



**B O A R D**  
MEMORANDUM

**Date:** March 23, 2022  
**To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Shawna Walter, Acting Superintendent  
**Originator(s):** Jonathan Konrad, Acting Deputy Superintendent, Education Services  
Tanya Sloan, Student Information Specialist  
**Subject:** 2021 Thoughtexchange Report

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**Purpose:**

To be received as information.

**Background:**

Between April 7<sup>th</sup> and April 20<sup>th</sup> administration will be hosting the division-wide Thoughtexchange Engagement with all stakeholders. Our question will be similar to last year to help continue the conversation on improving student learning and achievement.

**2022 Question**

*What are the most important things that Sturgeon Public Schools are doing or should consider doing to improve student learning in our schools next year?*

The Thoughtexchange platform allows all stakeholders to share their ideas and then to vote or 'star' on ideas that they believe are most important. In this way, the strongest or most supported thoughts rise to the top for everyone to see and for administration to consider when building the Education Plan.

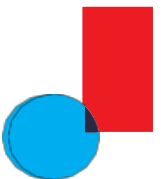
Results will be presented at the Public Board Meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022, as part of the Stakeholder Engagement and Education Plan Development information. To provide a clear and accurate picture of the stakeholder responses and to foster a deeper understanding of the upcoming 2022 Thoughtexchange data; attached you will find the Thoughtexchange Report from April 2021.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the March 23, 2022, Public Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Shawna Walter, M. Ed.  
Acting Superintendent

Attachment



# Exchange Summary

Jonathan Konrad, Sturgeon School Division No. 24  
April 8, 2021

What are the most important things that Sturgeon Public Schools are doing or should consider doing to improve student achievement in our schools next year?



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



566

Participants



520

Thoughts



5,886

Ratings


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## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation

Please choose the grade level your thoughts are most closely connected to:

%		Answer
1%	(8)	Pre-Kindergarten
6%	(29)	Kindergarten
7%	(37)	Grade 1
7%	(39)	Grade 2
9%	(45)	Grade 3
8%	(41)	Grade 4
8%	(44)	Grade 5
7%	(39)	Grade 6
10%	(52)	Grade 7
8%	(41)	Grade 8
4%	(20)	Grade 9
6%	(29)	Grade 10
5%	(24)	Grade 11
4%	(23)	Grade 12
10%	(52)	n/a



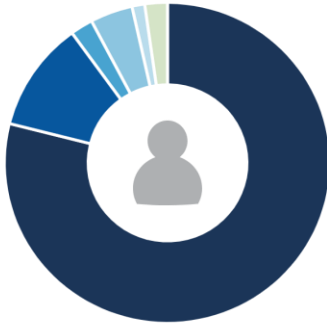









## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



What best describes your role within your school community?



%		Answer
80%	(411)	 Parent or Guardian
11%	(59)	 Teacher
2%	(9)	 Educational Assistant
4%	(19)	 Administration
1%	(8)	 Other Staff
2%	(9)	 Community Member





## THOUGHTS

### Key Thoughts



**Menta Health for Teachers** Teachers need healthy bodies and minds to help support our students. It's challenging to pour from an empty cup.

4.4 ★★★★★ (14 👤)  
Ranked #1 of 520

**Promoting a well-rounded approach to education such as community projects, wellness activities, outdoor classroom, etc.** This helps engage students in their learning and builds a connection to our community.

4.3 ★★★★★ (23 👤)  
Ranked #2 of 520

**Give teachers more support.** Students are at so many different levels and need extra help to help all students succeed.

4.3 ★★★★★ (21 👤)  
Ranked #3 of 520

**The class sizes ensure each child gets the assistance they need. A very positive environment where each child is encouraged to blossom.** Elementary teachers play a huge role in shaping how our kids feel about learning for the rest of their lives. I appreciate the our teachers.

