

PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
Staff, Parent, and Student Satisfaction
Survey Results

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Introduction

Palisades Charter High School is located in Los Angeles, California and was founded in 1961 as a traditional public school. In 1993, the school converted to charter status, serving students in 9th through 12th grades. Palisades’ mission focuses on empowering their diverse student body to make positive contributions to the global community by dedicating its resources to the development of educational excellence, civic responsibility, and personal growth.

This is the sixth year Palisades Charter High School has collaborated with the Survey Research Initiative at Teachers College, Columbia University. In this report, staff, parent and student responses from three previous academic years, 2015, 2016, and 2017, are compared to this year’s survey results.

Design of the Survey

In collaboration with Palisades Charter High School, the Survey Research Initiative created surveys for staff and parents to gather information on the school’s performance. Survey questions sought information about satisfaction with the academic program, school environment, working conditions, and the effectiveness of the school’s teachers and administrators. The surveys were created online through Qualtrics in English and Spanish.

The staff survey contained 40 survey items and three open-ended questions; the parent survey had 50 survey items and six open-ended questions. The parent survey was conducted in two rounds to shorten the time required to take the surveys and boost response rates among families. Surveys were available online to staff and parents for four weeks.

In addition, Palisades conducted their own student surveys, one for 9th grade students and one for 10th-12th grade students. The results of these two surveys are included in this report. The 9th grade survey included 60 survey items and eight open-ended questions. The 10th-12th grade survey included 50 survey items and six open-ended questions.

Facts, Figures, & Generalizability

	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Staff</i>	75	79	175	173 (88%)
<i>Parents</i>	361	294	292	586 (23%)
<i>Students</i>	282	311	2,133	2,080 (70%)

With the high response rate among staff and students, seen in parentheses, survey results are generalizable to these stakeholder groups. While the response rate for parents did increase from previous years, the rate was still too small to generalize to the total population. Therefore, results from the parent surveys should be only viewed as suggestive.

	Parent Survey 1	Parent Survey 2
<i>Total Respondents</i>	586 (23%)	407 (16%)

Though the response rates varied between the first and second parent survey, the respondents to the two surveys were similar enough demographically that responses can be generalized between the two surveys.

	9th Grade Survey	10th-12th Grade Survey
<i>Total Respondents</i>	629 (85%)	1,451 (65%)

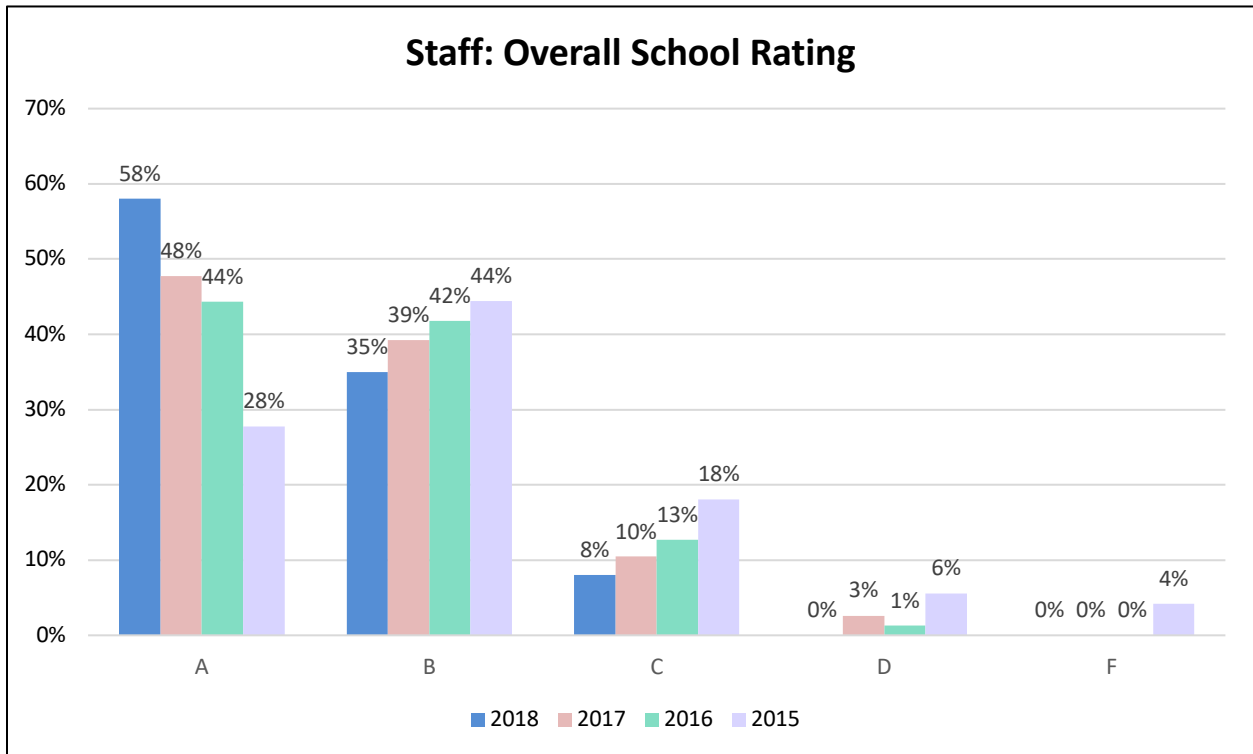
A substantial proportion of 9th grade students responded to the survey (85%) while a smaller proportion of upper-classmen responded to the 10th-12th grade survey (65%). Both response rates were sufficiently high, however, for responses from both surveys to be considered generalizable to all students.

Demographic data for staff and parents (see appendix) indicate that the community of respondents has been relatively stable across the four years included in this report. This demographic similarity suggests that comparing responses across these four years is valid. The student surveys, on the other hand, did not include the same questions as in previous years, so a comparison was not possible and only student data from 2018 is included in this report.

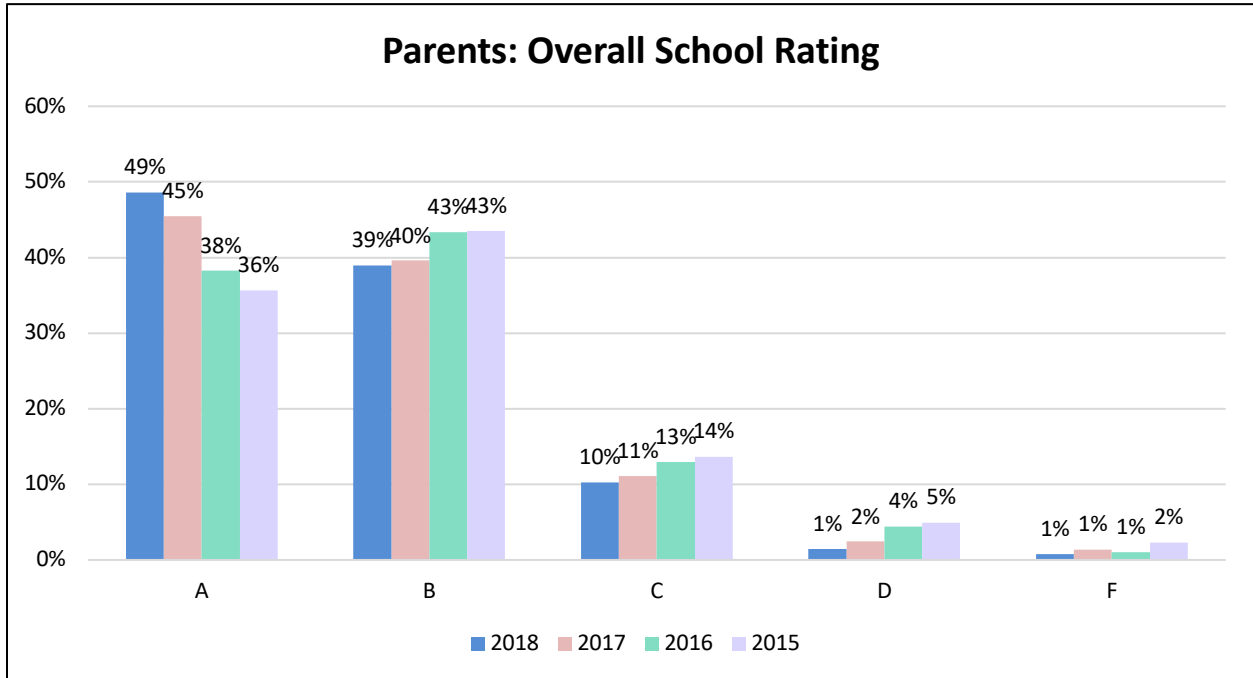
Organization of the Report

We have organized this report into fourteen different sections. The Likert Scale items, along with the open-ended responses from staff, parents and students, are summarized in nine sections. Open-ended questions offered participants an opportunity to comment on both Palisades Charter High School’s areas of strength, and opportunities for improvement. Staff also responded to an open-ended question concerning school functioning, and parents responded to a question regarding their children’s experiences at PCHS. In addition, results concerning bus services, parental support, and staff professional development are included in individual sections. In the conclusion, we discuss overall trends and provide recommendations for addressing key areas for improvement. Finally, the appendix presents demographic characteristics of the respondents over the course of the four years compared in this report.

Overall School Ratings



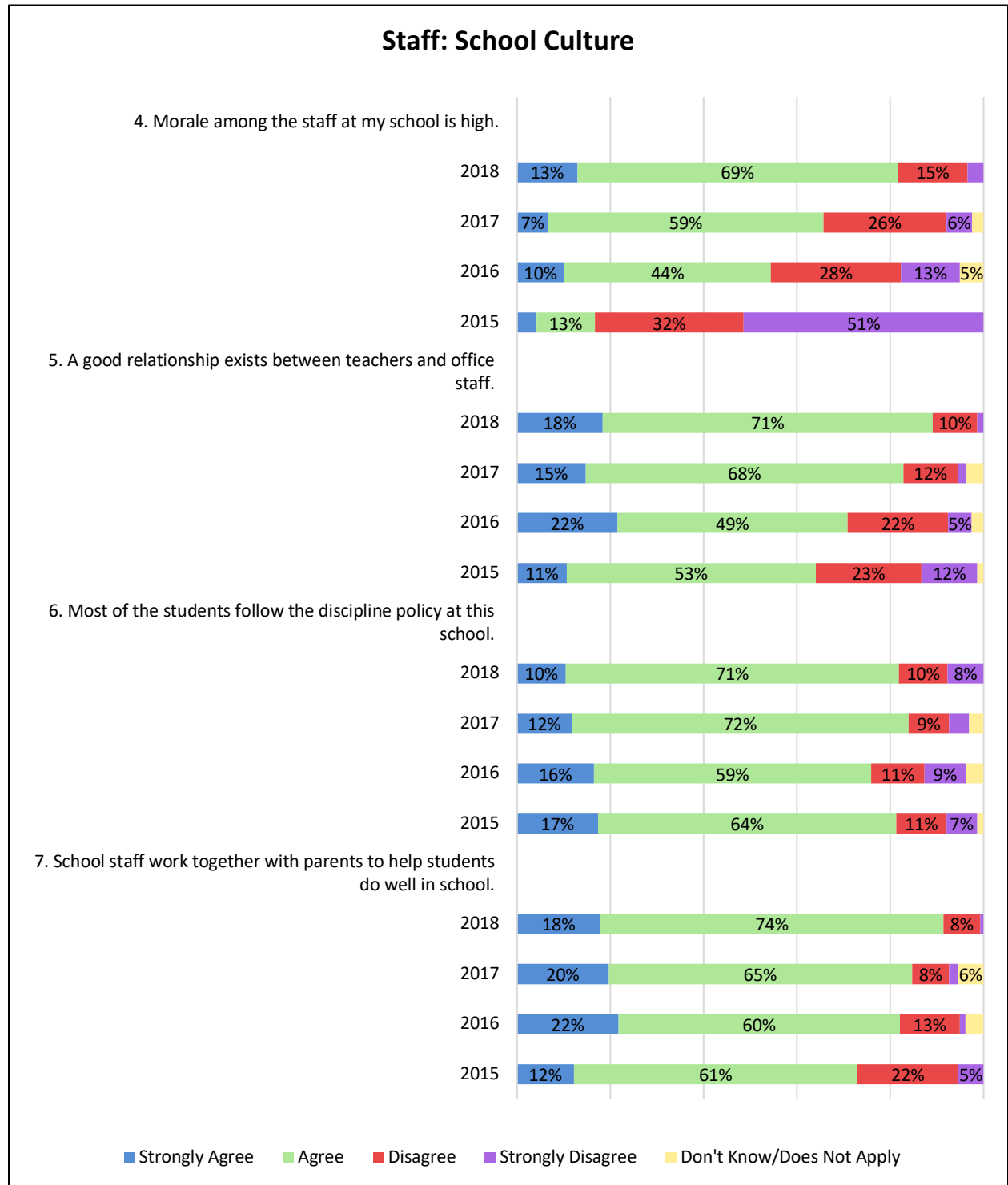
Overall school ratings among Palisades staff have increased since 2015. Fifty-eight percent of staff gave Palisades an “A” rating in 2018 (84 responses), compared to 48% in 2017 (73 responses), 44% percent in 2016 (35 responses), and 28% in 2015 (20 responses). The percentage of “B,” “C,” “D,” and “F” ratings also decreased since 2015: “B” ratings decreased from 44% (32 responses) in 2015 to 35% (51 responses) in 2018. “C” ratings decreased from 18% (13 responses) in 2015 to 8% (11 responses) in 2018 and “D” ratings decreased from 6% (4 responses) in 2015 to 0% in 2018.



