

Perspectives on the Schools

Results and Analysis
June 2012



Overview

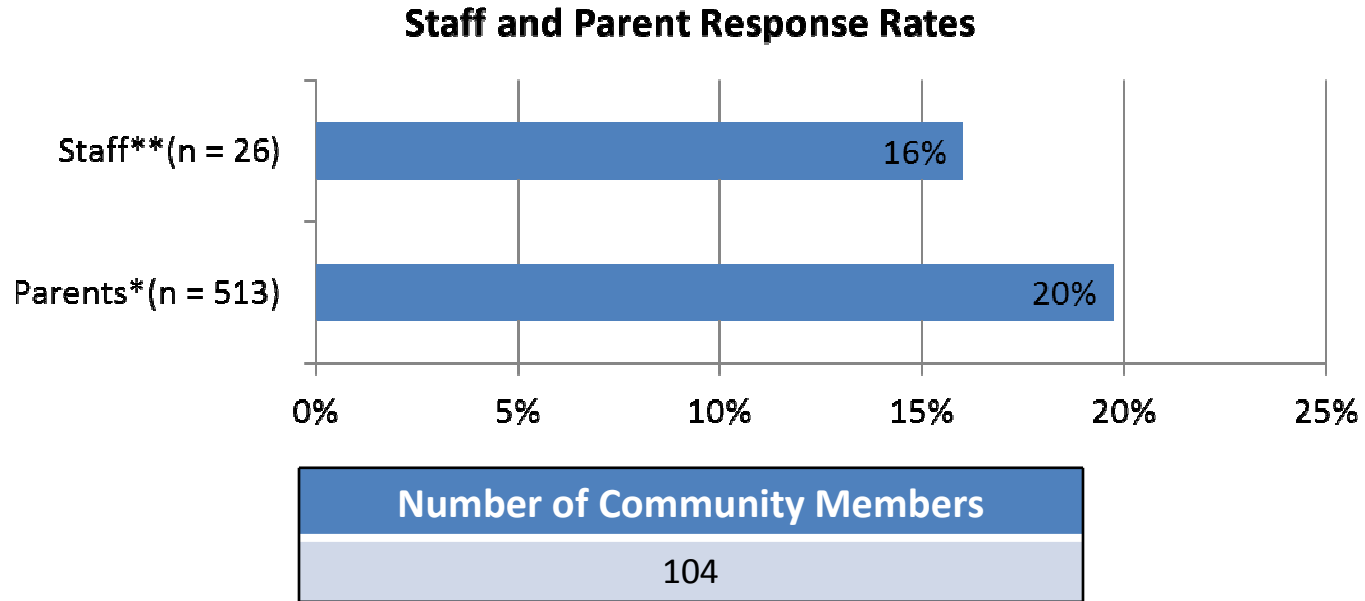
From May 7 to May 21, 2012, parents, staff, and community members were invited to participate in a Perspectives on the Schools survey. Respondents were given the opportunity to provide their thoughts, opinions, and ideas for improving the quality of education provided by Mineola Union Free School District. Those parents and staff who had an email address with the district were emailed an invitation to participate in the survey. The district also had a link on the district website for community members.

The following report provides a district level overview of the survey results. Respondents were separated by self-reported descriptions, i.e. parent, staff member, or community member.

Who Responded

Survey participation was open to all parents, community members and staff. Parents and staff were invited to complete the survey via email which provided a link to the survey. Community members and parents for whom email addresses were not available could access the survey by a link on the district's Website or request a paper copy.

A total of 513 parents, 26 staff, and 104 non-parent community members completed the surveys.

