional needs to improve teacher effectiveness.

Comments:

- Parent: “Teachers have all been great.”
- Student: “All the teachers are nice. If they can keep going like that, it would be a blessing.”
- Parent: “Teachers need more training on disabilities in particular emotional disabilities and the impact of student’s emotional state.”

Parent/Teacher Relationships

Key Insights:

- Parents desire more opportunities for involvement and communication with teachers.
- There is a perceived lack of proactive engagement from the school, leading to feelings of exclusion.
- Suggestions include more parent-teacher conferences and better communication channels.

Comments:

- Parent: “High school teachers should have conferences.”
- Parent: “Outside of watching your children in sports or music/theater performances, there really aren’t any opportunities for parents to be involved at the high school.”
- Parent: “In my opinion, there should be more parent-teacher activities; that would help us be more successful as a school and as students.”

Student Safety

Key Insights:

- Concerns exist about physical safety, including fights, bullying, and facility conditions.
- Some students and parents feel that the school does not adequately address safety issues, such as vaping in bathrooms or hallway monitoring.

Comments:

- Parent: “My student did not feel completely safe in the school at times.”
- Student: “Horrible, I feel so unsafe. People always are criticizing and rude. Please do better”
- Parent: “There are too many fights and students that distract those that truly want to learn.”

Budget/Funding Constraints

Key Insights:

- Budget limitations are a significant concern, impacting staffing, resources, and program availability.
- Parents and staff call for increased funding and better management of existing funds.
- There is frustration with perceived mismanagement and lack of transparency in budget decisions.

Comments:

- Staff: “Support for growth is not readily available. Turnover of staff seems to have spiked in recent years.”
- Parent: “The lack of funding is atrocious.”
- Student: “More funding for teachers”

School Resources

Key Insights:

- There are complaints about the lack of teaching materials, technology, and other resources.
- Parents and staff highlight the need for better classroom supplies and updated technology.
- Food quality and variety are also areas of concern.

Comments:

- Staff: “At times when the tv, or computers break it can take a long time for replacements, especially with the tvs.”
- Parent: “The food is AWFUL”
- Student: “School lunches I feel need more choices”

Special Needs and ESL Programs

Key Insights:

- There is dissatisfaction with the delivery of special needs services, particularly due to staff shortages and lack of training.
- Parents appreciate the efforts of staff but criticize systemic failures in supporting students with special needs.
- Equity concerns raised regarding access to programs and support for ESL students.

Comments:

- Staff: “Greater collaboration and support within the SPED department is needed.”
- Parent: “My son had issues with handwriting all thru his academic career which was all in Methuen. He NEVER got the help he needed.”
- Student: “The tests we need to do before going to college, like TOEFL iBT, IELTS, or Duolingo English Test. Those tests aren’t available in the school for English as a second language development kids.”

Counseling and Mental Health

Key Insights:

- Counseling services are seen as inadequate, particularly for career preparation and mental health support.
- Parents and students call for more proactive and individualized support from counselors.
- There is a recognized need for enhanced mental health resources and training for staff.

Comments:

- Parent: “College counseling is lacking! Returning students email is poor!”
- Student: “More mental health counselors for each student, most counselors are focused on academics rather than mental well-being.”
- Parent: “It is concerning that school counselors are screening for mental health issues in school and follow up supports, by licensed therapists, are not readily in place to support students.”

Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Key Insights:

- Staff and students report poor facility conditions, including cleanliness, temperature control, and maintenance delays.
- Issues such as pest infestations, broken equipment, and inadequate bathroom facilities are frequently mentioned.
- There is a call for better maintenance and cleaning services to improve the learning environment.

Comments:

- Staff: “Sometimes my classroom floor doesn't get cleaned for weeks.”
- Staff: “The rodent problem isn't new, this has been going on for years.”
- Parent: “Schools could be kept cleaner”
- Parent: “School is always cold. Must fix heat situation.”

School Culture

Key Insights:

- The school is often described as welcoming and supportive, fostering a positive culture.
- However, some comments indicate a need for improvement in inclusivity and student engagement.
- Suggestions include more community involvement and activities to enhance school spirit.

Comments:

- Parent: “I really liked it, because I see that there are no negative sentiments between colleagues.”
- Student: “We really need to add fun things into high school. High school is the last 4 years you have around, and it should be fun.”
- Parent: “There needs to be more community engagement.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Insights:

- Concerns exist about unequal treatment and lack of cultural celebration.
- Staff and parents call for more inclusive practices and awareness of diverse backgrounds.
- There are specific issues regarding access to programs for minority and special needs students.

Comments:

- Staff: “Inclusivity is applied selectively, which is a concerning trend.”
- Student: “I just want people to know enough of the stereotypes, enough with the comments, enough with racism and other inappropriate stuff.”

Impact of Social Media

Key Insights:

- Limited comments specifically address social media, with one parent noting its declining relevance for communication.

Comments:

- Parent: “Methuen High is so much better than the elementary schools. Nobody uses social media anymore. Don’t count on that, or our teens, to tell us what’s going on at the school.”

Staff Professional Development

Key Insights:

- Staff express frustration over limited and irrelevant professional development opportunities.
- There is a desire for more autonomy in choosing PD and for training that is applicable to their roles.
- Suggestions include PD on classroom management, curriculum use, and cultural awareness.

Comments:

- Staff: “I feel that our PD is mostly busy work and does not actually add to my career growth.”

- Staff: “Professional development is very limited and not helpful.”
- Parent: “Teachers need more training on disabilities in particular emotional disabilities.”

School–District Coordination

Key Insights:

- There are mentions of disconnect between school administration and central office priorities.
- Staff feel that district policies do not always align with school needs, particularly in special education and maintenance.

Comments:

- Staff: “I am unsure of what the disconnect is between the SPED Admin role and the district admin.”
- Staff: “The building crew are fantastic. The district facilities crew, are non-responsive and unsupportive.”

School Administration and Staff Dynamics

Key Insights:

- Staff report mixed experiences with administrative support, with some feeling undervalued or unsupported.
- Issues include lack of communication, inconsistent enforcement of policies, and perceived favoritism.
- Positive comments highlight supportive assistant principals and open communication in some areas.

Comments:

- Staff: “The dynamics and interactions between the staff and the admin at our central offices are extremely poor.”
- Staff: “There is very, very limited communication between administration and teachers.”
- Staff: “Disciplinary actions are not always clear, but I do feel that APs are supportive of teachers and respond appropriately.”

Admin Communication to Parents/Students

Key Insights:

- Parents frequently cite poor communication about their child's progress, incidents, and school activities.
- There is a desire for more proactive and consistent updates from the school.
- Some positive comments acknowledge good communication efforts, but overall, improvement is needed.

Comments:

- Parent: "A few texts from talking points in three years and a phone call with positive feedback is the only information I've had."
- Parent: "Sometimes kids' grades are not updated by a teacher in a timely manner and causes disruptions at home."

School Administration Care/Responsiveness

Key Insights:

- Parents and students feel that administration is sometimes unresponsive to concerns, particularly regarding discipline and special needs.
- There is a call for more proactive engagement and listening to student and parent feedback.
- Positive comments praise specific administrators for their support and understanding.

Comments:

- Parent: "The leadership does listen to parents' concerns, but actions are very rarely being taken."
- Student: "A big issue at our school is that administrators often blow things out of proportion without understanding the full context."
- Parent: "The associate principals are very understanding and supportive."

Discipline and Behavioral Issues

Key Insights:

- There is widespread dissatisfaction with the consistency and effectiveness of discipline policies.
- Staff and parents report that students often face no consequences for misbehavior, leading to a perception of lax enforcement.
- Suggestions include clearer rules, better enforcement, and more mediation-based approaches.

Comments:

- Staff: “Discipline for students is laughable. Staff are excused for behaviors that students demonstrate every day with no consequence.”
- Parent: “There needs to be better and more consistent consequences for students who are disruptive and disrespectful in class.”
- Student: “Stop ignoring kids getting bullied or kids vaping in the bathroom and actually do something about it.”

Bullying Response

Key Insights:

- Bullying is a significant concern, with reports of it being underreported and inadequately addressed.
- Students and parents call for more proactive measures to prevent and respond to bullying incidents.

Comments:

- Parent: “Bullying is rampant and underreported.”
- Student: “Do better, and stop bullying please”
- Student: “Let people be kinder, let them not make fun of others.”

Extracurricular Activities

Key Insights:

- Parents and students value extracurricular programs and express concern about potential cuts due to budget constraints.
- There is a desire for more diverse activities and better communication about available opportunities.
- Transportation and scheduling issues limit participation for some students.

Comments:

- Parent: “Please DO NOT REMOVE the school’s Arts Programs! My son is enjoying his time in JROTC.”
- Student: “We need a late bus. A lot of students uber home and that’s expensive.”
- Parent: “Very little information provided to parents as to what activities/clubs are available to students outside of athletics.”

Recommendations

1. Budget, Funding and Resource Allocation

Why: Feedback indicates significant concern about underfunding, lack of classroom resources, staff turnover, and aging infrastructure. Respondents describe broken equipment, outdated technology, and insufficient teaching materials. The perceived mismanagement and lack of communication around budget decisions further erode trust.

Opportunities:

- Communicate budget challenges transparently and advocate for community support.
- Prioritize funding for urgent building maintenance and classroom technology upgrades.
- Improve transparency by publicly sharing budget allocations and spending outcomes.
- Solicit community input through regular town halls or surveys on funding priorities.

2. Strengthen School–District Coordination and Administrative Alignment

Why: Staff describe a disconnect between school needs and district policies, especially in special education and facility support. A lack of clarity in roles and slow responsiveness from district teams undermines trust and effectiveness.

Opportunities:

- Establish routine alignment meetings between school leaders and district administrators.
- Develop shared accountability metrics and timelines for service delivery.
- Improve communication protocols for faster resolution.