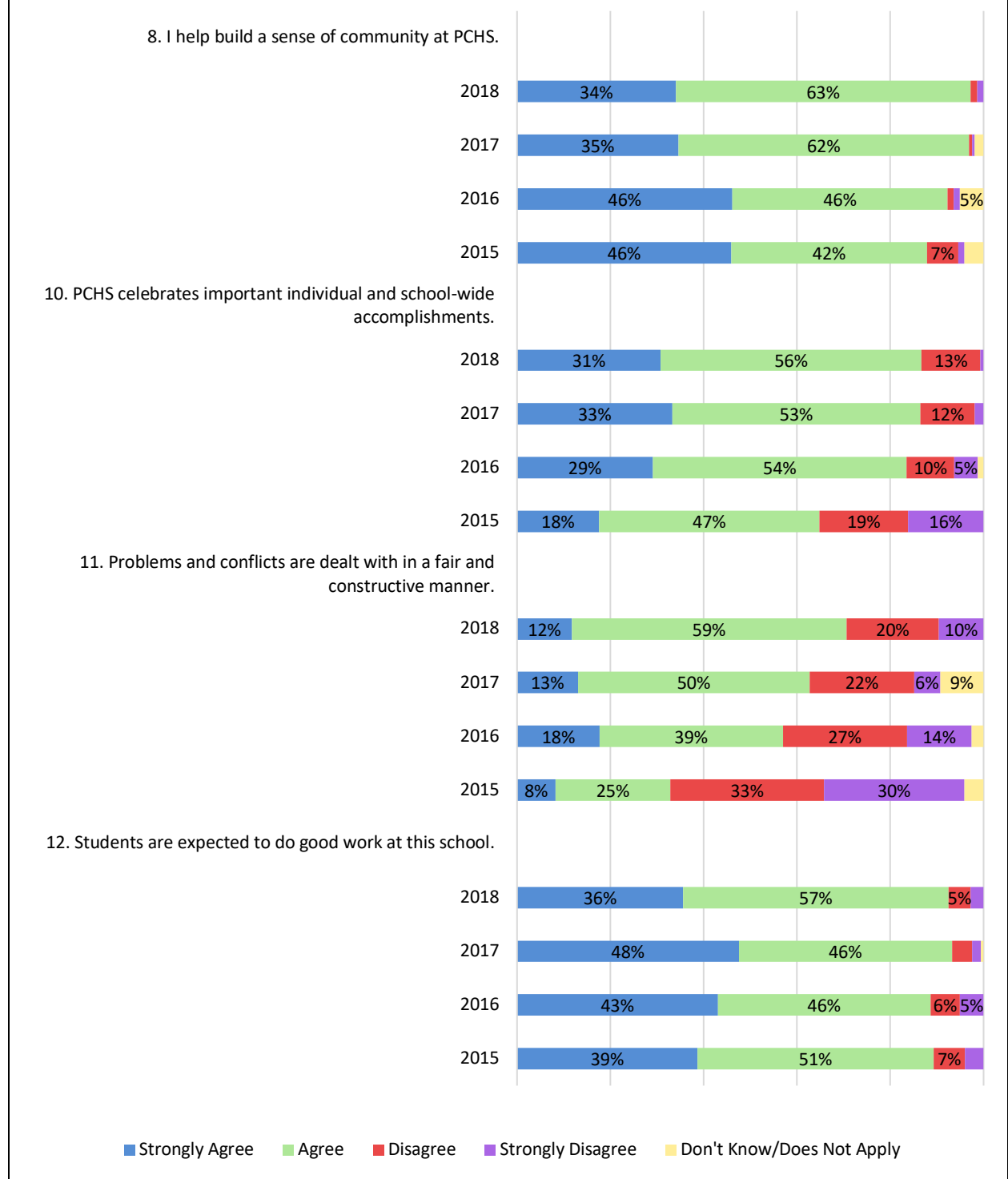
Parents rated Palisades overall very highly, as well as slightly more positively, on average, than in 2015 through 2017. Nearly half of parents gave the school an “A” in 2018 (49% / 266 responses), up from 45% (130 responses) in 2017. Thirty-nine percent of parents (213 responses) gave PCHS a “B” and 10% (56 responses) assigned it a “C”. Only 12 parents (2%) gave PCHS a “D” or “F”.

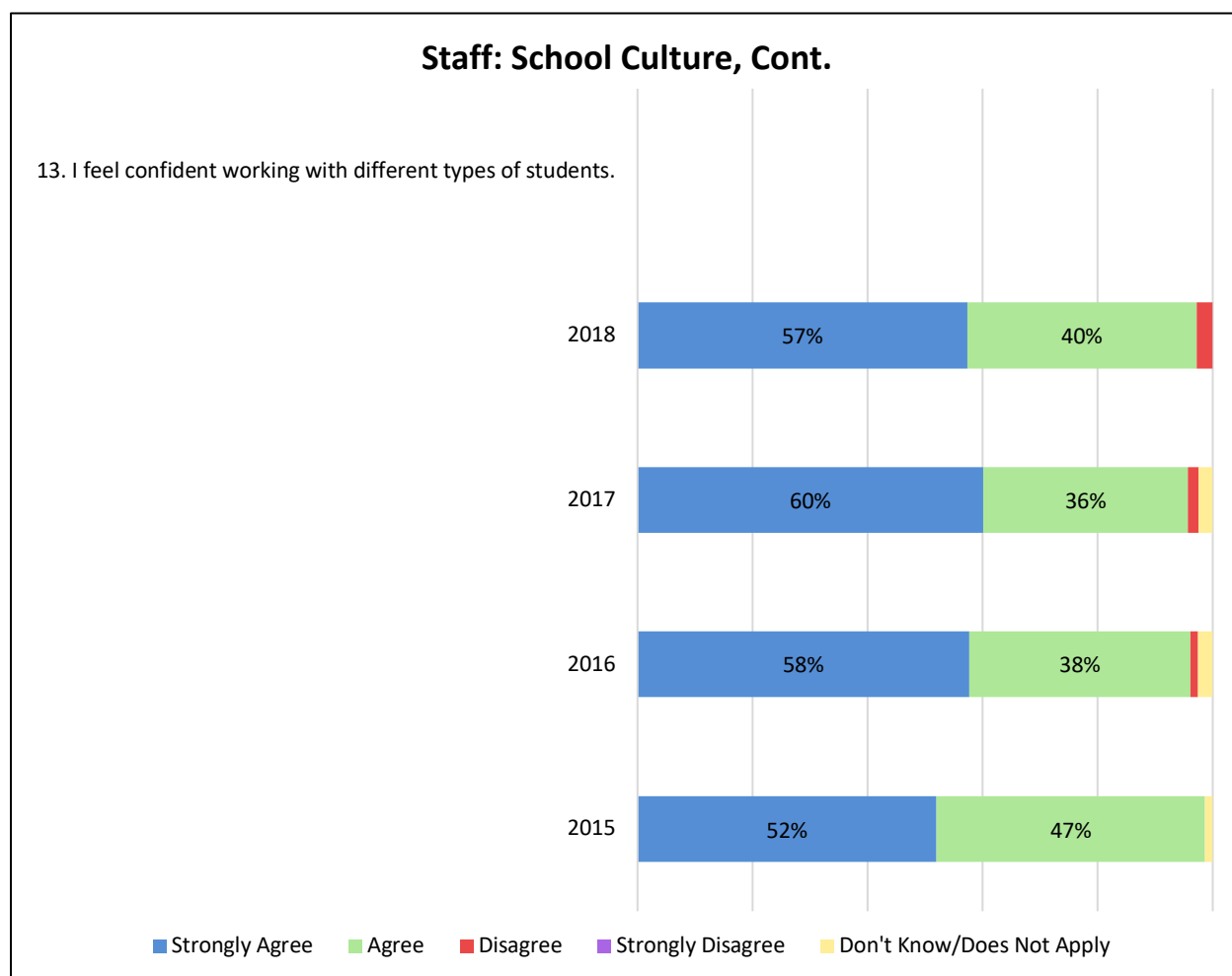
Staff Survey Results

School Culture



Staff: School Culture, Cont.



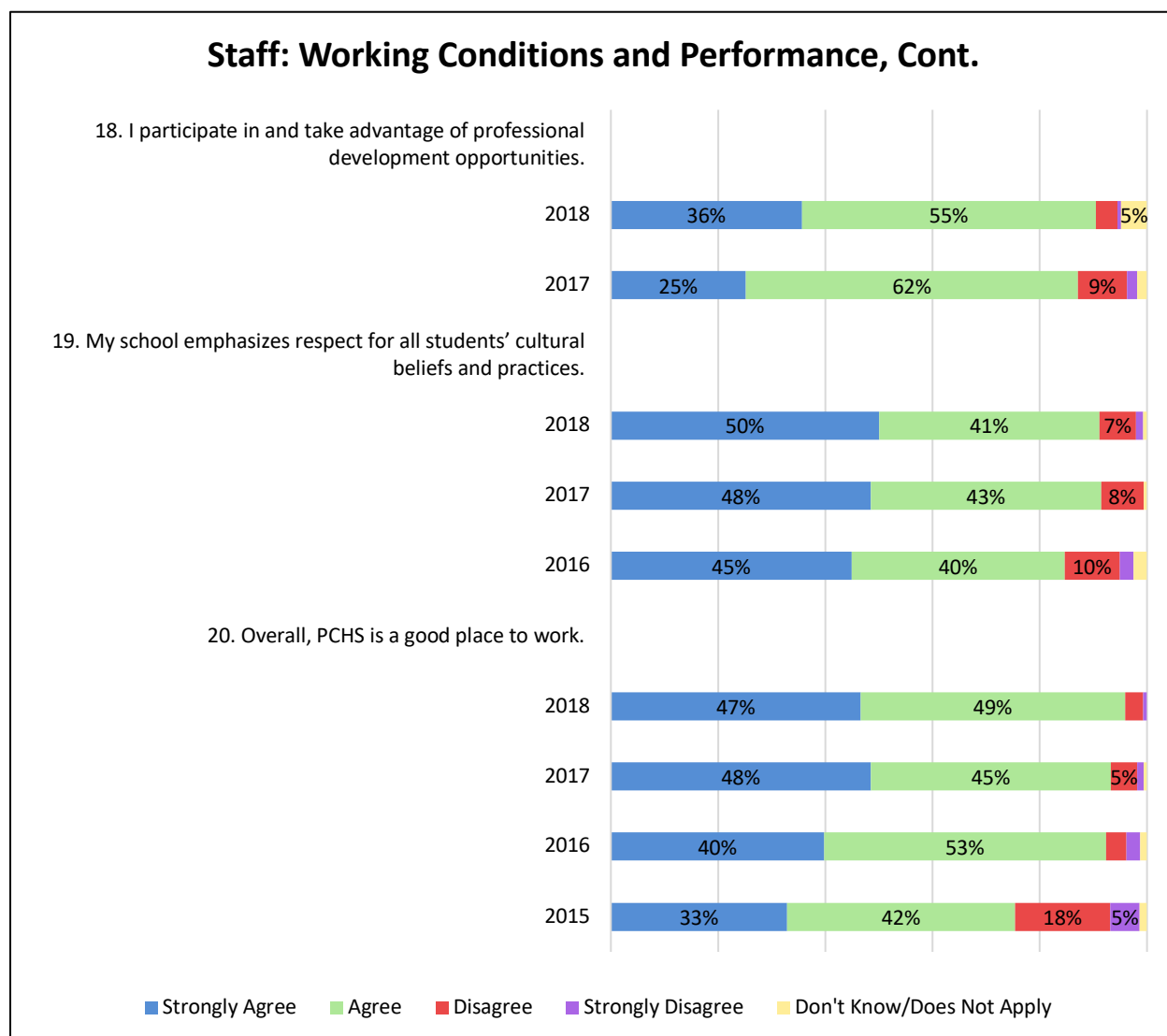


Generally, staff perceptions of school culture at Palisades have become more positive or remained consistently high over the past four years. Most notably, the percentage of staff respondents who agreed that staff morale was high increased from 17% (12 responses) in 2015 to 82% (120 responses) in 2018. The proportion of staff who agreed that a good relationship existed between the staff and office (89% / 128 responses), that staff worked together with parents (92% / 131 responses), that problems and conflicts were dealt with in a constructive manner (71% / 102 responses), and that they helped build a sense of community at PCHS (97% / 139 responses) all increased from 2015 to 2018. Staff have remained consistently positive between 2015 and 2018 when asked if most students followed the school’s discipline policies (81% / 117 responses), if PCHS celebrated individual and school-wide accomplishments (87% / 124 responses), if students were expected to do good work (93% / 135 responses), and if they felt confident working with different types of students (97% / 139 responses).

Working Conditions

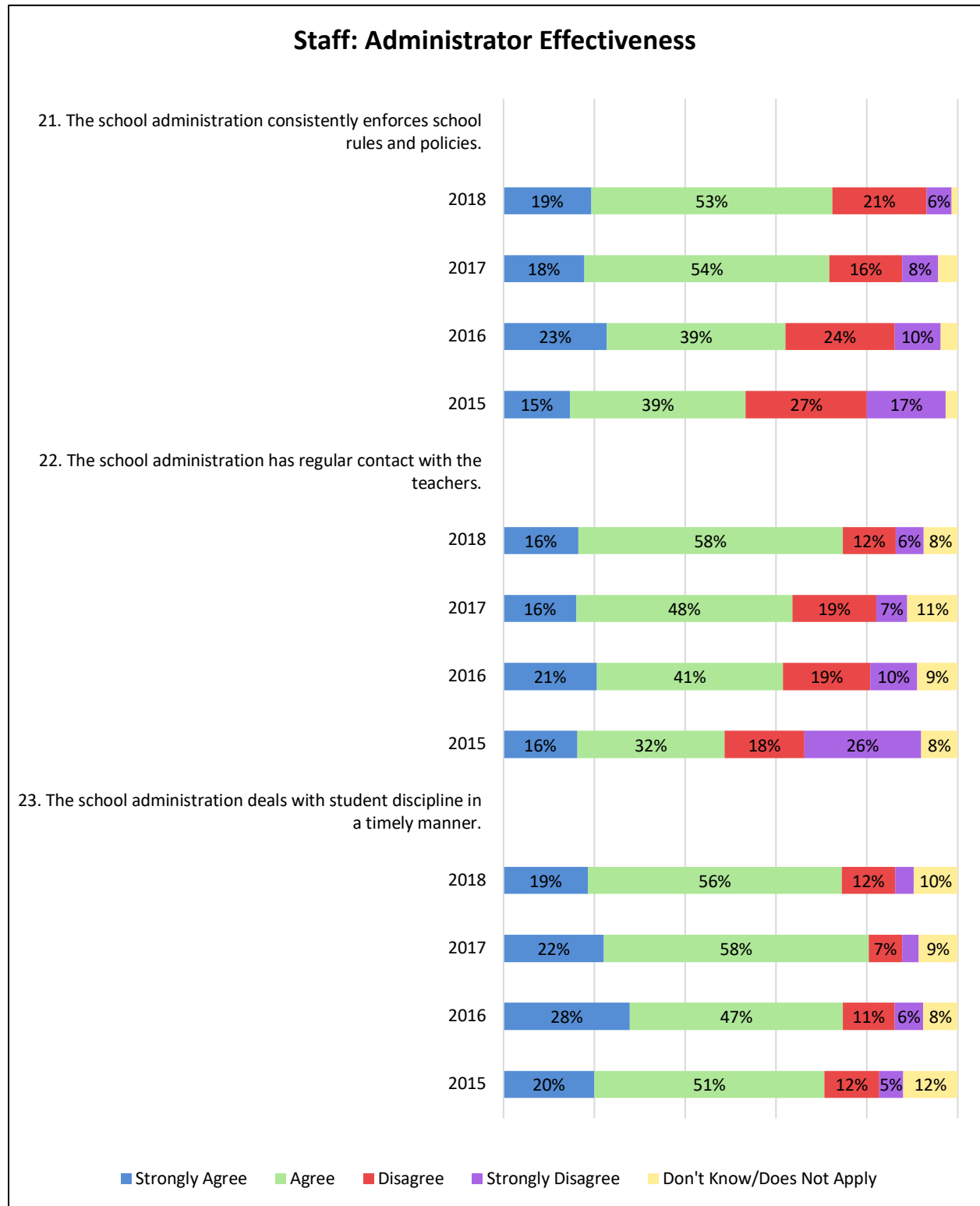
Staff: Working Conditions and Performance