4.3 ★★★★★ (20 👤)  
Ranked #4 of 520

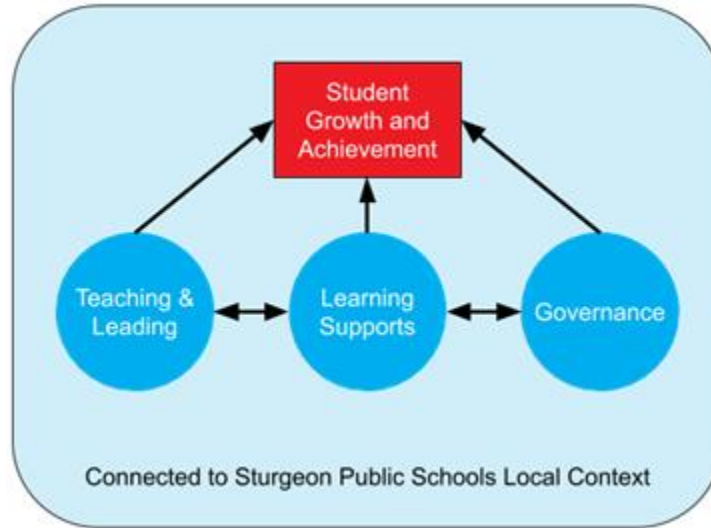
**Adequate communication with parents to ensure parents know when there are project due. Or if a student is struggling with a concepts.** If support and time is not available in class, parents can step up and help at home or get extra help outside school.

4.3 ★★★★★ (19 👤)  
Ranked #5 of 520



## Assurance Domains

Thoughts were organized into the five Alberta Education Assurance Domains  
Then themes were recognized within each domain and ranked.

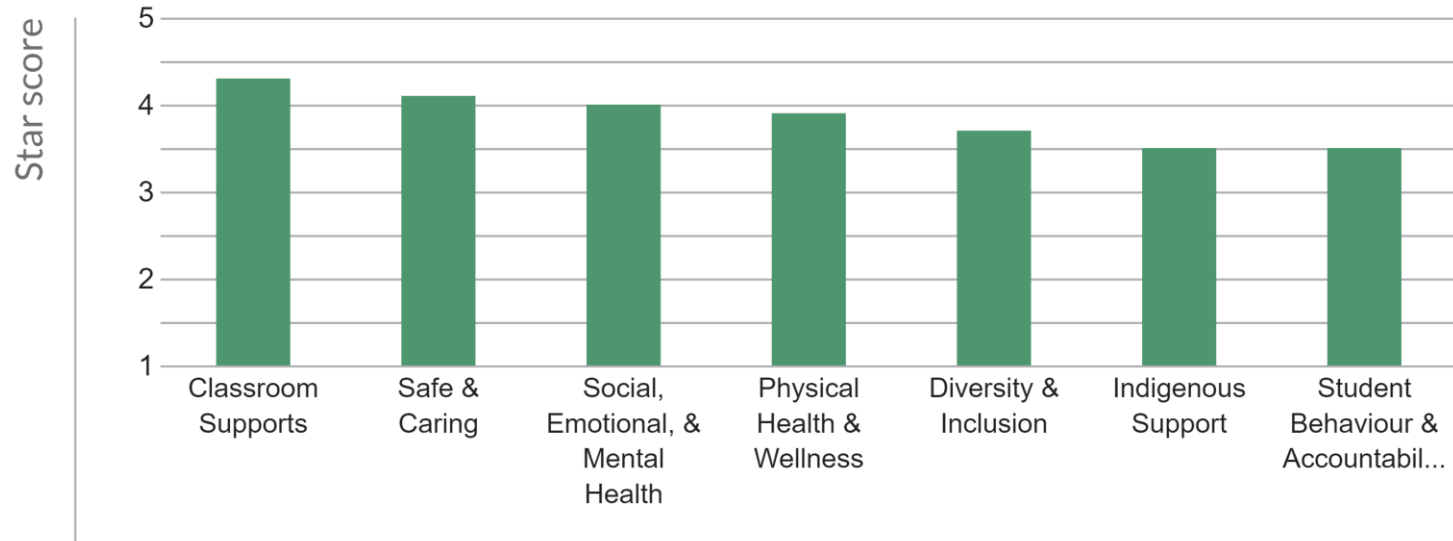






## LEARNING SUPPORTS

Top Themes by star score



Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Classroom Supports



- Give teachers more support.** Students are at so many different levels and need extra help to help all students succeed. 4.3 ★★★★★ (21 👤)
- Opportunities for students who are below grade level to get extra support from a support teacher or EA** Having a small groups work on individual needs is beneficial to student learning. 4.3 ★★★★★ (19 👤)
- Additional Supports** This will ensure all students are reached in large classes of 28+ students with 6+ IPPs/LPs/Behavioural Plans 4.3 ★★★★★ (15 👤)

Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

Theme: Safe & Caring



**The class sizes ensure each child gets the assistance they need. A very positive environment where each child is encouraged to blossom.** Elementary teachers play a huge role in shaping how our kids feel about learning for the rest of their lives. I appreciate the our teachers.

4.3 ★★★★★ (20 👤)

**During covid the school has gone above and beyond with their teaching whether it be online or in person** It's important for kids to feel safe in their learning environment and to know their teacher(s) are looking out for them.

4.2 ★★★★★ (19 👤)

**SPS continues to have caring staff that are dedicated to working with their students to be successful.** Relationships with students, getting to know their strengths and areas of need, and knowing how to work with students at their needs is crucial.

4.2 ★★★★★ (8 👤)

Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Social, Emotional, & Mental Health



**More inclusivity & mental health check in's needs to remain on the forefront even more through this pandemic.** Mental Health is declining in young students and not only are teachers,parents burnt out but students are lost.

4.3 ★★★★★ (15 👤)

**I think it important to highlight mental health in our school** Now more than every student needs the mental health support and strategies to build their resiliency for now and the future

4.1 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

**When planning classes for next year I believe it will be important to consider placing friend groups in the same class cohort.** The mental health of our children is fragile, especially now, and having the comfort of a few good friends in their cohort is important.

4.1 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

Theme: Physical Health & Wellness



**Get outside** It's safer and great for kids to move freely

4.1 ★★★★★ (19 👤)

**School Sports** students need school sports to be able to release energy

4.1 ★★★★★ (14 👤)

**More time spent outside** Fresh air and less time in front of screens

4.0 ★★★★★ (23 👤)

Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Diversity & Inclusion



- Diverse needs** The children need more EA support in the classroom especially those with diverse needs. They also need more support from the CLT to meet their goals 4.1 ★★★★★ (10 👤)
- Anti-Racism Education** In a rural, majority-white district, it can be difficult for BIPOC students who face prejudice and bullying in schools every day. We could do more 3.8 ★★★★★ (13 👤)
- Inclusion matters** Inclusion promotes mental health by building relationships, creating safe environments, connection & building confidence. Confidence builds performance. 3.8 ★★★★★ (13 👤)

Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Indigenous Support



**First Nation, Métis, and Inuit supports** Indigenous students tend to achieve below white students, and the Indigenous community has hesitancy about Eurocentric public education.

3.8 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

**Indigenous Education** Following the TQS for inclusion of FNMI content into curriculum is an important part of truth and reconciliation

3.1 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

Domain:  
Learning  
Supports



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Student Behaviour & Accountability



**Make students more accountable** Because that's how life works

3.9 ★★★★★ (22 👤)

**I think that having students being more accountable for having their assignments handed in on time.** I think students should be held accountable daily to show what they accomplished in the block rather than doing nothing.

3.8 ★★★★★ (7 👤)

**I believe cell phones are distracting many students with social media and gaming during the day, and should not be allowed in our school buildings.** Phones are often a source of cyber bullying. Gaming distracts students during instruction and impedes appropriate class participation.

3.7 ★★★★★ (16 👤)

