

Parent Involvement Council 2008 Needs Assessment: Summary of Parent, Staff, and Administrator Survey Results

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Prepared by

Elizabeth Christiansen, Ph.D.

Alyssa Rye, M.A.

Robyn Maitoza, M.A.

Tara Boswell, M.A.



Center for Program Evaluation
Division of Health Sciences
University of Nevada, Reno

For

The Washoe County School District
Parent Involvement Council

Parent Involvement Council 2008 Needs Assessment

An awareness of the value of parent involvement has increased in the last few years. In response to this growing awareness, the Washoe County School District (WCSD) formed a planning committee to write a Parent Involvement Initiative Strategic Plan (PIISP) for improving parent involvement. The final plan adopted by the WCSD uses Joyce Epstein's (1995) Six Elements of Parent Involvement as the framework for improving parent involvement. The six elements are:

- **Communication** between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.
- Responsible **parenting** is promoted and supported.
- Parents play an integral role in assisting **student learning**.
- Parents are welcomed as **volunteers** in the schools.
- Parents are **full partners in the decisions** that affect their children and families.
- Parents, school and community **collaborate** in order to enhance student learning, strengthen families and improve schools.

The WCSD formed the Parent Involvement Council (PIC) out of the committee that wrote the PIISP. The PIC is comprised of parents, school district employees and administrators, and business representatives. The PIC began the process of conducting a needs assessment to determine where to best focus efforts at change. As the first steps in implementing the needs assessment, the PIC's Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) conducted two district-wide online questionnaires, one surveying school principals and one surveying all teachers and staff. The third component was a mail survey of all parents in the district. The PIC contracted with the Center for Program Evaluation (CPE) at the University of Nevada, Reno to provide technical assistance with this process, including assistance with the survey development, analysis and reporting. This report presents the results of all three components and includes comparisons with data collected from school administrators and staff in the spring of 2007. Throughout the report, percentages presented in tables might not sum to 100% due to rounding and numbers might not equal the sample sizes due to item non-response.

Methodology

Administrator survey

Members of the NAC and CPE developed the administrator and school staff surveys based on the PIISP for parent involvement and a survey based on the six standards published by the National Parent Teacher Association used in previous years with teachers and other school staff. The administrator survey included a checklist of a variety of parent involvement activities. The second half of the survey asked principals questions about attitudes towards parent involvement and perceptions of the current state of parent involvement within their school. Both the administrator and staff surveys were administered online using Zoomerang.com. In April 2008 links to the surveys were emailed from the WCSD superintendent's office to all school principals and staff throughout the district and included a description of the surveys' overall purpose. The surveys were available online until early June 2008.

Out of 95 schools, 54 school administrators representing 46 schools completed the survey. The overall school response rate was 48%. Most schools had one administrator complete the survey, but two administrators completed the survey at eight elementary schools. The number of elementary schools represented (n=31) was used to calculate the response rate rather than the number of administrators responding (n=39). More than half (56%) the high school principals responded, while 48% of elementary schools and 38% of middle schools responded. Principals from 9 of the 25 (non-charter) Title I schools participated in the survey (36% response rate). Elementary school administrators made up the majority of the sample (72%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Administrator respondents by level

	n	% of sample
Elementary School	39	72.2
Middle School	6	11.1
High School	9	16.7

Staff survey

The staff survey asked both certified and classified staff to rate how well their school does at involving parents. The first section of the survey included several sets of questions with each set relating to one of the six standards of parent involvement as they are currently listed in the PIISP. The second half of the survey was similar to the principal survey, including items about attitudes towards and perceptions of parent involvement in their school.

According to district records, 5,582 certified and classified staff members were employed at the 95 schools surveyed. Of these, 1,206 completed the staff online survey for an overall response rate of 22%, ranging from 0 to 55% per school. The majority (76%) of the sample was comprised of certified staff, representing 26% of certified staff employed in the district (Table 2). Approximately 14% of the classified staff in the district completed the survey, which comprised 24% of the sample. Elementary school staff members made up more than half the sample. Response rates at each level were 23% or less. Nearly one-quarter (22%) of the sample represented staff from Title I schools. The staff response rate at Title I schools was 22%.

Table 2. School staff response rates

	n	% of sample	Response Rate
Elementary School	628	52.1	20%
Middle School	182	15.1	21%
High School	396	32.8	23%
Certified Staff	918	76.1	26%
Classified Staff	288	23.9	14%

Parent Survey

The parent survey was co-written by parents, school district staff, and evaluators from CPE. The NAC felt strongly that the survey be mailed to the total population of parents within the school district rather than a sample of parents for two reasons:

- 1) They wanted to be inclusive and give all parents an opportunity to share their opinions;
- 2) They wanted each school to receive an individual report to use when writing their School Improvement Plans (SIPs). The committee was concerned that sampling would result in some schools having too few or no responses.

While many parents have Internet access, it was decided that a mail survey would be a better option to increase the likelihood of reaching low-income families. To make the survey more financially feasible, the surveys were formatted using Teleform in order to scan the surveys directly into a database for analysis rather than having to hire additional staff to enter the data by hand. This also saved a considerable amount of time and helped ensure the individual school reports would be completed before the SIPs were due to the WCSD. To help improve response rates, numerous strategies were implemented:

- 1) A district-wide telephone message was sent to all households in the district using the WCSD's Connect-ED phone system;
- 2) A raffle ticket to win one of twenty Visa gift cards valued at \$50 each was enclosed with the survey;
- 3) Postage-paid, self-addressed envelopes were included to make returning the surveys easier;
- 4) A reminder postcard was mailed approximately two weeks after the initial mailing.

The surveys were printed, sorted, and mailed out by a local printing and mailing company in February 2008. The sorting was based on individual school lists provided by the WCSD. Each list included the names and addresses of each household in each school. The list also indicated whether the household preferred to receive information in English or Spanish, and surveys were provided in the language indicated in the database.

One problem occurred with the mailing. The company hired to print and mail the surveys made some sorting errors with Pine Middle School, Galena High School, and Reno High School. The extent of the error could not be determined. The company agreed to reprint and mail the surveys to these three schools again. For the second mailing, the surveys were printed on goldenrod-colored paper to insure that the second set of surveys was scanned and not the first. The second mailing also included a short letter of explanation and apology along with the survey, raffle ticket, and return envelope. The number of original surveys and goldenrod surveys from these schools were tracked. The overall response rate would have increased by less than one percent had the original surveys from those three schools been usable. The second mailing response rates from the three schools ranged from 25-28%, which were comparable to the response rates of other schools in the sample.

Of the 60,021 parent surveys mailed, 16,334 were returned for a response rate of 27%. The highest response rate was from middle school parents at 31% (see Table 3). More than half the respondents in the sample were elementary school parents. The majority of respondents completed the survey in English. The response rate from English-speaking respondents was higher than that of Spanish-speaking respondents.

Table 3. Parent Survey Response Rates

	n	% of sample	Response Rate
Elementary School	8601	52.8	27%
Middle School	3216	19.7	31%
High School	4472	27.5	26%
English	13067	80.2	30%
Spanish	3222	19.8	20%

Results

Principal Checklist

The frequencies of responses for the checklist of parent involvement activities and opportunities schools could offer are presented in Tables 4a-4f. Nearly half the principals reported having a Parent Involvement Facilitator or Coordinator at their school. While 71% reported receiving the Family Friendly Packet, only 27% reported using the packet. Less than 40% of principals reported that their school linked all family events to learning.

The vast majority of principals (more than 90%) indicated their school did the following:

- Implemented a “411” or ConnectEd phone system (100%);
- Had a “Back to School” night (98%);
- Provided information to parents about standardized testing (98%);
- Sent school calendars to parents (96%);
- Provided assistance to low-income families (94%);
- Encouraged parents to come into the classroom and observe (92%);
- Invited parents to participate in school committees related to school planning and business (92%).

Less than 25% of principal respondents indicated their school did the following:

- Provided training to teachers and staff who want to work with parent volunteers (22%);
- Involved parents in staff-related issues, such as hiring staff (22%);
- Offered English as a Second Language courses for parents (16%);
- Offered computer courses for parents (16%);
- Offered workshops on getting organized (6%).

Table 4a. Principal responses related to communication

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Our school has a Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF) or Parent Involvement Coordinator.	37.0	49.0	51.0	0
Bilingual faculty and staff are available to facilitate communication between the school and Spanish-speaking parents.	87.0	85.7	14.3	0
Cultural awareness training for teachers and staff.	28.3	47.9	52.1	0
Our school provides each student with a personal planner that serves as a daily form of communication between school and home.	60.9	65.3	34.7	0
Our school has classroom newsletters sent home to parents.	76.1	77.6	20.4	2.0
Most teachers send home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their child(ren)'s academic progress.	87.0	75.5	20.4	4.1
Most teachers send home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their child(ren)'s behavior.	80.4	71.4	20.4	8.2
School calendars are sent to parents.	97.8	95.9	4.1	0
Our school implements a "411" phone system, ConnectEd phone system, or similar system.	93.5	100	0	0
Staff conduct home visits to parents to communicate with parents.	52.2	42.9	57.1	0
Our school maintains an updated website with information relevant to parents.	47.8	46.9	53.1	0
Our school provides Parent Information packets.	87.0	87.8	12.2	0
In general, school staff and parents use email to communicate.	69.6	83.7	16.3	0
Our school provides information on standardized testing (including criterion- and norm-referenced tests) to parents.	97.8	98.0	0	2.0
Our school distributes WCSD Grade Level Standards to parents.	62.2	65.3	32.7	2.0
Parents are encouraged to come into the classroom and observe.	89.1	91.8	8.2	0
Our school conducts a new parent orientation program.	58.7	51.0	49.0	0