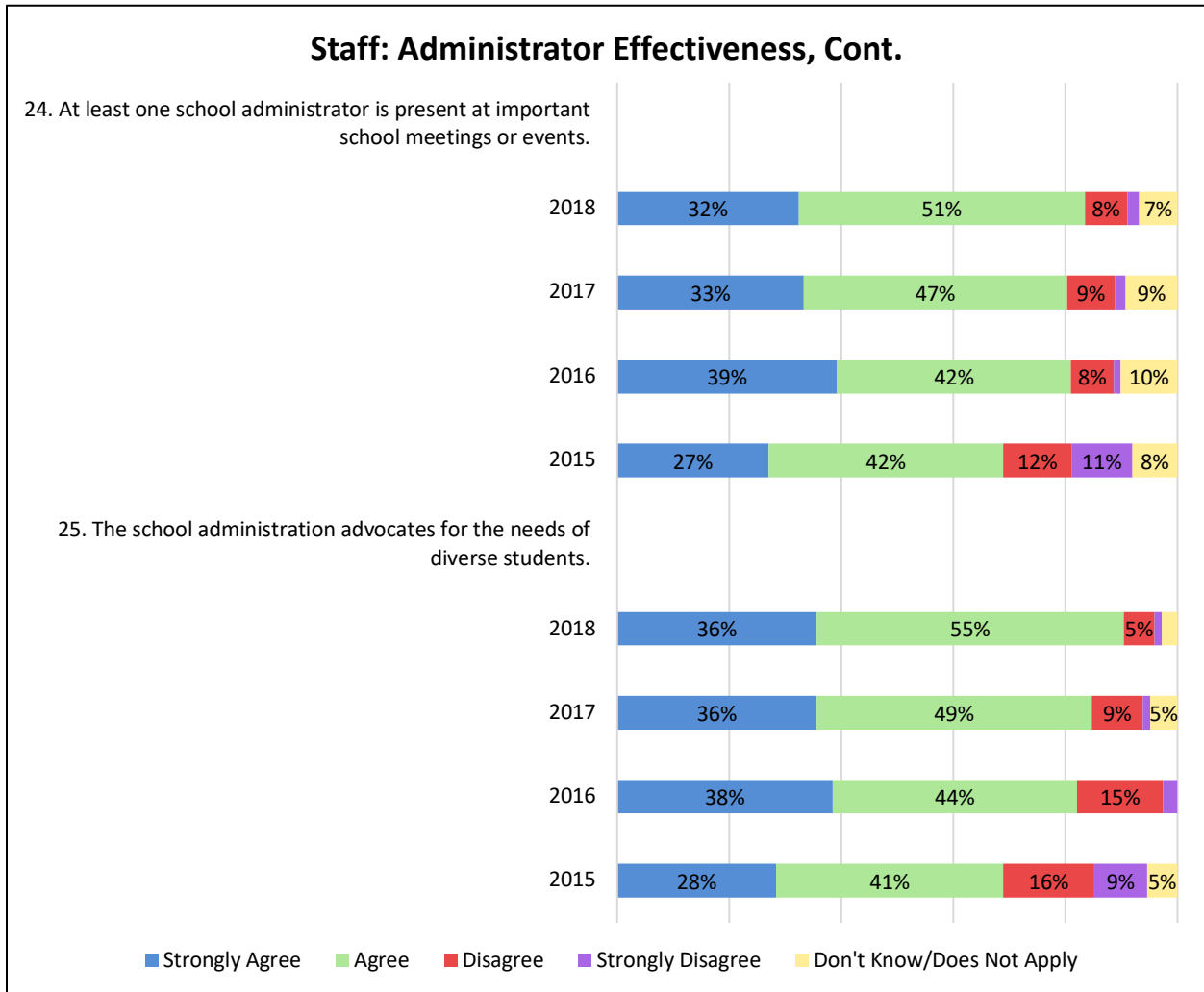




Overall, staff responses to statements concerning working conditions improved between 2015 and 2018. In particular, the vast majority of staff responded consistently that they had a clear understanding of their job responsibilities (94% / 138 responses) and that overall, PCHS was a good place to work (96% / 140 responses). Staff feedback on working conditions also improved significantly in several areas. In 2018, 68% of respondents (99 responses) said that performance evaluations were fair, compared with 50% (37 responses) in 2015. Further, three quarters of respondents (95 responses) said that school personnel shared constructive criticism with each other, compared with 39% of 2015 respondents (29 responses) agreeing with that statement. Despite these improvements from 2015 to 2018, the percentage of staff respondents who felt that they had a voice in shaping decisions about school policies and practices (66% / 96 responses) remained lower than those of other working conditions-related indicators. When asked whether they participated in and took advantage of professional development opportunities, a larger share of staff responded affirmatively in 2018 (91% / 132 responses) than did in 2017 (87% / 142 responses). The percentage of staff who felt that PCHS emphasized respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices also increased in 2018 (91% / 133 responses) when compared with responses 2016, when the question was introduced to the survey.

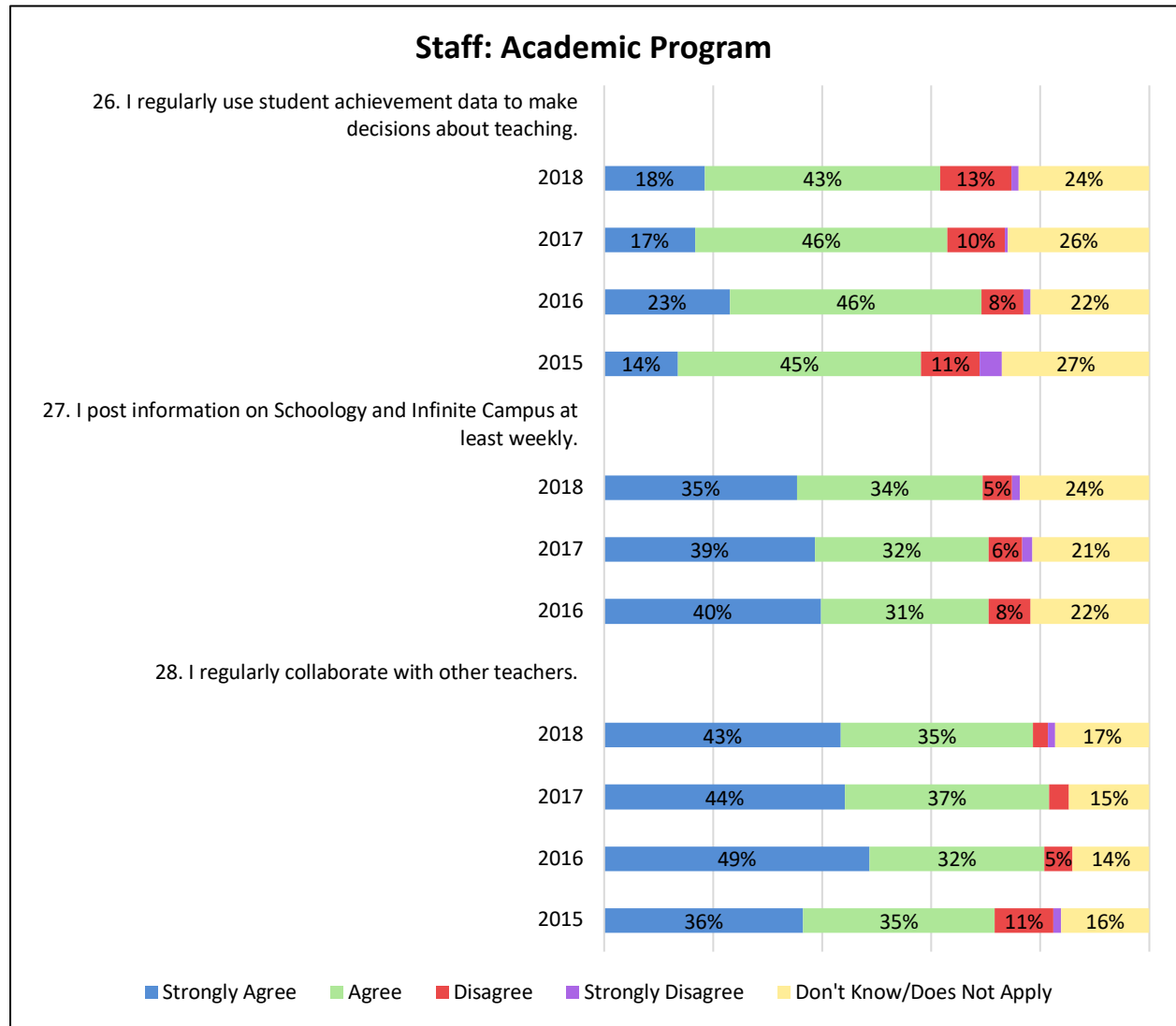
Administrator Effectiveness



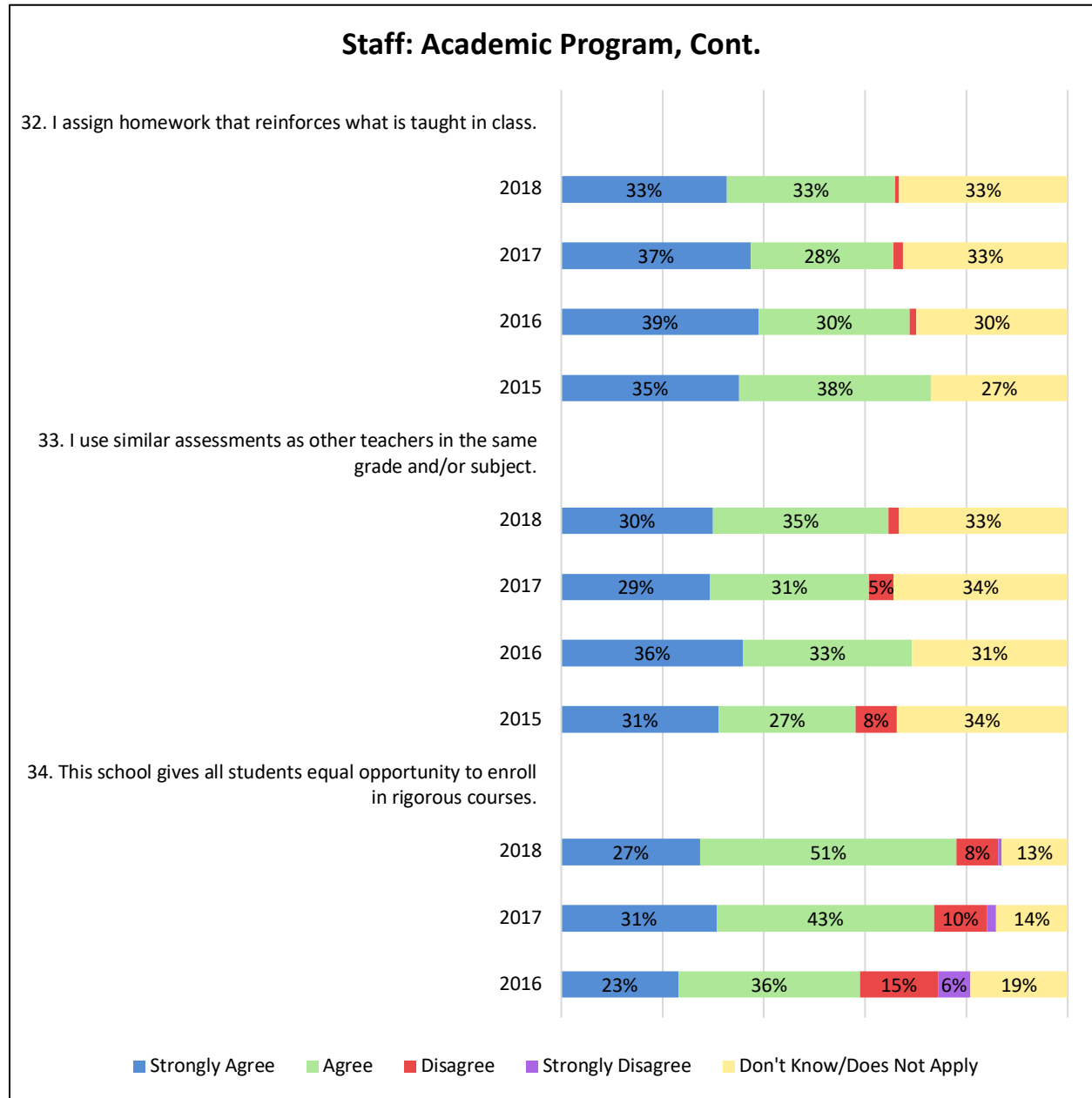


Staff perception of administrator effectiveness at PCHS improved between 2015 and 2018. Staff indicate a perception that administrators have made significant progress on advocating for the needs of diverse students. 91% of staff (132 responses) responded positively to that indicator in 2018, compared to only 69% (51 responses) agreeing with it in 2015. According to staff, administrators also made progress in communication with 74% of staff (129 responses) agreed that administrators made regular contact with teachers in 2018, compared to 48% (36 responses) in 2015. Although staff perception of the administration’s consistency in enforcing school rules improved between 2015 and 2018, responses for this indicator remained more mixed than for others. While 72% of staff (105 responses) agreed in 2018 that administrators consistently reinforced school rules and policies, 27% of respondents (38 responses) disagreed. Finally, staff perception of administrators’ timeliness in dealing with student discipline worsened slightly in 2018 (75% / 108 responses) when compared to 2017 (80% / 131 responses).