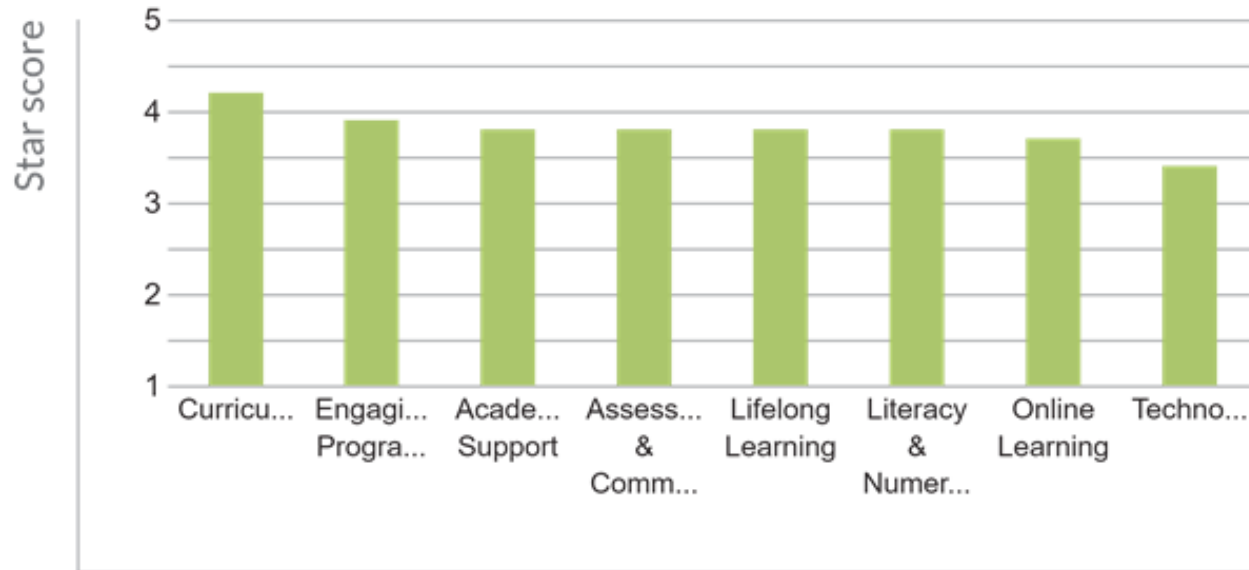
Domain:  
Learning  
Supports





## STUDENT GROWTH & ACHIEVEMENT

Top Themes by star score



Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Curriculum



**Not participating in the curriculum pilot was a wise decision.** This would have been an added stress on students, parents and teachers that was unnecessary.

4.3 ★★★★★ (15 👤)

**Schools should not be imposing political ideologies at primary and elementary grade levels.** Children should be taught the 4 core subjects of math, english, science, and social studies (history/geography) without a political bias.

4.1 ★★★★★ (16 👤)

**I think the curriculum should be child-appropriate.** It is important to ensure that our children's minds are not traumatized or skewed by developmentally inappropriate materials.

4.1 ★★★★★ (15 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Engaging Programming



I love that Namao School spends time outdoors. It was a thing pre COVID with walks, run-athons, lose parts play ground. Now with increased regulations or restrictions the children get to spend more time outdoor with gym classes, and regular classes expanding out doors

4.3 ★★★★★ (16 👤)

Stick to strong academic principles. Provide innovative programs. Create a strong community environment.

4.3 ★★★★★ (16 👤)

Hands on learning opportunities and projects Engaging for students

4.3 ★★★★★ (13 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

Theme: Academic Support



**Need more help for kids that are on the cusp of failing** Success is important for all

4.1 ★★★★★ (13 👤)

**Extra help for my child.**

3.9 ★★★★★ (14 👤)

**More support for kids** I would like to see more support for kids who are struggling with reading and numeracy, like small groups with a teacher where they learn basic skills

3.8 ★★★★★ (19 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Assessment & Communication



**Adequate communication with parents to ensure parents know when there are project due. Or if a student is struggling with a concepts.** If support and time is not available in class, parents can step up and help at home or get extra help outside school.

4.3 ★★★★★ (19 👤)

**More access for parents since Covid has been a good thing** Prior to closures/online learning I only had a vague idea what my child was learning. Now I can access my child's work online & make sure it's done.

4.2 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

**communication with home** keep parents connected to what's happening at school

4.0 ★★★★★ (21 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Lifelong Learning



**Better prepare students for University** The difference in the workload between a high school student and a university student is astronomical! My daughter was completely overwhelmed

4.1  (23 )

**CTF courses designed to help students grow their own passions** Develop life long learners

4.0  (13 )

**Students should have more career exploration.** Helps motivate them to do well in class when they have a goal or purpose. Having career insight allows them to see the means to an end!