Table 4b. Principal responses related to Parent Leadership and Decision-making

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Our school has a Parent Organization such as Parent Faculty Organization, Parent Teacher Association, Parent Teacher Organization.	84.8	83.7	16.3	--
Our school invites parents to participate in school committees related to school planning and business.	97.8	91.8	8.2	--
Parents are involved in the leadership at our school.	73.9	63.3	36.7	0
Parents are involved in making budget-related decisions.	80.4	73.5	24.5	2.0
Parents are involved in school-site planning and development.	60.9	73.5	24.5	2.0
Parents are involved in staff-related issues, such as hiring new staff.	15.2	22.4	75.5	2.0

Table 4c. Principal responses related to Learning at Home and School Events

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Our newsletter provides information on helping children with homework.	60.9	49.0	32.7	18.4 ¹
Our school links ALL family events to learning.	--	38.8	59.2	2.0
Our school offers regular social events for parents and children.	87.0	77.6	22.4	0
Parent meetings such as "Second Cup of Coffee," "Koffee Klatch," "Morning Mugs" are offered at our school.	26.1	30.6	69.4	0
Our school hosts Family Nights on a regular basis.	52.2	26.5	73.5	0
Our school has a Multicultural Night.	32.6	44.9	55.1	0
Our school has a "Bring Dad/Mom/Special Person to School Day."	60.9	57.1	42.9	0
Our school has an annual Back-to-School night.	95.7	98.0	2.0	0
Our school has a Homework Club.	65.2	53.1	46.9	0
Our school has an Art Night.	26.1	34.7	65.3	0
Our school has a science fair in which parents are encouraged to attend.	63.0	60.4	39.6	0

¹Our School does not have a newsletter.

Table 4d. Principal responses related to Volunteering

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Our school keeps a log of parent volunteer hours.	73.9	69.4	20.4	10.2
Our school asks parents to complete a survey or form regarding what they would be interested in doing as a volunteer.	65.2	51.0	46.9	2.0
Our school uses parent survey results to recruit volunteers.	50.0	49.0	30.6	16.3 ²
We have a volunteer recognition celebration for parents.	67.4	75.5	22.4	2.0
Our school provides training to parents who want to volunteer.	54.3	49.0	51.0	0
Our school provides training to teachers and other staff who want to work with parent volunteers.	10.9	22.4	77.6	0
Parents are involved in numerous fund raisers for the school.	82.6	89.8	10.2	0

²Our school does not survey parents.

Table 4e. Principal responses related to Parenting and Collaborating with the Community

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Our newsletter provides information on parenting skills.	56.5	42.9	38.8	18.4 ¹
Our school provides workshops, seminars, or other trainings on parenting skills.	34.8	40.8	57.1	2.0
Our school offers workshops on Getting Organized.	17.4	6.1	91.8	2.0
Our school offers workshops on Bullying.	39.1	36.7	63.3	0
Our school offers workshops on Gangs.	19.6	28.6	71.4	0
Our parents sign a Safety Pledge for the school.	26.1	28.6	69.4	2.0
Our school offers computer courses for parents.	17.4	16.3	83.7	0
Our school offers English as a Second Language courses for parents.	15.2	16.3	81.6	2.0
Our school allows parents to use computers at the school.	69.6	65.3	34.7	0
Local businesses and other organizations participate in events or meetings that support parent involvement.	60.9	53.1	44.9	2.0
Our school provides assistance to low-income families through coat drives, holiday food donations, computer drives, or other types of family assistance.	97.8	93.9	6.1	0

¹Our School does not have a newsletter.

Table 4f. Principal responses related to the Family Friendly Packet

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Has your school received the "Family Friendly Packet?"	71.7	70.8	6.3	22.9
Has your school used the "Family Friendly Packet?"	34.8	27.1	56.3	16.7

Comparison of 2007 and 2008 responses. Many of the responses to this year's principal survey were very similar to those from last year's survey. However, there were some differences from 2007 to 2008. Compared to those responding last year, *more* schools who responded this year did the following:

- Had a Parent Involvement Facilitator;
- Provided cultural awareness training for teachers and staff;
- Used email to communicate between school staff and parents;
- Provided training to teachers and other staff who want to work with parent volunteers;
- Offered workshops on gangs;
- Involved parents in school-site planning and development;
- Involved parents in staff-related issues, such as hiring new staff;
- Had a Multicultural Night;
- Had an Art Night.

Compared to those responding last year, *fewer* schools this year did the following:

- Provided information on parenting skills in their newsletter.
- Provided information on helping children with homework in their newsletter.
- Most teachers sent home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their child's academic progress.
- Involved parents in the leadership at the school.
- Offered regular social events for parents and children.
- Hosted Family Nights on a regular basis.
- Asked parents to complete a survey or form regarding what they would be interested in doing as a volunteer.
- Offered workshops on getting organized.
- Used the Family Friendly Packet.

Items specific to elementary or middle/high schools. Certain checklist items applied only to elementary or middle/high schools. Of those items relevant to elementary schools (Table 5), 71% had a science night, but no schools had a parent reading club. Compared to last year, fewer principals this year reported that their school had a COW/CALF bus; had a literacy program for parents; allowed parents to check out Leap Pads; or, had a Math Night.

Table 5. Principal responses for administrators at elementary schools

Checklist Items	2007	2008		
	Yes %	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
Our school has a COW/CALF bus.	18.2	8.8	91.2	--
Our school has a Read to Succeed program.	51.5	52.9	44.1	2.9
Our school has a literacy program for parents, (such as Family Literacy Experience (FLITE), to assist their child(ren) with their reading and writing.	39.4	14.7	82.4	2.9
Our school allows parents to check out Leap Pads or other materials to help with math and literacy at home.	54.5	41.2	52.9	5.9
Our school has a Math Program (such as Math and Parent Partnerships (MAPPS)) to assist their child(ren) with math skills.	24.2	29.4	70.6	--
Our school has a Math Night.	54.5	47.1	52.9	--
Our school has a Science Night.	72.7	70.6	29.4	--
Our school has a Family Book Exchange.	21.2	17.6	79.4	2.9
Our school has a Parent Reading Club.	3.0	0	100	--

Most (93%) of the middle and high school principals reported their school provided information to parents on post-high school educational options (see Table 6). More than three-quarters (79%) reported their school used EdLine, provided information to parents about financial aid for post-high school education, or provided information to parents about what courses students should take to prepare for post-high school education. Less than one-quarter reported that their school offered the Parent School Partnership program through the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF). Compared to last year, fewer middle and high school principals reported that their school used EdLine or had a process to facilitate parents with the transition between middle and high school. More principals reported each of the remaining items on the checklist this year compared to last.

Table 6. Principal responses for administrators at middle and high schools

	2007	2008		
	Yes	Yes	No	Don't Know
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Our school provides a community resource list to parents, including information related to planned parenthood, drug screening, health, etc.	53.8	71.4	14.3	14.3
Our school provides parents with a list of educational resources available in the community, such as where to find tutors, etc.	53.8	71.4	7.1	21.4
Our school has a process to facilitate parents with the transition between middle and high school.	92.3	71.4	28.6	0
Our school provides information to parents on post-high school educational options.	76.9	92.9	7.1	0
Our school provides information to parents about financial aid for post-high school education (such as FAFSA, scholarships, etc.).	61.5	78.6	14.3	7.1
Our school provides information to parents about what courses students should take to prepare for post-high school education.	76.9	78.6	14.3	7.1
Our school uses EdLine.	100	78.6	21.4	0
Our school insures that parents sign and return the Education Involvement Accord form prescribed by the NDOE.	61.5	64.3	7.1	28.6
Our school uses the tip sheet provided by the WCSD to communicate the intent of the Accord in a meaningful way.	61.5	64.3	7.1	28.6
Our school offers the Parent School Partnership program through the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF).	--	21.4	57.1	21.4

Comparison of principal responses by school level. Principals' responses were compared by school level (elementary, middle, and high). Statistically significant differences were found among the levels on several items (see Table 7). A higher percentage of elementary schools than middle or high schools indicated they do the following activities:

- Our school has classroom newsletters sent home to parents.
- Most teachers send home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their children's academic progress.
- Most teachers send home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their children's behavior.
- Our school has a science fair in which parents are encouraged to participate.
- Our school offers regular events for parents and children.
- Our school has a bring dad/mom/special person to school day.
- Parents are involved in numerous fund raisers for the school.
- Our school keeps a log of parent volunteer hours.
- We have a volunteer recognition celebration for parent volunteers.

Compared to elementary schools, a higher percentage of middle and high schools indicated they do the following activities:

- Our school maintains an updated website with information relevant to parents.
- Our school offers workshops on Getting Organized.

Compared to elementary and middle schools, a higher percentage of high schools indicated they do the following activities:

- Parents are involved in staff-related issues, such as hiring new staff.

