

Report 4: Stakeholder Survey Results

Additional Responses for Questions 5, 6, and 9

Themes and Descriptors for Open-Ended Questions 13 and 15

Question 5.

What are your most significant EXPECTATIONS of Woodland Park School District graduates?

Total Responses (35)

- Postsecondary knowledge, readiness and success (12)
- Competencies and 21st century skills (8) – curiosity, creativity, initiative, goal-oriented, multi-disciplinary thinking, research pros and cons to make informed decisions, financial intelligence, self-advocacy, adaptable, self-reliance
- Strong academic foundation (5) – English language arts, math, science, technology
- All of the above (3)
- Personal responsibility (3)
- Self-respect and respect for others (3)
- Social and emotional intelligence (3)
- Well rounded individuals (3)
- Communicate ideas effectively both in writing and orally (2)
- Exposed to and appreciate art (2)
- Life skills (2) – pay bills
- Lifelong learners

Question 6.

What PRINCIPLES should guide the district over the next 15 years?

Total Responses (36)

- Consequences for inappropriate conduct (6)
- Safe, respectful, profanity-free learning environment (5)
- Arts accessible to all students (4)
- Student-centered decisions (4)
- Embrace diversity and multiple perspectives (3)
- Develop the whole child (2)
- Focus on the basics (2)
- Less testing and teaching to the tests (2)
- Parent involvement (2)
- Support and invest in current staff (2)
- Choice
- Clear and consistent communication
- Continuous improvement
- Equity across schools
- Focus on a few principles

- Individualization
- Innovation
- Instruction provided by certified, highly qualified teachers
- Life skills classes
- Maintain facilities
- No Common Core
- Students build relationships with teachers

Question 9.

What high level strategies should be implemented to IMPROVE student outcomes?

Total Responses (56)

- Highly-qualified staff (15) – passionate, well-prepared, engaging teachers; develop, support, and empower educators; reward and appropriately compensate highly effective educators; help ineffective teachers improve or find new jobs
- Curriculum (10) – build student confidence with courses that empower students and show how others overcome challenges, life skills classes, more extracurricular and elective classes, variety of programs and opportunities beyond the basics, Korean language program, college preparatory classes, teach the basics, balance humanities and STEM
- Consequences for inappropriate conduct (7) – hold students and staff accountable for meeting clear and consistent expectations
- Instruction (5) – high quality, in-person; individualized learning that addresses special needs of all students; tutors for all subjects who are readily available; blended learning districtwide, students advance when ready
- Arts program (4) – band, theater, qualified instructors, develop well-rounded students
- Community engagement and collaboration (3)
- More vocational programs (3)
- Communication (2) – differs by school, need better and non-computer based communication with parents, website needs improvement
- Recognize distinctive, high-quality programs and practices (2)
- Respectful learning environment (2)
- Same expectations, policies, and programs at all elementary schools (2)
- Allow students to fail and learn from their experiences
- Changes must benefit students
- Clear vision and leadership to achieve it
- Comprehensive, long-range strategic and financial planning
- Equity training for students and staff
- Fix licensure system, hire college students to teach
- Focus on innovation, achievement, and creativity
- Funding sources that enhance learning
- Identify with students who need more learning time
- Improve anti-bullying campaign
- Life skills, especially for students with special needs
- Maintain the facilities
- Proactively engage parents as partners

Question 13.

What programs, initiatives, or services should be added to address new, emerging, or unmet needs?

Theme #1: Arts programs (n=17)

- Bolster the fine arts programs; fine arts enhance student learning; keep high quality fine arts; fine and performing arts are just as important as activities, athletics, clubs
- Bring back the band
- Combine concert band and marching band
- Full-time vocal teacher at the high school
- Full-time band director at the high school
- Focus on music education at the high school level
- More instrumental music opportunities
- Music department needs two full-time teachers with training in choir and band
- Music programs should be higher priority than athletics.
- Orchestra offered at the high school
- String program at the middle and high schools

Theme #2: Career and technical programs (n=13)

- Enhance vocational programs
- Any interested student should be able to enroll in vocational programs.
- Vocational certification programs through PPCC
- Construction, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, auto mechanics, nursing, CNA, etc.
- Votech programs for non-college bound students to give them workforce skills
- Technical classes for those not expecting to go to college
- Automotive class at high school
- Shop class at middle school
- Engineering courses, CAD, design, ...
- Industrial arts and technologies
- Partner with area businesses for interning/school credit opportunities.
- Half-semester vocational classes to give students brief look at options and help them decide what to study in the future
- Focus on the trades to compete with other districts