3.9  (14 )

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Literacy & Numeracy



- Provide targeted interventions for literacy instruction.** Students that are far below grade level in their reading and writing need additional support to enable them the opportunity to catch up to grade level 4.1 ★★★★★ (22 👤)
- Guided math** learning math through centres and games 4.1 ★★★★★ (10 👤)
- Help students become strong readers as soon as possible** Because this sets kids up for success. 4.0 ★★★★★ (23 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Online Learning



**SPS has provided great options for learners unable to be in a regular classroom.** This is important because these options may fit a learner or family better than more traditional options.

4.1 ★★★★★ (8 👤)

**I feel one important thing Sturgeon School Division is taking care of student learning through synchronous online learning platform.** This is important as it helps to keep students on track, attending and staying on top of their learning day by day.

4.1 ★★★★★ (7 👤)

**For some of my children this online form has been an eye opener in understanding what type of learners they are.** My children having the ability to learn in a quiet environment, less noise and distraction. Their mental and physical health greatly improved

4.0 ★★★★★ (7 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement





## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Technology



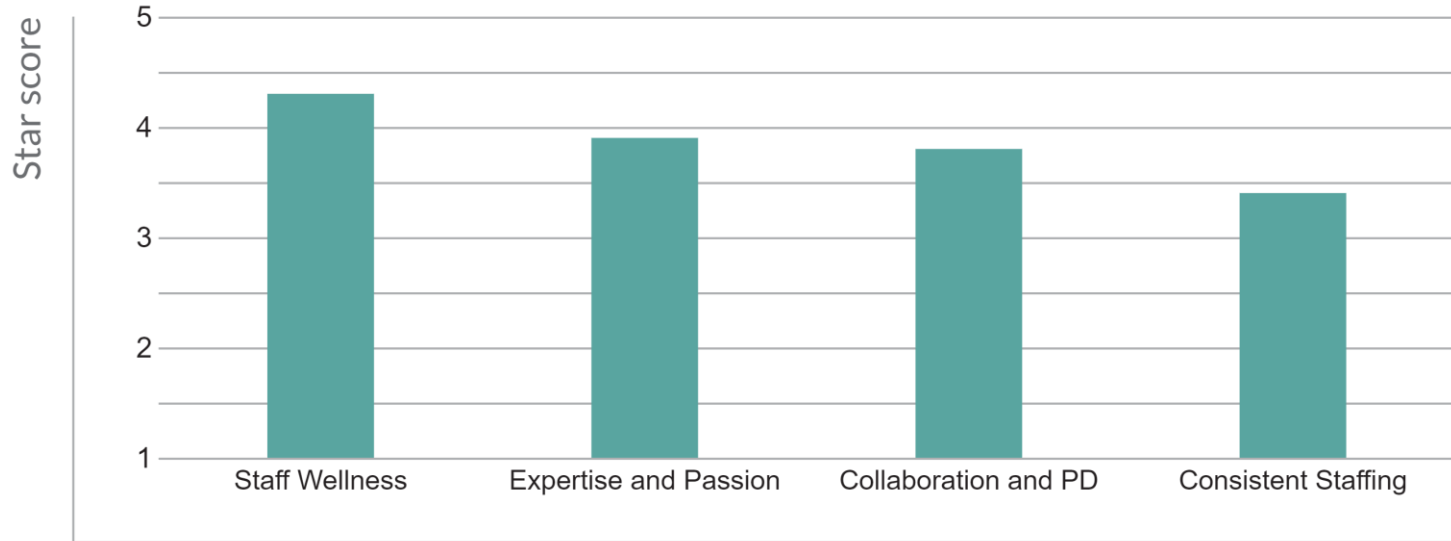
- Technology Reliability** Technology needs to work well and efficiently if it is going to be an asset. We can't be trouble shooting problems in the middle of class. 4.3 ★★★★★ (15 👤)
- Chromebooks** Especially this year it was important to have technology easily accessible for students. We are almost at a 1:1 ratio for our population. 3.9 ★★★★★ (13 👤)
- Promethean boards are out of date and quickly dying.** We appreciate the support and plan in replacing and updating tech in the classrooms so that students can see and hear the material being presented. 3.9 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

