



MEMORANDUM

Date May 25, 2021

To Board of Trustees

From Shauna Boyce, Superintendent

Originator Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent

Resource Jordi Weidman, Director of Strategic Communications

Governance Policy Board Policy 2: Role of the Board
Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent

Additional Reference BP 2: Education Planning and Programming
BP 2: Stakeholder Engagement and Communication
BP 2: Collaboration

Subject **ASSURANCE REPORT 2020-2021**

Purpose

For Information. No recommendation required.

Background

In support of education planning, the Board promotes positive community engagement with the Division, represents the community's needs, hopes and desires, and supports the school's programs and essentials to the community. The following Assurance Report is in support of these responsibilities.

Report Summary

Parkland School Division utilizes a robust Assurance Model to better understand stakeholder feedback. Working with an Assurance Model means that Parkland School Division and the Board of Trustees actively seeks to reveal all avenues for stakeholders to tell us how we are attending to our goals and priorities. The 2020-2021 Assurance Report captures stakeholder insights from the March 2021 *ThoughtExchange* process that was available from February 11th through March 4th.

Administration would be pleased to respond to questions.

SJ:kz



Parkland School Division

Where the World Opens Up

ASSURANCE REPORT – 2020-2021

May 25, 2021

Our students possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

2020-2021 THOUGHTEXCHANGE PROCESS REVIEW

Parkland School Division conducted our annual *ThoughtExchange* process for 2020-2021. This online, assurance-process provides more interactivity than a typical survey. Parkland School Division stakeholders are able to share their thoughts and, also, demonstrate a sense of agreement or disagreement with the thoughts shared by others.

The *ThoughtExchange* was available online from February 11 through to March 4th. We provide this process at this time to coincide with the provincial Assurance Surveys. Alberta Education has not yet released the results of the Assurance Survey as of the creation of this report.

To ensure transparency, this full *ThoughtExchange* report will be shared online, and the thoughts include their participant ranking.





PARTICIPATION Breakdown of Participation



Select the option that you feel best describes your involvement with the division:

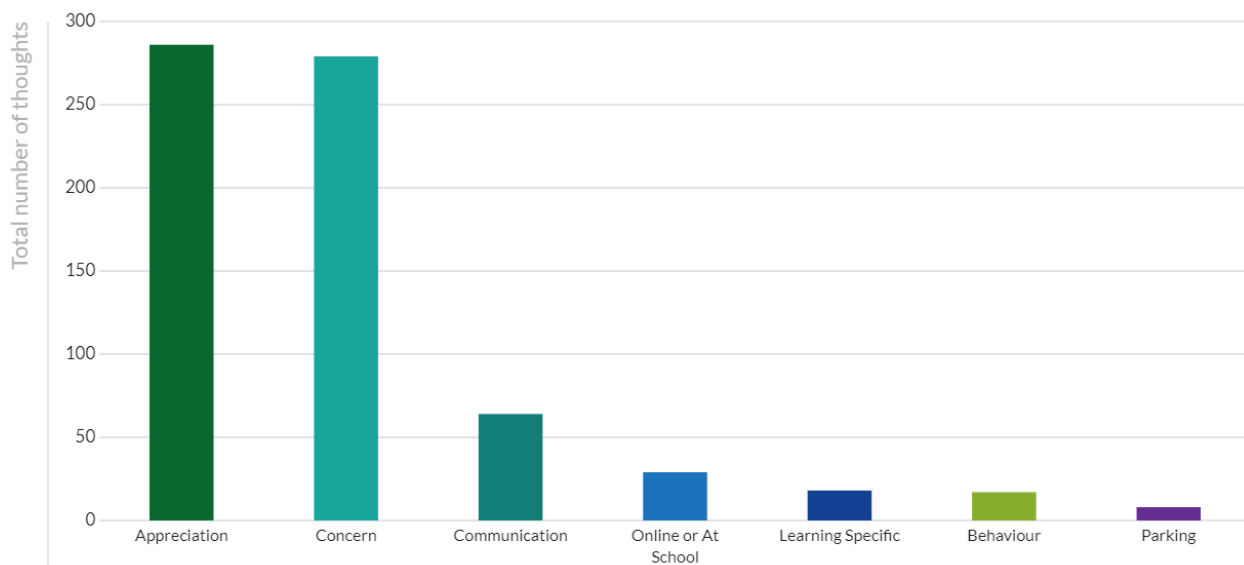


%	Person Icon	Answer
72%	(459)	Parent/Guardian
26%	(164)	Staff Member
1%	(4)	Student
1%	(7)	Community member