3. Enhance Professional Development Relevance and Flexibility

Why: Staff report that current professional development (PD) offerings lack relevance and impact. There is a strong demand for more autonomy, practical skills training, and PD that supports diverse learning and behavioral needs.

Opportunities:

- Allow educators to select PD options aligned with their roles and classroom needs.
- Offer targeted training in emotional disabilities, classroom management, and inclusive instruction.
- Regularly assess PD effectiveness through feedback and implementation tracking.

4. Improve Communication and Administrative Responsiveness

Why: Parents and students express frustration with inconsistent updates about academic progress, discipline, and school activities. Some feel ignored or dismissed when raising concerns. While some administrators are praised, the overall perception points to a gap in responsiveness.

Opportunities:

- Standardize communication tools and increase frequency of updates to families.
- Train staff in effective and empathetic communication practices.
- Create feedback loops where parents and students see follow-up on concerns raised.

5. Address Discipline Consistency and Bullying Prevention

Why: Stakeholders report lax and uneven enforcement of discipline, as well as insufficient action in response to bullying. These issues impact school culture and feelings of safety among students.

Opportunities:

- Revise and clearly communicate discipline policies to all staff, students, and families.
- Implement consistent enforcement procedures and mediation-based alternatives.
- Launch a proactive anti-bullying initiative, including student training and staff support.

6. Expand Mental Health and Counseling Services

Why: Students and parents feel counseling services are overly focused on academics and lack sufficient mental health support.

Opportunities:

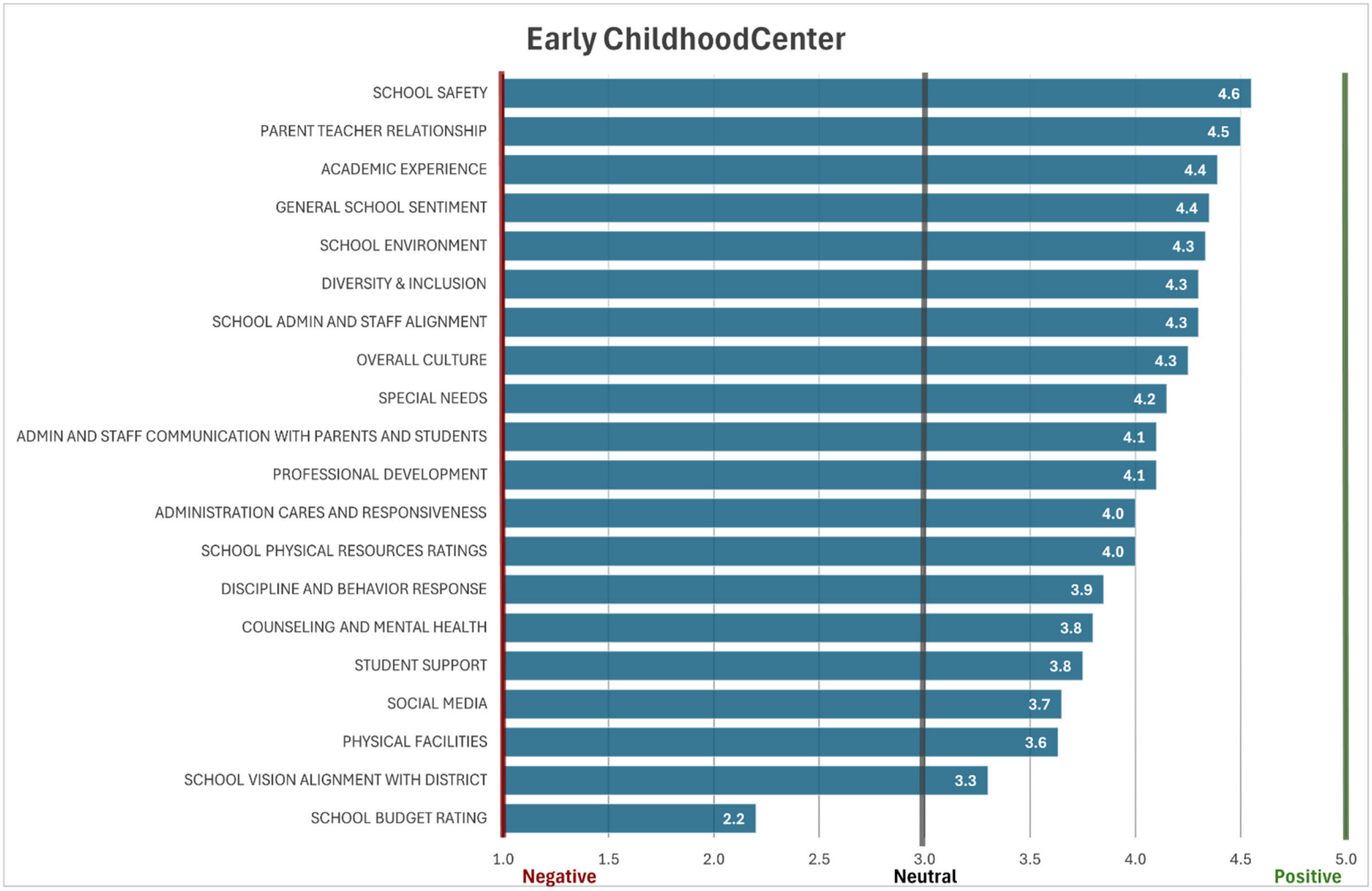
- Increase staffing of licensed mental health professionals.
- Redefine counselor roles to ensure balanced focus on emotional, academic, and career support.
- Provide mental health training for all staff and clear referral pathways for students in need.

Early Childhood Center

Overall Score: 79.5%

Summary:

The Early Childhood Center (ECC) received an overall score of 79.5% based on qualitative and quantitative feedback from parents and staff. Stakeholders generally expressed high satisfaction in areas such as general school sentiment, parent-teacher relationships, school safety, and the nurturing culture provided by staff and teachers. However, key challenges emerged across several domains that merit strategic attention to enhance educational experience and operational effectiveness.



General School Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Respondents generally express high satisfaction with the school, particularly praising its supportive and nurturing environment.
- Some staff members indicate that there is room for improvement, though this sentiment is less prevalent.

Comments:

- Staff: "I love working at ECC, and with my colleagues."
- Parent: "The school environment has been very positive—structured, supportive, and nurturing."

Parent Perspective on Child's Experience

Key Insights:

- Parents express significant dissatisfaction with the school's ability to meet their child's special needs, particularly due to unmet IEP services such as speech therapy.
- Staff shortages and budget constraints are frequently mentioned as barriers to providing adequate support.
- There is a lack of communication from the school regarding academic progress and IEP service delivery, leading to frustration and a sense of being uninformed among parents.

Comments:

- Parent: "Academically I do not know if my child is doing well or not, because they never give us blueprints to track down the progress."
- Parent: "Iep services are not being met due to lack of staff. Have not been satisfied with this year."
- Parent: "IEPs are not followed due to budget constraints and lack of staff. My son has an IEP with Speech and has been without more than half the year with no plan to implement one."

The Overall School Environment- Staff Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Staff members feel supported by their colleagues and mentors, contributing to a positive work environment.

Comments:

- Staff: "I have felt supported by our SEA this year, and my mentors. I love working at ECC, and with my colleagues."

Teacher Support for Students

Key Insights:

- Teachers are widely praised for their dedication, support, and positive impact on students, especially those with special needs.
- Despite challenges such as resource constraints, teachers are recognized for their efforts to provide high-quality support.

Comments:

- Parent: "Everyone who works with my child is wonderful and gives 100 percent. The teachers, service providers, paraprofessionals are all great and do everything they can with resources they have."
- Parent: "The teachers and staff themselves are great."
- Parent: "I'm so grateful for the teachers here."
- Parent: "The teachers are well trained and welcoming."

Parent/Teacher Relationships

Key Insights:

- Parents desire more opportunities for involvement and communication with teachers.
- There is a perceived lack of proactive engagement from the school, leading to feelings of exclusion.

Comments:

- Parent: "My child is in preschool. I never get invitations to volunteer. I even asked the receptionist if they can count on me."
- Parent: "Wish there were more opportunities for parent involvement."
- Parent: "One suggestion I would offer is to create more opportunities for parent involvement and connection."

Student Safety

Key Insights:

- Concerns exist about physical safety hazards, such as broken equipment and unsafe playground conditions.
- Delays in maintenance and repairs are seen as contributing to potential safety risks.

Comments:

- Staff: "A swing contraption in a motor room broke while a student was on the swing."
- Parent: "I also think that sometimes there's some unsafe things like rocks by the playground — which I know at least my kid got one thrown at his head earlier this year."

Budget/Funding Constraints

Key Insights:

- Budget limitations are a significant concern, impacting staffing levels, resource availability, and the delivery of IEP services.
- Both parents and staff call for increased funding to address these challenges and improve school operations.

Comments:

- Staff: "Our only asks have been for classroom supplies, that have been difficult to obtain due to purchasing freezes. While I understand the necessity of maintaining budgets, it makes it difficult to support our students with creative and engaging learning without requisite supplies."
- Parent: "School is short staffed. Iep services are not being met due to lack of staff."
- Parent: "Huge issue here is budget and not enough teachers / staff for the children."
- Parent: "IEPs are not followed due to budget constraints and lack of staff."

School Resources

Key Insights:

- There are a notable lack of classroom supplies and resources, which hinders effective teaching and learning.
- Large class sizes are also a concern, as they limit the attention and support students receive.

Comments:

- Parent: "Class sizes are too big. Kids get less attention and support."
- Parent: "Help teachers get the supplies they need for their school plans."
- Parent: "It is clear that budget limitations impact student access to resources and learning opportunities."

Special Needs and ESL Programs

Key Insights:

- There is widespread dissatisfaction with the delivery of special needs services, particularly speech therapy, due to staff shortages and budget constraints.
- Parents appreciate the efforts of staff but are critical of systemic failures in supporting students with special needs.