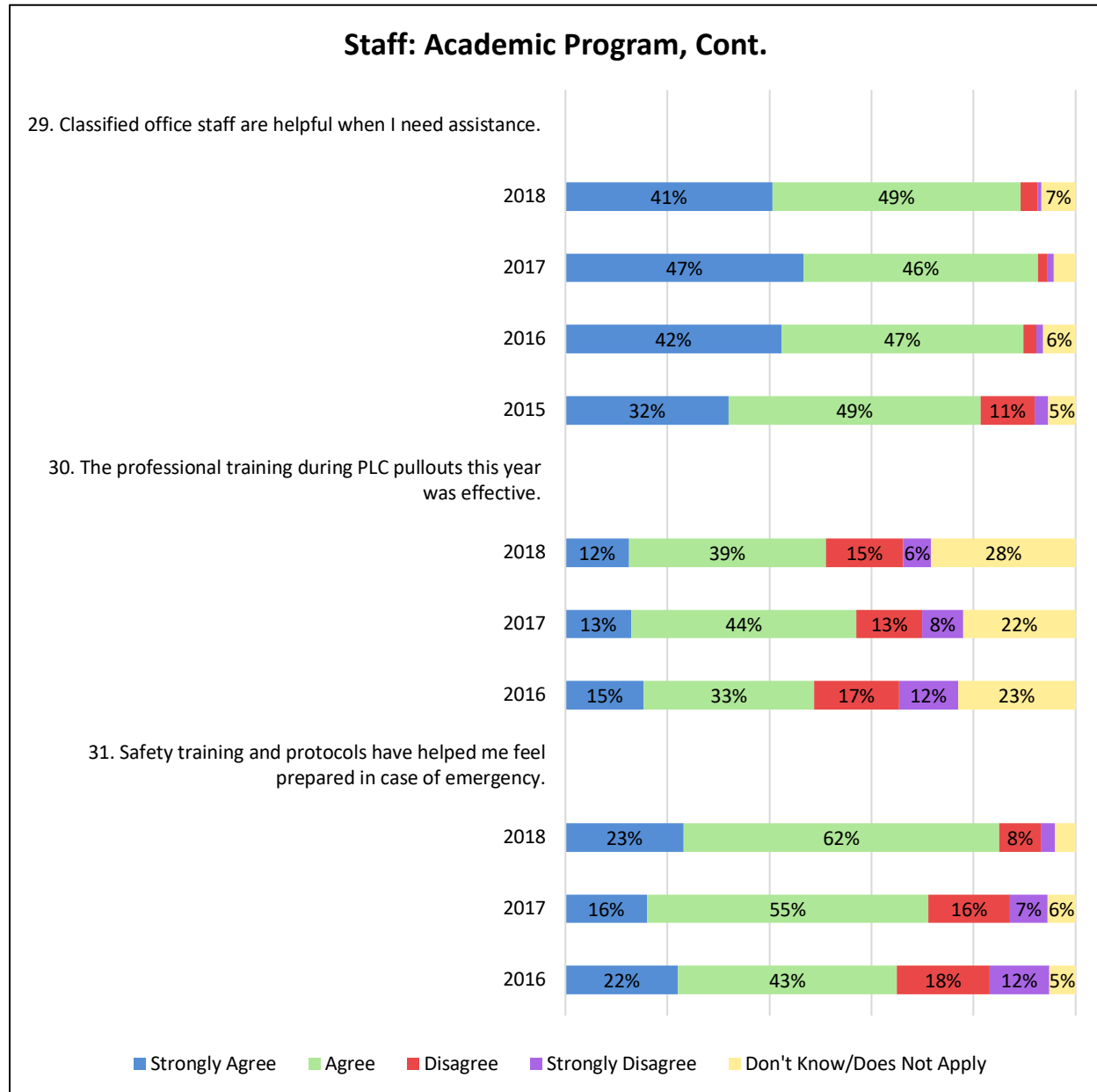
Academic Program



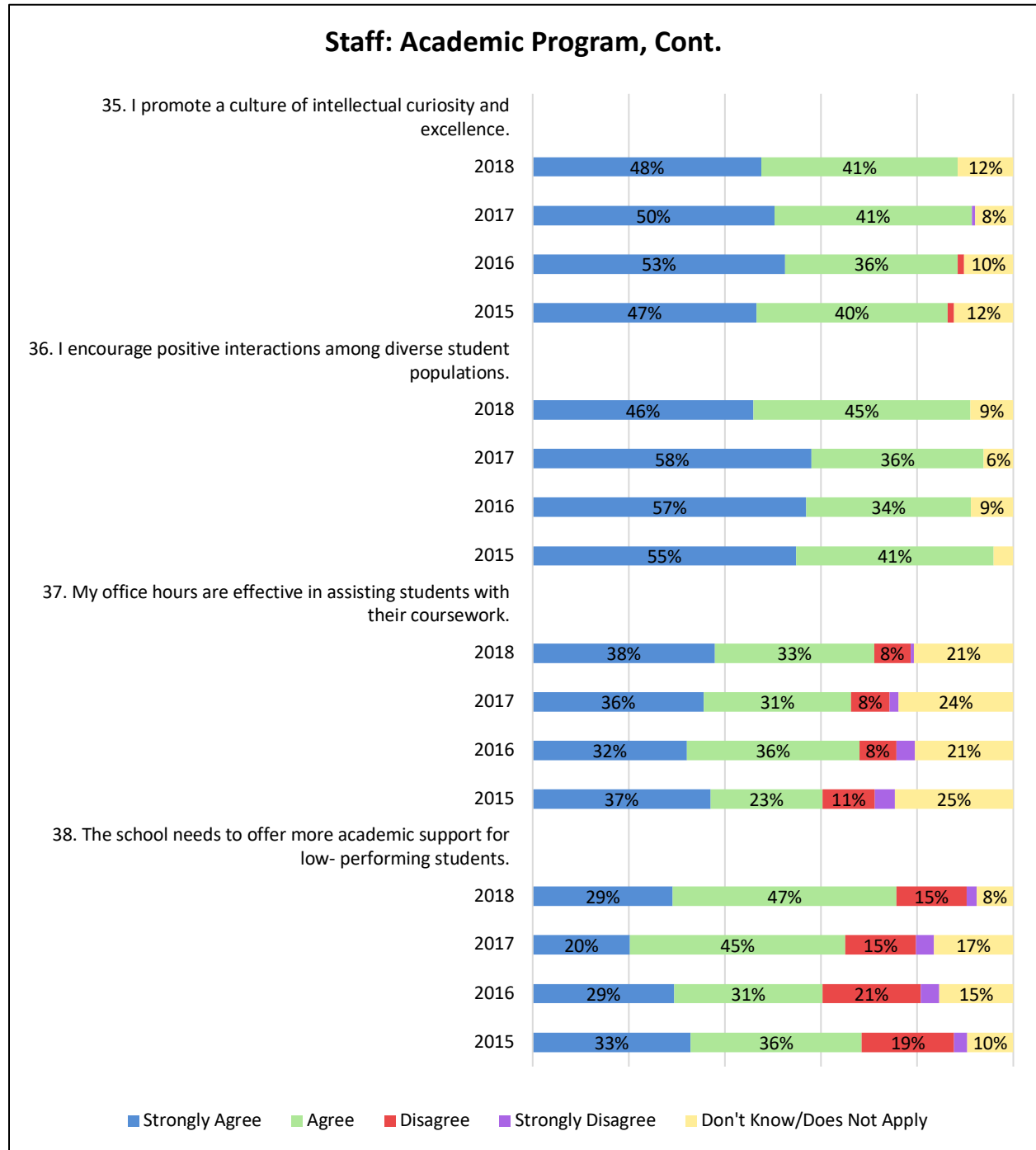
When asked to consider their own teaching practices, teachers responded relatively consistently across the four years compared in this report. The use of student achievement data remains an area for potential improvement with 14% of staff (21 responses) surveyed in 2018 *not* agreeing and nearly a quarter of staff (36 responses) not knowing if they regularly used student achievement data to make decisions about teaching. As in previous years, 69% of staff (102 responses) reported posting at least weekly on Schoology and Infinite Campus in 2018. Additionally, 78% of staff respondents (114 responses) indicated that they regularly collaborated with other teachers.



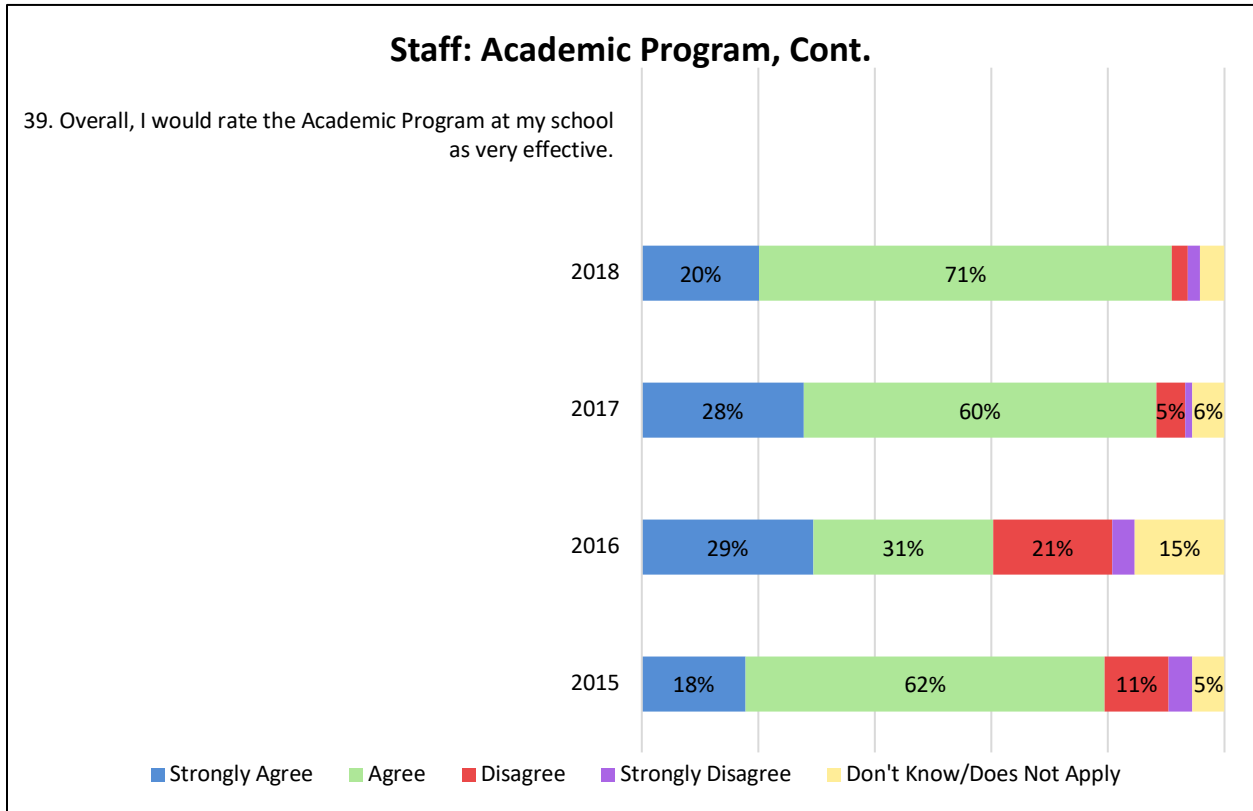
(Cont.) In 2018, only one teacher *disagreed* they assigned homework that reinforced what was taught in class and only three teachers *did not* use assessments similar to those of other teachers in the same grades or subjects. More staff also felt that PCHS gives all students equal opportunities to enroll in rigorous courses in 2018 (79% / 114 responses), compared to in 2017 (74% / 120 responses) and 2016 (59% / 46 responses).



(Cont.) Staff responses were slightly more varied over time in terms of the supports offered to them by PCHS. The share of staff who felt that safety trainings and protocols helped them feel prepared in case of emergency increased in 2018 (85% / 125 responses), compared to responses to a similar statement in 2016 (65% / 50 responses) and 2017 (71% / 116 responses). Similar shares of staff surveyed found PLC pullouts ineffective across comparison years: in 2018, twenty-one percent of staff surveyed (30 responses) disagreed that professional training during PLC pullouts was effective, compared to twenty-one percent (34 responses) in 2017 and twenty-nine percent (23 responses) in 2016.



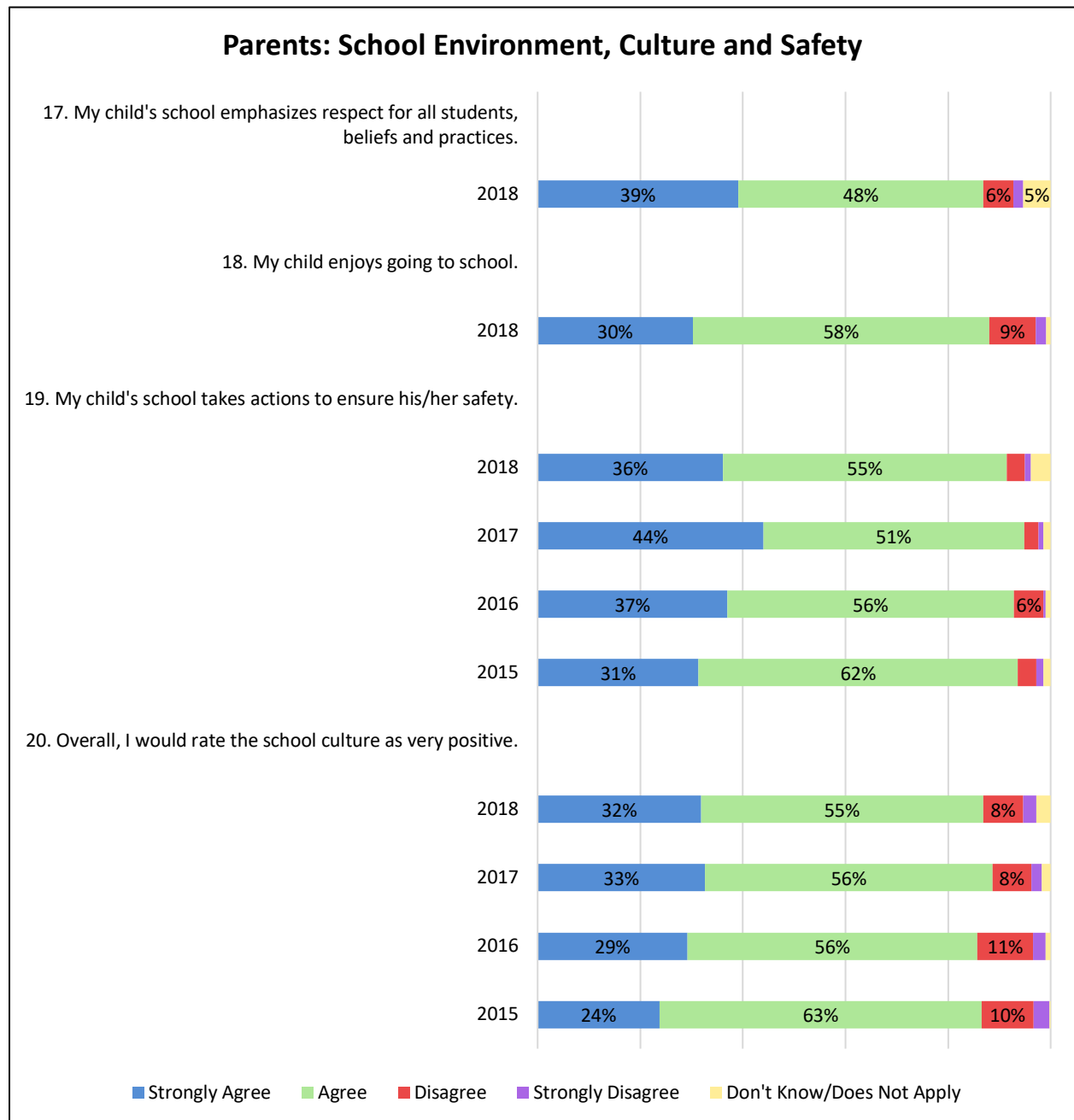
(Cont.) Staff feedback about classroom and school culture also remained relatively consistent across years. In 2018, 89% of staff surveyed (130 responses) agreed they promoted a culture of intellectual curiosity and excellence. Across all comparison years, nearly all teachers felt they encouraged positive interactions among diverse student populations with 91% of respondents (133 responses) agreeing with this indicator in 2018. The percentage of staff respondents who felt that PCHS needed to offer more academic support to low-performing students increased this year, from 65% (50 responses) in 2017 to 76% (109 responses) in 2018. Finally, similarly to previous years, only 9% of staff surveyed *did not* think their office hours were effective in assisting students with their coursework.



(Cont.) Promisingly, the overall staff ratings of the academic program at PCHS have improved across the four years compared in this report. In 2018, 91% (131 responses) of staff agreed they would rate the academic program at their school as very effective, compared with 88% (143 responses) in 2017, and 60% (67 responses) in 2016.