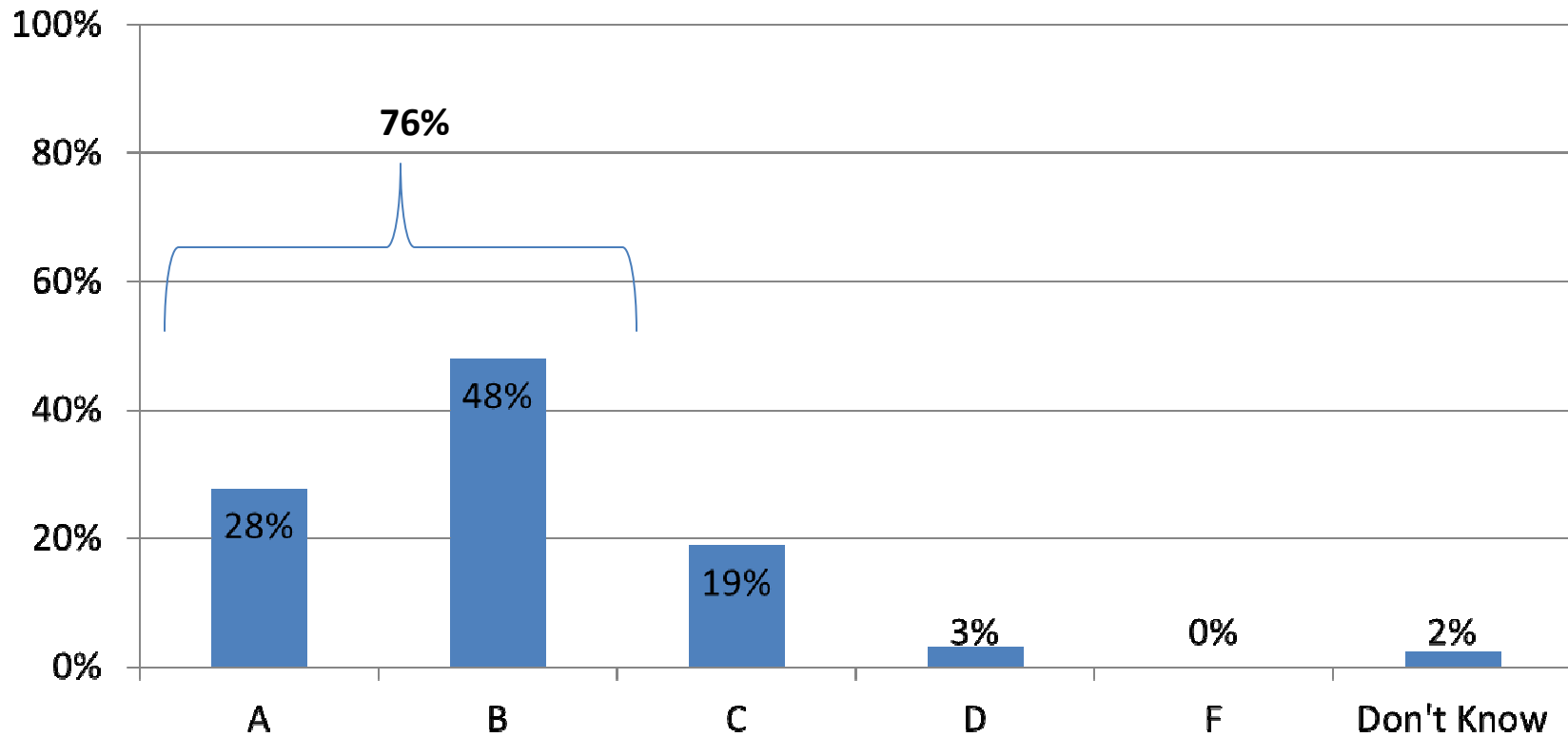


* *The staff response rate is based on the respondents to the email invitations (26 out of 164).

*The parents response rate is based on the total number of parent households within the district (2600).

Parent Perceptions

What grade would you give to the school district as a whole for how well we are educating our children?



Recent Decisions

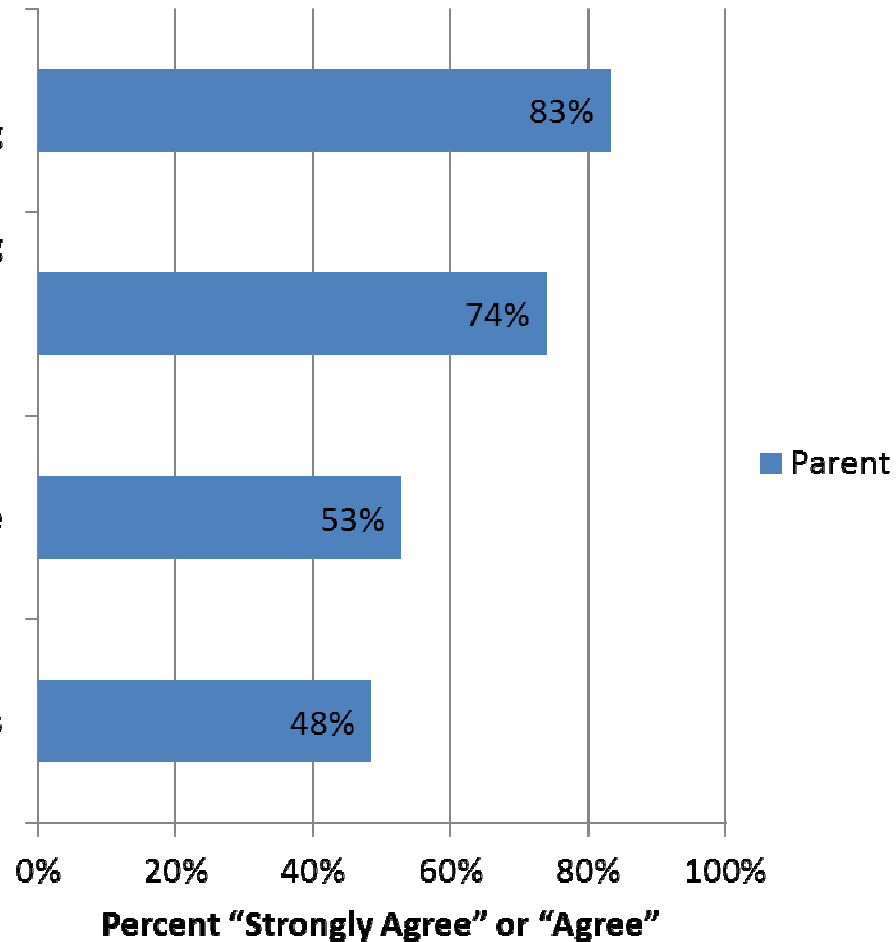
Do you agree with the decision?