Comments:

- Parent: "Hire sufficient speech therapist to have as a background if one ever leaves the school children with IEP won't suffer."
- Parent: "My child is supposed to receive speech. She hasn't had it for 6 months."
- Parent: " We need speech therapy for my son. He is not receiving it since there is no staff."
- Parent: "Iep services are not being met due to lack of staff."

Counseling and Mental Health

Key Insights:

- There is a recognized need for enhanced mental health support for students, particularly those with anxiety and depression.
- Current policies for addressing the needs of nonverbal students are seen as inadequate.

Comments:

- Staff: "There needs to be more help to children with anxiety and depression."

Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Key Insights:

- Staff report that maintenance services are unresponsive, leading to poor facility conditions such as missing doors and inadequate heating.
- Delays in repairs and maintenance are seen as affecting both safety and the usability of school spaces.

Comments:

- Staff: "Facilities do not respond to most staff requests in our building. For example, I work in a space without a door, and have asked for facilities for a door multiple times, with no response and there is still no door. Doors do not have locks/keys and there are some spaces without doors. Tiles sometimes fall from the ceiling. It took months for facilities to get the heat working in one of the rooms."
- Staff: "Some things are slow to be taken care of. For example, a storage room turned therapy room hovered around 60 degrees or lower for weeks during the winter before heating was installed."

School Culture

Key Insights:

- The school is frequently described as compassionate, inclusive, and nurturing, contributing to a positive culture.
- Parents appreciate the supportive environment but suggest areas for further enhancement, such as increased parent involvement.

Comments:

- Parent: "The culture is one of compassion, inclusivity, and unwavering support, which has made a tremendous difference in our son's development."
- Parent: "The school environment has been very positive—structured, supportive, and nurturing."

- Parent: "We're so grateful for the support, care, and structure that the program provides."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Insights:

- Concerns are raised about unequal treatment of parents, particularly those with more knowledge of the system, and a lack of cultural celebration.
- There are specific equity issues regarding access to programs for neurodivergent students, with some parents feeling that these students are excluded or discriminated against.

Comments:

- Staff: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that the squeaky wheel gets the grease. It's unfortunate but unsurprising that the parents with the most knowledge about the public school and special education systems (who tend to be white) are treated with the most attention and concern."
- Parent: "There are no celebrations of traditions and cultures. No inclusiveness."
- Parent: "Methuen public school has another program as well which is little Rangers which is full time but they do not accept the neurodivergent kids at all. I felt bad that they discriminate between kids on the basis of neurodivergence."

Staff Professional Development

Key Insights:

- Staff express frustration over the limited availability of professional development opportunities that are relevant to their specific fields.
- There is also concern about the lack of opportunities for career advancement.

Comments:

- Staff: "Not a lot of PD pertains to my field. Also, it is difficult to find ways to move up."

Admin–Staff Dynamics

Key Insights:

- Staff members report feeling supported by school administration, particularly in terms of communication and mentorship.
- There is positive feedback about the administration's openness and honesty in addressing school issues.

Comments:

- Staff: "This year administration has been open and honest with communication to parents and staff about some of the issues we have and are facing in the classrooms."

Admin Communication to Parents/Students

Key Insights:

- Parents frequently cite poor communication from the administration regarding their child's progress, incidents, and IEP services.
- While some acknowledge efforts at communication, there is a consistent call for more proactive and consistent updates.

Comments:

- Parent: "I would love to hear more often how my child is doing with maybe a weekly email or note on how he did that week."
- Parent: "No communication with parents unless parents ask questions and go in for a meeting."
- Parent: "Teacher's documentation and communication if any incidents happen during the school should improve. Incidents have happened and certain teachers fail to report incidents."
- Parent: "Wish for a website where parents can see pictures/details of what kids are working on to see more on how they are doing and interacting."

Admin Care/Responsiveness

Key Insights:

- Parents feel that the administration is unresponsive to their concerns, particularly regarding IEP services and student needs.
- There is a sense of frustration and distrust, with some parents feeling that the administration is a barrier to resolving issues.

Comments:

- Parent: "There is no meeting to get support my son needs. Dissatisfied and unfortunate that the system allows this to happen and brushes it off."
- Parent: "There's no resolution when meeting with administrators promising IEP services to resume."
- Parent: "Administration is the barrier. It's the run around for parents who are uninformed."

Extracurricular Activities

Key Insights:

- Parents express a strong desire for more extracurricular activities, particularly for students with special needs.
- Current extracurricular offerings are perceived as insufficient or nonexistent, limiting opportunities for student engagement.

Comments:

- Parent: " I think there could be football (soccer) games ⚽ at school after school for the kids to participate in."
- Parent: "I wish they had soccer or tball for the special need students."
- Parent: "No special activities for special needs children. Ever."
- Parent: " I think there could be more activities for children after school, something where parents take their children to a place to do activities."

Recommendations

1. Budget and Funding Constraints

Why: This was the lowest quantitative score in this category with a mean score of 2.2. Qualitative feedback overwhelmingly highlights concerns around insufficient funding, staffing shortages, and the resulting impact on IEP services and overall classroom support.

Opportunities:

- Advocate at the district and town level for increased funding, specifically earmarked for special education services and staffing.
- Partner with community organizations to sponsor classroom materials or programs.

2. Special Needs and ESL Programs

Why: This area garnered consistent negative sentiment in qualitative responses, especially around unmet IEP services like speech therapy due to staffing shortages and budget constraints. While the quantitative score is relatively high at 4.2, vocal dissatisfaction signals an urgent need for targeted improvements.

Opportunities:

- Prioritize recruitment and retention of qualified special education professionals and speech therapists.
- Establish transparent communication protocols for IEP implementation status.

3. Parent Communication and Involvement

Why: Multiple categories touch on poor communication practices, especially regarding academic progress, IEP updates, and incident reporting. The Admin Communication to Parents/Students area received a mean score of 4.1, but qualitative responses indicate a widespread desire for more proactive and transparent communication.

Opportunities:

- Create a weekly or bi-weekly parent update system (e.g., email, app notification, paper handouts).
- Implement an incident reporting protocol to notify parents within 24 hours of any school event involving their child.

4. School Resources and Class Sizes

Why: Classroom supplies, and high student-to-teacher ratios were recurring concerns. The School Budget Rating (2.2) and School Physical Resources Ratings (4.0) suggest that while some infrastructure is acceptable, day-to-day teaching resources remain insufficient.

Opportunities:

- Leverage district resources for redistributing surplus materials or tech equipment.
- Reassess student-teacher ratios and consider staffing adjustments where possible.

5. Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Why: Despite a modest Facilities score of 3.6, many staff raised concerns about safety hazards, unresponsive maintenance requests, and poor facility upkeep (e.g., missing doors, poor heating).

Opportunities:

- Initiate a formal facility audit and prioritize urgent safety and comfort needs.
- Create a transparent ticket-tracking system for maintenance issues to increase accountability.
- Schedule quarterly walk-throughs with district facilities staff to assess and address site conditions.

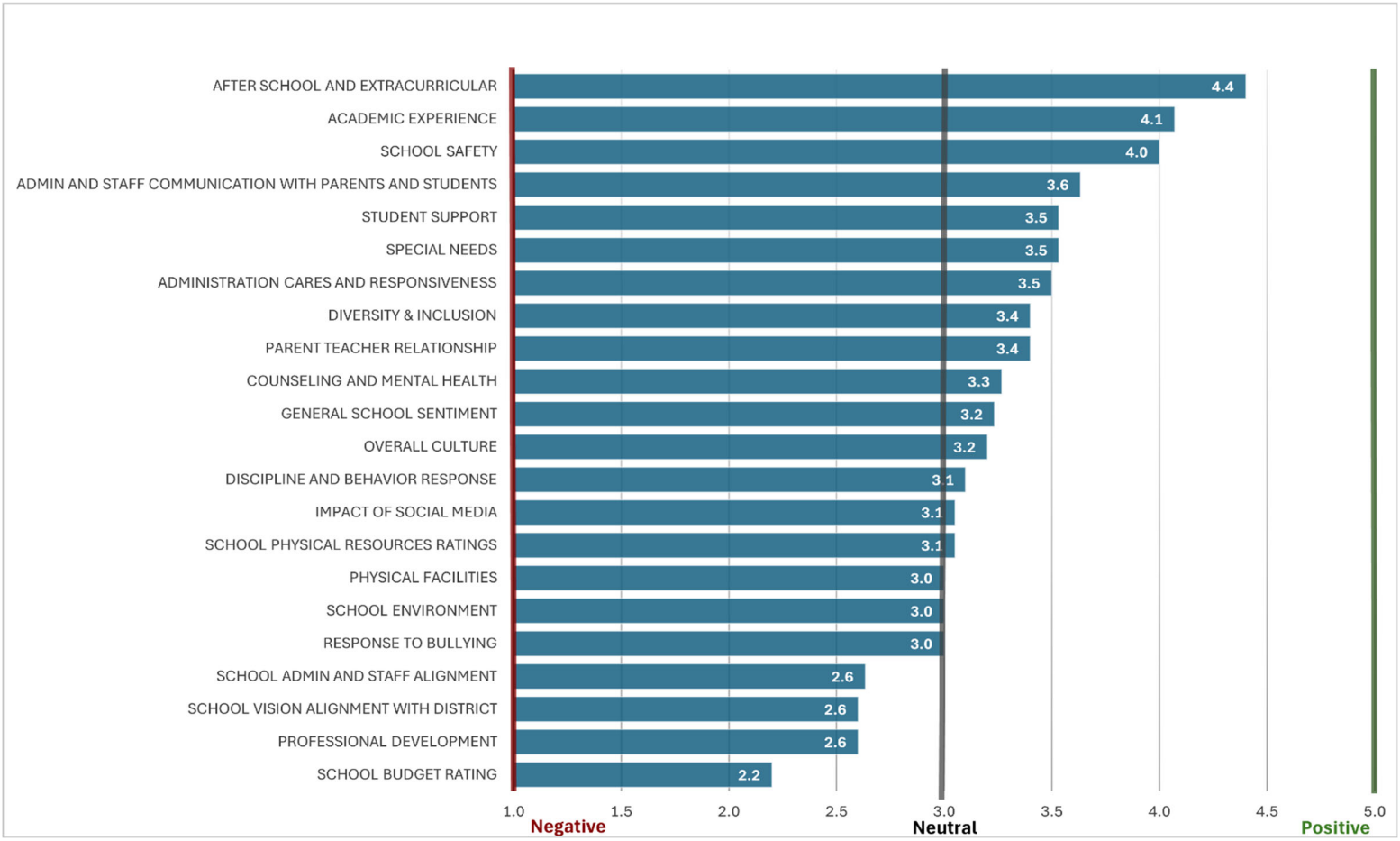
Marsh Grammar School

Overall Score: 64.9%

Summary:

The Marsh Grammar School (MGS) includes qualitative feedback and corresponding quantitative ratings across 22 focus areas. While there is evidence of dedicated teachers and positive academic experiences for many students, the overall results reveal some dissatisfaction in several key areas, particularly around administrative responsiveness, budget constraints, school culture, and the treatment of students with special needs.