Domain:  
Student Achievement



## TEACHING & LEADING

Top Themes by star score



Domain:  
Teaching and  
Leading



## THOUGHTS

### Teaching & Leading / Staff Wellness



- Menta Health for Teachers** Teachers need healthy bodies and minds to help support our students. It's challenging to pour from an empty cup. 4.4 ★★★★★ (14 👤)
- Staff and support team wellness should be at the top of the list of priorities for the division.** Teachers and support staff are the only constant part of the equation for student achievement. Well cared for staff will lead to student achievement. 4.2 ★★★★★ (10 👤)
- If you want student achievement, start by taking care of your teachers. If you do this, the students will succeed.** Teacher burnout, cutbacks, lack of support, and a lack of respect all add up to stress, illness, and teachers thinking about leaving the profession. 4.1 ★★★★★ (10 👤)



Domain:  
Teaching and  
Leading



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Expertise and Passion



**Ensuring teachers that have both expertise and passion for the subject are teaching the subject.** It's awesome to hear my child come home and share stories that show the teacher's passion for the subject. It makes kids more engaged

4.1 ★★★★★ (10 👤)

**Train, support, and maintain quality staff.**

3.8 ★★★★★ (12 👤)

**They should hire fresh new teachers who want to teach. Those teachers who have a lower grade average overall due to lack of teaching should retire.** It's important for students overall.

3.2 ★★★★★ (14 👤)

Domain:  
Teaching and  
Leading



## THOUGHTS

### Teaching & Leading / Collaboration and PD



**collaboration between teachers** improves teaching and learning in the classroom

3.9 ★★★★★ (10 👤)

**Staff work very well together - there is lots of collaboration and sharing of assignments and units.** Sharing is a part of learning and being a team player. These are skills that can be applied to future grades and later, jobs.

3.9 ★★★★★ (8 👤)

**Self-assess regularly** Some things are going to work beautifully and some things are not. Be open to that. Strive to improve, modify, add to, change as needed.

3.8 ★★★★★ (8 👤)



Domain:  
Teaching and  
Leading



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Consistent Staffing



- Consistency** Consistency of staff is important to achievement. The board needs to stop shuffling administrators between schools **3.8** ★★★★★ (10 👤)
- Continuity of administration in schools.** Turn over every year is stressful for students and staff. It does not create a positive atmosphere when everyone is waiting for the next change **3.5** ★★★★★ (8 👤)
- Maintain the staff currently in our Headstart Program** The team working at Ochre Park are absolutely the reason I have seen so much improvement in my son's speech and social skills. **3.2** ★★★★★ (6 👤)