A new online platform provides a virtual learning center where students and teachers use district-issued iPads or home computers to extend learning opportunities beyond the school day.

Academic standards were increased by providing foreign language instruction in Spanish at elementary school and requiring all 8th grade students to take the Algebra I exam.

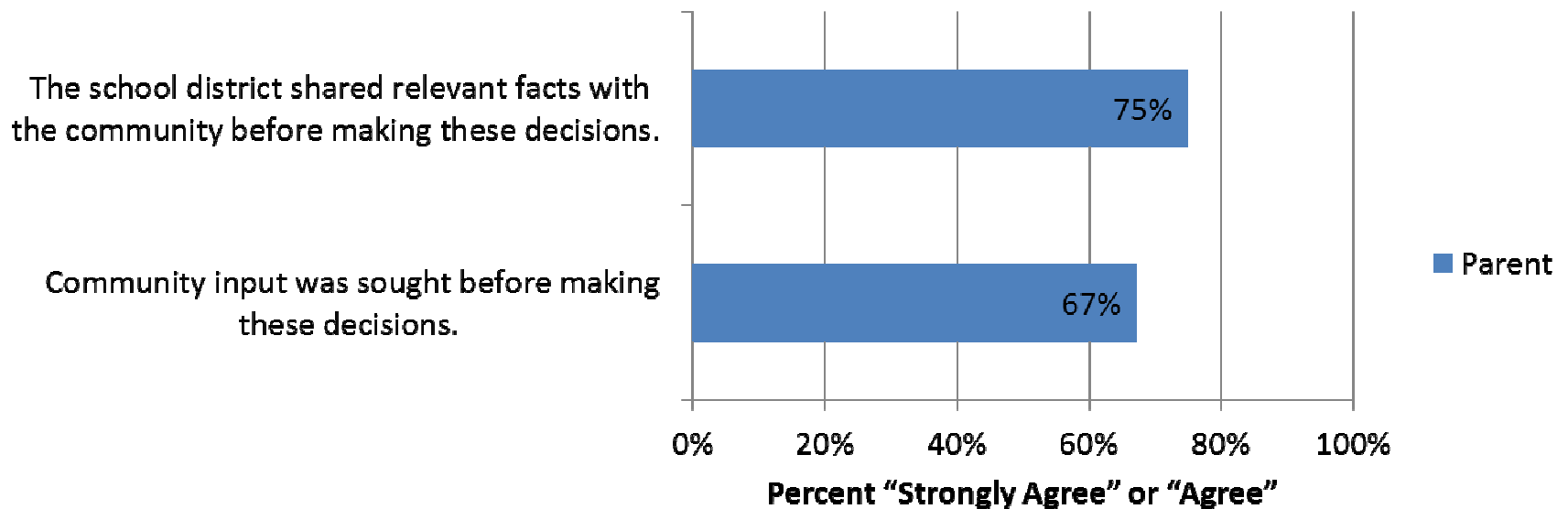
To address budget constraints, one elementary school was closed this past September, another one will close next September.

To increase instructional time and allow for additional 'Specials' (i.e. Spanish), recess was shortened for elementary students.