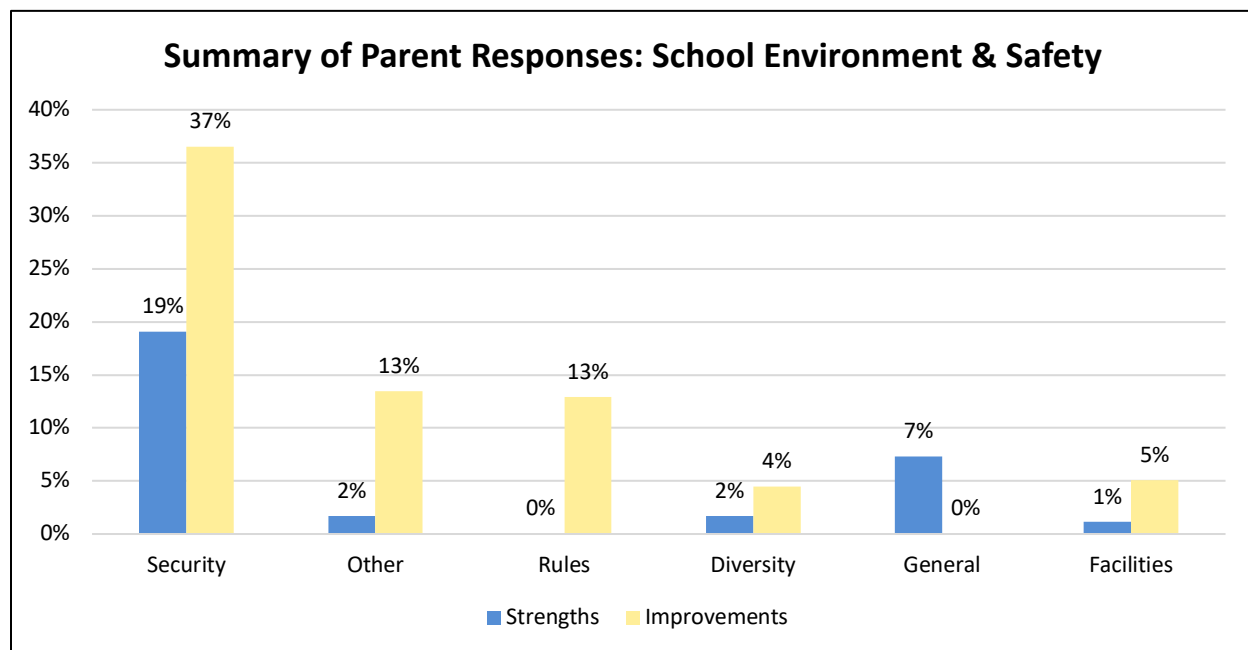
Parent Survey Results

School Environment, Culture, & Safety



As in prior years, parents expressed a very high opinion of the school environment, culture and safety at PCHS. Eighty-seven percent of parents (504 responses) agreed that PCHS emphasized respect for all students, beliefs and practices, and 88% (510 responses) indicated that their child enjoyed attending school. Continuing trends from 2015 through 2017, the vast majority of parents believed the school took action to ensure the safety of their child (91% / 527 responses) and that the overall school culture was very positive (87% / 502 responses).

Overview of Open-Ended Responses: School Environment, Culture & Safety



The above chart categorizes parent comments about the school environment, culture and safety at PCHS by topic and indicates whether the comment was identifying a school strength or offering a suggestion for improvement. Parent comments most frequently discussed school safety and security (56% / 99 responses), with 19% (34 responses) of parents praising current school security and 37% (65 responses) providing suggestions for improving security at PCHS. Fifteen percent of comments (27 responses) discussed ‘other’ topics, with three parents noting miscellaneous strengths and 24 parents addressing areas for improvement. Thirteen percent of parents (23 responses) articulated concerns about enforcement of school rules and discipline. Eleven comments (6%) discussed diversity and inclusion at PCHS. Three parents cited it as a strength and eight parents provided suggestions for improving inclusivity of PCHS. Seven percent of comments (13 responses) expressed general positivity about the environment, culture and safety at PCHS. Finally, 6% of comments discussed the facilities and physical environment, with two comments identifying strengths and nine comments providing recommendations for improvement.

Parents: Do you have any additional comments about your child’s experiences related to the school environment and safety?

Parent responses fell into six broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

School Security & Safety (99 responses: 34 strengths, 65 improvements)

I appreciate you taking the current environment in the nation with respect to gun violence very seriously and working with faculty and students on safe practices.

I am amazed at how the school provides excellent security with an open campus. Great Job!

School safety is fairly addressed, and I feel like the administration makes sure to share information so that parents are aware of what is happening. However, I feel like the school environment could be warmer and more welcoming.

The beautiful clean campus is treated with pride. The presence of police cruisers is a welcome sight but by no means dominating or aggressive. They just keep the campus safe before during and after school.

I believe necessary steps are being taken. A stronger guard presence would always be helpful. Greater mental health awareness is always needed.

I do not like the idea of closing the campus with chain fences. Students should be trusted and be able to attend a school that doesn't look like a prison.

My kids really dislike having the fence around the school. They feel that not only is it unsightly, but they feel less safe thinking that because a shooter would most likely be a student who can walk in anyway the fence will just hinder escape.

The school needs to be secured by walls or fences and have a gate keeper 24/7.

Anybody can get on campus through the flow of students entering in the morning.

I strongly oppose the militarization/walling-off of our school campus in the name of safety.

Security should be more visible.

Other (27 responses: 3 strengths, 24 improvements)

I like that there is an adult stationed just inside campus to question and direct visitors on campus.

I believe the school responds promptly to problems and then communicates them to parents.

I wish there were more mental health clinics/forums for students.

I cannot believe how many times the new bus company, which started after spring break, has been late with no calls or attempts to explain.

I find some of the administrative people to be less than friendly. It's like they have been dealing with teens for too long and are "over it."

Rules/Discipline (23 responses: 0 strengths, 23 improvements)

The prevalence of drugs is overwhelming to my child.

I hear stories about fights at school and kids doing drugs in the bathroom.

There are too many kids vaping in school.

My son reports that there is a lot of drug use by students that he does his best to stay away from.

General (13 responses: 13 strengths, 0 improvements)

Great neighborhood, great kids, and great staff.

Welcoming, pleasant and safe environment where all students and parents are encouraged to participate and contribute.

Pali is a wonderful school and has very friendly personnel, who are always ready to help.

Facilities/Physical Environment (11 responses: 2 strengths, 9 improvements)

The location near the ocean is very peaceful.

We find that the galvanized fence erected around the school is silly, easy to broach, and looks horrible.

The school needs water bottle refill/filter water stations, clean, working bathrooms, and a/c and heat in every classroom.

Refurbishment of classrooms would be great.

Diversity/Inclusion (11 responses: 3 strengths, 8 improvements)

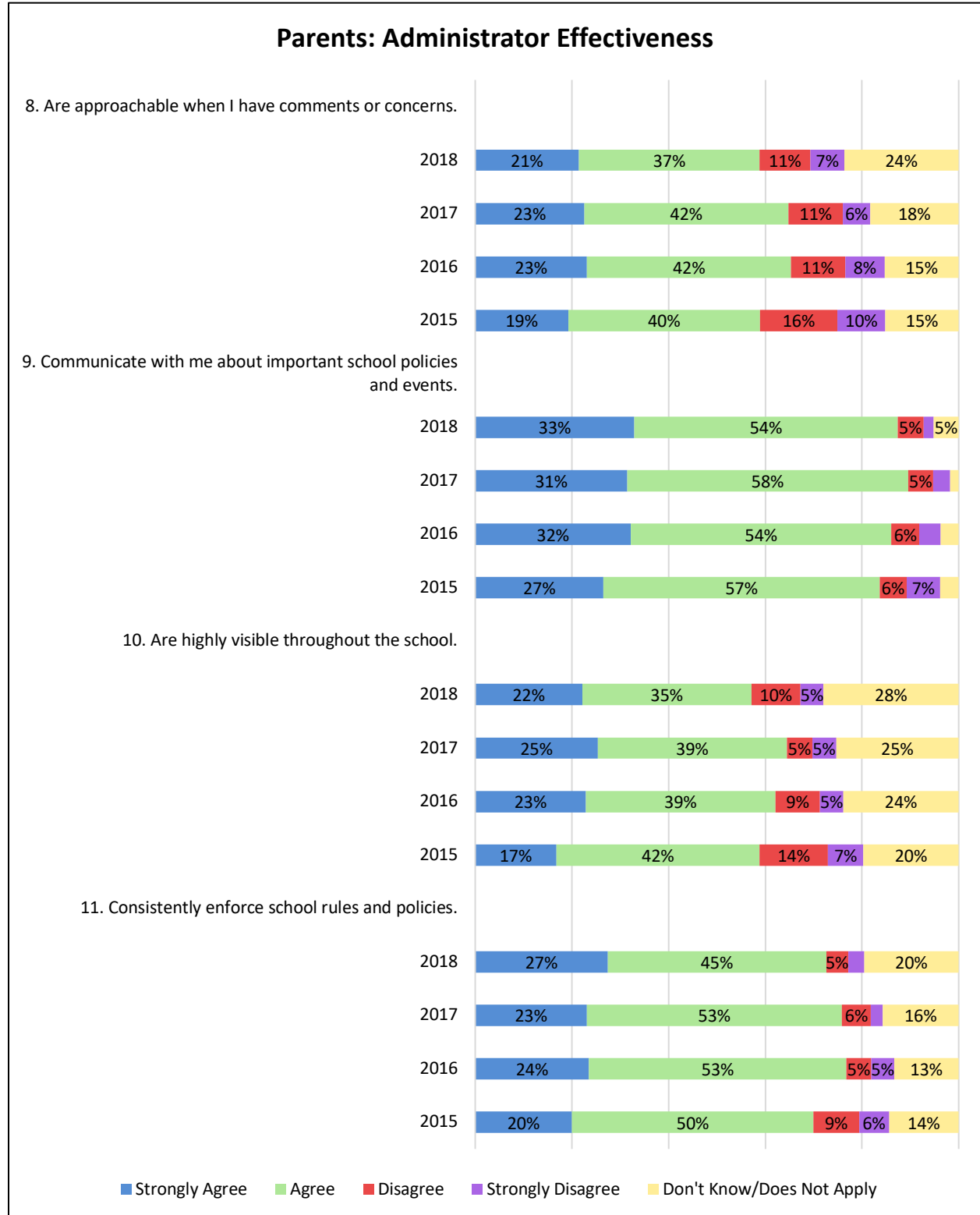
It's remarkable how the students from so many different backgrounds get along and respect each other.

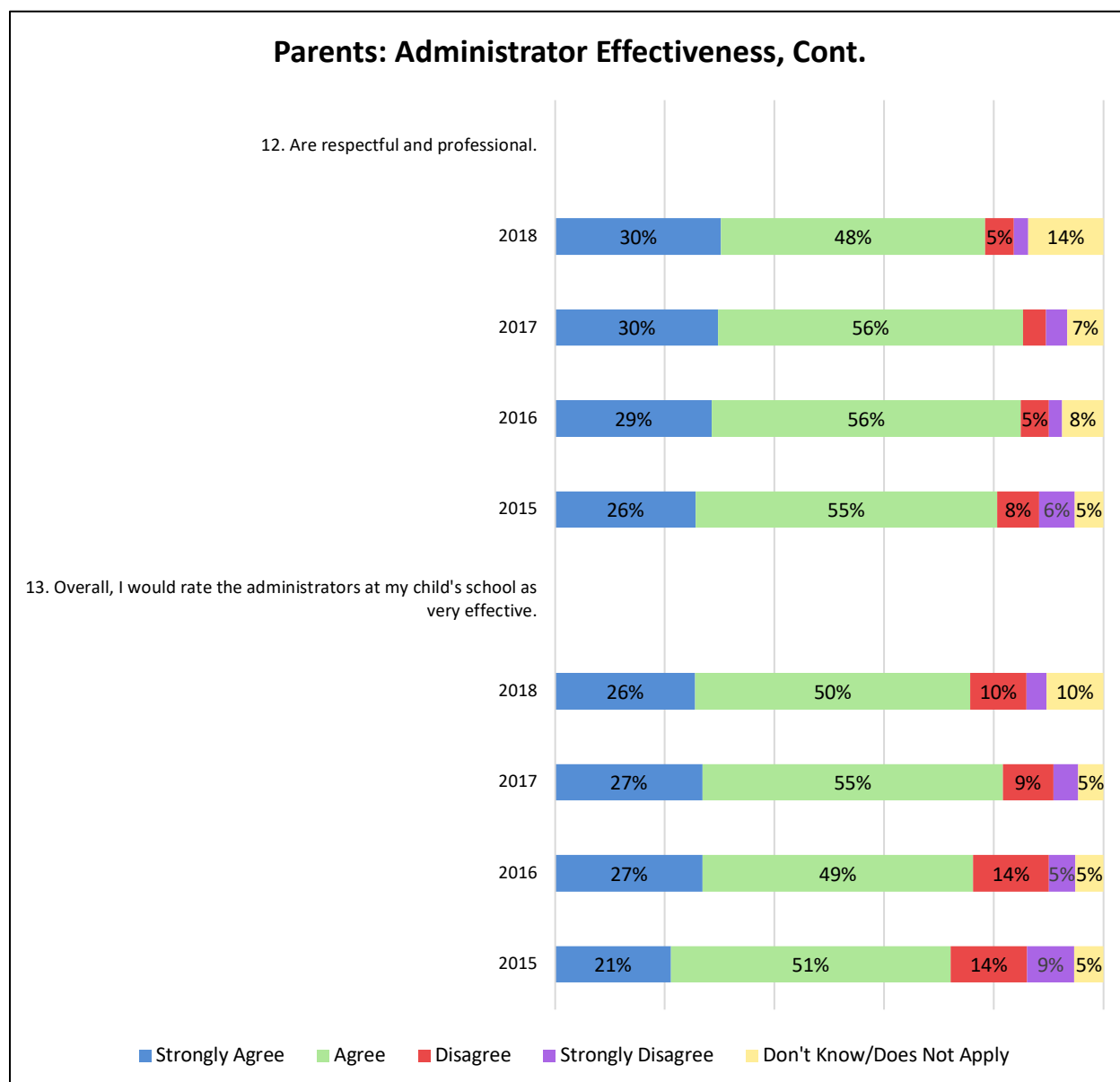
It would be comforting to see women of color and men on campus rather than only in security and catering departments. All ethnicities are not represented fairly on campus in faculty or administration.

We need to be careful about Islamophobia. The media and some family homes don't help so this is not on the school only, but we're not as proactive about dealing with the negativity directed toward Islam and Muslims as we are with prejudices against other faiths or even LGBT people. The school should be proactive about educating against ALL prejudice.

The cheer leaders and the dance team are unrepresentative of the school population. There should be an attempt to diversify.