The quantitative results support these concerns, with notably low scores in areas such as budget (2.2), professional development (2.6), district alignment (2.6), and admin-staff relations (2.6). Qualitative comments repeatedly point to communication breakdowns, inconsistent discipline, a toxic work environment, and equity concerns. These represent critical areas for targeted improvement.



General School Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Respondents express a range of sentiments, with some praising the dedication of teachers and staff, while others voice frustration with leadership, communication, and systemic issues.
- Positive feedback often highlights individual teacher efforts, but broader dissatisfaction centers on administration and resource limitations.
- Students show a mix of satisfaction with specific aspects (e.g., gym, football) and calls for improvement in engagement and support.

Comments:

- Staff: "I feel valued and supported at the Marsh."
- Parent: "We have been extremely happy with our sons' time at the Marsh. They've both had amazing teachers, and we can't thank them enough."
- Student: "I think our school is great but the kids with special needs could use some support to make their learning experience as valuable as ours."
- Parent: "Let's be honest and not sugar coat, the Marsh is failing our kids, and families, I'm, are done pretending otherwise."

Parent Perspective on Child's Experience

Key Insights:

- Parents report inconsistent support for children's academic and emotional needs, especially for those with special needs or diverse backgrounds.
- Frustration arises from poor communication and lack of collaboration, though some praise specific teachers or counselors.
- Concerns include unmet expectations for academic rigor and behavioral support.

Comments:

- Parent: "My child's academic and emotional needs have gone unmet and attempts to work collaboratively with the school have led nowhere."

- Parent: "I expected active communication from my child's teacher after being informed they were struggling with social emotional behaviors... Instead, I have to consistently reach out for updates and receive minimal response."
- Parent: "Special education staff has supported my student. Kudos to them! It is appreciated."
- Parent: "Academically, the bar is low. Communication about progress is nonexistent unless parents chase it down."

The Overall School Environment

Key Insights:

- Staff frequently describe a toxic work environment marked by favoritism, micromanagement, and lack of administrative support.
- Parents and students perceive the school as unwelcoming, with inconsistent discipline and poor maintenance contributing to a negative atmosphere.
- Morale is impacted by leadership issues and facility conditions.

Comments:

- Staff: "The most toxic environment I have ever worked in. Colleagues give each other a lot of support but supervising principal treats staff like children and micromanages."
- Staff: "The head principal is very hard to work for. She has her 'favorites' and favoritism comes into play. Not all staff are treated the same."
- Parent: "The school culture feels cold and unwelcoming, especially to students who need extra help or come from diverse backgrounds."
- Parent: "The school environment is dismal at best. There's no real effort to build a sense of community."

Teacher Support for Students

Key Insights:

- Teachers are often commended for their commitment, but inconsistencies in quality and support for diverse learners are noted.
- Parents and students value individual teacher efforts, yet systemic barriers limit overall effectiveness.

- Calls for more training to address special needs and emotional support are common.

Comments:

- Parent: "The teachers are amazing. Some of the administration is great too."
- Staff: "I think that some of the difficulties with culture in our school stem from both administration as well as attitude of teachers."
- Parent: "Teachers are doing exceptional work with students and families."
- Parent: "I do not feel that teachers are providing my child with the support they need to succeed."

Parent/Teacher Relationships

Key Insights:

- Parents seek stronger communication and involvement opportunities, feeling disconnected due to limited engagement from the school.
- Positive experiences with specific teachers contrast with broader complaints about administrative barriers.
- Suggestions include more conferences, volunteer roles, and better communication tools.

Comments:

- Parent: "I wish the school culture felt more welcoming to parents."
- Parent: "Ways in which I feel like the Marsh can improve include communication and parent collaboration especially when it comes to discipline, bullying, special needs services."
- Parent: "I've been incredibly disappointed with the school environment and lack of meaningful activities. The school gives off the message that parent and guardian involvement isn't valued."
- Parent: "I have been impressed with communication from teachers. We usually get an end of week update."

Student Safety

Key Insights:

- Safety concerns include bullying, inadequate supervision, and inconsistent discipline, particularly during unstructured times.

- Parents and students report emotional and physical safety issues, with calls for better monitoring and enforcement.
- Leadership responsiveness to safety concerns is perceived as lacking.

Comments:

- Parent: "I don’t feel confident that my child is truly safe, emotionally or physically—while at school."
- Student: "I think the Marsh is a really nice school. I just wish the bullying would stop. I've been bullied countless times and have cried and even cut myself because of it."
- Parent: "The school environment does not feel safe or supportive for all students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds."
- Staff: "Train lunch and recess monitors! Students are throwing food, slapping or rough housing each other."

School Resources

Key Insights:

- Complaints focus on inadequate teaching materials, outdated technology, and poor facility maintenance.
- Parents and students note specific resource gaps, such as playground equipment and classroom supplies.
- Staff highlight the strain of limited resources on daily operations.

Comments:

- Staff: "Hardly think we need to note this. We all know the school is in very bad shape. Not enough maintenance staff to properly care for each building."
- Parent: "The Marsh is filthy. Classrooms are not getting cleaned overnight."
- Student: "Broken scoreboard lights need to be fixed Fix some lights Get advanced technology."

Budget/Funding Constraints

Key Insights:

- Budget limitations are a recurring concern, affecting staffing, programs, and resources, with frustration over perceived mismanagement.
- Parents and staff advocate for increased funding to preserve essential services like arts and special education.

Comments:

- Staff: "Funding and budget seem to limit our resources and professional development."
- Parent: "The school system is horribly underfunded in this town. It's criminal."
- Parent: "Cutting programs for children is not acceptable. So much money is spent on out of district children and more needs to be done on that!"

Special Needs and ESL Programs

Key Insights:

- Significant dissatisfaction exists with special needs support, citing understaffing, inconsistent IEP implementation, and lack of training.
- Parents appreciate some staff efforts but criticize systemic failures in equity and delivery.
- Calls for better ESL and special education resources are prevalent.

Comments:

- Staff: "There is not enough staff to manage the volume of special education students and students who have behaviors especially due to trauma that occurs outside of school."
- Parent: "Marsh Grammar fails to support students with special needs, services are lacking, inconsistent, and often dismissive."
- Parent: "Special education staff has supported my student. Kudos to them! It is appreciated."
- Staff: "BEGINNING YEAR TRAINING for 1st year Para's should be mandatory!... crash course on how to work with special ed students."

Counseling and Mental Health

Key Insights:

- Counseling services are seen as insufficient, with delays in response and limited emotional support availability.
- Positive feedback highlights specific counselors, but overall demand exceeds capacity.
- Suggestions include more mental health resources and staff training.

Comments:

- Parent: "Emotional support and behavioral therapy/support should be available to all children. My child would greatly benefit from these services, but we were told ‘we’ll try to get her into a program’ there has been no progress."
- Parent: "The school counselor is amazing! Thank you, school counselor."
- Parent: "Support services? What support? If your child has special needs, you’re on your own."
- Student: "I’ve been bullied countless times and have cried and even cut myself because of it."

Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Key Insights:

- Poor facility conditions—cleanliness, temperature control, and structural issues—are widely criticized.
- Staff and parents report inadequate custodial staffing and delayed repairs, impacting the learning environment.
- Students echo concerns about playgrounds and equipment.

Comments:

- Staff: "Bathrooms are not cleaned enough. Soap, toilet paper, and paper towels are not checked daily."
- Parent: "The Marsh is filthy. Classrooms are not getting cleaned overnight."
- Student: "Clean up the field because there's a lot of trash and litter."

- Staff: "Work orders/tickets. A tracking system needs to be in place that logs all building issues."

School Culture

Key Insights:

- School culture is often described as unwelcoming, fear-based, or lacking inclusivity and engagement.
- Positive comments are rare and tied to specific staff, while broader criticism targets a leadership tone.
- Suggestions include more community-building activities and a positive atmosphere.

Comments:

- Parent: "The school culture is excellent, fostering a positive environment for students."
- Student: "We really need to add fun things into school. School is the last 4 years you have around, and it should be fun."
- Parent: "The administration has created a fear culture amongst teachers and a divide for parents who want to be involved."
- Staff: "Poor morale due to administration."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Insights:

- Concerns about bias, racism, and unequal treatment are significant, particularly for students of color and neurodivergent learners.
- Staff and parents call for more inclusive practices and cultural awareness training.
- Leadership is criticized for failing to address these issues effectively.

Comments:

- Staff: "Our school (and the city) are so egocentric that there is little acknowledgement or celebration of the diversity in the district."

- Parent: "The school culture is not inclusive, it's conditional. Students from culturally diverse backgrounds and those with special learning needs are treated as exceptions."
- Student: "I just want people to know enough of the stereotypes, enough with the comments, enough with racism."
- Parent: "We are proud Americans with Hispanic heritage, and it's clear to me that this administration holds different standards for students based on the color of their skin."