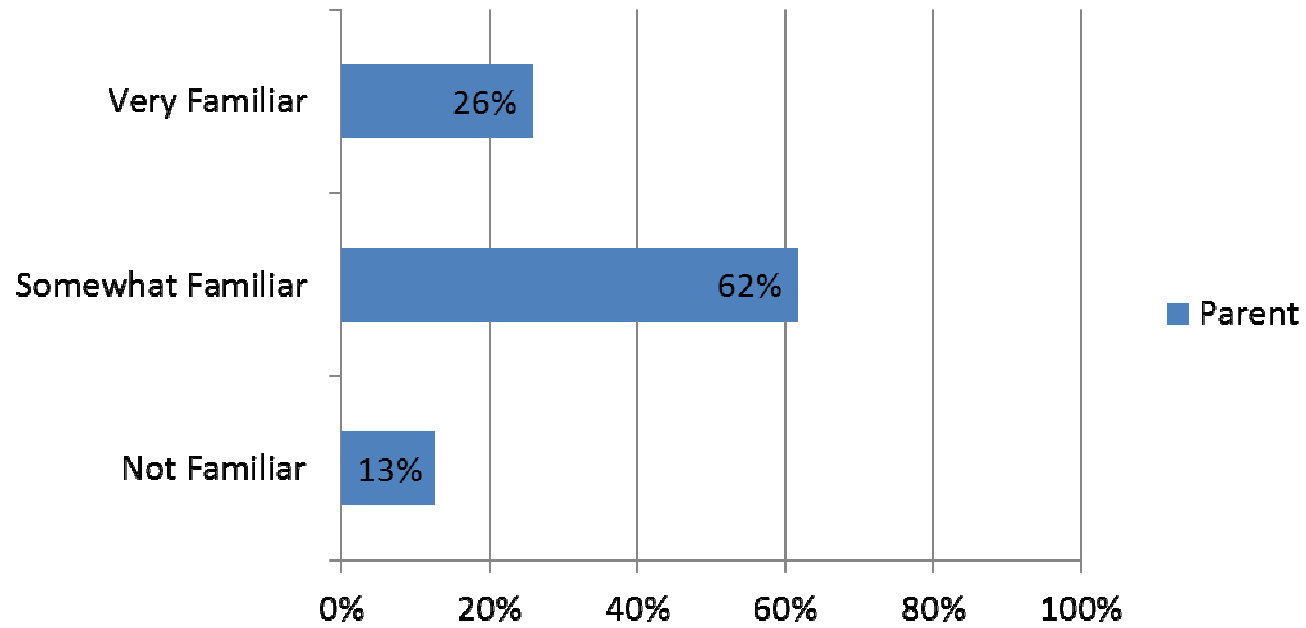
Recent Decisions

With regard to these decisions...