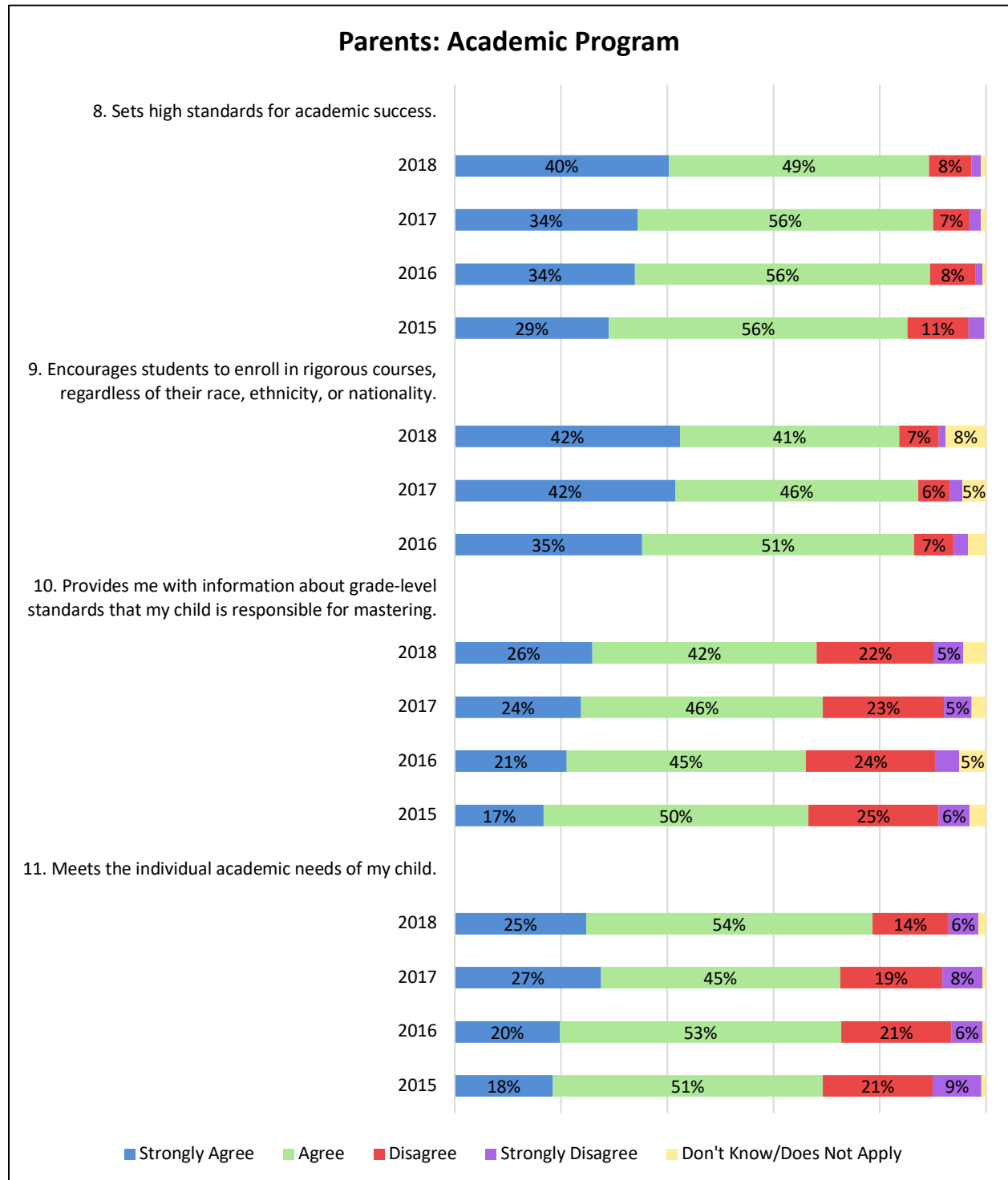
Administrator Effectiveness

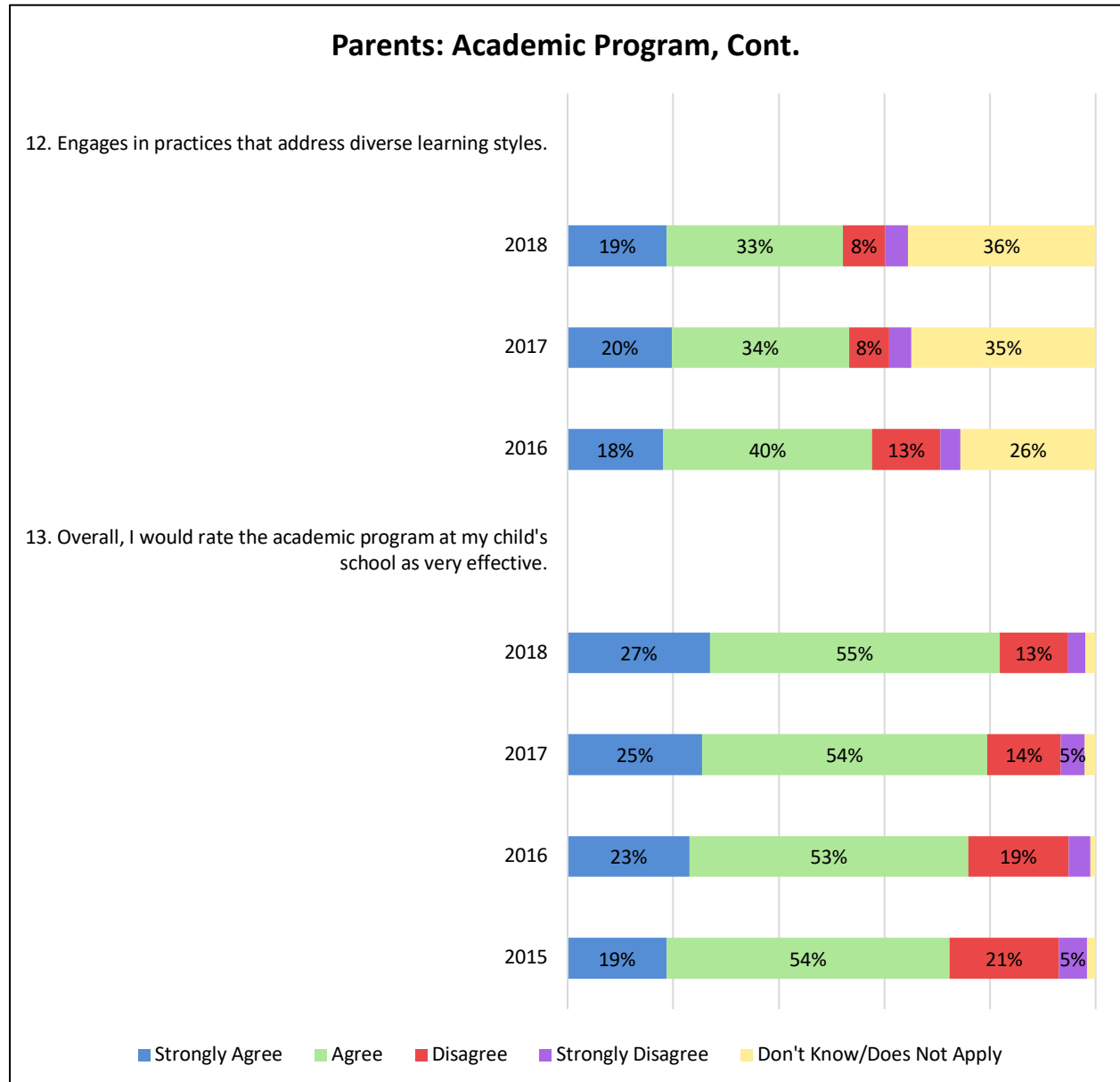




In general, parents reported favorable views about the administration at PCHS, although responses across all indicators were slightly less positive in 2018 than in 2017. As in previous years, most parents agreed the school communicated with parents about important school policies and events (87% / 504 responses), that school rules and policies were consistently enforced (73% / 416 responses), and that administrators were respectful and professional (78% / 451 responses). Some indicators, however, point to potential areas for growth in administrator effectiveness. Only 58% (340 responses) of parents felt the administration was approachable if they had comments or concerns, and only 57% (325 responses) felt that the administration was highly visible around the school. Overall, as in 2017, approximately three-quarters of parent respondents (76% / 436 responses) in 2018 agreed that the administrators at PCHS were very effective.

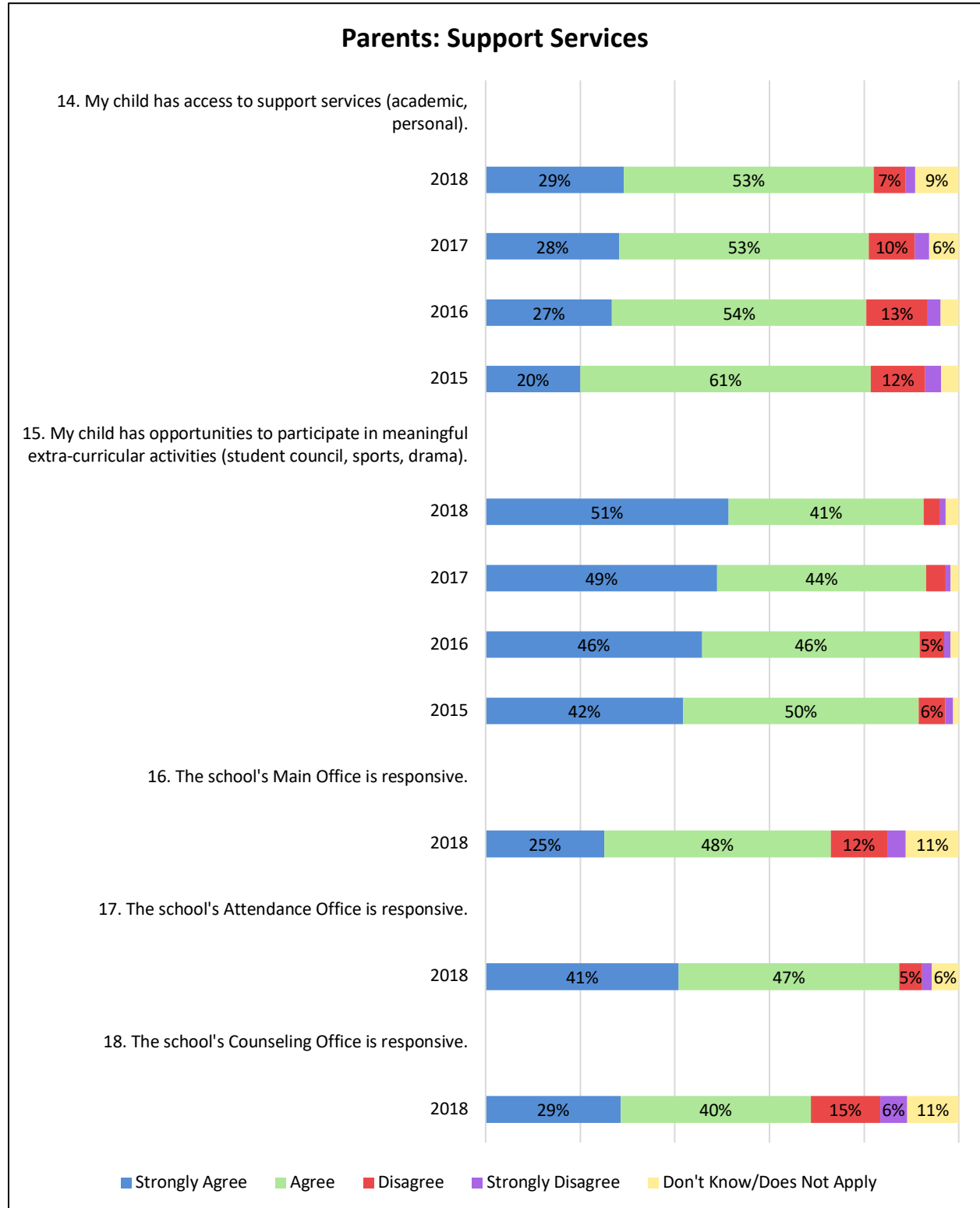
Academic Program

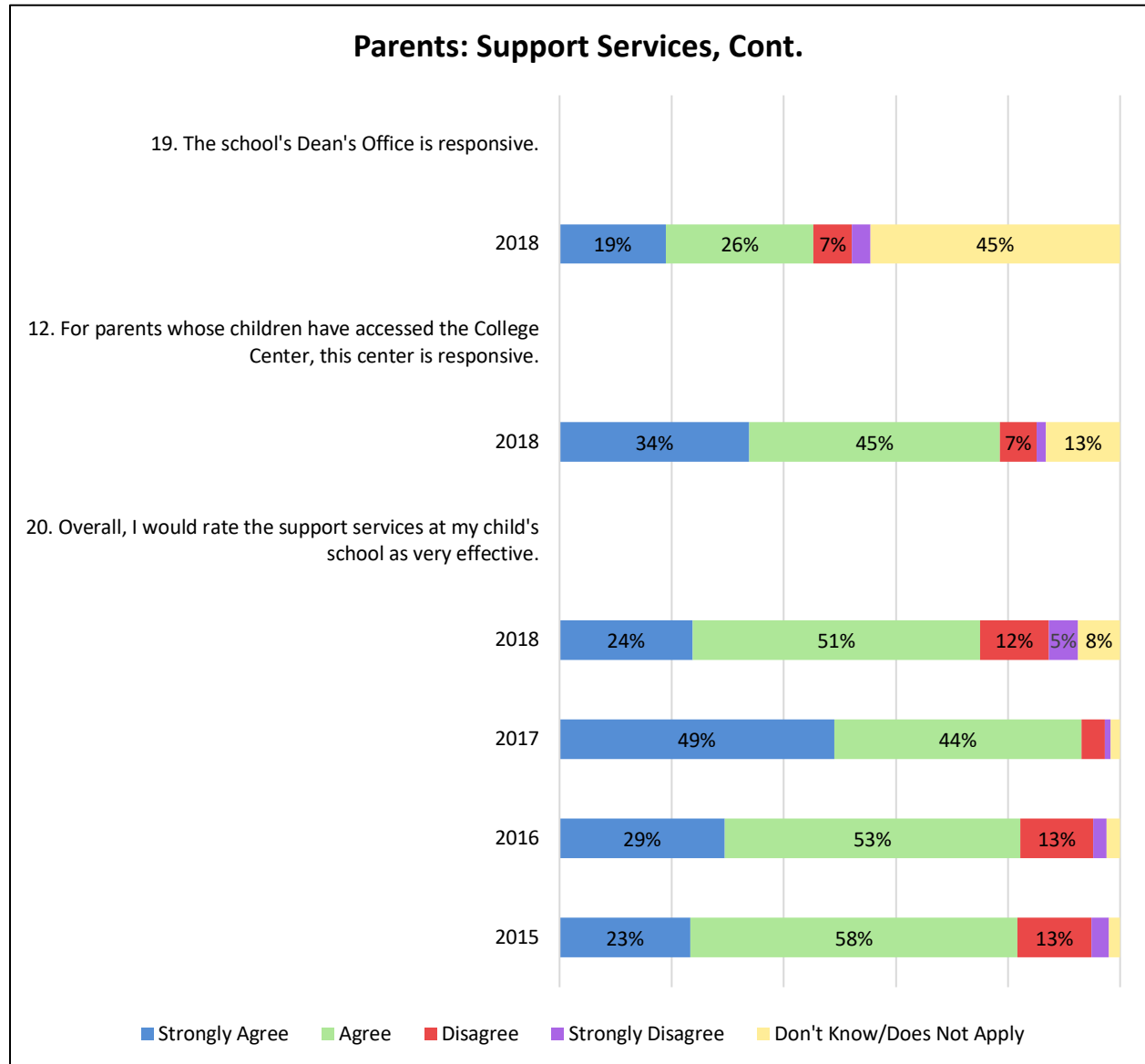




Parent feedback about the academic program at PCHS was generally positive, although some areas for improvement are indicated in their responses. Overall, 82% of parent respondents (328 responses) rated the academic program as very effective, the highest overall approval over the four-years of survey administration. Parents also mostly agreed that the school set high standards for academic success (89% / 357 responses) and that it encouraged students to enroll in rigorous courses regardless of their race, ethnicity, or nationality (83% / 337 responses). Further, slightly *more* parents believed that PCHS met the academic needs of their child in 2018 (79% / 312 responses), than in 2017 (73%). However, one-quarter of parents (111 responses) *did not* agree that they were provided with information about their child’s grade-level standards and only 52% of parents (208 responses) *agreed* that PCHS engaged in teaching practices across diverse learning styles. These indices suggest room for improvement in communication to parents of both the goals and methods of instruction practiced at PCHS.