Theme #3: Advanced courses (n=12)

- More advanced classes, college-level classes, AP classes
- Independent studies in an AP course
- More concurrent enrollment classes and qualified teachers to teach them
- Expand and provide more resources for gifted and talented students
- Better services and college opportunities for GT and college credits
- Full time GT elementary teachers
- Physics – The Change, USA has phenomenal program that El Pomar and Daniels Fund helped roll out in Colorado districts; game changer; look at these types of opportunities.
- Computer classes and clubs; bring back computer programmer program; understanding computer technology and basic programming, coding and robotics
- Expand Columbine's Retired Educator program to the other two elementary schools

Theme #4: Life skills classes (n=12)

- Add more real-world skill classes, such as money management
- Financial education (5) – Personal finance required for every graduate. Teach students to pay bills and budget.
- Required instruction in common courtesy and customer service skills
- Basic life skills such as how to file taxes, have a bank account, buy a car or house, personal budgeting, cooking, nutrition, fix a flat, stay on budget, and be contributing people to society
- Prepare students to be adaptable

Additional Suggestions

1. Behavioral policies and procedures – Integrate character education. Establish and consistently enforce a districtwide student conduct policy. Educate parents about the policy beyond signing a handbook.
2. Blended learning – Transition to a blended learning structure that involves more than the addition of online courses.
3. Curriculum, instruction, assessment – Offer online courses for other languages and give credit for these courses; adopt Kahn Academy or a university model; combine classes such as language arts and history to promote generalized learning across settings; increase the amount of high-quality instructional time that integrates brain-based learning strategies; allow students to choose from a menu of options to demonstrate learning (e.g., Monument District 38).
4. Discipline – Use Love and Logic or another type of disciplinary approach at the secondary schools to improve relationships among teachers and students.
5. Industry-recognized credentials – Elementary and middle schools build basic skills so that students may earn meaningful certificates and college credits during high school, and then work in these fields while attending college. For example, if students want IT degrees, then offer basic certifications in security and programming. Partner with organizations that offer these certifications to address unmet needs.
6. Mentoring – Intensify mentoring for new teachers.
7. Prevention – Offer ongoing programs to help parents understand teenagers and deal with serious issues such as drug use and bullying.
8. Special education – Build an alternative education facility that is separate from the high school; provide high-quality special education services; apply universal screening for grade level and appropriate class placement; implement a strong MTSS/RTI/PBIS system.
9. Student supports – Use PLC time (one hour on Wednesdays) for teachers to work directly with struggling students. Create specific classes to build basic skills and address deficiencies in reading and math. Offer free, afterschool tutoring programs. Hire more social workers.
10. Technology – Establish a dedicated technology education lab at the middle school. Integrate the use of and information about technology throughout the school day; add coding and programming classes, and include other IT skills.

Question 15.

Any other comments about WPSD or this survey that you would like to share?

Theme #1: Satisfaction (n=26)

District (14) – No other district in the area that I would choose for my children. They are "elevated" daily! Love WPSD. Children have done well in WPSD. Happy with the education my children received. Kids had wonderful experience in this district. Exemplary assistance with IEP for child with Autism. Great district with untapped potential. Impressed by the school district's ability to offer a great education and so many opportunities with nominal funding. Like the Personal Learning Platform. You truly do amazing work. Great district overall. Excellent elementary and middle schools. Obviously, improvement is something to strive for but WPSD does well for being a small district.

Columbine (6) – Love the school. Very satisfied with our experience. Very happy at Columbine. Parents are engaged. Innovative and creative at solving problems and improving the families' experiences. Principal is top notch and professional.

Gateway (1) – Really enjoy gateway.

Summit – (3) Summit pre-k and elementary are amazing. Son excelling in all areas thanks to teachers. Couldn't be happier with Summit. Couldn't have a better staff.

Middle School (2) – Love the new Summit program. Students taking ownership for academic success.

Theme #2: Staff quality (n=19)

Positive (4) – You couldn't have better staff. Love the district and teachers. Many excellent teachers. Teachers are highly qualified.