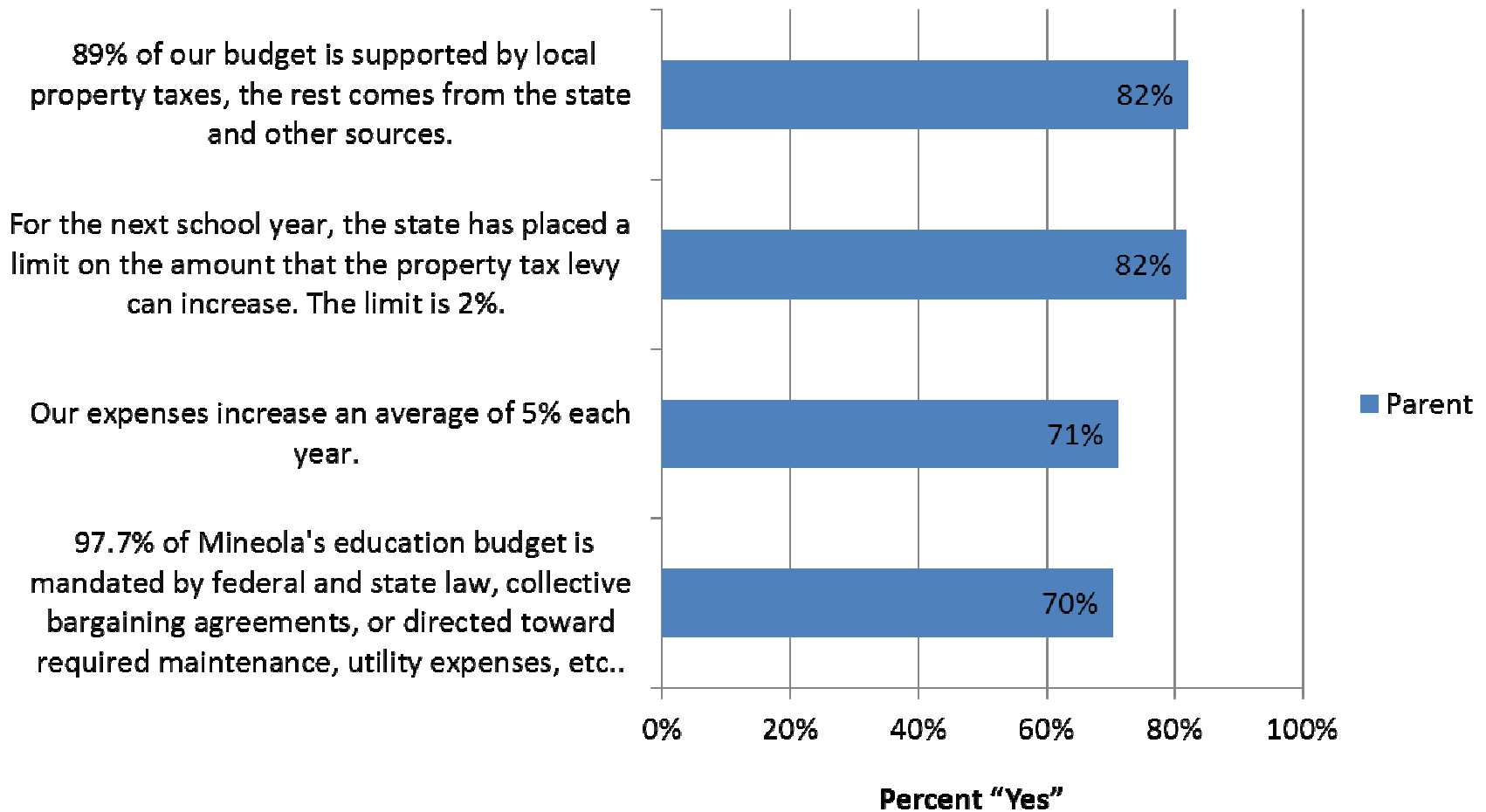
School district budget

How familiar are you with the school district's budget constraints?



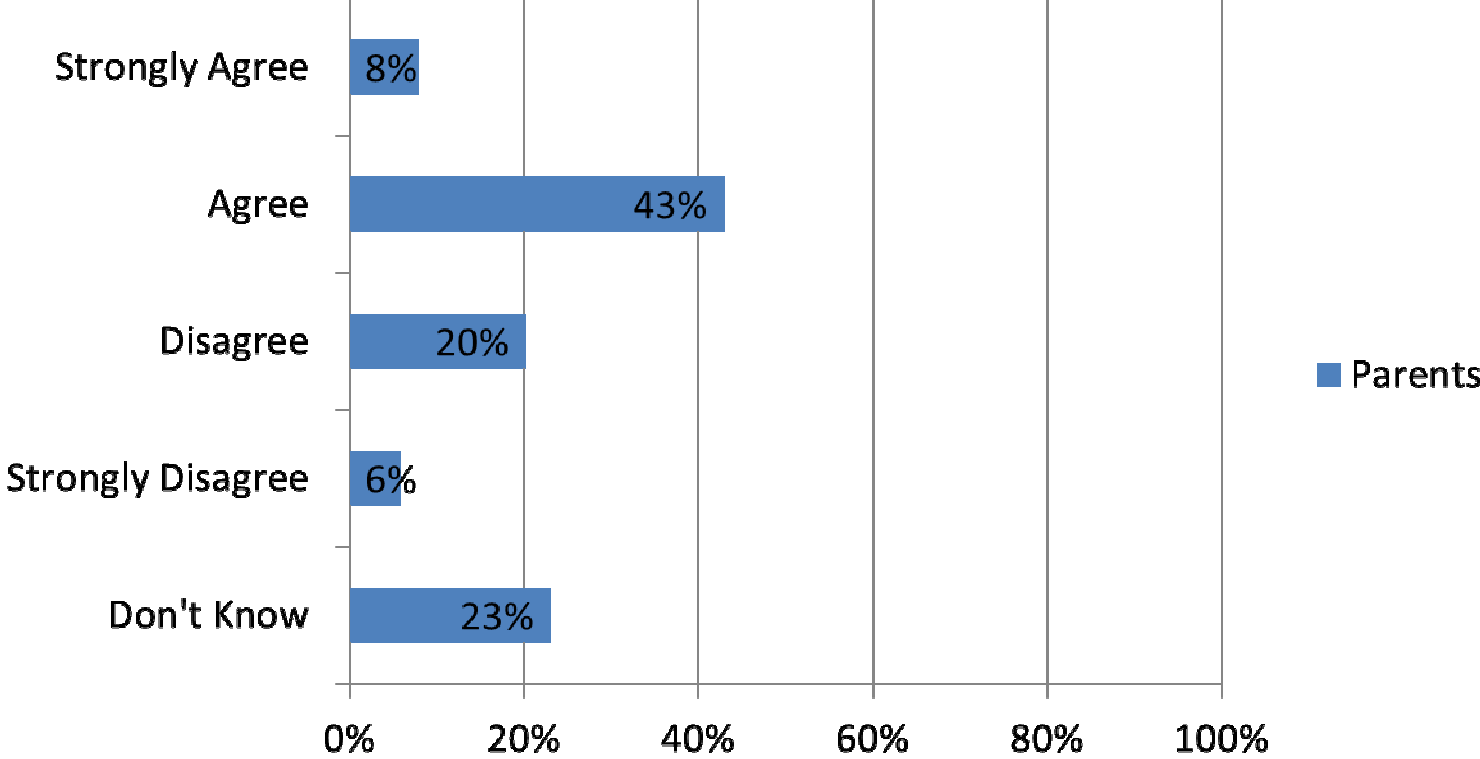
School district budget

Are you aware that...?