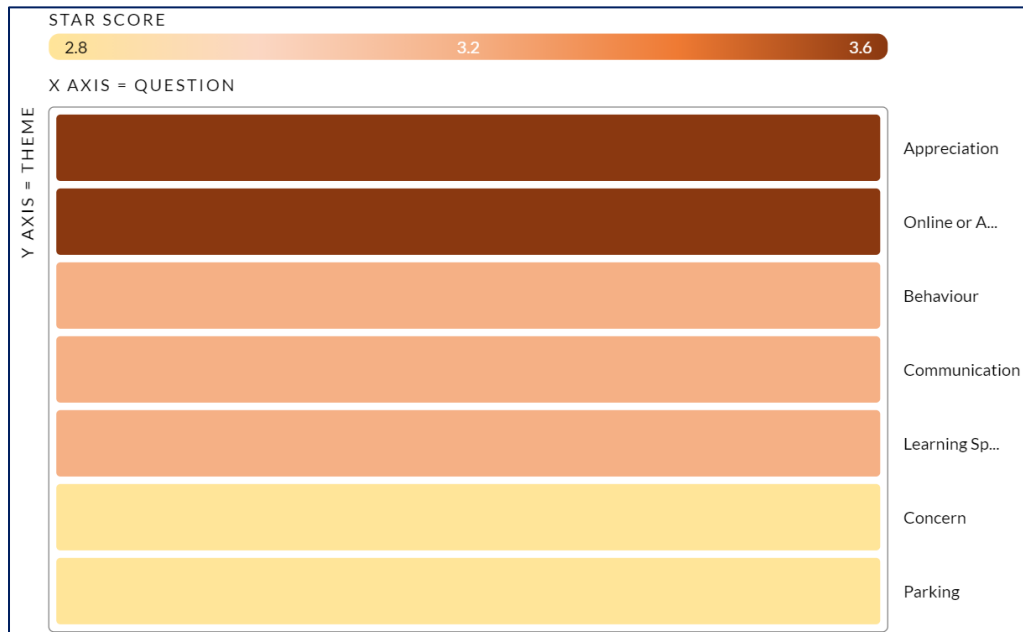
The *ThoughtExchange* process is used to support the various methods that Parkland School Division utilizes to engage stakeholders. It offers participants an opportunity to comment anonymously, and to view the thoughts that others have regarding issues that are of importance to stakeholders.

Educational Services themed the overall ThoughtExchange responses into specific categories:

- Thoughts of appreciation,
- Thoughts of concern,
- Thoughts specific to the transition between learning at school and at home,
- Thoughts specific to learning suggestions,
- Thoughts regarding student behaviour, and
- Thoughts related to parking and school access.



An “Agreement Heat-Map” provides an overview of stakeholder agreement with comments related to each of these themes. Note that the comments of appreciation have strong stakeholder agreement, while the thoughts of concern generate less agreement. This is understandable in that the thoughts of concern tend to be specific to an experience or school, whereas the thoughts of appreciation tend to be more general.



THEMATIC EXAMPLES

The following thoughts provide an overview of the general themes. The representation is limited in that a comment (thought) may only be attached to one theme. Given the stakeholder interest in our pandemic response, for instance, some thoughts regarding COVID are thoughts of appreciation, and some are thoughts of concern.

COVID efforts.

For the most part I think the teachers and staff are doing a great job with the added stress of COVID efforts. (Ranked 2 of 680)

COVID Burnout.

Too many added responsibilities added onto all (staff, students) (Ranked 134 of 680)

Our ability to respond to the pandemic generated a considerable amount of thoughts. For the most part, the 2020-2021 *ThoughtExchange* process demonstrated that our stakeholders are incredibly impressed with our school staff and their ability to keep learning progressing, given the challenges and limitations of our current reality:

School cleanliness.