Table 7. Differences in principal responses among elementary, middle, and high schools

	Elementary	Middle	High
Checklist Items	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Our school has classroom newsletters sent home to parents.	97.1	33.3	37.5
Most teachers send home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their child(ren)'s academic progress.	88.2	66.7	42.9
Most teachers send home notes to all parents regularly to inform them of their child(ren)'s behavior.	87.9	66.7	33.3
Our school maintains an updated website with information relevant to parents.	32.4	83.3	77.8
Our school has a science fair in which parents are encouraged to participate.	81.8	16.7	11.1
Parents are involved in staff-related issues, such as hiring new staff.	14.7	20.0	55.6
Our school offers regular social events for parents and children.	88.2	66.7	44.4
Our school has a "Bring Dad/Mom/Special Person to School Day."	70.6	50.0	11.1
Parents are involved in numerous fund raisers for the school.	97.1	66.7	77.8
Our school keeps a log of parent volunteer hours.	90.3	50.0	42.9
We have a volunteer recognition celebration for parent volunteers.	94.1	50.0	25.0
Our school offers workshops on Getting Organized.	0	16.7	22.2

Comparison of principal responses from Title I and non-Title I schools. Higher percentages of administrators from Title I schools than non-Title I schools reported offering a variety of parent involvement activities at their schools, such as parent workshops, family learning nights, and home visits (see Table 8). A higher percentage of Title I school administrators (80%) compared to non-Title I administrators (28%) reported linking all family events to learning. All of the Title I school administrators (100%) reported offering cultural awareness training for teachers and staff compared to 36% of non-Title I school administrators. In contrast, higher percentages of

non-Title I school administrators reported that “in general, school staff and parents use email to communicate” and their school used parent survey results to recruit volunteers (Table 8).

Table 8. Differences in principal responses between Title I and non-Title I schools

	Title I	Non-Title I
Checklist Items	% Yes	% Yes
Our school has a Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF).	100.0	35.9
Staff conduct home visits to parents to communicate with them.	90.0	30.8
In general, school staff and parents use email to communicate.	50.0	92.3
Our school has a literacy program for parents (such as Family Literacy Experience (FLITE)) to help parents assist their children with their reading and writing.	55.6	0
Our school has a math program (such as Math and Parent Partnerships (MAPPS)) to help parents assist their children with math skills.	66.7	16.0
Our school has a Math Night.	77.8	36.0
Our school has a Homework Club.	90.0	43.6
Our school allows parents to check out Leap Pads or other materials to help with their children’s math and literacy at home.	77.8	28.0
Parent meetings such as “Second Cup of Coffee” are offered at our school.	70.0	20.5
Our school hosts Family Learning Nights on a regular basis.	60.0	17.9
Our school links ALL family events to learning.	80.0	28.2
Our school uses parent survey results to recruit volunteers.	30.0	53.8
Our school offers workshops on gangs.	70.0	17.9
Our school offers computer courses for parents.	40.0	10.3
Our school has a COW/CALF bus.	33.3	0
Our school provides workshops, seminars, or other trainings to parents on parenting skills.	60.0	35.9
Our school offers cultural awareness training for teachers and staff.	100.0	34.2

Use of interpreters. At family nights and other parent events, 45% of the principals responded that 20% or fewer of their events had non-English speaking interpreters available (Table 9). One-third (33%) of principals indicated that more than 80% of their events had interpreters available. Almost all (98%) principals said their teachers and staff knew how to find interpreters when they needed. Spanish interpreters were most frequently needed by schools (80%). Other

languages mentioned included Chinese dialects (Mandarin, Cantonese) (13%), Tagalog (7%), Korean, Indian languages, Lithuanian, Russian, and American Sign Language.

Table 9. Parent events with an interpreter

Events	n	%
0-20%	22	44.9
21-40%	2	4.1
41-60%	5	10.2
61-80%	4	8.2
81-100%	16	32.7

Parent-staff communication. Most principals reported the majority of their teaching and non-teaching staff members communicate effectively with parents at their school (Table 10). The highest percentage of principals (56%) indicated 81% or more of their teachers communicated well with parents, and 54% believed 81% or more of their non-teaching staff communicated well with parents. There was very little difference between principals' assessment of teaching versus non-teaching staff members' communication with parents.

Table 10. Percentages of principals ratings of parent-staff communication

What proportion of the teachers and non-teacher staff at your school do you feel communicate effectively with parents?	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers	0	6.2	6.3	31.3	56.3
Non-teaching staff	4.2	6.3	0	35.4	54.2

Changes to increase parent involvement in the past year. Principals were asked to indicate what changes they had made in the past year to increase parent involvement (Table 11). The most frequently chosen response was linking parent events and meetings to learning to increase academic achievement (43%). About one-quarter of principals indicated they had allocated money in the school budget to parental involvement or dedicated staff time to parental involvement. Thirty percent of respondents wrote in other changes they had made. Several mentioned the use of ConnectEd to communicate with parents, while other responses included more staff involvement with parent organizations, providing more opportunities for parent volunteers, and inviting parents to participate on committees. Elementary and middle school principals were more likely to link parent events and meetings to learning, dedicate staff time to parent involvement and provide professional development opportunities around professional development than high school principals.

Despite these changes mentioned by principals, principals rated the level of parent involvement at their schools lower this year than last (Figure 1a). Just 9% of principal respondents this year rated PI as very high at their schools compared to 20% last year. However, no principals rated PI as very low this year compared to 9% last year. When high and very high responses are combined, the percentage of principals rating PI as high or very high is the same from last year to this year. Compared to non-Title I school administrators (38%), a greater percentage of Title I

school administrators (80%) rated their current level of parent involvement “high” or “very high” (Figure 1b). The proportion of school budgets allocated to PI remained fairly level from 2007 to 2008. However, a lower percentage of principals this year allocated none of their budget to PI (Figure 2). Title I school administrators reported allocating a higher percentage of their school budgets to parent involvement activities than did non-Title I administrators.

Table 11. Changes made to increase parent involvement

	Overall	Elementary	Middle	High
Checklist Items	%	%	%	%
Link parent events and meetings to learning to increase academic achievement.	42.6	46.2	50.0	22.2
Provide professional development opportunities around parental involvement to staff.	9.3	10.3	16.7	0
Allocate money in the school budget to parental involvement.	25.9	25.6	33.3	22.2
Dedicate staff time to parental involvement.	24.1	28.2	33.3	0
Nothing that I can think of.	9.3	7.7	16.7	11.1
Other	29.6	25.6	33.3	44.4