School District Budget

The current funding level is adequate to meet this community's education needs.



Preference for Educational Value

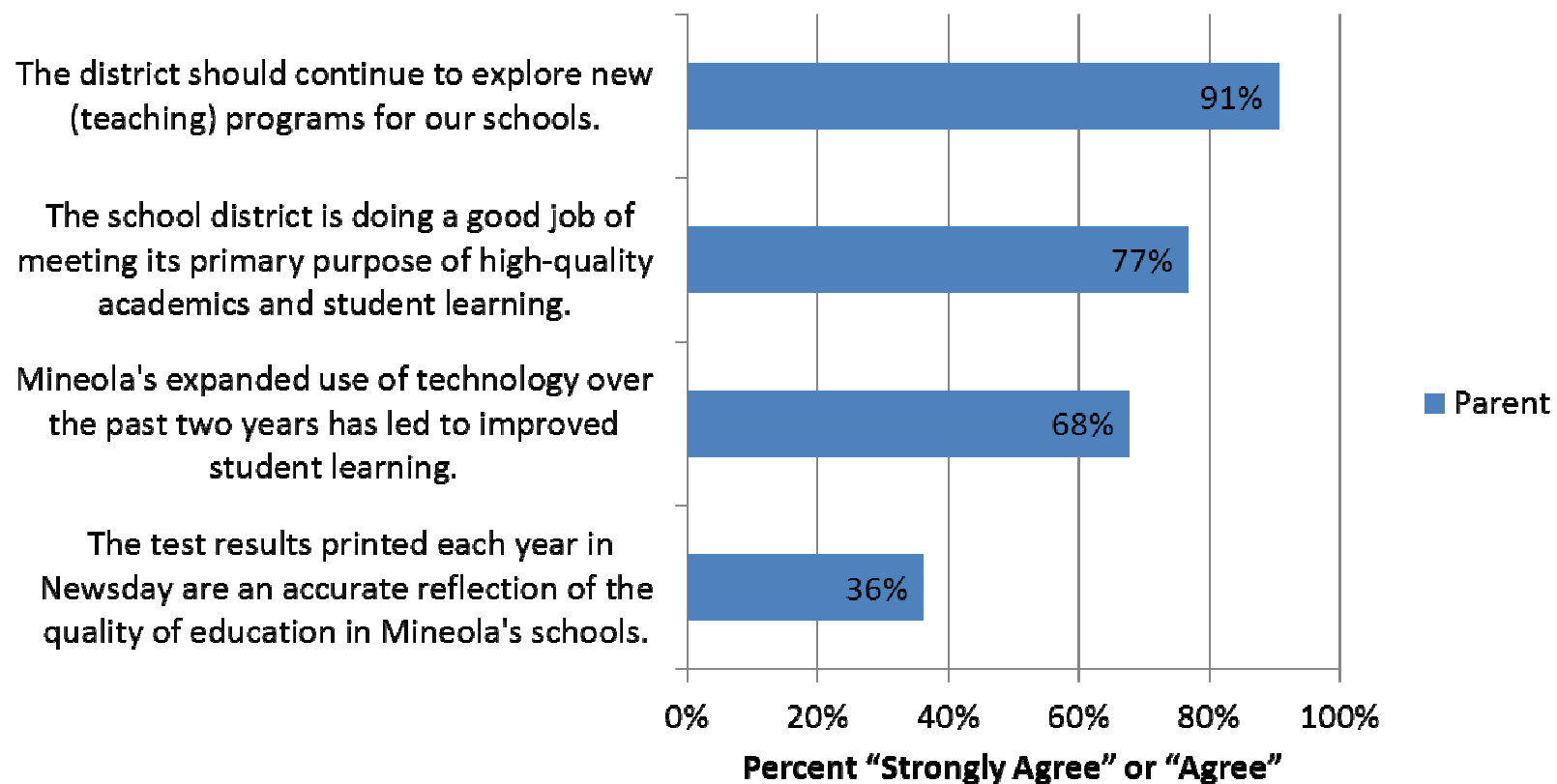
Weighted scores were assigned to each selected answer option based on a ranking of 1 to 3. The highest ranked item was set to 100 so that all other items were compared to that top item.