Our school Custodians are outstanding with keeping up with all of the additional COVID cleaning on top of their regular duties. (Ranked 3 of 680)

All of the staff is working incredibly hard to deliver quality education, with a smile, during a time that's stressful for everyone. From custodians to office staff, from teachers to admin, I appreciate everything they are doing for students. Whether learning in person or virtually. (Ranked 11 of 680)

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I appreciate how much our teachers, administrators, and staff care about our kids. I appreciate that our schools are open and kids are in class. The impacts of kids not being in class may be worse than COVID itself in many respects. Our teachers show that they care by teaching in class. (Ranked 30 of 680)

While there are dozens of thoughts of appreciation, our stakeholders expressed a concern that the pandemic is taking a toll on the mental well-being of students and staff:

I am concerned about staff mental health. The restrictions of staff not being able to socialize during breaks is taking a toll on their well-being. (Ranked 242 of 680)

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Covid protocols - isolation for staff and constant masking for everyone. I worry about staff and student mental health. (Ranked 337 of 680)

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Kids need access to places to have lunch and safely gather together to socialize as much as possible in the school. Because even in good times, gathering in school was limited... now? the deep sorrows that are growing because of enforced governmental isolation. (Ranked 438 of 680)

While a significant number of comments were directly related to our pandemic response, some stakeholders took the opportunity to share other strengths or concerns:

Relevant learning. Teaching how to identify false news in social media is important. Thanks for adding that to the lessons. (Ranked 129 of 680)

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A quality Health & Life Skills program, along with a quality Phys. Ed. program taught by passionate educators is essential to student success. These two subject areas are essential to student development, but all too often are not being taught in a meaningful and enlightening way, if at all. (Ranked 294 of 680)

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How are indigenous world views being incorporated into learning environments and routines? (Ranked 610 of 680)

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Parkland demonstrated commitment to French immersion with option 2 This was an effort to maintain the growth of our program. (Ranked 563 of 680)

Some stakeholders addressed communication successes and some identified challenges:

Parent Teacher Interviews Online. Love this format. More private, effective and efficient than waiting in line in the gym at SGCH. (not ranked)

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There was a COVID exposure, which was scary, but communication around it was great. Deciding to do in-person school was not easy. when we got the call about an exposure it was very scary, but the staff were super kind and supportive. (Ranked 76 of 680)

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I would like to see more communication from the teachers, using an app or an email, keep parents informed. My child struggles with what need to be done, and I don't know what needs to be done, I would like to be kept in the loop. (Ranked 299 of 680)

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Increased transparency in student progress and ways to improve. Parents don't always have a clear image of their child's efforts based on grades alone and increased clear communication makes it easier. (Ranked 253 of 680)

Several stakeholders utilized the opportunity to discuss the successes and challenges with transitioning to online learning, or to discuss the difference between learning from home and learning at school.

I appreciate having an option to learn at home and an easy transition when we were ready to return. It is important to have options for families that have different risk tolerance and factors. (Ranked 49 of 680)

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I appreciate the effort the teachers put into the online instruction portion of the year. It helped keep a routine during at home learning. My kids knew exactly what to do at home. (Ranked 52 of 680)

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Online learning should now be the norm on snow days. No need to miss out on even more education due to mother nature. School is all about preparing kids for adulthood. Most jobs do not accommodate snow days in Alberta. This is more so with older kids. (Ranked 230 of 680)

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I appreciate the ability to work from home. I'm high risk for COVID and my mental health has suffered this past year, but feeling safe at home enables me to keep working well. (Ranked 286 of 680)

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Online learning was very patchy in the fall term with each individual school trying to manage Option 2 itself. Things are a lot better now that the schools are pooling resources for dedicated teachers for each grade. Fall term was really difficult. (Ranked 566 of 680)

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Overall, the comments are significantly positive. The full 2020-2021 *ThoughtExchange* report of comments is included in the following pages. The comments are provided based on participant ranking.