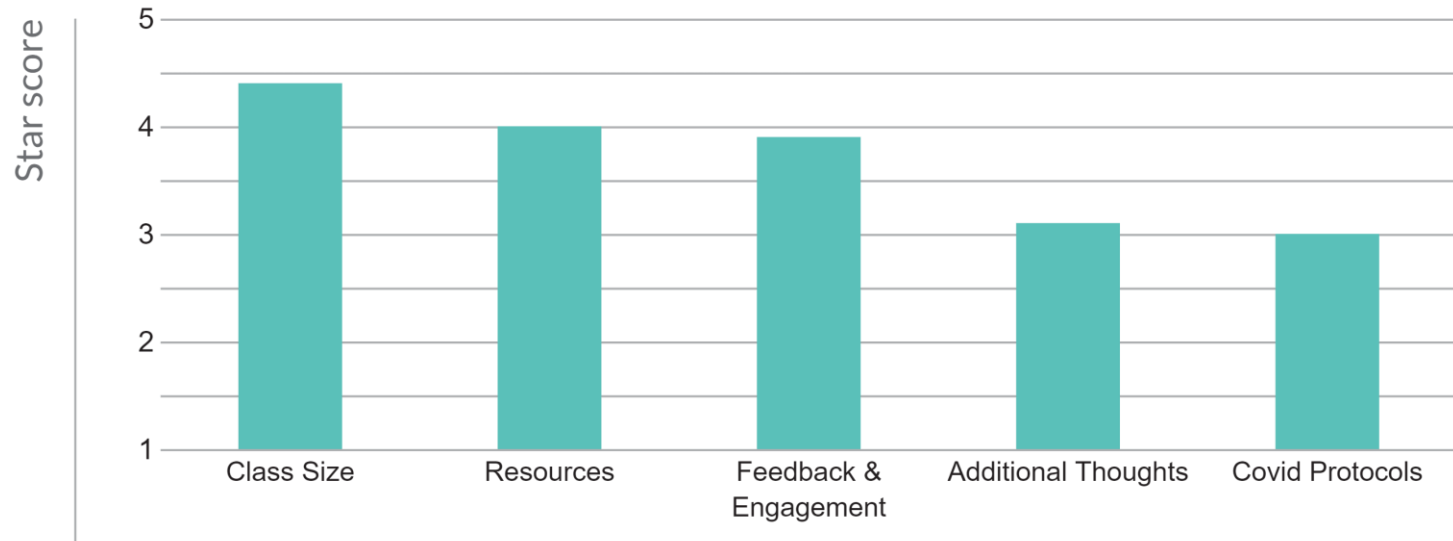


Domain:  
Teaching and  
Leading



## GOVERNANCE

### Top Themes by star score



Domain:  
Governance



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Class Size



**Keep kids classes at manageable sizes so teachers can properly assess the students.**

Students will slip through the cracks if concept understanding is not checked.

4.3 ★★★★★ (18 👤)

**Small class sizes.** Teachers cannot provide additional supports to students when there are 30 students in a class. It is also impossible to maintain social distancing.

4.3 ★★★★★ (14 👤)

**Small class sizes continued** Large class sizes result in cluttered classroom environments which does not facilitate learning and is overwhelming for students.

4.2 ★★★★★ (14 👤)

Domain:  
Governance





## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Resources



**Focus should be in classroom, not cutting budgets. Public school is for the kids, and the people who teach them. Take care of our teachers, and they** Will take care of our kids.

4.2 ★★★★★ (16 👤)

**More money for help, for all staff from EA'S , office staff to the custodians, they are the slaves who work hard and are not paid for it enough !!!** Those staff do it all those schools would not run without them, they go above and beyond what there job descriptions are and they are taken advantage

4.1 ★★★★★ (13 👤)

**Providing more access to resources and ideas to help with students achievement success.** When teacher's have access to good resources it makes it easier for them to plan and have a students learning more knowledge.

4.0 ★★★★★ (15 👤)





## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Feedback & Engagement



**Thank you for asking for parental feedback!** Nothing is more important to me than my child's education: these are her stepping stones for the future. I appreciate you asking for our comments:)

4.2 ★★★★★ (11 👤)

**Requesting Teacher Feedback** It would be beneficial to the students if teachers were able to provide meaningful feedback (like this!) to improve future years.

3.9 ★★★★★ (15 👤)

**Thanks for inviting [dialogue.it](#)'s appreciated.** It's important to be able to discuss these things openly, rationally and critically.

3.6 ★★★★★ (6 👤)





## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Additional Thoughts



**SSD should continue to provide transportation services to rural students who have attended Sturgeon Public Schools their entire student lives.** Many will have no option but to uproot our children from the only community and peers they've ever known, AND while experiencing a pandemic. Disgusting

3.4 ★★☆☆☆ (2 👤)

**Focus on general ideas instead of ideology in school.** I think it's important that kids learn how to think rather than what to think. I think that teaching kids this will help them.

3.3 ★★☆☆☆ (3 👤)

**Improve ranking** Fraser Institute: EMPS was rated 2.8/10 vs Camilla which was 7.4/10. EMPS has had a downward trend for several years

3.1 ★★☆☆☆ (12 👤)



Domain:  
Governance



## THOUGHTS

Theme: Covid Protocols



**A thoughtful, well laid out, well executed plan to begin the the year! A superb job handling tracing and cases. Excellent communication.** Helped with determining our family direction.

3.8  (12 )

**When a classroom is isolated, siblings who go into isolation should be offered the same learning opportunities as the isolated class.** When siblings are kept home, to prevent potential spread to other classrooms, they are not given equal education, and aren't marked as self-isolated.