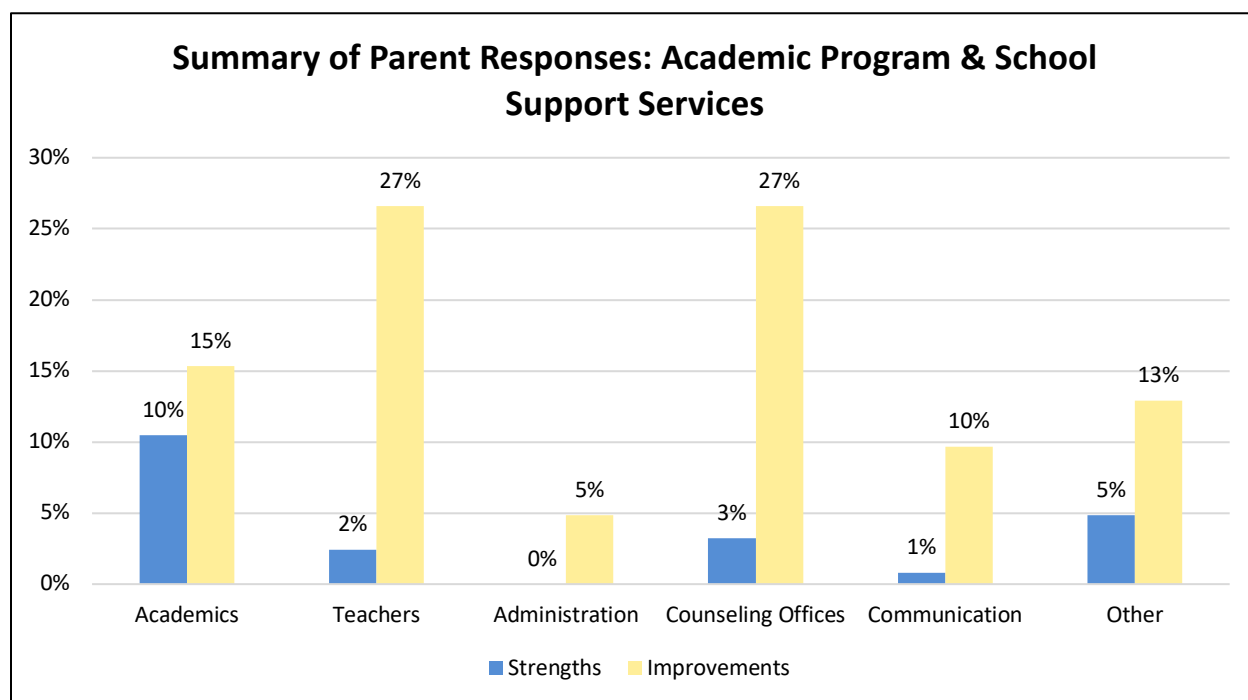
School Support Services





Parents indicated generally positive feelings about the support services offered at PCHS, although responses to some indicators suggested that communication with parents by support-service providers could be improved. Three-quarters of parents (300 responses) agreed that overall, they would rate the support services at PCHS as very effective, down from 93% of parents feeling the same way in 2017, though in line with responses from 2015 and 2016. As in 2015 through 2017 most parents felt their child had access to academic and personal support services (82% / 329 responses) and opportunities to participate in meaningful extracurricular activities (92% / 373 responses). The offices that parents agreed were very responsive included the attendance office (88% / 353 responses) and the college center (79% / 317 responses). Seventy-three percent of parents (294 responses) agreed that the main office was responsive, although 16% of parents (64 responses) *did not* agree with that statement. Finally, 21% of parents (82 responses) *did not* agree the school’s counselling office was responsive. Only 45% of parents (179 responses) felt the Dean’s Office was responsive, although the high proportion of “don’t know” responses (45% / 176 responses) to that indicator suggests that many parents had never attempted to communicate with the Dean’s office.

Overview of Open-Ended Responses: Academic Program & School Support Services



The above chart categorizes parent comments about the academic program and support services offered at PCHS by topic and indicates whether the comment was identifying a school strength or offering a suggestion for improvement. Parent comments most frequently discussed the counselling offices (30% / 37 responses), with 4 parents praising counselling services at Palisades and 33 parents offering suggestions for improvement. The second most frequently discussed topic was the teaching staff (29% / 36 responses), with 3 parents identifying strengths and 33 commenting on areas for improvement. Parents most frequently praised the academics at PCHS (10% / 13 responses), although 15% of comments (19 responses) still identified areas for growth in the academic program. Eighteen percent of comments discussed ‘other’ topics (5% / 6 responses identifying strengths; 11% / 16 responses giving suggestions). One parent identified school communication as a strength while 12 comments (10%) offered suggestions for improvement in that area. Finally, six parent comments (5%) identified concerns with the school administration.

Parents: Do you have any additional comments about your child’s experiences related to the academic program and school support services.

Parent responses fell into six broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

Counselling Offices (37 responses: 4 strengths, 33 improvements)

The College Center is amazing!

In general, I don’t believe the school counseling office pushes students to excel. Rather it is the families and some of the teachers that must do so.

The College Center is behind in updating my child's record, which makes it difficult to use the college search tools effectively as they are in part based on grades and test scores that still have not been entered in my child's record.

The College Center cannot possibly accommodate the needs of 700 students with the number of counselors they have.

Emotional counseling was not effective for my child and there is no follow through. Academic counseling is seemingly too busy and difficult to access.

If I could wave a magic wand I wish the counselors had more time to call the students in to their offices to get to know them and help them reach out. Sometimes kids are very shy at this age, and we know the counselors are overloaded. By senior year, the college counselors do a wonderful job in helping students launch their college adventures.

Teachers (36 responses: 3 strengths, 33 improvements)

The teachers are so kind and caring. They are always there for my child.

I feel the math program at the school has challenges in the quality of teachers and in their support for students. My son has struggled to be successful in the math courses at Pali and has had to turn to outside sources to meet his math needs.

Teachers seem more concerned with getting through the curriculum than with helping students understand and learn. My son is an honors student, straight 'A's all his life, and when he needs to hear parts of a lesson explained, the teachers are not willing to help. I fear for kids who are really struggling.

We have a terrible math department even though is a significant subject. The head of the math department is extremely defensive and closed to criticism while the teachers are careless, unprofessional and not qualified.

Academics (25 responses: 13 strengths, 19 improvements)

We feel fortunate to be able to attend public school of this caliber.

All I can say is that our child is incredibly motivated, and is taking a lot of AP classes, and is quite happy here!

The math program at Pali needs to be looked at. My child receives very little or poor instruction.

I feel the great majority of classes, apart from AP classes, do not properly prepare the students for the rigor of college.

Other (21 responses: 6 strengths, 16 improvements)

It a great school and has a very good athletics programs for the students.

I recommend this school for its equal treatment toward all student who enter with an open mind for higher education.

More attention/resources should be allocated to both the psychological and physical health of all students.

There needs to be more understanding of African American male students.

My child has special needs and prone to forgetting things or losing things. However, the school is too strict with their "no drop-offs" policy and this often hinders his academic success.

There should be more college visit days for Juniors and Seniors in the Fall.

Communication (13 responses: 1 strength, 12 improvements)

For the most part, everyone at Pali has been responsive when we've e-mailed or called the school about various issues. I think my daughter feels comfortable with what is available to her and with talking to the administration and staff if she needs anything.

My student's communication with her counselor, as well as the Athletic Director, has been less than ideal.

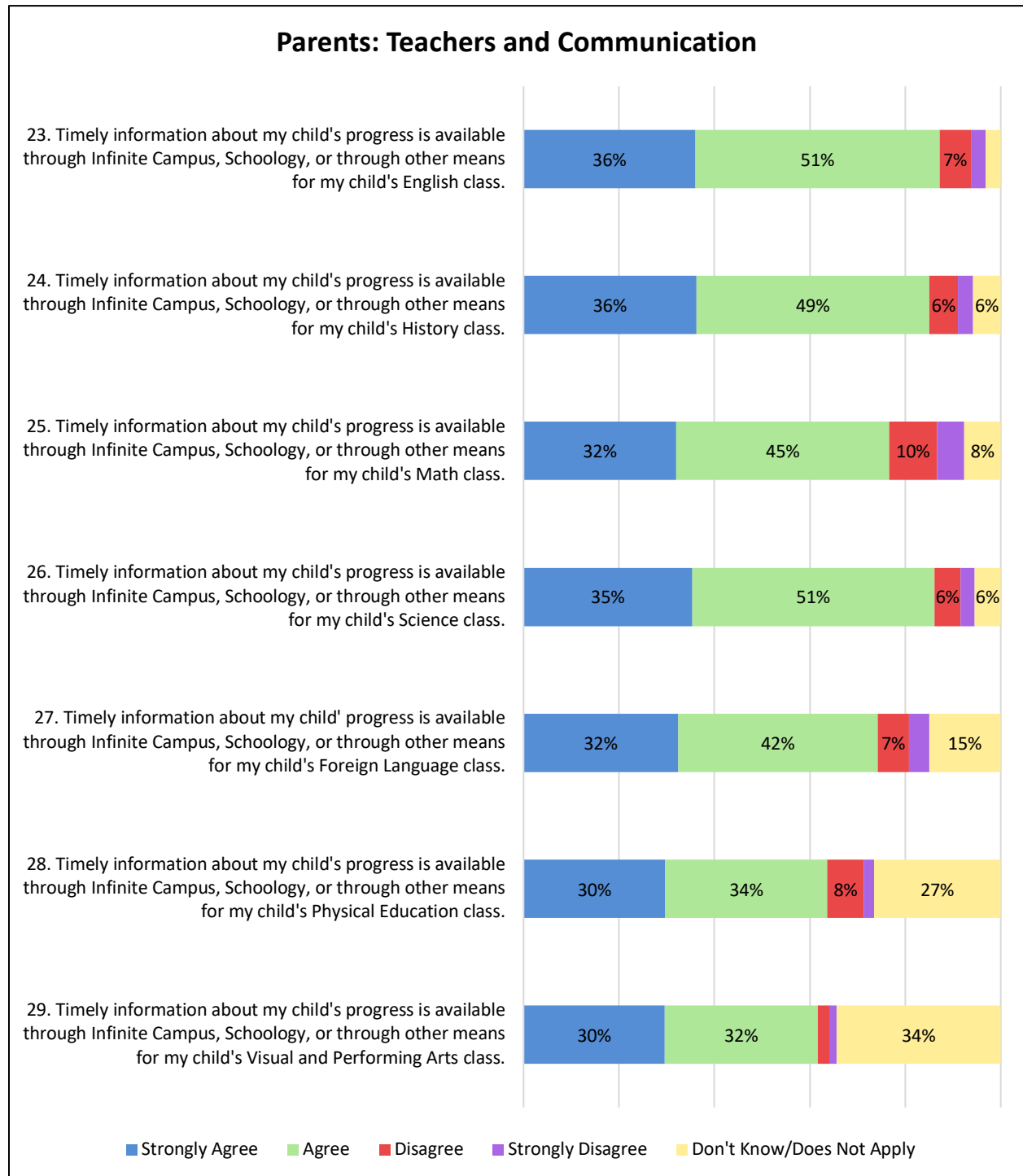
While there are resources on campus, the accessibility to teachers and their support of individual student needs varies widely.

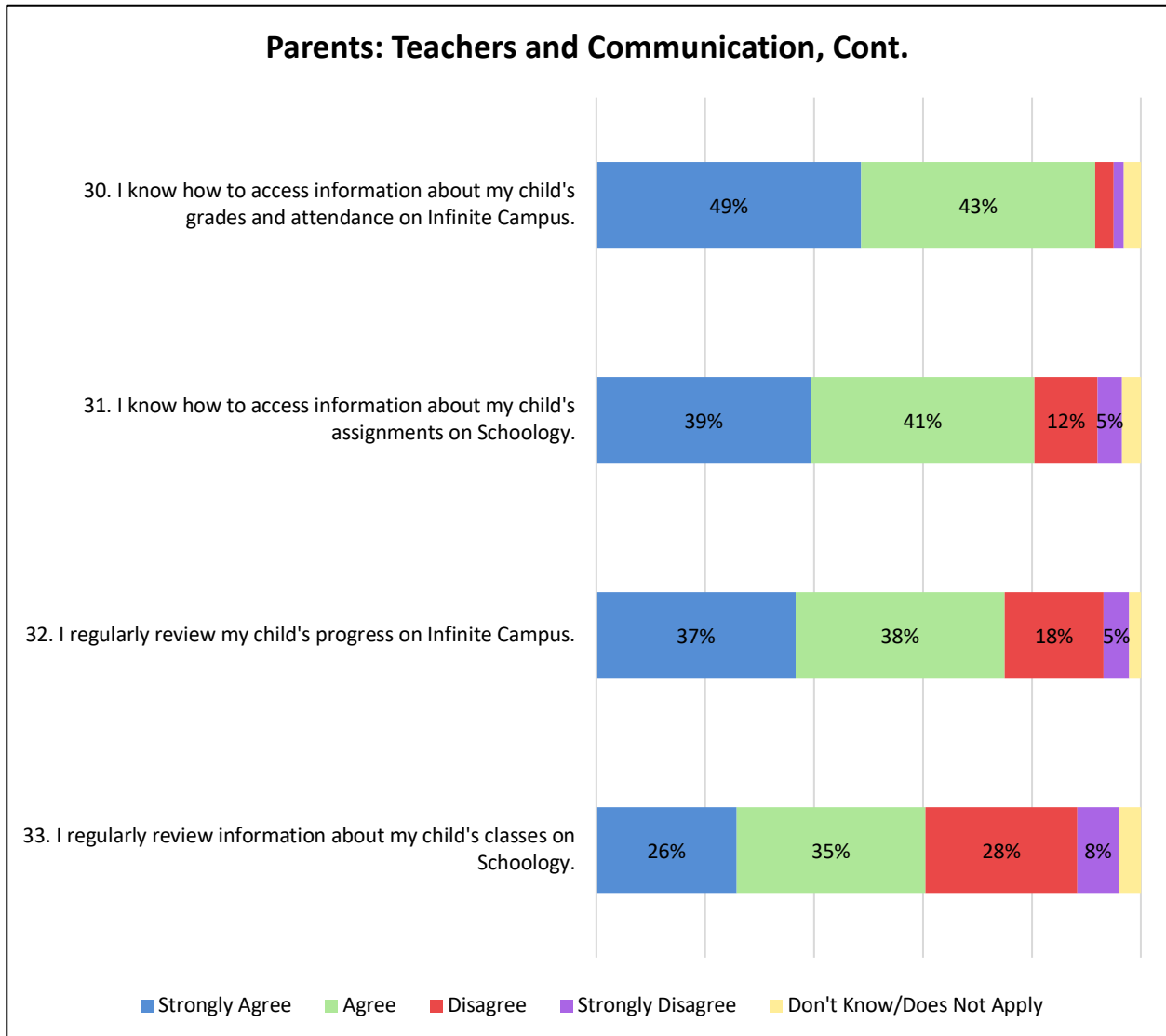
Administration (6 responses: 0 strengths, 6 improvements)

All front office staff, deans, and counselors at Pali aren't helpful. There's no support.