Impact of Social Media

Key Insights:

- Limited feedback addresses social media directly, with one parent noting its use for event communication but highlighting its inadequacy.

Comments:

- Parent: "Social Media- I do find out about things from Facebook, especially PTO events. I sometimes find that not enough information is given."

Staff Professional Development

Key Insights:

- Staff express dissatisfaction with the quality and relevance of professional development (PD), seeking practical, role-specific training.
- Suggestions include PD on behavior management, special needs, and cultural competence.
- Current PD is often seen as busy work or insufficient for career growth.

Comments:

- Staff: "I feel that our PD is mostly busy work and does not actually add to my career growth."
- Staff: "Professional development is very limited and not helpful."
- Parent: "Teachers need more training on disabilities, in particular emotional disabilities."
- Staff: "Would love behavioral management PD."

School–District Coordination

Key Insights:

- Staff note a disconnect between school and district priorities, particularly in special education and maintenance support.
- Frustration exists over district-level responsiveness and alignment with school needs.

Comments:

- Staff: "I am unsure of what the disconnect is between the SPED Admin role and the district admin."
- Staff: "We don’t see MPS admin in our building often."
- Parent: "The state and city has not funded the school system in a way that keeps up with the rate of legally necessary special education requirements."

School Administration and Staff Dynamics

Key Insights:

- Staff report strained relationships with administration, citing favoritism, poor communication, and lack of support.
- Positive feedback is limited to specific administrators, while broader criticism targets the supervising principal.
- A toxic dynamic impacts staff morale and effectiveness.

Comments:

- Staff: "There is very poor communication between admin. and staff and there's no support from admin."
- Staff: "The dynamics and interactions between the staff and the admin at our central offices are extremely poor."
- Staff: "Supervising Principal is responsive, always available to help when needed and is hands on!"
- Staff: "Admin has favorites that are treated differently."

School Administration Communication to Parents/Students

Key Insights:

- Parents frequently cite poor communication about progress, incidents, and events, desiring proactive updates.
- Students suggest principals listen more to their input.
- Mixed experiences include both excessive messaging and lack of meaningful outreach.

Comments:

- Parent: "I wish the school was better about communicating with families. Many families don’t know anything that happens in or after school."
- Parent: "I get a lot (usually about 3-5 each day) of texts messages from the different teachers... Too many messages in my opinion."
- Student: "Principals and staff should listen to students’ opinions and respect them even if they are in the wrong."
- Parent: "Communication with parents is also a major concern, updates about my child’s progress are inconsistent."

Admin Care/Responsiveness

Key Insights:

- Parents and students perceive administration as unresponsive or dismissive of concerns, especially regarding discipline and diversity.
- Positive comments praise specific administrators, but overall trust in leadership is low.
- Calls for proactive engagement and accountability are widespread.

Comments:

- Parent: "The leadership does listen to parents' concerns, but actions are very rarely being taken."
- Student: "The principal needs to listen to us more and ask question instead of just straight yelling at us."
- Parent: "The associate principals are very understanding and supportive."

Discipline and Behavioral Issues

Key Insights:

- Discipline is seen as inconsistent and ineffective, with students facing few consequences for misbehavior.
- Staff and parents call for clearer policies and enforcement, citing impacts on learning and safety.
- Suggestions include alternative approaches like mediation and consistent accountability.

Comments:

- Staff: "Students are NOT held accountable for their actions in the school. Teachers are NOT respected."
- Parent: "The ball gets dropped with younger kids who exhibit signs of bullying, and the school waits too long to do anything."
- Student: "Stop bullying, be more fun. FEILD TRIPS, better chairs and desks, behave the kids about the calculators."
- Staff: "Administration needs to have consequences for student behavior and not just in school detention."

Bullying Response

Key Insights:

- Bullying is a major concern, with inadequate prevention and response reported by students and parents.
- Calls for stricter policies, better supervision, and proactive measures are common.
- Leadership is criticized for downplaying or mishandling incidents.

Comments:

- Parent: "Bullying policy is a joke. It is not enforced."
- Student: "I think the Marsh is a really nice school. I just wish the bullying would stop. I've been bullied countless times."

- Parent: "The school does not foster a welcoming or inclusive atmosphere. My child has had negative experiences during recess."
- Parent: "The supervising principal does not adequately inform parents of possible courses of action related to bullying."

Extracurricular Activities

Key Insights:

- Parents and students express a strong desire for more diverse, accessible extracurricular options, especially for younger grades.
- Communication about existing activities is poor, limiting participation.
- Suggestions include arts, sports, and academic clubs to enhance engagement.

Comments:

- Parent: "There are no extracurricular activities offered for lower school."
- Student: "More clubs for students that aren't able to actively participate in sports. Clubs that allow students to express academic and artistic intelligence."
- Parent: "I wish more field trips were offered. Field trips are such a great opportunity for kids to learn outside the classroom."
- Student: "Field trips!!! Also, more fun activities. I love drama, and the chorus opportunities though!!"

Recommendations

1. Address Budget Constraints and Resource Gaps

Why: Budget/funding constraints received the lowest mean score of 2.2, with stakeholders citing underfunded programs, lack of essential classroom materials, and deteriorating facilities.

Opportunities:

- Conduct a transparent review of budget allocation to identify critical shortfalls and advocate for increased funding from district or local sources.
- Reprioritize spending to protect essential services.
- Explore community partnerships or grants to supplement funding for technology, enrichment, and maintenance.

2. Improve Staff Professional Development

Why: Professional development earned a low score of 2.6, with staff describing current offerings as irrelevant or ineffective.

Opportunities:

- Redesign PD sessions around practical, teacher-identified needs such as behavior management, trauma-informed teaching, and inclusive practices.
- Include staff in the planning process to ensure PD aligns with their roles and responsibilities.
- Evaluate and adjust PD formats to ensure time is used efficiently and meaningfully.

3. Strengthen School–District and Admin–Staff Alignment

Why: Both "School Vision Alignment with District" and "Admin and Staff Dynamics" scored poorly at 2.6, highlighting leadership disconnects and low staff morale.

Opportunities:

- Schedule regular joint meetings between district leadership and school teams to align priorities and share updates.

- Provide leadership coaching for school administrators to build trust and create a more inclusive, supportive work environment.
- Implement anonymous staff surveys to continuously assess morale and improve communication loops.

4. Enhance Special Education and ESL Support

Why: Special needs and ESL programs, though scored slightly higher at 3.5, were a central theme in qualitative complaints, particularly from parents of neurodivergent students.

Opportunities:

- Increase staffing and training for special education and ESL support personnel.
- Implement regular audits of IEP and 504 plan execution to ensure compliance and effectiveness.

5. Rebuild Trust through Improved Communication and Responsiveness

Why: While "Admin Care/Responsiveness" (3.5) and "Admin–Parent/Student Communication" (3.6) received mid-tier scores, qualitative responses reveal widespread frustration over ignored concerns and inconsistent messaging.

Opportunities:

- Create a communication plan that includes regular updates, transparent follow-up on concerns, and clearly outlined escalation processes.
- Establish feedback loops with families and staff to monitor the effectiveness of communication efforts.
- Train admin to use empathetic, student- and family-centered communication styles.

6. Promote a Safer, More Inclusive School Culture

Why: "Discipline and Behavior Response" (3.1) and "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" (3.4) highlight significant issues with safety, bullying, and inclusivity, particularly for marginalized students.

Opportunities:

- Implement restorative practices and social-emotional learning curricula to address behavior proactively.
- Offer cultural competence and anti-bias training for all staff.
- Involve students in peer-led initiatives to promote inclusion and mutual respect.