3.5  (16 )

**Find ways to allow for activities and events for the kids around potential restrictions**

With everything else so restricted there it would be nice if there were options for clubs during lunch (lego,dance, art, etc)

3.5  (6 )

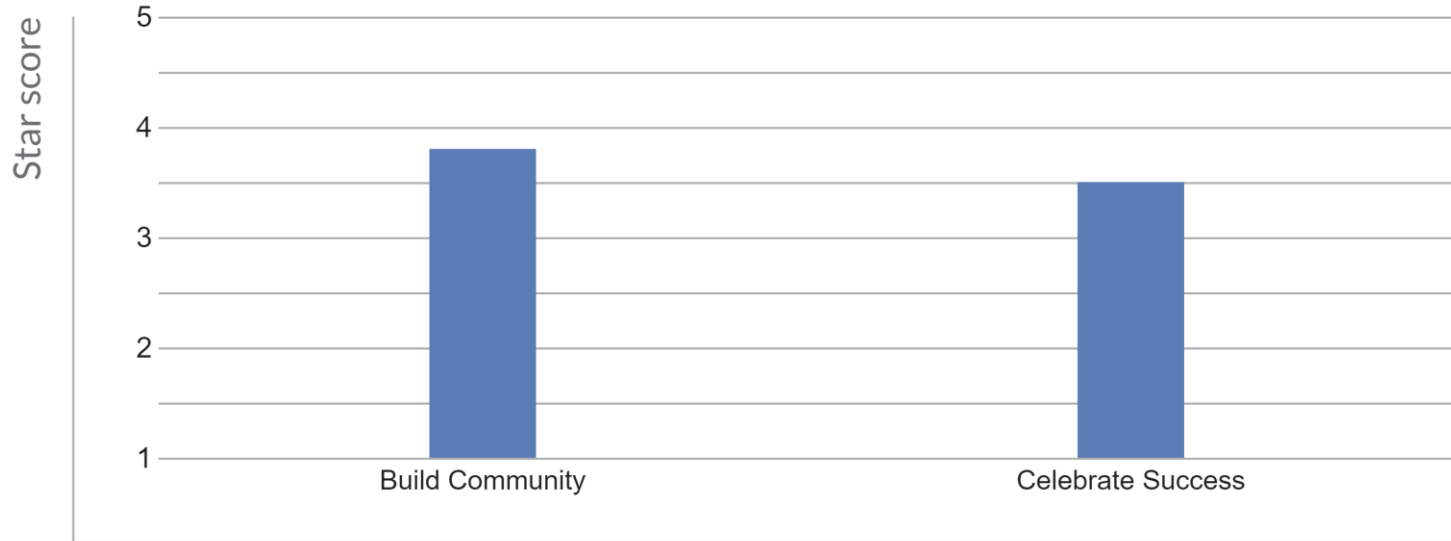


Domain:  
Governance



## LOCAL & SOCIETAL CONTEXT

Top Themes by star score



Domain:  
Local & Societal



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Build Community



**Promoting a well-rounded approach to education such as community projects, wellness activities, outdoor classroom, etc.** This helps engage students in their learning and builds a connection to our community.

4.3  (23 )

**I think it is important to allow parent volunteers, student teachers and practicum students into the schools to help the teachers. Especially in** light of a reduction of teaching staff, an increase in students per class, and budget cuts. The schools and teachers need all the help they can get

4.1  (13 )

**Community Connections** allows students to feel a part of something bigger than just their home or there school, that they can all be connected in some way

3.7  (14 )

Domain:  
Local & Societal



## THOUGHTS

### Theme: Celebrate Success



**Celebrate student GROWTH** Each child grows and develops at a different rate. We need to celebrate learner growth, not just "grades"

4.0 ★★★★★ (18 👤)

**Celebrate ALL learning styles and successes** Student achievement isn't simply receiving high marks in the core subjects. We need to celebrate the arts, STEAM, creativity, etc.

3.9 ★★★★★ (18 👤)

**Rewards and recognition for effort and improvement** . Not all kids will be able to achieve a certain academic standard, however, everyone is capable of improvement and this should be celebrated.

3.8 ★★★★★ (19 👤)

Domain:  
Local & Societal



WRAP UP  
Next Steps

Thanks for participating