Rankings	
Math	100%
English Language Arts	98%
Science	57%
Social Studies	15%

Rankings	
Music Education	100%
Foreign Language	86%
Sports	85%
Fine Arts	65%
Extracurricular Activities (clubs)	46%

Progress

Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.



Elementary Academics

Do you feel that your child's classes in elementary school are too difficult, just right, or too easy?

	Too Difficult	Just Right	Too Easy
Math	6%	68%	26%
Science	0%	69%	31%
Social Studies	1%	75%	23%
English Language Arts	1%	71%	28%

Overall, I feel that my child's classroom experience . . .

	Parents
Exceeds my expectations	15%
Meets my expectations	64%
Does not meet my expectations	20%

Middle School Academics & Extra-Curricular

Do you feel that your child's classes in Middle school are too difficult, just right, or too easy?

	Too Difficult	Just Right	Too Easy
Math	9%	74%	17%
Science	1%	74%	24%
Social Studies	3%	76%	21%
English Language Arts	1%	73%	26%

Please rate the extra-curricular activities available to your child in middle school.

	Parents
Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	
Music	77%
Drama	72%
Clubs	59%
Sports	52%

High School Academics & Extra-Curricular

Do you feel that your child's classes in high school are too difficult, just right, or too easy?

	Too Difficult	Just Right	Too Easy
Math	11%	77%	12%
Science	5%	82%	13%
Social Studies	5%	81%	14%
English Language Arts	1%	79%	20%
Foreign Languages	4%	77%	19%

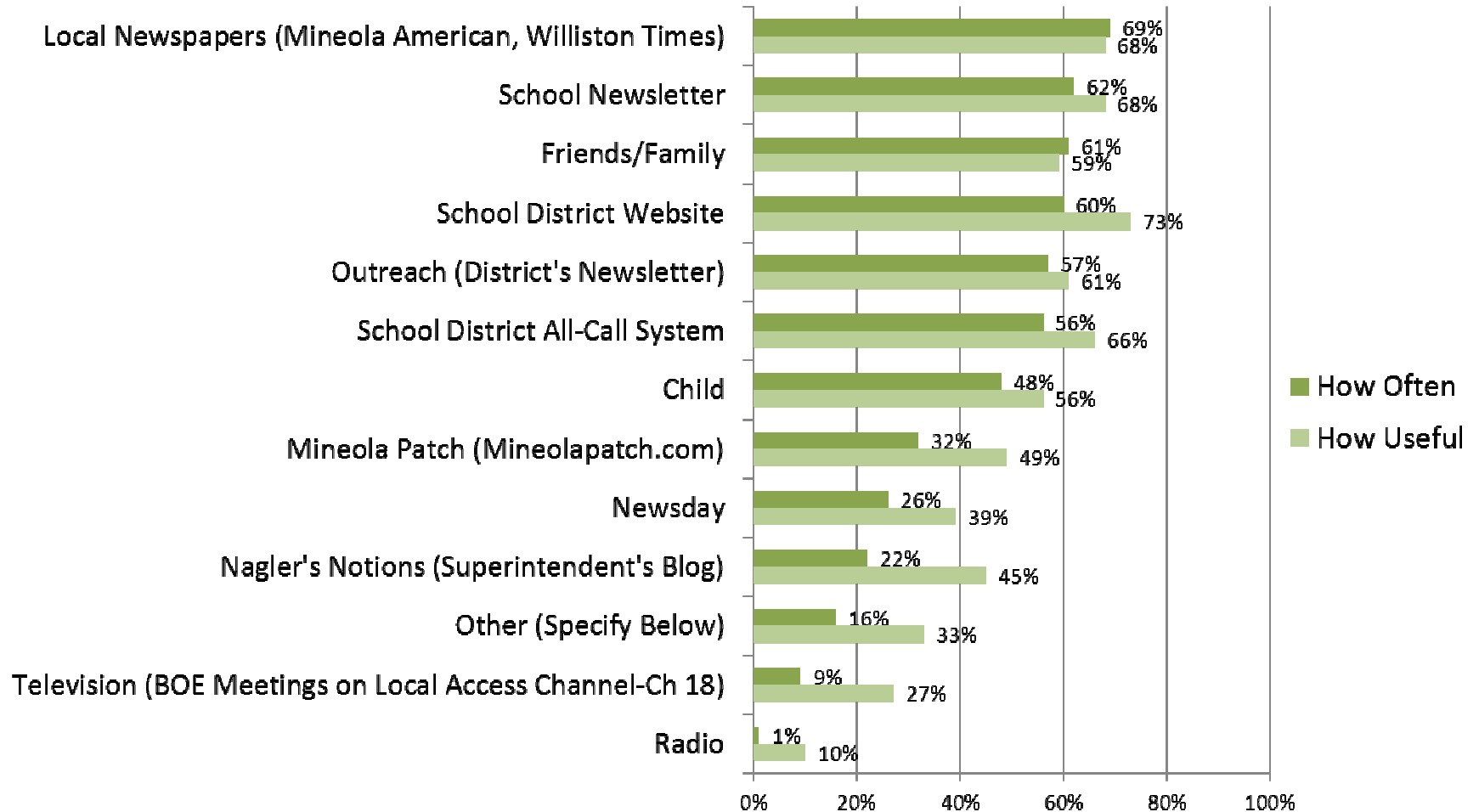
Please rate the extra-curricular activities available to your child in high school.