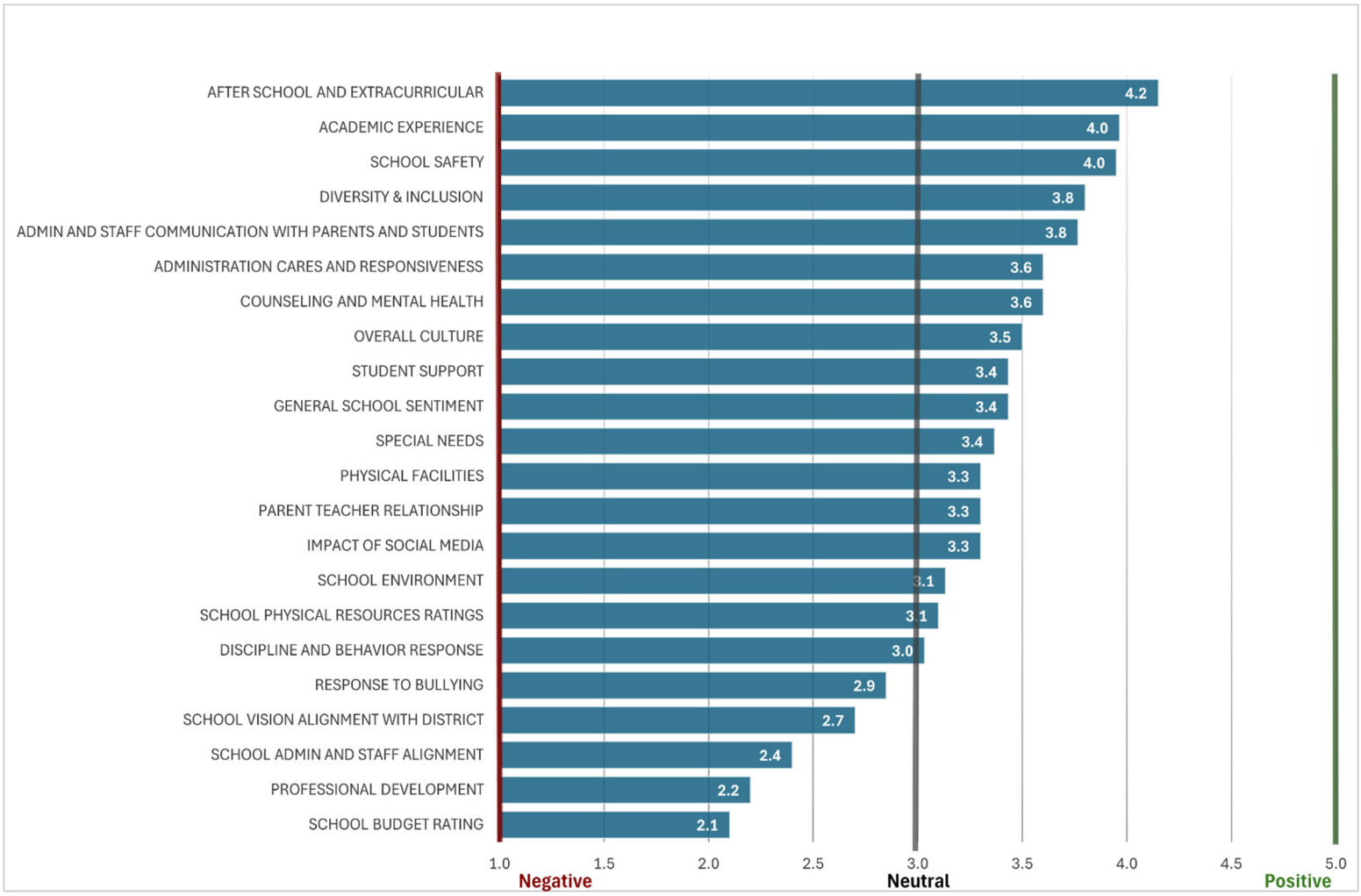
Tenney Grammar School

Overall Score: 65.4%

Summary:

This report presents findings from the Tenney Grammar School. While some stakeholders express appreciation for teachers, student support, and extracurricular opportunities, qualitative responses reveal a vocal subset of stakeholders expressing dissatisfaction and concerns regarding funding, school culture, communication, and responsiveness from administration.

Low scores are found in categories related to budget constraints (2.1), professional development (2.2), and school–district alignment (2.4). These findings suggest that while Tenney has strengths, especially in student safety (4.0), academic experience (4.0), and extracurricular programs (4.2), there are urgent areas needing focused attention.



General School Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Mixed feelings prevail, with some respondents praising the school's staff and environment, while others express strong dissatisfaction, describing it as chaotic or lacking educational focus.
- Positive comments highlight cooperative spirit and dedicated teachers, contrasted by negative views of the school as a "ghetto" or "subsidized daycare."

Comments:

- Parent: "The school is well on point; with the academic program my children are getting their education going well I thank God for Tenney Grammar School and all the staffers"
- Student: "I like my school a lot, the teachers and kids are so nice, and we are able to cooperate and work together!"
- Parent: "Race to the bottom. Constant regret sending my kids to the Tenney. Less of a school and more of subsidized day care. No emphasis on academics."
- Student: "My school feels like a ghetto sometimes."

Parent Perspective on Child's Experience

Key Insights:

- Parents report varied satisfaction, with some appreciating support for their children and others frustrated by insufficient attention, especially for students with moderate needs or special education requirements.
- Concerns include academic progress, behavioral disruptions, and lack of tailored support.

Comments:

- Parent: "I am very pleased with my IEP services, my student's teacher, and especially his councilor."
- Parent: "I feel like there are a lot of high needs for the very low kids and not much support or attention for the kids that are just getting by."

The Overall School Environment

Key Insights:

- Staff frequently describe a toxic work environment with low morale, tension, and feelings of being undervalued or unsupported by administration.
- Issues include poor communication, fear of retaliation, and a divisive “us vs. them” culture.

Comments:

- Staff: "As far as the work environment, it can be quite toxic at times."
- Staff: "The work environment has changed greatly since the addition of a new principal. There has been a noticeable rise in tension, discouragement, and unease."

Teacher Support for Students

Key Insights:

- Perceptions of teacher support vary, with praise for dedication and criticism for lack of motivation, favoritism, or inadequate help for struggling students.
- Students and parents note inconsistent teaching quality and a need for more proactive support.

Comments:

- Parent: "Teachers are amazing!!!"
- Student: "Some teachers don’t have the motivation to help students and don’t have a great curriculum."
- Parent: "Teachers do not advocate for children who need extra help, IEPs, more support, especially in the higher grades."

Parent/Teacher Relationships

Key Insights:

- Parents desire stronger communication and more opportunities to engage, often citing poor or inconsistent updates from teachers.
- Positive examples exist, but overall communication gaps frustrate parent involvement.

Comments:

- Parent: "Administration has added Tenney Rockstar assemblies which is a nice way for families to come and see their child recognized."
- Parent: "Teachers also do not communicate well with the parents overall."
- Parent: "We have asked for communication from my child's school team all year, it's written in his IEP too, yet we rarely receive any."

Student Safety

Key Insights:

- Safety concerns center on disruptive behaviors and violence, with staff and parents feeling the school fails to ensure a secure environment.
- Examples include students signaling fear and unsafe classroom conditions.

Comments:

- Staff: "We have students who have hand signals for their teachers to let them know they don't feel safe next to a peer."
- Parent: "School should be a safe place and it just feels the opposite lately, this school year in particular."

Budget/Funding Constraints

Key Insights:

- Widespread frustration with inadequate funding affects staffing, resources, and program availability, with calls for increased investment in education.
- Parents and staff link funding shortages to diminished educational quality.

Comments:

- Staff: "Given the ongoing loss of staff and the high costs associated with contracted workers..."
- Parent: "There is not enough money to support what our students need."
- Student: "get more funding and pay the workers better."

School Resources

Key Insights:

- Complaints focus on overreliance on technology, poor quality of lunch, and inadequate facilities like libraries and bathrooms.
- Suggestions include reducing digital dependence and improving resource access.

Comments:

- Staff: “We are constantly being told to do more with less support and resources.”
- Parent: " There are not enough resources to meet the variety of needs at the Tenney."
- Student: "Fix the library so kids have better resources."

Special Needs and ESL Programs

Key Insights:

- Significant dissatisfaction with special needs and ESL support, highlighting inconsistent services, undertrained staff, and lack of inclusivity.
- Parents and staff call for better resources and attention to these programs.

Comments:

- Parent: "Children with special learning needs do not get the support they need."
- Staff: "Special education never receives valued PD. We are an afterthought."
- Parent: "There is a very real lack of services for the children with special needs and it needs to be addressed now."

Counseling and Mental Health

Key Insights:

- Counseling services are overstretched, with limited mental health support noted by parents and students.
- Calls for more counselors and better emotional support are prevalent.

Comments:

- Parent: "Counselors are stretched thin and need more support."
- Student: "Teachers often blame you for stuff you didn't do and aren't there for you when you really need help especially mentally."

Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Key Insights:

- Poor facility conditions, including mice infestations, unclean bathrooms, and temperature issues, are widely criticized.
- Staff and students demand better maintenance and cleanliness.

Comments:

- Staff: "There are still mice in the building."
- Student: "I think that the bathroom should be cleaner and that the lockers should be better."
- Parent: "Lots of things are broken and with all the rain lots of leaky windows."

School Culture

Key Insights:

- Limited feedback, but some parents seek a more welcoming and community-oriented culture through events and inclusiveness.

Comments:

- Parent: "I think there should be more events and get togethers for families and students."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Insights:

- Concerns about selective cultural recognition and calls for broader inclusivity, including prayer spaces and support for non-English-speaking families.
- Students and parents advocate for equitable cultural celebration.

Comments:

- Parent: "I believe they celebrate the cultures they want...my child brought tons of St Patrick stuff, but i have not seen any from the Hispanic week."
- Student: "I think the Muslims should have a place to pray or even just an empty room."

Impact of Social Media

Key Insights:

- Mixed views on social media use, with some valuing it for communication and others opposing its role in school-related matters.
- Accessibility for non-users is a concern.

Comments:

- Parent: "The use of social media has been helpful, but if you don't use social media regularly it could be hard to know how to engage."
- Parent: "I don't think social media should be used or that kids should be posted at all online."

Staff Professional Development

Key Insights:

- Staff overwhelmingly criticize professional development as irrelevant, disorganized, or a waste of time, seeking more practical and autonomous training.
- Suggestions include collaboration time and specialized training.

Comments:

- Staff: "PD is a waste of time."
- Staff: "The professional development often feels like an afterthought."

School–District Coordination

Key Insights:

- Limited but notable frustration with misalignment between school needs and district decisions, particularly around resource allocation.
- Staff feel district priorities overlook classroom realities.

Comments:

- Staff: "It feels like working for the bad news bears at times. Admin seems unaware of what teaching in a digital, post pandemic classroom is."

Admin–Staff Dynamics

Key Insights:

- Staff report poor relationships with administration, citing dismissiveness, lack of support, and poor communication.
- A sense of disconnection and lack of follow-through dominates feedback.

Comments:

- Staff: "Admin NEEDS to do a better job with this!!!"
- Staff: "I find the administration to be dismissive to most staff members and not very supportive."

Admin Communication to Parents/Students

Key Insights:

- Parents and students criticize unclear or last-minute communication about programs and events, seeking more inclusive and timely updates.
- Report cards and event scheduling are particular pain points.

Comments:

- Parent: "I think the school needs to improve communication with parents about the programs it offers."
- Parent: "It's hard to interpret how my child is doing in school with the way the report cards are setup."

Admin Care/Responsiveness

Key Insights:

- Mixed feedback on admin responsiveness, with some praise for efforts and others noting a lack of action on concerns.
- Parents feel heard but their concerns are not always addressed effectively.

Comments:

- Parent: "I have been very pleased with the school's responsiveness when any issues with my children arise."
- Parent: "I think the school needs to improve communication with parents about the programs it offers, both academic and extracurricular and sports"
- Parent: "(Need) clear communication between admin teachers and parents. More parent involvement.
- Staff: "As a teacher, I believe our concerns often fall on deaf ears."