Figure 1a

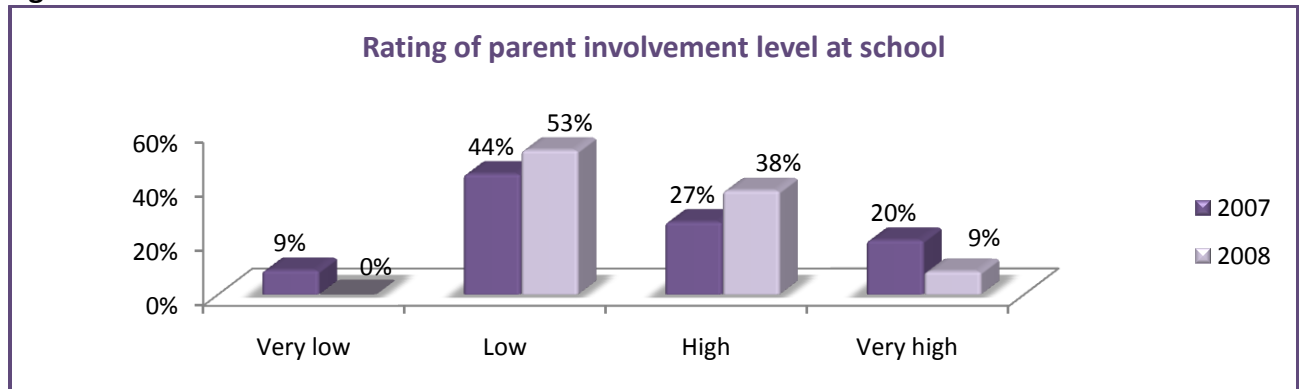


Figure 1b

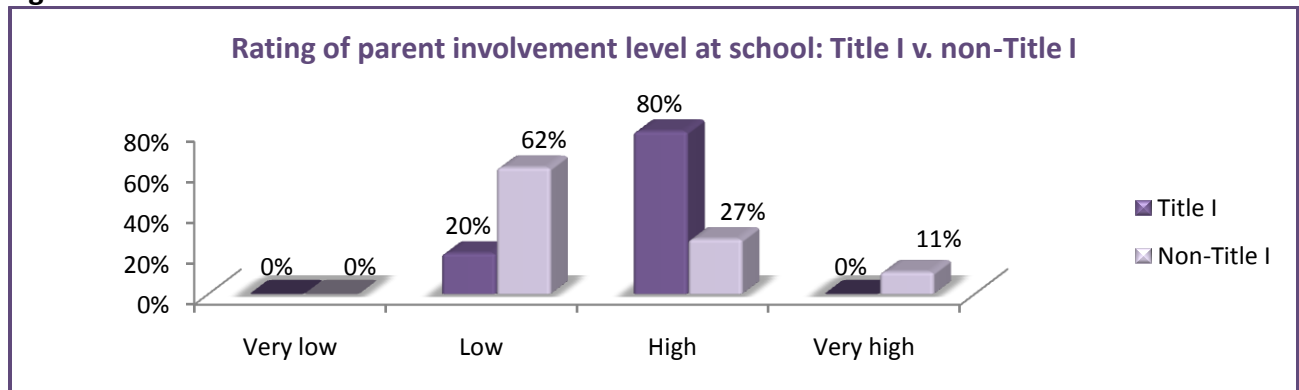


Figure 2a

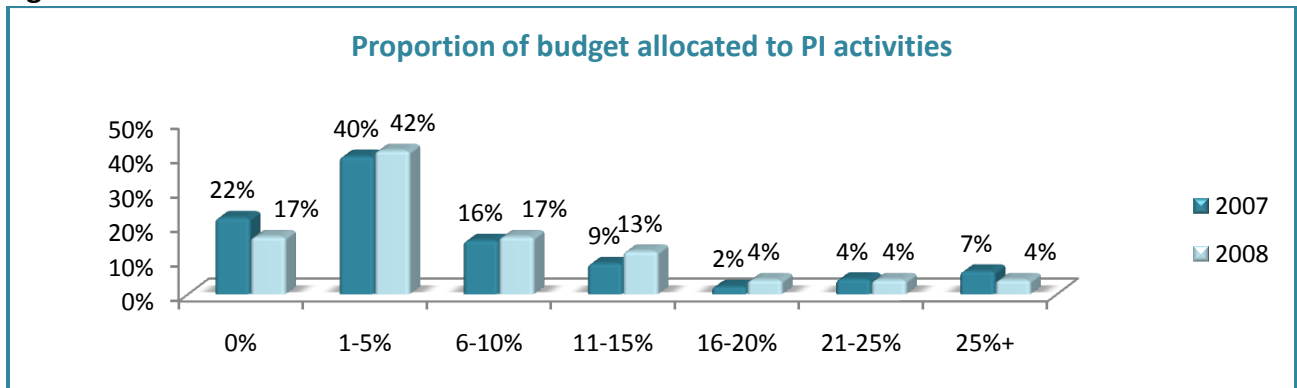
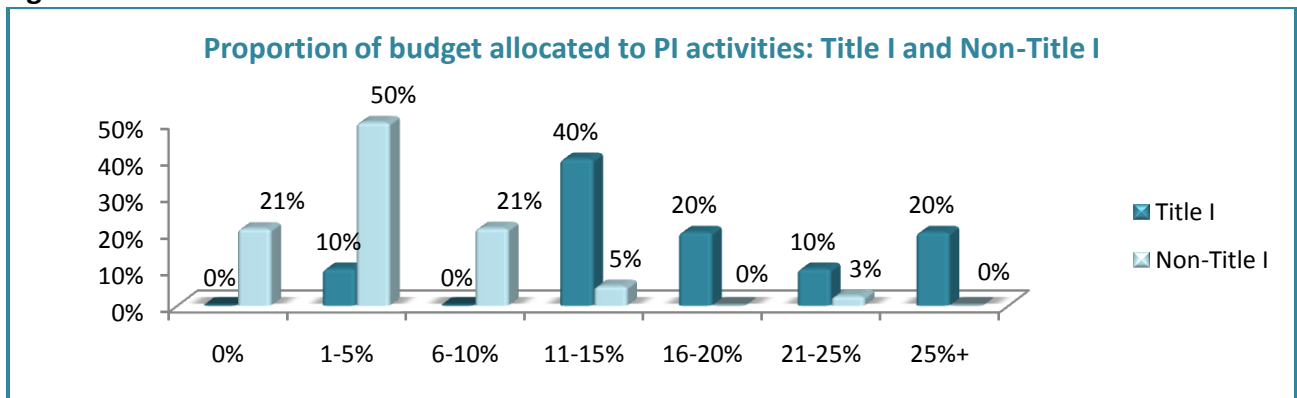


Figure 2b



Assessment of efforts to increase parent involvement. Principals were asked how they assess their school’s efforts to increase parent involvement. There was some misunderstanding of the question. Some principals (39%) provided an assessment of parent involvement at their school (how good their parent involvement was at their school), while others described how they assess their school’s efforts (the original intent of the question). The most frequent method of assessing parent involvement was tracking attendance at events and other contacts with parents (43%). Other methods mentioned included informal feedback from parents (15%); parent surveys (11%); SIP goals (2%); and, improvement in student grades (2%).

Vision for improving parent involvement. When asked to describe their vision for improving parent involvement at their schools, several common themes emerged:

- Educate parents on the importance of education/how to help their child at home.
- Increase participation of English as a Second Language families.
- Provide more opportunities for parents to volunteer in meaningful ways.
- Provide a wider variety of activities and events for families.
- Fund a Parent Involvement Facilitator.
- Increase staff confidence/abilities to work with parents.
- Encourage/increase collaboration with parent groups.
- Build relationships with families.
- Incorporate learning into school social events.

Staff Survey

Staff perceptions of Parent Involvement in their school. The first component of the staff questionnaire was based on items from the National PTA's Assessment for Schools to Evaluate Parent/Family Involvement tool. Each section of the component of the survey was related to one of six elements of the WCSD PIISP. Item means were combined to create a total mean score to indicate the staffs' perceptions of the strength of each element within their school. The response scale ranged from one to four, with a rating of a one indicating the school is doing a poor job and a rating of a four indicating the school is doing an excellent job.

As the following bar graphs illustrate, staff felt their school is performing well related to communication and involving parents in student learning. It is also evident that staff did not perceive their schools to be as strong when it comes to having parents actually participate in the schools by volunteering or serving as decision-makers and advocates in the schools. Staff mean ratings from 2007 and 2008 were nearly identical (Figure 3).

When the results are analyzed by staff at elementary, middle and high schools, the overall pattern holds. However, staff at elementary schools consistently gave their schools higher scores than staff at the middle and high schools (Figure 4). The differences in mean scores between the three groups were statistically significant for five of the six standards. The differences were not significant for the communication mean ratings. The differences were significant between staff at elementary and middle schools on the volunteering ratings. Differences between staff at elementary and high schools were significant for parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision making and collaborating with the community. Mean ratings were significantly different between staff at middle and high schools for parenting, volunteering and decision making. Title I school staff respondents had higher mean ratings on the communication, parenting, volunteering, and collaboration standards than non-Title I staff respondents (Figure 5).

Figure 3

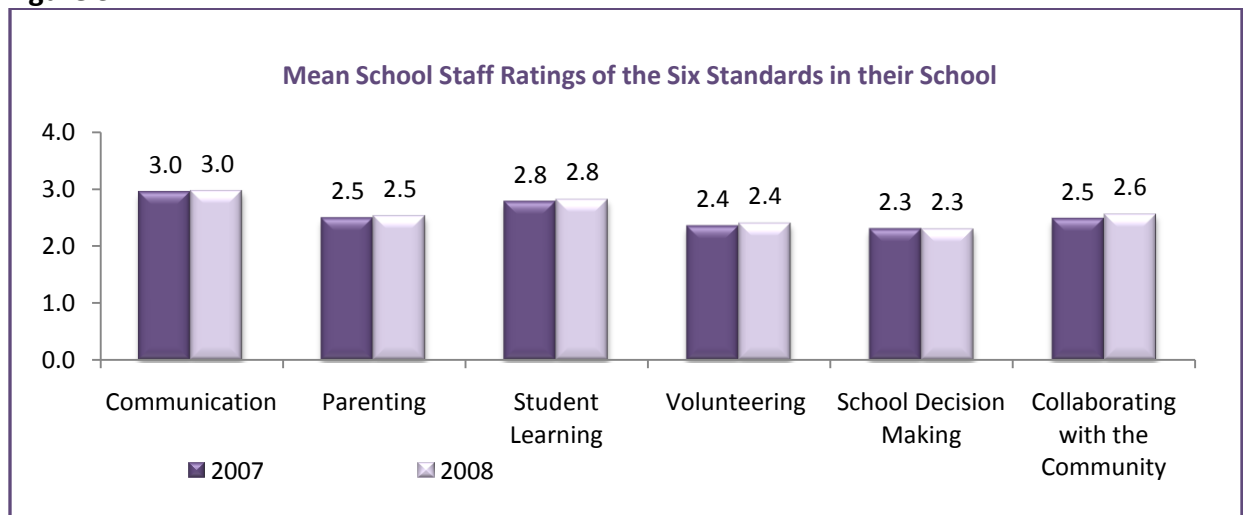


Figure 4

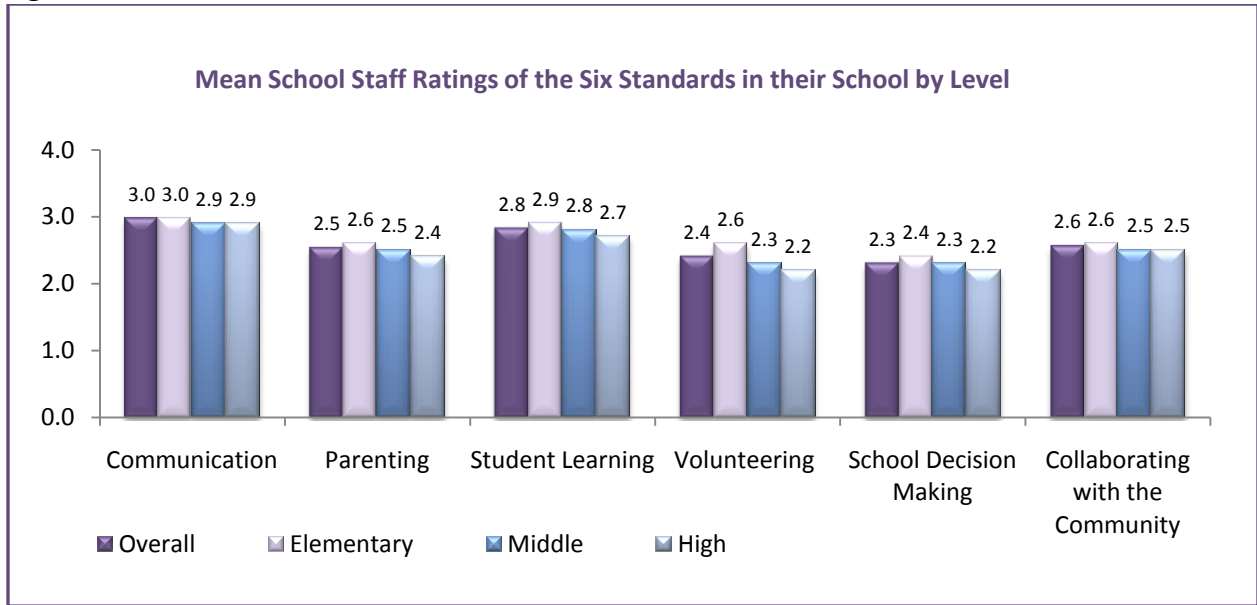
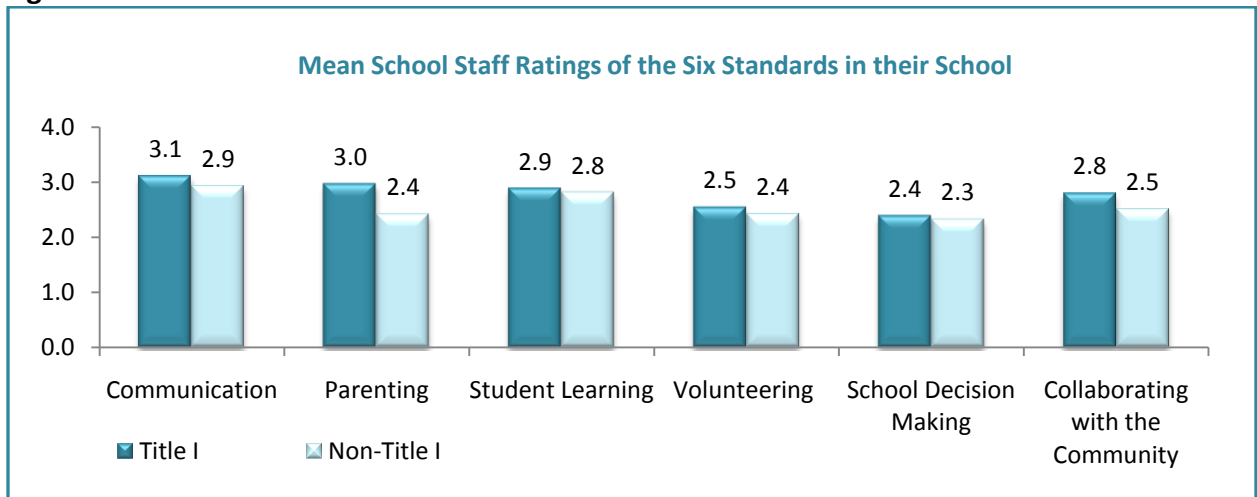


