



**Northwest R-1 School District  
2018 State of the District Online Survey  
Final Report  
September 24, 2018**

**Introduction**

In late August, online surveys were made available to four key constituent groups in the Northwest R-1 School District – parents, staff, community members and middle school/high school students. The only differences among the surveys were the demographic questions.

The purpose was to gauge the current views on a variety of aspects of the district's performance, as well as strengths of and improvements areas of the district and what are the important characteristics Northwest students/graduates need to possess to be successful.

Parents took the most advantage of this opportunity to speak up, as 833 chose to take part, though not all those who participated answered all the questions – a situation that is typical with online surveys. A total of 527 middle school and high school students participated, as did 391 staff members and 114 community members.

The results of the online surveys are shown below, along with some commentary. As this data is reviewed, please note the percentages may add to more or less than 100 percent, due to rounding.

1. What grade – A, B, C, D or F – would you give the Northwest R-1 School District on the following areas? Results on this question are reported, using a 5-point weighted scale. In this scale, 4.00 is considered the equivalent of a “B,” and “n” is the number of participants in each group.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Parents (n=833)</b>	<b>Staff (n=391)</b>	<b>Community (n=114)</b>	<b>MS/HS students (n=527)</b>
<b>Quality of education</b>	4.19	4.27	3.97	4.1
<b>Performance of teachers</b>	4.25	4.35	4.13	4.11
<b>Performance of school principals</b>	4.21	4.2	3.92	4.26
<b>Performance of the superintendent</b>	4.38	4.65	4.34	4.44
<b>Condition of the school facilities</b>	3.93	3.47	3.79	3.57
<b>Accessibility of technology for students</b>	4.38	4.48	4.21	4.22
<b>Value received for the tax dollars spent by the district</b>	4.04	4.08	3.79	3.63
<b>Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom</b>	3.91	3.38	3.59	3.94
<b>Preparation of students to be college- and career-ready</b>	3.83	3.97	3.52	3.78
<b>Safety of students</b>	4.12	4.09	3.94	4.15
<b>The district's efforts to report its plans and progress to citizens</b>	4.10	4.27	3.93	3.92
<b>The district's responsiveness to citizen concerns</b>	3.96	4.17	3.73	3.71
<b>Providing a welcoming school environment</b>	4.41	4.46	4.18	3.93
<b>Meeting your expectations</b>	4.01	4.04	3.81	3.75

It is not unusual for the district staff to give the highest scores on survey questions, and Northwest R-1 School District was no exception. In looking at the community scores, it is important to note the “n” number, which suggests completing this survey was not a priority for the average citizen. Almost half (53) said they had a student in the district at the present time, making it quite possible at least some individuals took both the parent and community surveys. Among all audiences, the top performing areas (highlighted in blue) were “Performance of teachers,” “Performance of the superintendent” and “Accessibility of technology for students.” The items with the lowest scores (highlighted in gray), but still nearly reaching a “B” grade, included

“Condition of school facilities,” “Class sizes, meaning the number of students in a classroom” and “Preparation of students to be college-and career-ready.

**2. What are the strengths of Northwest R-1 School District?**

<b>Key word responses – most important word/phrase, highest occurrences</b>	
<b>Parents (n=562)</b>	Teachers, students, school, staff, safety, communications
<b>Staff (n=313)</b>	Community, staff, teachers, district, caring, school
<b>Community (n=81)</b>	Teachers, students, school, staff, district
<b>MS/HS students (n=347)</b>	Teachers, school, students, safety

Survey respondents – 1,303 to be exact – shared their thoughts on the strengths of the school district. Below are word clouds that visually represent the responses by audience. The size of each word indicates its frequency or importance.

**PARENT WORD CLOUD**



**STAFF WORD CLOUD**

Curriculum Interest Superintendent Employees  
Communication Teams Environment  
Sense of Family School Learn Caring Improve  
Teachers Willing Staff Programs  
Community Leader District Chromebook  
Technology Extra Education Succeed Leadership  
Able Welcoming

**COMMUNITY WORD CLOUD**

Believe Resources Communication Facilities Staff  
Classes Offered Students Administration  
Teachers Program School Friendly District  
Community

## STUDENT WORD CLOUD



It is apparent by the comments that the audiences surveyed are pleased with the performance of the teachers and the superintendent, district communication, the use of technology, and the variety of curriculum offered, all of which align with the findings in Question 1.

### 3. What is the one area, if any, where the district needs to improve the most?

Key word responses – most important word/phrase, highest occurrences	
<b>Parents (n=567)</b>	Communications, safety, building/facility concerns, College-and career-ready
<b>Staff (n=300)</b>	Class size, building/facility concerns, communications, teacher salaries
<b>Community (n=79)</b>	College-and career-ready, safety, quality education, bullying
<b>MS/HS students (n=347)</b>	Quality of teaching, student needs, safety, building/facility concerns

Open-ended responses for this question totaled 1,293. There were several improvement areas mentioned, so it is difficult to identify just one definite item for each group.

When reviewing the comments about communications, improvements were suggested for teacher to student, district to parents, buildings to parents and then internal within buildings and within the district (not public). As for building and facility concerns, most survey respondents indicated general building improvements, with some specific mentions about water leaks, mold and the need for new bathrooms, sports facility upgrades, and air-conditioning in the high school. Respondents also stated a concern for having overcrowded buildings.

Students indicated they want to see student behavior policies enforced, specifically in terms of drug use. While only noted for the staff in the chart, low teacher salaries were recognized by all groups, specifically in terms of retaining good teachers who are leaving for higher paying jobs. Other areas for improvement noted, but not by significant numbers, included transportation, quality of education, academic offerings and district leadership.

**4. What are the top three characteristics Northwest students/graduates need to possess to be successful?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Most Important</b>	<b>Second Most Important</b>	<b>Third Most Important</b>
<b>Parents (n=538)</b>	Good academics/ education/knowledge	Responsible/accountable	Respect/kindness/courtesy, along with good work ethic/ hard-working
<b>Staff (n=299)</b>	Good academics/ education/knowledge	Motivation/determination (grit)/self-motivated	Respect/kindness/courtesy
<b>Community (n=69)</b>	Good academics/ education/knowledge	Motivation/determination (grit)/self-motivated	Responsible/accountable
<b>MS/HS students (n=323)</b>	Good academics/ education/knowledge, along with being smart/good grades	Respect/kindness/courtesy	Responsible/accountable

All four survey audiences overwhelmingly indicated the most important characteristic of successful students/graduates was they have the basis of good academics/education/knowledge.

## **Demographics**

### **Parents: Location of current students**

Early Childhood Center – 46  
Brennan Woods Elementary – 96  
Cedar Springs Elementary – 72  
High Ridge Elementary – 58  
House Springs Elementary – 83  
Maple Grove Elementary – 41  
Murphy Elementary – 5  
Valley Middle School – 176  
Woodridge Middle School – 103  
Northwest High School – 317  
*Chose not to answer – 99*

### **Staff: Length of time working in the district**

Less than 2 years – 45  
2 years to 5 years – 46  
More than 5 years to 10 years – 40  
More than 15 years – 88  
More than 10 years to 15 years – 136  
*Chose not to answer – 36*

### **Community**

Yes, I have a student in the district at the present time – 53  
No, I do not have a student in the district at the present time – 42  
*Chose not to answer – 19*

### **Middle school and high school students**

High school student – 218  
Middle school student – 165  
*Chose not to answer – 144*