Discipline and Behavioral Issues

Key Insights:

- Strong dissatisfaction with inconsistent or lenient discipline, seen as enabling disruptive behaviors that affect learning and safety.
- Calls for clear, fair consequences are widespread.

Comments:

- Staff: " Behavior situations continue to be an ongoing issue where student behavior impacts the classroom learning environment. While the state may have restrictions in place for consequences to address these situations, there is a lack of consequences or a plan to reduce these behaviors."
- Parent: "Discipline seems nonexistent."
- Student: "There should be more discipline to bad kids and a lot less discipline to good kids."

Bullying Response

Key Insights:

- Bullying is a major issue, with inadequate responses leaving students and parents feeling unsupported.
- Emotional and physical bullying incidents highlight a need for stronger action.

Comments:

- Parent: "Bullying matters should not be minimized."
- Parent: “Guidance counselor and teachers need to take bullying more seriously”
- Student: “Nothing, the schools not well educated, bullying is always happening.”

Extracurricular Activities

Key Insights:

- High demand for more diverse, accessible extracurriculars, with current options seen as limited or poorly communicated.
- Students and parents suggest specific activities like arts and sports.

Comments:

- Parent: "I wish there were more extracurricular activities for the lower school."
- Student: "More clubs for nerds"
- Parent: "There are very limited activities for kids to participate in and NO FIELD TRIPS."

Recommendations

1. Budget and Funding Constraints

Why: This category received the lowest quantitative score (2.1) and was widely cited in the qualitative data as a root cause of other issues—such as insufficient resources, staffing shortages, and program limitations.

Opportunities:

- Advocate at the district or state level for increased school funding.
- Conduct a transparent review and reallocation of existing budget to prioritize critical needs like staffing and facilities.

2. Staff Professional Development

Why: Staff rated this area at 2.2, describing current PD as irrelevant, disorganized, and disconnected from actual teaching needs—especially for special education staff.

Opportunities:

- Co-design professional development with teacher input to ensure relevance and practical application.
- Offer specialized PD for special education and ESL support staff.
- Allocate structured time for peer-led learning and collaboration.

3. School–District Coordination

Why: Scoring only 2.4, teachers and staff expressed frustration over district decisions that don't reflect on-the-ground realities, particularly in a digital learning environment.

Opportunities:

- Establish regular two-way feedback channels between school staff and district leaders.
- Pilot district-supported initiatives with teacher involvement before scaling.

4. Bullying Response and Discipline

Why: These categories scored 2.9 (bullying) and 3.0 (discipline), with numerous comments highlighting inconsistent enforcement, ineffective intervention, and unsafe emotional environments for students.

Opportunities:

- Implement a consistent, transparent behavior management system across all grades.
- Provide trauma-informed training for staff to better recognize and address bullying.
- Increase student voice and leadership in promoting peer respect and conflict resolution.

5. Facility Conditions and School Resources

Why: Comments about mice infestations, unclean bathrooms, and broken infrastructure align with the 3.1–3.3 scores in related categories.

Opportunities:

- Conduct a thorough facilities audit and prioritize maintenance needs with a published plan.
- Improve sanitation and invest in high-traffic repairs (e.g., restrooms, halls, etc.).

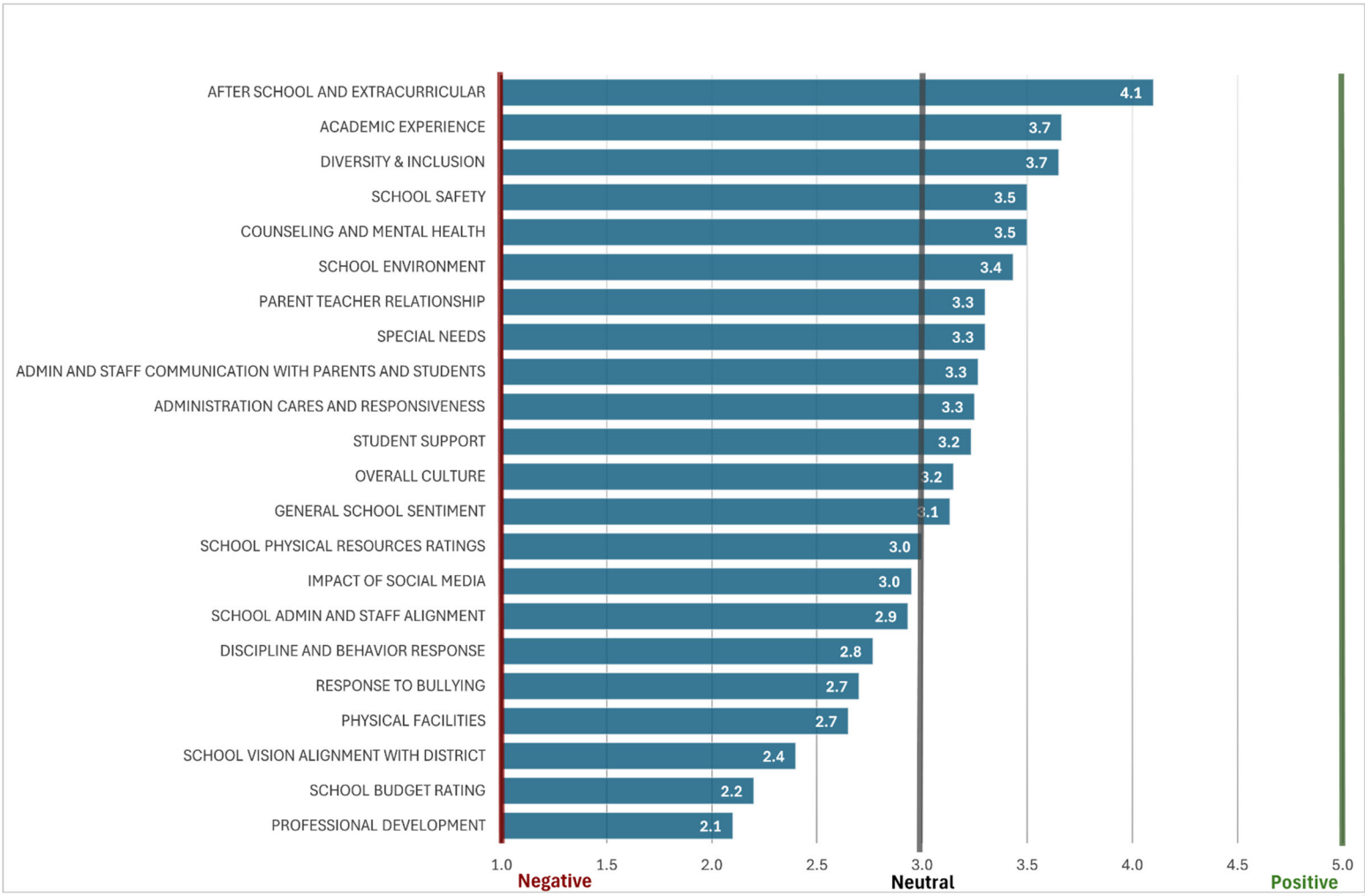
Timony Grammar School

Overall Score: 62%

Summary:

This report presents findings from a mixed-method analysis of survey responses from the Timony Grammar School community, including qualitative feedback and corresponding quantitative ratings across 22 focus areas. While the qualitative analysis portion highlights the perspectives of a vocal minority, the themes revealed are supported by quantitative trends and point to areas of concern and opportunity.

The qualitative and quantitative data indicate that while isolated positives exist, especially around extracurriculars and inclusion, the school community is largely concerned with funding, facilities, student safety, communication, and support structures.



General School Sentiment

Key Insights:

- Respondents express a mix of positive and negative sentiments, with some praising staff dedication and others expressing deep dissatisfaction with leadership, safety, and educational quality.
- Positive comments highlight supportive colleagues and dedicated teachers, while negative views describe the school as unsafe, poorly managed, or failing to meet educational standards.

Comments:

- Staff: "I absolutely love my colleagues here at the Timony School. They are incredibly hard-working and passionate about what they do."
- Parent: "Timony Grammar School is one of the best public schools you could think of. The school environment is welcoming, and the teachers respond to emails and messages very quickly and efficiently."
- Parent: "Kids hate going to school here. The upper school principal and supervising principal are awful, abusive and toxic."

Parent Perspective on Child's Experience

Key Insights:

- Parents report varied satisfaction, with some praising support for their children and others frustrated by insufficient attention, especially for students with special needs or behavioral issues.
- Concerns include lack of communication, unmet academic needs, and inconsistent support for diverse learners.

Comments:

- Parent: "I am very happy with my children's school experience. They are there to learn and are supported by their teachers."

- Parent: "I feel like due to overpopulated classrooms and understaffed schools the gen ed kids often fall through the cracks."

The Overall School Environment

Key Insights:

- Staff frequently describe a toxic work environment with low morale, tension, and feelings of being undervalued or unsupported by administration.
- Issues include poor communication, fear of retaliation, and a divisive “us vs. them” culture.

Comments:

- Staff: “The overall work environment is frequently discouraging."
- Staff: "The staff is amazing we all support each other. Administration lets a lot of bad behaviors go and staff is constantly being disrespected by students."

Teacher Support for Students

Key Insights:

- Perceptions of teacher support vary, with praise for dedication and criticism for lack of motivation, favoritism, or inadequate help for struggling students.
- Students and parents note inconsistent teaching quality and a need for more proactive support.

Comments:

- Parent: "The teachers are amazing, PAs are amazing, nurses are amazing, secretaries are amazing, counselors are amazing."
- Student: "The teachers need to respect the kids more and not punish everyone and only certain kids."
- Parent: "Some of the teachers are very rude in the way they speak to the children and genuinely do not enjoy the work they do."

Parent/Teacher Relationships

Key Insights:

- Parents desire stronger communication and more opportunities to engage, often citing poor or inconsistent updates from teachers.
- Positive examples exist, but overall communication gaps frustrate parent involvement.