Figure 5



When results of individual scale items were examined, the item related to professional development or staff training for each standard was the lowest rated item for five of the six standards (Tables 12–17). The item “our school provides workshops for parents that teach them to influence decisions, raise issues or concerns, and resolve problems at the school” had the lowest rating for the standard of decision-making and advocacy, while the item related to professional development and staff training was the second lowest rated item. These results follow the same pattern as last year’s.

Table 12. Frequencies and mean scores related to communication

COMMUNICATION: Communication between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.					2007	2008
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Mean	Mean
How well does your school...	%	%	%	%	2.95	2.97
...provide information to parents in a variety of ways (i.e., newsletter, e-mail, home visits, phone calls)?	1.9	12.5	44.7	40.8	3.28	3.25
...provide all information in the parent's native language and at an appropriate literacy level?	4.8	18.9	46.1	30.3	2.97	3.01
...disseminate information on topics such as school reforms, policies, discipline procedures, assessment tools, and school grades?	5.1	20.5	47.4	27.0	2.97	2.96
...provide staff development regarding effective communication techniques and the importance of regular, two-way communication between the school and the family?	11.9	30.6	39.5	18.0	2.58	2.64

Table 13. Frequencies and mean scores related to parenting

PARENTING: Parenting skills are promoted and supported.					2007	2008
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Mean	Mean
How well does your school...	%	%	%	%	2.49	2.53
...communicate the importance of positive relationships between parents and their children?	7.0	23.6	42.7	26.7	2.92	2.89
...link parents to family support services and resources in the community?	5.0	24.1	43.7	27.2	2.91	2.93
...provide a central location where parents/families have easy access to information and resources on parenting?	11.9	29.0	37.9	21.2	2.65	2.68
...offer workshops, seminars, or trainings on parenting skills?	31.8	34.3	23.5	10.5	2.04	2.13
...provide staff development regarding the promotion of parenting skills?	32.9	38.4	21.6	7.0	1.94	2.03

Table 14. Frequencies and mean scores related to student learning at home

STUDENT LEARNING: Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.					2007	2008
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Mean	Mean
How well does your school...	%	%	%	%	2.78	2.82
...provide clear information regarding the expectations for students in each subject at each grade level?	4.0	15.2	43.9	36.9	3.13	3.14
...provide clear information regarding student placement, student services, and optional programs?	4.5	19.3	47.8	28.4	2.96	3.00
...assist parents in understanding how students can improve skills, get help when needed, meet class expectations, and perform well on assessments?	5.0	21.9	46.4	26.7	2.95	2.95
...provide opportunities for staff members to learn about successful approaches to engaging parents in their child's learning?	15.7	36.1	35.1	13.1	2.36	2.46
...explain and discuss students' results from assessments like the CRTs with parents, and share ways to improve students' scores?	12.8	33.4	38.0	15.8	2.52	2.57

Table 15. Frequencies and mean scores related to volunteering

VOLUNTEERING: Parents are welcome in the schools, and their support and assistance are sought.					2007	2008
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Mean	Mean
How well does your school...	%	%	%	%	2.35	2.45
...survey parents regarding their interests, talents, and availability to volunteer?	18.2	31.9	32.9	17.0	2.34	2.49
...maintain a system for contacting parents to volunteer throughout the school year?	15.9	29.6	33.7	20.8	2.50	2.59
...educate and assist teachers to effectively use volunteer resources?	23.9	36.3	29.3	10.6	2.17	2.27
...match volunteer activities to volunteer interests and abilities?	18.0	33.7	34.8	13.6	2.37	2.44

Table 16. Frequencies and mean scores related to school decision making and advocacy

SCHOOL DECISION MAKING AND ADVOCACY: Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families					2007	2008
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Mean	Mean
How well does your school...	%	%	%	%		
...provide workshops for parents that teach them to influence decisions, raise issues or concerns, and resolve problems at the school?	31.0	36.1	24.4	8.5	1.95	2.10
...encourage the formation or activities of PTAs or other parent groups that respond to issues of interest to parents?	16.6	25.8	35.0	22.6	2.69	2.64
...include and give equal representation to parents on decision-making and advisory committees?	17.5	30.7	37.2	14.6	2.50	2.49
...provide training for staff and parents in how to be collaborative partners and share decision-making in areas such as policy, curriculum, budget, school reform, safety, hiring personnel, and other personnel issues?	29.0	37.6	25.8	7.5	2.06	2.12

Table 17. Frequencies and mean scores related to collaboration with the community

COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY: Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families and student learning					2007	2008
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Mean	Mean
How well does your school...	%	%	%	%		
...distribute to staff and parents information on community resources that serve the cultural, recreational, academic, health, social, and other needs of families within the community?	8.6	26.7	42.5	22.2	2.67	2.78
...develop partnerships with local business, community organizations, and service groups to advance student learning and assist schools and families?	9.5	28.4	39.5	22.6	2.69	2.75
...collaborate with community agencies to provide family support services and adult learning opportunities, enabling parents to more fully participate in activities that support education?	14.7	33.9	35.8	15.7	2.41	2.52
...provide staff development on establishing community partners and using community resources?	26.1	36.6	26.9	10.3	2.15	2.21

Staff personnel were asked a few additional questions not asked of principals (Table 18). Most staff (82%) rated their school as good or excellent when it comes to welcoming parents into the school, with the highest percentage (43%) giving their school a rating of excellent. Ratings of how frequently staff discussed using parent involvement as a vehicle for improving parent involvement were split fairly evenly between infrequently and frequently. Ratings of both items were very similar from 2007 to 2008.

Table 18. Additional staff items

How does your school do at making your parents feel welcomed into the school?	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	%	%	%	%
2007	3.2	14.8	40.1	41.9
2008	2.7	15.3	38.6	43.4
In professional learning community meetings, how frequently do you talk about parental involvement as a strategy for improving student academic achievement?	Never	Infrequently	Frequently	Very frequently
	%	%	%	%
2007	16.6	37.2	36.8	9.5
2008	13.1	38.0	37.4	11.5

Parent Involvement Facilitators. Staff respondents were asked if their schools had a Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF). Overall, 42% of respondents reported that their school had a PIF, and 46% felt a PIF would be an asset to their school’s efforts at increasing parent involvement (Table 19). Nearly half the elementary staff respondents reported having a PIF, while lower percentages of middle and high school staff did. Surprisingly, more than 40% of middle and high school staff respondents did not know if their school had a PIF. Staff respondents also were asked if their school worked with other partners in the community to provide outreach to parents, to which 31% indicated they did.

Table 19. Staff knowledge of Parent Involvement Facilitators (PIF)

School has a PIF	Elem. %	Middle %	High %	Overall %
Yes	46.9	42.2	35.3	42.4
No	31.9	16.1	16.9	24.7
Don’t know	21.2	41.6	47.7	32.9
Would a PIF be an asset to your school’s efforts at increasing parent involvement?	Elem.	Middle	High	Overall
Yes	42.6	47.3	49.8	45.9
No	10.9	3.2	4.4	7.4
Don’t know	46.5	49.5	45.9	46.7

Principal and Staff Responses

Barriers and Strengths. When asked what the greatest barrier was to increasing parent involvement at their school, 57% of the principals said parent work schedules or other events prevent parents from participating (Table 20). The next highest percentage (13%) of principals indicated that “parents do not know how to support learning at home” was the greatest

barrier. For school staff, 38% selected parents' schedules as the biggest challenge for parent involvement, followed by 12% selecting parents are not interested. Compared to 2007, fewer principals this year indicated that lack of time was their greatest barrier. Staff results were fairly similar from last year to this year.