Positive/Negative (4) – Some teachers and staff are truly outstanding while others are not. Some very high quality teachers in the district and some teachers just collecting a paycheck. About half the teachers are very strong and effective teachers. The other half expect the students to figure it out for themselves.

Negative (2) – Disappointed with the education our children received. Some staff seem apathetic.

Suggestions to address staff quality (9):

- Better teacher evaluation process – more staff observations and feedback
- High school teachers should involve parents more.
- Hire teachers that help students achieve their goals.
- Reward effective teachers.
- Fire teachers who don't follow through with assigned tasks.
- Teachers should do more to prepare students for standardized and college entrance tests.
- Teachers should actively lead and teach classes.
- WPSD needs to demand more of the students and teachers.

Theme #3: High school quality and culture (n=18)

Challenges:

- Students (5) – inappropriate behaviors and conduct, lack of discipline, no consequences for violating rules, limited accountability, low academic expectations
- Staff (6) – some underperforming teachers who are not connecting well with students, poor communication with parents, parents don't feel comfortable approaching with ideas and issues, lack of trust, teachers are overworked and under-resourced, use of fear-based approaches, ideas and issues viewed as threats rather than opportunities

Desired educator qualities (6):

- Caring and kind
- Classroom management skills
- Content expertise
- Know how to connect with students
- Leadership skills
- Pedagogical skills

Needs (9):

- Clear consequences for inappropriate student conduct
- Empower administrators to lead
- Higher academic standards
- Higher expectations for student conduct
- Highly qualified teachers and strategies for retaining them
- Improved relationships among teachers and students
- New approach to discipline
- Observe, evaluate, and provide teachers with constructive feedback; help them improve.
- Teachers need sufficient resources, a good support system, and time to plan and collaborate together.

Theme #4: Staff retention (n=15)

- Adopt a pay scale that is similar to other districts in the region.
- Attract and keep good teachers.
- Invest in good teachers and give them the time they need to do their jobs.
- Losing talented educators
- Recruitment and retention of high quality teachers should be a top priority.
- Rethink tenure and retention policies to keep highly qualified and effective educators.

Additional Suggestions

1. Communication – Add a weekly school information page in the Courier. List upcoming athletic competitions, events, concerts, and special programs. Too difficult to use school calendar.
2. Cultural experiences – Provide opportunities for students to engage in cultural experiences beyond Teller County to open minds and develop a global perspective.
3. Excellence – Have the same expectation of excellence for performing arts and academics; hire excellent educators who teach rather than letting students teach themselves online. Focus on innovative direct instruction that helps the “average” student.

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4. Expectations – Students need a stable set of rules and expectations at the beginning of the year. Don't change the rules each semester without an explanation. Follow the syllabus that is given to each student at the beginning of every year.
5. Facilities – Share the school facilities with the community that supported the sales tax increase. Do not lock up fields, gyms, track, and auditoriums. Don't charge facility fees that the public can't afford.
6. Feedback – Listen to the parents' voices. Often there is not a venue to hear parents' concerns or suggestions on how to improve the District. Each school should survey parents annually, especially parents of graduating students and families who leave the district. Students should be surveyed too. Reach out to Manitou parents to find out what that district offers that WPSD does not.
7. Innovate – Make radical changes, empower good teachers, utilize your wonderful small size to do new things in the educational realm.
8. One percent sales tax – Provide regular updates to inform the community about how these funds are being used. Community does not understand why salaries are an issue when it appears we have more tax base and fewer students.
9. Personal Learning Platform – Encourages students to learn a subject even if they do not succeed initially. Learning becomes the objective. This is a game changer.
10. Programs – We do not need more programs; need to educate community about existing programs and how to access them.
11. Rubrics – Students' grades should be based upon objective standards. Require and use rubrics consistently across classes. Use rubrics to communicate with parents regarding what is required of students in a concise manner. Hold teachers and administrators accountable for the objective use of the rubrics. They should be able to prove that rubrics are used objectively.
12. Staff retention – Keep excellent staff regardless of tenure status; don't allow talent to leave in favor of less effective, tenured faculty. Fire ineffective teachers.
13. Summit Program – Keep this program. It helps middle school students grow and own their academic success.
14. Transformation Committee – Read the report and take it seriously.
15. Transparency – The district needs to be more open. Explain why decisions are made, whether for financial, staffing, or other reasons. For example, when teachers are fired mid-year, provide parents with an explanation. Address security concerns by explaining lockdowns and their resolutions.