Comments:

- Parent: "Communication stopped in November with parents on Student specific progress and I didn’t know my child was specially failing and needed help in English until parent teacher conference."
- Parent: "Unless a parent asks questions, they get no information on their child's academic performance."

Student Safety

Key Insights:

- Safety concerns center on disruptive behaviors, violence, and facility conditions, with staff and parents feeling the school fails to ensure a secure environment.
- Examples include bullying, fights, and health hazards like mold and pests.

Comments:

- Staff: "The lack of real and consistent consequences for students with problematic behavior is both unfair and dangerous for the school community as a whole."
- Parent: "The school environment is anything but safe! Mice problems, terrible air quality report made public, dirty classrooms, overcrowded small classrooms, mold problems."
- Student: "The staff at the Timony is the biggest problem. They don't deal with bullying to the point where the bullying escalates and I no longer feel safe to go to school."

Budget/Funding Constraints

Key Insights:

- Widespread frustration with inadequate funding affects staffing, resources, and program availability, with calls for increased investment in education.
- Parents and staff link funding shortages to diminished educational quality and safety.

Comments:

- Staff: "The district has lost numerous fantastic staff members over the years because of this, including school psychologists and counselors."
- Parent: "The budget cuts are having a very negative impact on the school, morale of students and staff."
- Parent: "The schools need to be financially supported to provide the best education possible."

School Resources

Key Insights:

- Complaints focus on outdated technology, poor curriculum, and inadequate facilities.
- Suggestions include better resource allocation and improved communication about available resources.

Comments:

- Staff: "Our technology is inadequate, and we spend our own money on speakers and extra monitors, etc."
- Staff: “Technology devices in classrooms are not maintained, (expensive projector filters not cleaned). Old technology not taken care of, (smart boards and 36-inch tvs) still in classrooms.
- Staff: “No resources for indoor recess”
- Student: "The curriculum is boring and too much reliance on chrome books."

Special Needs and ESL Programs

Key Insights:

- Significant dissatisfaction with special needs and ESL support, highlighting inconsistent services, undertrained staff, and lack of inclusivity.
- Parents and staff call for better resources and attention to these programs.

Comments:

- Staff: "The Special Ed dept. as well as the Guidance dept., hasn't received the same level of support from the current Assistant Superintendent of Student Services."
- Staff: "The district recently had hired a Director of Special Education who was an extremely knowledgeable and phenomenal administrator. She had made a point to consistently be in EVERY building to connect with staff and to make necessary changes. Unfortunately, she resigned after a little over a year in the position because of the resistance she received."
- Parent: "The district needs to have a better plan in place for the special education system. I think the special population is getting the short end of the stick."
- Parent: "I think children with special needs and conditions like autism should have access to ABA therapies integrated into an inclusive classroom."

Counseling and Mental Health

Key Insights:

- Counseling services are seen as insufficient, with limited mental health support noted by parents and students.
- Calls for more counselors and better emotional support are prevalent.

Comments:

- Parent: "We need more counseling available for our gen ed. kids."
- Student: "I have gone down to guidance to talk about how I'm feeling because that's what they tell me to do but, on multiple occasions, when I have opened up about my feelings they have sent me to a hospital to get evaluated."

Facility Conditions and Maintenance

Key Insights:

- Poor facility conditions, including mold, pests, and uncleanliness, are widely criticized.
- Staff and parents demand better maintenance and cleanliness.

Comments:

- Staff: "We have a serious mold problem that is continuously being disregarded."
- Parent: "The school environment is anything but safe! Mice problems, terrible air quality report made public, dirty classrooms."
- Student: "Hire pest control."

School Culture

Key Insights:

- School culture is often described as unwelcoming, fear-based, or lacking inclusivity and engagement.
- Positive comments are rare and tied to specific staff, while broader criticism targets leadership's tone.

Comments:

- Parent: "The Timony has some amazing teachers that have been crucial to my children's success. Unfortunately, the admin in this building is beyond unwelcoming."
- Student: "I like my school a lot, the teachers and kids are so nice, and we are able to cooperate and work together!"

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Insights:

- Expressions of concerns about bias, racism, and unequal treatment.
- Staff and parents call for more inclusive practices and cultural awareness.

Comments:

- Parent: " Culture is ignored not celebrated to prevent controversy."
- Staff: "As a minority when I began working at MHS I was treated very poorly by peers and my dept head. I tried making several reports through the union but was dismissed."

Impact of Social Media

Key Insights:

- Limited feedback, with one parent noting the use of social media for communication but highlighting its inadequacy.

Comments:

- Parent: "The use of social media for the PTO has been helpful, but if you don't use social media regularly it could be hard to know how to engage."

Staff Professional Development

Key Insights:

- Staff overwhelmingly criticize professional development as irrelevant, disorganized, or a waste of time, seeking more practical and autonomous training.
- Suggestions include collaboration time and specialized training.

Comments:

- Staff: "Professional Development has been useless and not informational."
- Staff: "The current approach to professional development (PD) lacks intentional planning and relevance."

School–District Coordination

Key Insights:

- Frustration with misalignment between school needs and district decisions, particularly around resource allocation and PD.
- Staff feel district priorities overlook classroom realities.

Comments:

- Staff: "Admin. does not value our years of experience and knowledge from being in the classroom and knowing what works and what doesn't work with our students."
- Staff: “I believe that the communication is one of the biggest issues within the district, everything seems hush or last minute and the plays into the dynamics between all personnel”

Admin–Staff Dynamics

Key Insights:

- Staff report poor relationships with administration, citing dismissiveness, lack of support, and poor communication.
- A sense of disconnection and lack of follow-through dominates feedback.

Comments:

- Staff: "Admin. does not value our years of experience and knowledge from being in the classroom and knowing what works and what doesn't work with our students."
- Staff: "The staff is amazing we all support each other. Administration lets a lot of bad behaviors go and staff is constantly being disrespected by students."
- Staff: "Admin are the superintendent’s minions so they do not have a backbone to support their teachers.”

Admin Communication to Parents/Students

Key Insights:

- Parents and students criticize unclear or last-minute communication about programs and events, seeking more inclusive and timely updates.
- Report cards and event scheduling are particular pain points.

Comments:

- Parent: "Communication stopped in November with parents on Student specific progress and I didn’t know my child was specially failing and needed help in English until parent teacher conference."
- Parent: " I didn't know what material my child was reading or covering until pt meetings. We stopped getting talking points communications from everyone EXCEPT the homeroom teacher November 2024."
- Parent: “more consistency and communication from the teachers would be appreciated”

Admin Care/Responsiveness

Key Insights:

- Mixed feedback on admin responsiveness, with some praise for efforts and others noting a lack of action on concerns.
- Parents feel heard but their concerns are not always addressed effectively.

Comments:

- Staff: "When we do reach out for help with students there is absolutely no consistency and sometimes, we wait days for a reply."
- Parent: “The administration fails to assure any level of accountability or responsibility.”

Discipline and Behavioral Issues

Key Insights:

- Strong dissatisfaction with inconsistent or lenient discipline, seen as enabling disruptive behaviors that affect learning and safety.
- Calls for clear, fair consequences are widespread.

Comments:

- Staff: "The lack of real and consistent consequences for students with problematic behavior is both unfair and dangerous for the school community as a whole."
- Parent: "Discipline seems nonexistent."
- Student: "The teachers should take more action when it comes to children with behavioral issues."

Bullying Response

Key Insights:

- Bullying is a major issue, with inadequate responses leaving students and parents feeling unsupported.
- Emotional and physical bullying incidents highlight a need for stronger action.

Comments:

- Parent: "Bullying is an ongoing issue. As is the issue at many schools."
- Student: "The staff at the Timony is the biggest problem. They don't deal with bullying to the point where the bullying escalates and I no longer feel safe to go to school."

Extracurricular Activities

Key Insights:

- High demand for more diverse, accessible extracurriculars, with current options seen as limited or poorly communicated.
- Students and parents suggest specific activities like arts and sports.

Comments:

- Parent: "I wish there were more extracurricular activities for the lower school."
- Student: "More clubs for nerds"
- Parent: "There are very limited activities for kids to participate in and NO FIELD TRIPS."

Recommendations

1. Rebuild Trust Through Stronger Leadership and Communication

Why: Leadership alignment (2.9) and vision alignment with the district (2.4) received low ratings, echoing open-ended concerns about poor communication, unclear direction, and lack of responsiveness.

Opportunities:

- Increase transparency through regular updates and opportunities for stakeholder input.
- Clarify school goals and ensure alignment with district priorities.
- Hold regular parent and staff forums to close communication gaps.

2. Address Student Behavior and Bullying with Consistent Policies

Why: Discipline (2.8) and bullying response (2.7) were among the lowest-scoring categories. Qualitative feedback reflects a deep frustration with inconsistent enforcement and a lack of safe learning environments.

Opportunities:

- Develop and enforce a clear, consistent behavior policy.
- Provide training to all staff on conflict resolution and bullying intervention.
- Launch a student-led safety and kindness campaign to promote a culture shift.

3. Revamp Professional Development to Be Relevant and Empowering

Why: Professional Development received the lowest score (2.1) and was widely criticized as irrelevant and ineffective in qualitative responses.

Opportunities:

- Redesign PD around teacher-identified needs.

- Incorporate peer-led workshops, classroom observation exchanges, and dedicated collaboration time.

4. Invest in Mental Health Services and Special Needs Support

Why: Special needs (3.3) and counseling/mental health (3.5) ratings were above neutral, but qualitative responses showed deep concern about gaps in support and inclusivity.

Opportunities:

- Expand counseling resources and integrate social-emotional learning into classroom practice.
- Improve special education staffing, training, and inclusive strategies across the school.

5. Improve Physical Learning Environments and School Resources

Why: Physical facilities (2.7), school resources (3.0), and budget (2.2) all scored low, with qualitative data pointing to mold, pests, and outdated equipment.

Opportunities:

- Prioritize funding for urgent building maintenance and technology upgrades.
- Communicate budget challenges transparently and advocate for community support.