	Parents
Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	
Music	85%
Clubs	79%
Drama	77%
Sports	75%

Individualized Education Programs (IEP)

	Parents
Percent "Yes"	
Does your child have an IEP?	22%
Do you feel the IEP adequately addresses your child's learning needs?	86%
Percent "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied"	
How satisfied are you with the support and services being provided for your IEP child?	85%

Overall Frequency vs. Use of Communication Resources



Percent "Usually" and "Always" was aggregated for "How Useful".
 Percent "Usually" and "Always" was aggregated for "How Often".

Use of Resources

The following are several sources where you can get information about our schools.

	Overall	Parents	Staff	Community Members
Percent "Usually" or "Always"				
Local Newspapers (Mineola American, Williston Times)	69%	67%	91%	69%
School Newsletter	62%	68%	65%	34%
Friends/Family	61%	64%	42%	48%
School District Website	60%	65%	88%	30%
Outreach (District's Newsletter)	57%	57%	88%	48%
School District All-Call System	56%	62%	43%	24%
Child	48%	54%	15%	21%
Mineola Patch (Mineolapatch.com)	32%	34%	27%	22%
Newsday	26%	25%	46%	24%
Nagler's Notions (Superintendent's Blog)	22%	24%	46%	8%
Other (Specify Below)	16%	20%	0%	3%
Television (BOE Meetings on Local Access Channel-Ch 18)	9%	8%	20%	13%
Radio	1%	1%	0%	1%

Usefulness of Resources

The following are several sources where you can get information about our schools.

	Overall	Parents	Staff	Community Members
Percent "Useful" or "Very Useful"				
School District Website	73%	74%	100%	58%
Local Newspapers (Mineola American, Williston Times)	68%	69%	70%	64%
School Newsletter	68%	70%	64%	50%
School District All-Call System	66%	69%	68%	41%
Outreach (District's Newsletter)	61%	62%	78%	53%
Friends/Family	59%	61%	50%	49%
Child	56%	61%	42%	27%
Mineola Patch (Mineolapatch.com)	49%	50%	55%	40%
Nagler's Notions (Superintendent's Blog)	45%	46%	65%	31%
Newsday	39%	38%	52%	37%
Other (Specify Below)	33%	39%	0%	0%
Television (BOE Meetings on Local Access Channel-Ch 18)	27%	27%	37%	28%
Radio	10%	9%	6%	16%

Event Attendance

How many times you have attended each of the following events during the past year.

	Overall	Parents	Staff	Community members
Percent "One or more times"				
Board of Education Meetings	42%	45%	33%	31%
PTA Meetings	56%	66%	28%	10%
School Plays	69%	75%	68%	39%
School-Sponsored Art/Music Presentations	75%	84%	64%	27%
School-Sponsored Sporting Events	52%	56%	52%	29%
School Events (Back to School, Parent Conferences, Celebrations, Open House)	84%	97%	64%	23%
District or School Committee Meetings	41%	46%	40%	16%

Verbatim Responses

Parents, staff members, and community members were given the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback in the survey. Respondents were asked what the district could do next year in order to receive a better grade. A random sample of 10% was taken from the verbatim responses and analyzed for common themes. Some of the most common responses include:

- Need to challenge students more. Better differentiation for advanced students.
- Need a focus on more writing, grammar, spelling.
- Concerns that educating students for taking standardized tests is taking too much time over teaching core subjects.
- Desire for more communication between staff members and administrators in order to set universal expectations.

Conclusions

The district leadership and School Board is very pleased with the quality of the thoughtful feedback provided by members of the Mineola community in our first survey of this kind. The key findings are:

- A high level of participation shows the engagement of the community.
- 76% give the district a grade of A or B
- Of the 19% rating a “c” the majority of the comments focused on:
 - Concerns regarding emphasis on standardized tests
 - Opportunity identified to offer more extra help
 - Lingering concerns regarding reconfiguration
 - Academic standards could be raised to be more challenging
 - Concern regarding the Everyday Math Program
- Among Parents, a quarter of respondents expressed the view that Elementary Academics and Middle School academics (with the exception of math) are too easy.