Table 20. Percentage reporting the greatest barrier

Potential Barriers	2007		2008	
	Principals	Staff	Principals	Staff
Lack of time	20.0	9.7	8.5	10.5
Lack of money	0	1.5	4.3	2.7
Lack of staff knowledge	2.2	5.3	0	2.8
Poor staff attitude	4.4	2.6	2.1	2.8
Lack of parent volunteers	0	9.9	0	8.6
Communicating with staff regarding PI	2.2	3.4	2.1	2.8
Communication with parents	0	3.6	0	2.9
Parents are not interested	8.9	13.3	2.1	11.7
Parents work schedules and other events prevent them from participating	48.9	42.0	57.4	38.1
Parents do not know how to support learning at home	--	--	12.8	8.8

A few principals (9%) selected "other" and wrote in these responses:

- Extreme needs of severely handicapped students
- Making parent involvement an area of focus
- Our parent involvement is quite strong.
- Time, money, and parent interest.
- Would benefit from a Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF)

A small percentage of staff (7%) selected "other" and offered responses:

- Language
- No barriers or parent involvement is already very high
- Lack of leadership from principal and other administrators
- Poor attitude and/or behavior from parents
- Lack of money for PIF
- Transportation
- Cultural barriers
- Parents' work schedules

Regarding schools' strengths related to parent involvement, the highest percentage of principals selected positive staff attitude as their strongest point (36%), followed by communication with parents and parents are interested (17% each; Table 21). Several principals

(7%) selected “other” and wrote in responses, including Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF), core group of parents willing to recruit, and parent center. Forty percent of the staff thought positive staff attitude was their greatest strength for increasing parent involvement, and 18% felt that communication with parents was the greatest. Responses from last year to this year were fairly similar. Some of the differences likely were due to the addition of several new items this year.

Table 21. Percentage reporting the greatest strength

Potential Barriers	2007		2008	
	Principals	Staff	Principals	Staff
Sufficient time	0	3.5	2.1	2.3
Sufficient money	0	2.3	2.1	3.0
Sufficient staff knowledge	0	3.9	2.1	4.2
Positive staff attitude	35.6	49.7	36.2	39.7
Sufficient parent volunteers	13.3	9.7	10.6	6.2
Communicating with staff regarding PI	6.7	2.6	2.1	3.9
Communication with parents	26.7	19.7	17.0	18.3
Parents are interested	--	--	17.0	9.6
Parents’ work schedules and other events allow them to participate	--	--	0	2.8
Parents know how they can support learning at home	--	--	2.1	2.1

A small percentage (8%) of staff selected “other” and provided strengths:

- School’s PIF or parent coordinator
- School has bilingual staff
- School’s PTO, PTA, PFA, or Booster Club
- Dedicated planning to increase parent involvement
- Parents who want to have their children succeed
- EdLine
- Specific parent/student events listed (e.g., Reading Time & Academic Success programs)
- Parent Center which is open during school hours
- Don’t know
- No strengths

Value of parent involvement. Principals and school personnel were asked to rate several items related to their beliefs or value placed on parent involvement. Although 70% of the principals surveyed felt that parent involvement was “extremely important” in their school (Figure 6), and 92% believed it makes a “major contribution” to a child’s academic success, less than half (49%) indicated they considered parent involvement a “high priority” in their school (Figure 7). Compared to last year, a higher percentage of principals this year believed PI was extremely important in their schools. Most staff also felt parent involvement made a major contribution

to a child's academic success (90%). A higher percentage of staff (57%) compared to principals (49%) would place a high priority on increasing parent involvement at their school. Furthermore, compared to last year a higher percentage of both staff and principals this year would place a high priority on increasing parent involvement at their schools. Staff were asked to rate the extent to which others at their school thought parent involvement was important. Less than half (44%) indicated that others thought it was extremely important, while 45% responded that others thought it was important.

Figure 6

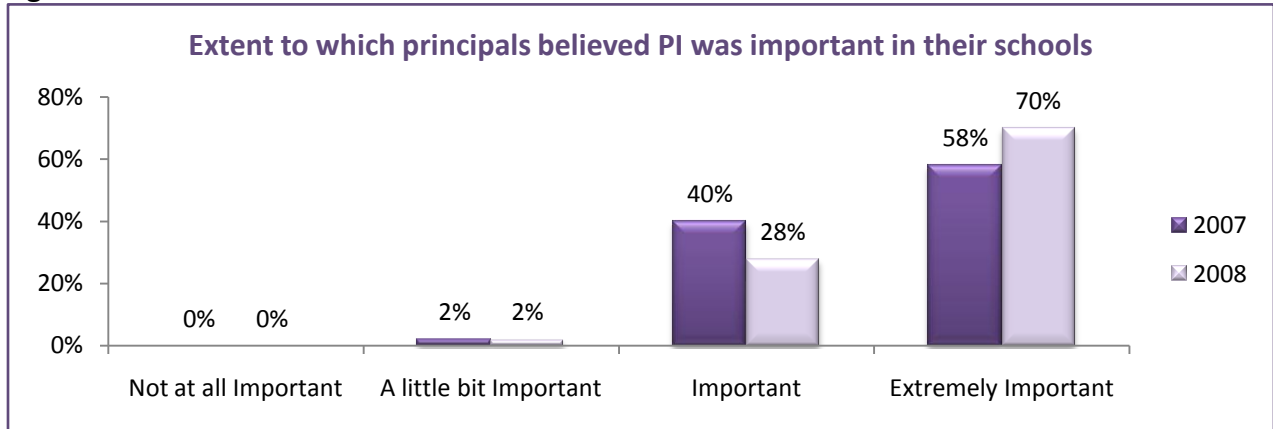
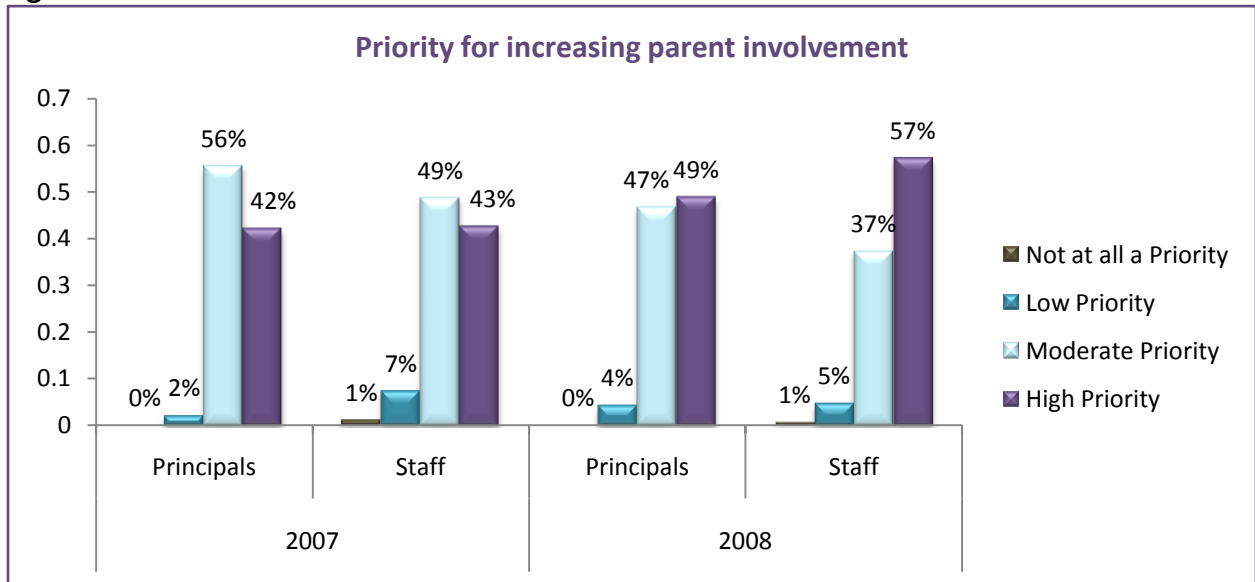


Figure 7



Encouraging parent involvement. Principals and school staff were asked to indicate what their school did to meet parents' needs to encourage their involvement (Table 22). The most frequently mentioned activity by both principals and staff was hold meetings and events at different times of the day. The second most frequently mentioned response on both surveys was providing translation and/or interpretation services. The least frequently mentioned response for staff was "hold meetings and events at different locations." Elementary staff were

more likely than middle and high school staff to report providing child care and holding meetings and events at different times of day. Elementary and middle school principals were more likely than high school principals to report holding meetings and events at different times of the day. Middle school principals were more likely than elementary and high school principals to report providing translation and/or interpretation services.

Table 22. What schools do to encourage parent involvement

	Staff				Principals			
	Elem. %	Middle %	High %	Overall %	Elem. %	Middle %	High %	Overall %
Hold meetings and events at different times of day	52.3	41.8	36.6	45.7	69.2	66.7	33.3	63.0
Hold meetings and events at different locations	5.9	8.2	7.1	6.6	7.7	16.7	11.1	9.3
Provide translation and/or interpretation services	41.7	41.8	41.2	41.5	28.2	83.3	55.6	38.9
Provide child care	20.7	7.7	5.6	13.8	25.6	33.3	11.1	24.1
Nothing that I can think of	13.5	19.8	24.7	18.2	5.1	0	22.2	7.4

Professional development. The majority of staff and principals felt they would benefit some or a great deal from receiving professional development specific to parent involvement, although higher percentages of both staff and principals indicated it would be of some help rather than a great deal of help. A higher percentage of staff than principals said they would benefit a great deal (Table 23). Principals also were asked how much their staff would benefit from professional development, to which 38% responded they would benefit a great deal.

Table 23. Benefit from professional development specific to parent involvement

	Staff	Principals	
		Benefit to themselves	Benefit to their staff
	%	%	%
Not at all	5.9	4.3	0
A little	20.9	12.8	19.1
Some	41.9	63.8	42.6
A great deal	31.3	19.1	38.3

Resources and assistance needed. Principal and staff respondents were asked to write what resources and assistance they needed to increase parent involvement. The most frequently mentioned principal responses included:

- Funding (30%)
- Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF) (20%)
- Training for staff and/or parents (17%)
- Time (17%)
- Bilingual support (9%)
- Ideas (9%)
- Childcare (4%)

Common staff responses included:

- Providing staff development and training on how to use parent help.
- Reviewing a model of where parent involvement is already successful.
- Having more translators and/or bilingual staff available to improve communication with parents whose native language is not English.
- Writing newsletters and notices in Spanish and English.
- Hiring a staff member whose job description and commitment to the school includes a focus on parent involvement.

A staff respondent wrote, “We should hold classes that allow parents to see the importance of parent involvement on their child’s academic success and provide them information on how they can help their students at home.” Others suggested it would be helpful to have a Parent Information Center or a dedicated space for parents to meet.

Some respondents also mentioned some barriers to parent involvement in their responses, including:

- Requiring more money and time.
- Needing more parents to take interest in their child’s education and development plans.
- Struggling with parents’ work schedules and conflicts with multiple responsibilities.

Specifically, one teacher commented, “Time. I am so busy trying to make sure that my children have all of the tools they need that I simply don’t have time to call parents or enlist support of others.” Another frustration shared can be summed in this comment, “We need parents to commit themselves to helping their student as well as others. Get involved and don’t make up excuses.” These responses were echoed by many other staff members. One solution to parents’ inability to attend meetings and get involved due to their work schedules included, “We need to find a way to communicate with employers of our parents to help them understand the importance of school meetings.” Another wrote, “We need ideas for times/ways to have parents involved other than times during the school day.”

Usefulness of survey. At the end of the survey, principals and staff were asked if the questionnaire was useful in thinking about parent involvement in their school (Table 24). The most frequent response was “some” for both principals and staff. More principals than staff felt the survey was useful “a great deal” in helping them think about parent involvement.

Table 24. Usefulness of survey

	Not at all %	A little %	Some %	A great deal %
Principals	4.3	21.7	45.7	28.3
Staff	5.9	23.8	50.7	19.7

Parent Survey

Demographics. Parents with children attending more than one school received a copy of the survey for each school attended by their children. Therefore, households could be represented more than once within the demographic results reported in Table 25. More than one-third of respondents had lived in Washoe County for more than 20 years. The highest percentage of respondents was white/Caucasian (64%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (24%). The majority of respondents reported having Internet access at home (83%).

Several differences were found when comparing English-speaking and Spanish-speaking parents, as well as white and non-white parents' demographic information:

- English-speaking parents and white parents had lived in Washoe County longer than Spanish-speaking parents and non-white parents, respectively.
- 58% of Spanish-speaking parents compared to 88% of English-speaking parents had Internet access at home.
- 64% of non-white parents compared to 93% of white parents had Internet access at home.

These same differences were found when comparing parents from Title I versus non-Title I schools. Non-Title I parents had lived in Washoe county longer and were more likely to have Internet access at home (87%) than Title I parents (55%).

Table 25. Parent Demographic Information

	Elementary %	Middle %	High %	Overall %
Survey Respondent				
Mother	81.6	80.7	79.8	80.9
Father	13.5	14.0	15.2	14.1
Other	4.8	5.3	5.0	5.0
Residence in Washoe County				
5 years or less	22.2	19.6	17.7	20.4
6-10 years	18.9	16.7	15.4	17.4
11-15 years	14.9	14.8	13.9	14.6
16-20 years	11.9	13.3	12.4	12.3
More than 20 years	32.1	35.6	40.6	35.3
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3
Hispanic/Latino	26.0	23.8	18.8	23.6
Black/African American	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.6
Native American/Alaska Native	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.2
White/Caucasian	61.6	64.5	69.1	64.2
Multiethnic/Other	6.5	5.4	5.8	6.0
Internet access at home (% yes)	79.1	84.4	87.8	82.5

Attendance at events and contact with school. Across all three school levels, more than 40% of parent respondents had attended 3-5 events during the past year and had contacted the school 3-5 times (Table 26). Compared to elementary and middle school parents, high school parents were more likely to attend more events and to contact the school more frequently. English-speaking, white, and non-Title I parents were more likely than their Spanish-speaking, non-white, and Title I parents to attend more school events and contact the school more often.

Table 26. Parent event attendance and contact with school during the past year

	Parent event attendance				Parent contact with school			
	Elementary %	Middle %	High %	Overall %	Elementary %	Middle %	High %	Overall %
0	4.1	7.3	7.2	5.6	3.6	3.1	2.7	3.3
1-2	23.3	27.6	24.5	24.6	17.2	18.5	16.9	17.3
3-5	46.7	41.9	34.9	42.4	39.8	42.7	40.8	40.7
6-10	19.1	15.3	16.9	17.7	26.9	24.8	27.1	26.5
11+	6.8	7.9	16.5	9.7	12.4	10.9	12.4	12.2

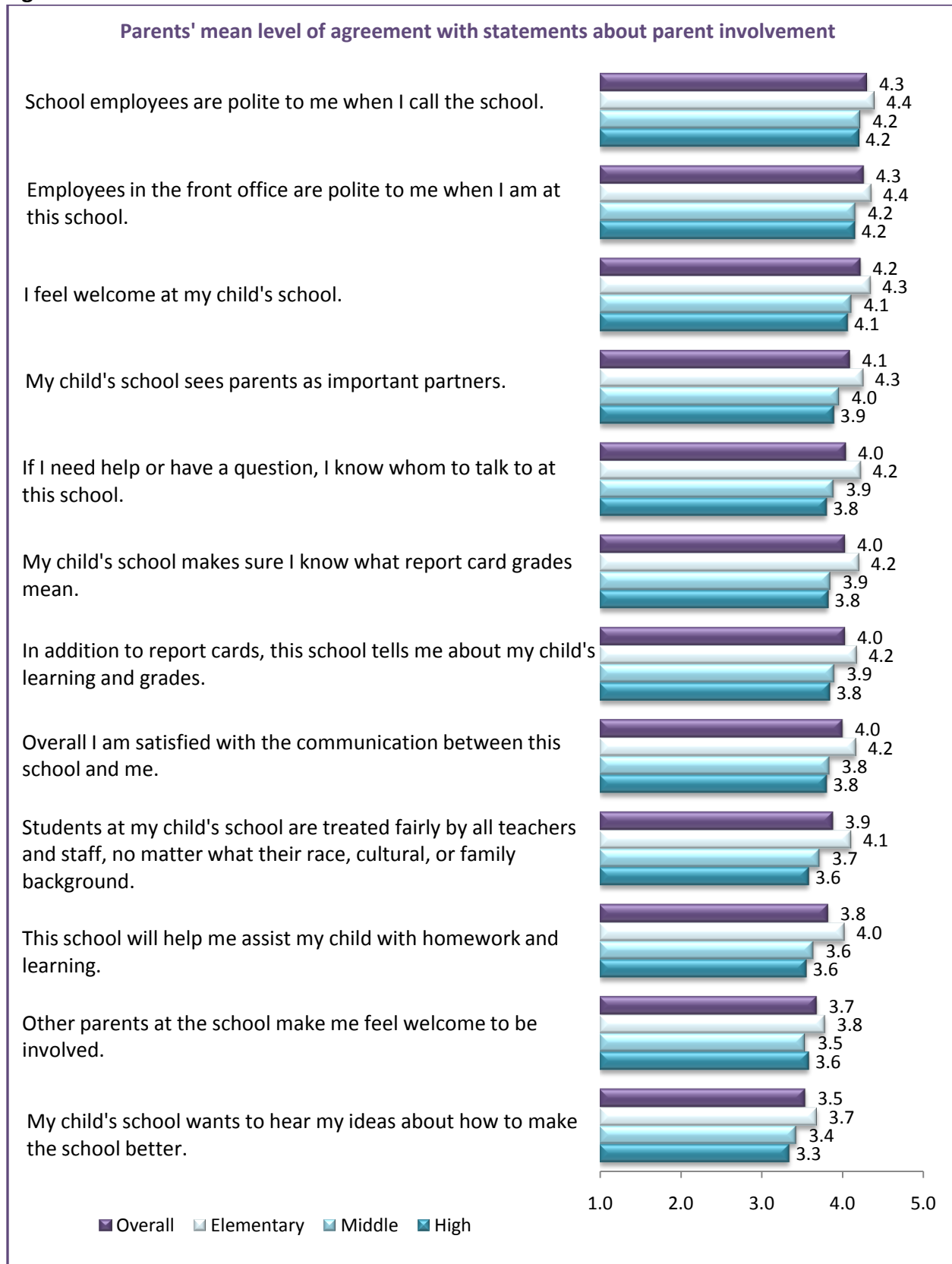
Volunteering. Overall, 62% of parent respondents had been asked to volunteer, and 56% of them had ever volunteered (Table 27). Of those who had never volunteered, 56% said they would like to do so. English-speaking and white parents were more likely than their Spanish-speaking and non-white counterparts to have been asked to volunteer at their child’s school, and to have volunteered. Spanish-speaking, non-white, and Title I parents who had never volunteered were more likely than their English-speaking, white, and non-Title I counterparts to want to do so.

Table 27. Parent Volunteering

	Elementary %	Middle %	High %	Overall %
Ever been asked to volunteer	69.4	50.5	55.7	61.8
Ever volunteered	61.9	44.4	54.5	56.3
If never volunteered, would like to	60.1	56.1	47.6	55.6

Opinions about parent involvement at their child’s school. Parent respondents indicated their level of agreement with 12 statements about parent involvement at their child’s school (see Figure 8). Responses could range from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Across all respondents, the level of agreement ranged between a mean of 3.5 to 4.3. The lowest level of agreement was on the items “my child’s school wants to hear my ideas about how to make the school better.” The highest level of agreement was for the item “school employees are polite to me when I call the school.”

Figure 8



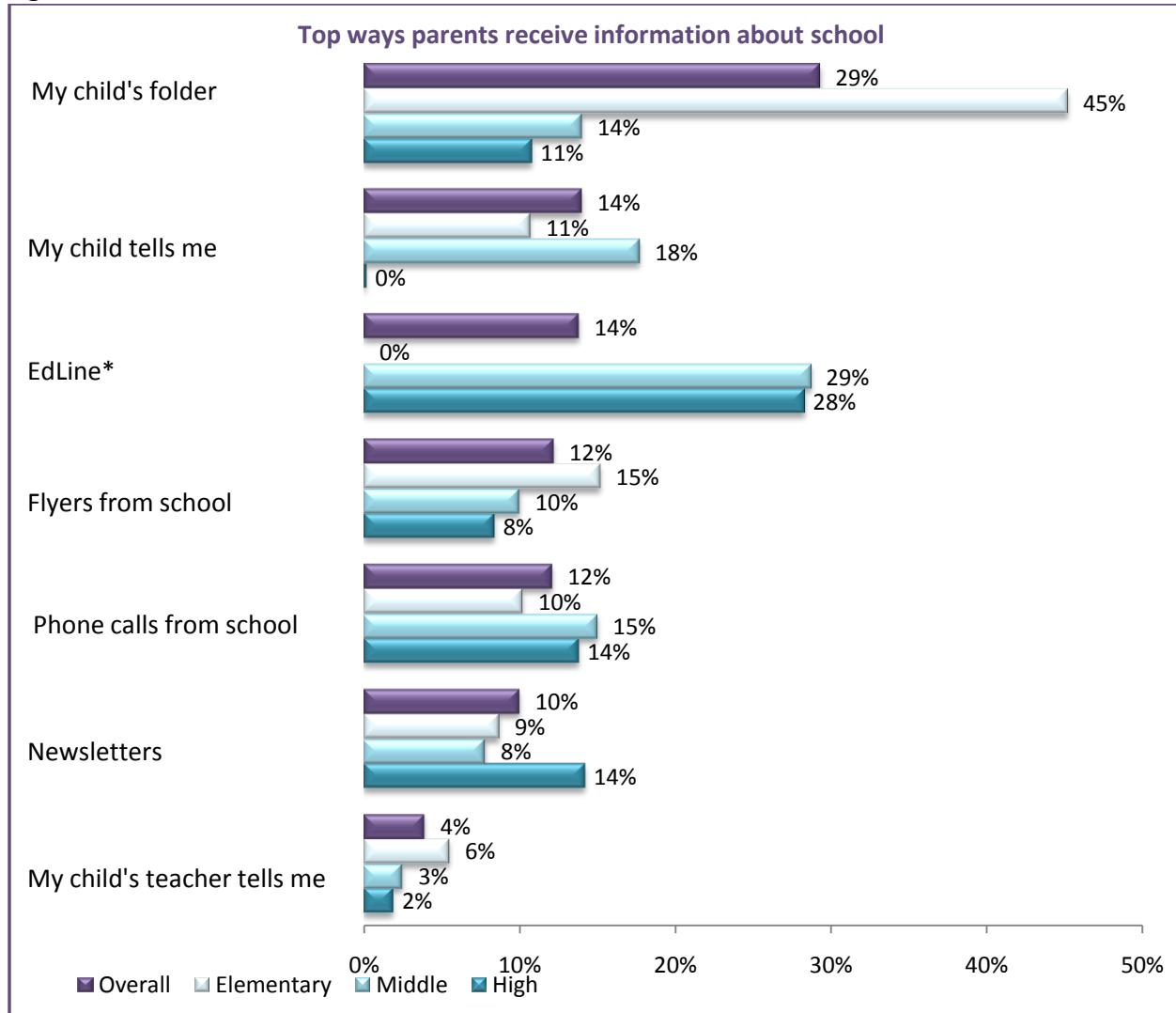
Some statistically significant differences were found among parents at different levels. Elementary school parents' mean ratings were higher than both middle and high school parents' on all 12 items. Middle school parents' mean ratings were higher than high school parents' on all of the items with the exception of four: "school employees are polite when I call the school;" "employees in the front office are polite when I am at this school;" "my child's school makes sure I know what report card grades mean;" and, "overall, I am satisfied with the communication between this school and me."

Comparisons of opinions by language, ethnicity, and Title I status. With the exception of two items, "I feel welcome at my child's school" and "other parents at the school make me feel welcome to be involved," Spanish-speaking parents rated each of the items higher than English-speaking parents. With the exception of four items, non-white parents rated each of the items higher than white parents. White parents rated the item "other parents at the school make me feel welcome to be involved" slightly higher than non-white parents. There was no statistically significant difference between white and non-white parents for the items "I feel welcome at my child's school," "employees in the front office are polite to me when I am at this school," and "school employees are polite to me when I call the school." With the exception of one item "other parents make me feel welcome to be involved," Title I parents rated each of the items higher than non-Title I parents.

Information sources and EdLine usage. Parents were asked to choose where they get most of their information about school. The most frequently chosen method was from their children's folders, followed by from their child and EdLine (Figure 9). Among elementary school parents, the most frequent method of obtaining information was from their child's folder. At the middle and high school levels, EdLine was the most frequent source of information.

More than 40% of middle and high school parents reported that all of their child's teachers post their child's information on EdLine (Table 28). More than 60% of middle and high school parents reported using EdLine to track their child's progress. As would be expected from the differences in Internet access at home reported in Table 25, Spanish-speaking parents (22%) were less likely than English-speaking parents (43%) to use EdLine. Similar differences were found when comparing EdLine usage among white (47%) and non-white parents (26%) and non-Title I (44%) and Title I parents (13%).

Figure 9



*Only middle schools and high schools use EdLine

Table 28. Use of EdLine (Middle and High School Only)

	Middle %	High %	Overall %
Do teachers post your child's information on EdLine?			
Yes, all of the teachers do.	39.5	46.1	43.4
Yes, some of the teachers do.	26.6	25.6	25.8
No, none of the teachers do.	2.5	2.6	2.5
I don't know.	25.0	20.1	22.3
Do you use Edline to track your child's progress?			
No, I do not use it.	29.6	25.2	27.1
Yes, it is helpful.	56.7	61.8	59.6
Yes, but it is not helpful.	4.9	4.4	4.6
Total % who use EdLine	61.6	66.2	64.2

Conclusion

As demonstrated by the results from the WCSD administrator, staff, and parent surveys, communication was the strongest area of parent involvement for WCSD schools. Principals indicated their schools were engaged in many communication-related activities. School staff rated communication as the strongest of the six standards of parent involvement. Parents also had high levels of agreement with communication-related items. Survey responses also revealed some challenges related to communication, particularly with respect to communicating with parents whose first language is not English. Both administrators and staff respondents noted the need for more bilingual staff and support for translators and interpreters for school documents and events. Spanish-speaking parents also were less likely than English-speaking parents to have been asked to volunteer at their child's school. The language barrier may contribute to schools' challenges in the area of volunteering. Another gap related to communication is the disparity in Internet access at home. Spanish-speaking parents, non-white parents, and parents at Title I schools were all less likely to have Internet access at home than English-speaking, white and non-Title I parents. Schools need to be aware of this gap and provide school information to parents in a variety of modes to accommodate parents who do not have Internet access at home.

The weakest areas of parent involvement were school decision making and volunteering. Staff respondents rated their schools lowest on these two standards. Parents had the lowest level of agreement with the item "My child's school wants to hear my ideas about how to make the school better." The second lowest level of agreement was with the item "other parents at the school make me feel welcome to be involved." Parents may be discouraged from volunteering and other involvement at school due to how they are treated by other parents. Spanish-speaking, non-white, and parents at Title I schools were all less likely to have volunteered at their child's school and less likely to have been asked to volunteer than English-speaking, white, and non-Title I parents. Some school staff responses revealed assumptions that parents do not want to volunteer. However, Spanish-speaking, non-white, and Title I parents who had never volunteered were more likely to want to do so than their English-speaking, white, and non-Title I counterparts. This highlights the importance of school staff inviting all parents to volunteer and be involved and refraining from making assumptions about parents' desire to be involved. It is unlikely that parents will volunteer if they have not been asked to do so.

School administrators and staff respondents expressed interest in receiving more funding for parent involvement particularly to fund a Parent Involvement Facilitator (PIF) and family events. Many expressed the need for more time to address parent involvement adequately. Administrators and staff expressed a desire to improve parent involvement at their schools but found it difficult to do so in light of all the other demands on their time. They expressed an interest in receiving more professional development related to parent involvement.

Responses this year showed an improvement in school administrators' and staff's perceptions of the importance of parent involvement and the priority they would place on increasing parent

involvement in their schools. This is encouraging and suggests that perhaps WCSD administrators and school staff members are becoming more aware of the importance of parent involvement. Challenges for schools continue to be finding time for staff to devote to increasing parent involvement, as well as finding innovative ways to encourage parents to fit parent involvement into their busy lives.