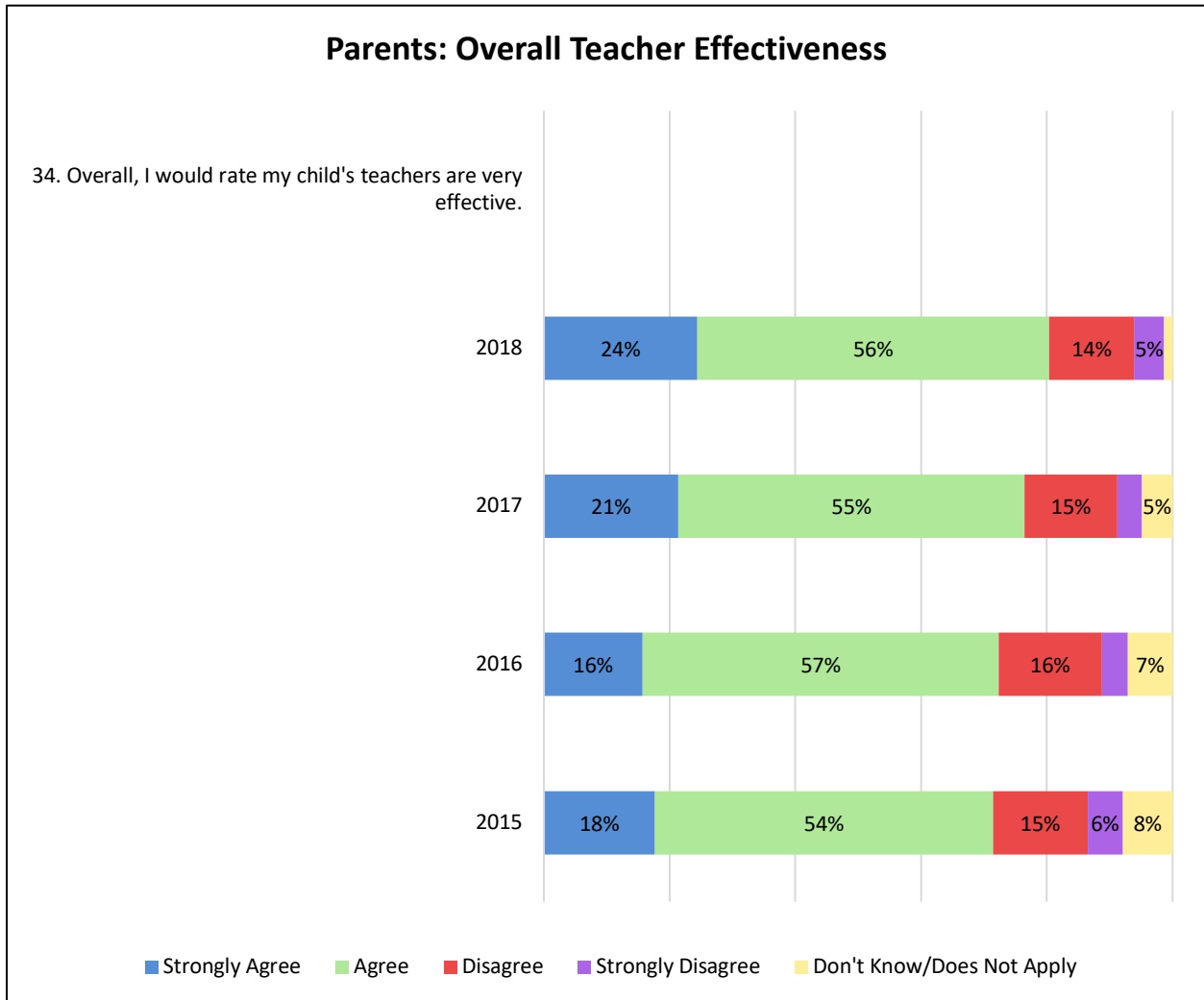
The dean is not very responsive.

Teacher Effectiveness



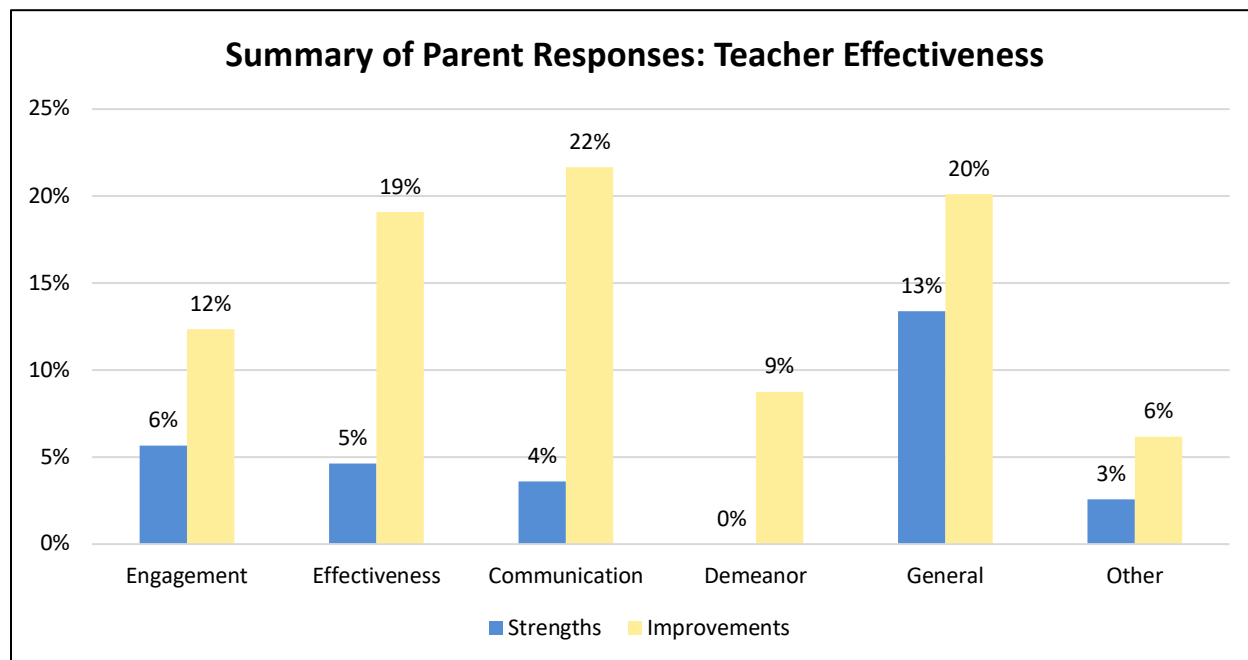


Parent responses indicated a high level of awareness and a moderate level of usage of online platforms for communication about their child’s academic progress. Parents mostly agreed with that timely information about their child’s progress was available to them via Infinite Campus, Schoology or other means for their child’s English class (87% / 334 responses), science class (86% / 329 responses), history class (85% / 324 responses), math class (77% / 292 responses) and foreign language class (74% / 282 responses). A smaller proportion of parents agreed with that statement for their child’s physical education class (64% / 242 responses), and visual and performing arts class (62% / 233 responses). Nearly all parents knew how to access information about their child’s grades and attendance on Infinite Campus (92% / 348 responses), though only 75% of parents (285 responses) said that they regularly did so. Finally, 80% of parents (304 responses) indicated knowing how to access information about their child’s assignments on Schoology and 61% (228 responses) stated that they regularly did so.



Parent responses on overall teacher effectiveness have remained consistently positive over the past four years. In 2018, 80% of parents (303 responses) agreed that, on the whole, their child’s teachers were very effective, a slight increase from the 76% (218 responses) of parents who expressed the same belief in 2017. As in 2017, 19% of parent respondents (69 responses) *did not* agree that their child’s teachers were very effective.

Overview of Open-Ended Responses: Teacher Effectiveness



The above chart categorizes parent comments about the effectiveness of their child’s teachers by topic and indicates whether the comment was identifying a school strength or offering a suggestion for improvement. A third of all comments were general (65 responses), with 26 parents commending teachers as a strength of PCHS and 39 offering suggestions for improvement. Parents also frequently commented on communication, with 19% of comments (49 responses) indicating it as an area needing improvement. Seven parents (4%), however, commended teacher communication as a strength. Nineteen percent of parents (37 responses) stated that teacher effectiveness could be improved while 5% of comments (9 responses) felt that teacher effectiveness was already a strength. Further 6% of parents (11 responses) stated that teachers were engaged with students, while 12% of comments (24 responses) expressed a concern that teachers were not invested enough in their students. Finally, 17 respondents (9%) discussed ‘other’ aspects of teacher effectiveness and identified teacher demeanor as an area for improvement.

Parents: Do you have any additional comments about your child’s experiences related to the effectiveness of their teachers?

Parent responses fell into six broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

General (65 responses: 26 strengths, 39 improvements)

Teachers are the heart - and best part! - of Pali.

There are some absolutely wonderful teachers, but unfortunately far too many who are totally ineffective, uninterested, and uninspiring.

The teachers are a mixed bag as usual. It really depends upon the class. English/history are great. Extensive writing should be done at ALL grades with good teachers who specialize in writing and who return papers timely. Again

math/foreign language needs work. The homework load needs to be more evenly distributed. Sometimes it is really heavy for a few weeks and then none, then heavy again, then none.

The math and foreign language departments are terrible and need to be improved. The quality of the instruction is subpar.

As we had heard prior to beginning at Pali, my daughter's math instructor has been the weakest instructor

Communication (49 responses: 7 strengths, 42 improvements)

I wish teachers made clear on one of the school websites what the class schedule is ahead of time and when assignments are due to help with planning.

Some teachers do not respond to emails.

Grades are never updated so looking at Infinite Campus causes great anxiety because it is never current.

At times, especially the first semester, my son has done very poorly with absolutely no communication from his teachers. There was not one comment on his report card regrading anything, at all. Additionally, there is very little feedback given on assignments. Sometimes you can learn from your mistakes, but he never learns from his returned work what his mistakes were. I find this absurd in supposedly such a good school.

Effectiveness (46 responses: 9 strengths, 37 improvements)

What my child has learned in English and in media has been life changing for him this year.

Teachers provide good support and are willing to help students master their subject.

The math teacher gives very little instruction, sends homework with no lesson, and only teaches after they struggle with the homework.

The mathematics teachers are very ineffective in teaching kids. Please hire a strong mathematics faculty - it is a very important subject for everything that comes after high school.

My child doesn't feel they're all equally effective teachers. He has a very high opinion of his math teacher and low opinion of his Spanish teacher but seems to do fine regardless.

Engagement (35 responses: 11 strengths, 24 improvements)

My child has had good experiences with all his teachers this year. They have been energetic and caring.

The teachers are incredible, helpful and love teaching, and we enjoy the school. It's an honor sending our kids here.

Teachers have been supportive and accessible, going above and beyond even to write recommendation letters.

We have had a very mixed experience. Some teachers are engaged and inspiring, but a fair percentage are neither.

Many teachers do not put in a lot of effort. There seem to be a lot of substitutes and my students report watching movies.

Other (17 responses: 5 strengths, 12 improvements)

Virtual academy is amazing.

Music has been phenomenal including marching band, drum line, concert band and wind ensemble.

Why does Pali High use both Infinite Campus AND Schoology?

Infinite Campus/Schoology grade and assignment info lags and is incomplete.

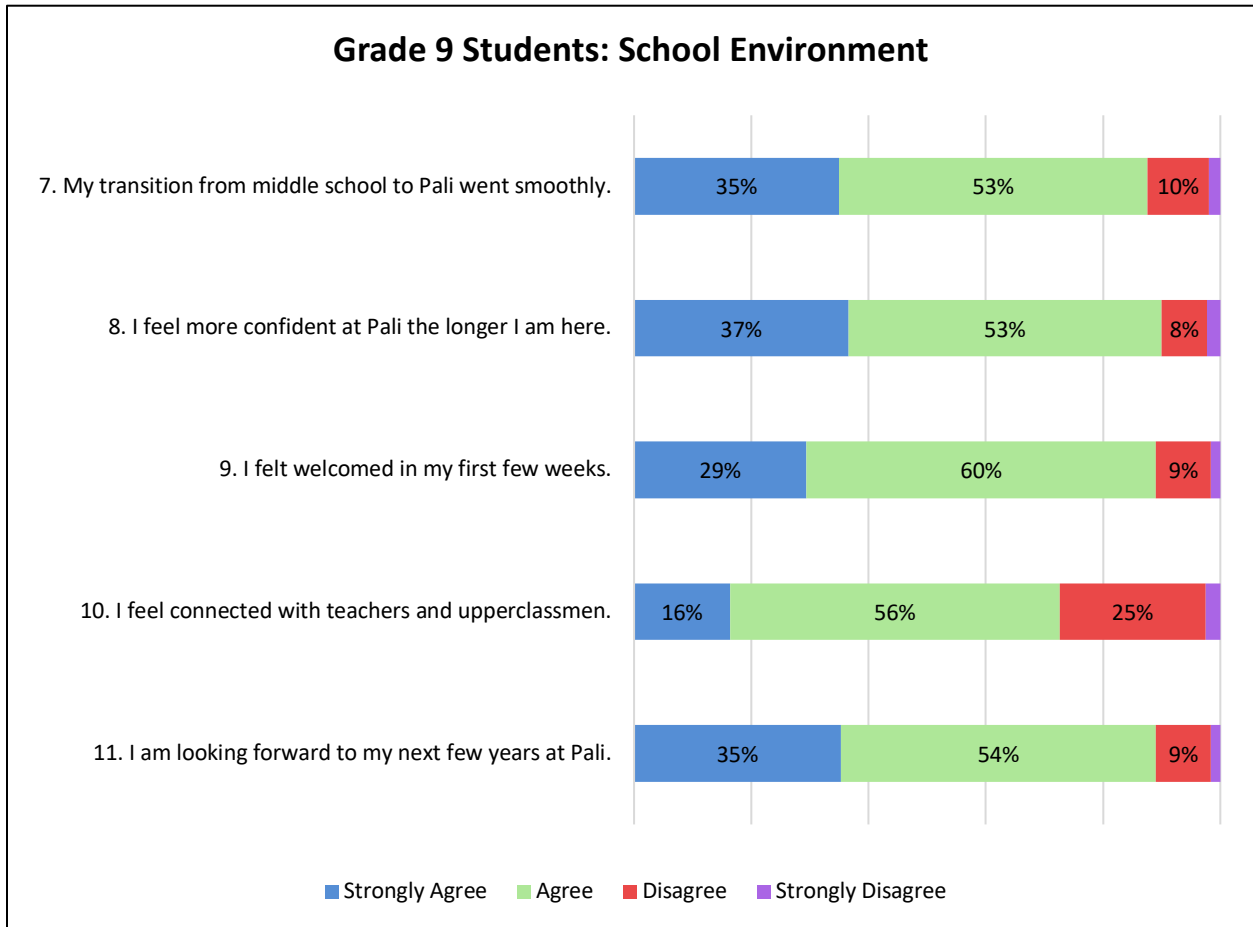
Demeanor (17 responses: 0 strengths, 17 improvements)

Some teachers are engaged and invested in teaching. Other teachers are belittling and shaming. Some teachers are not organized, and class time is spent with kids watching movies on their computers.

It seems that a few teachers tend to be negative and angry with their class/students. Not sure if this is due to class sizes being too large, teacher burn out, teaching loads being too heavy or personal issues.

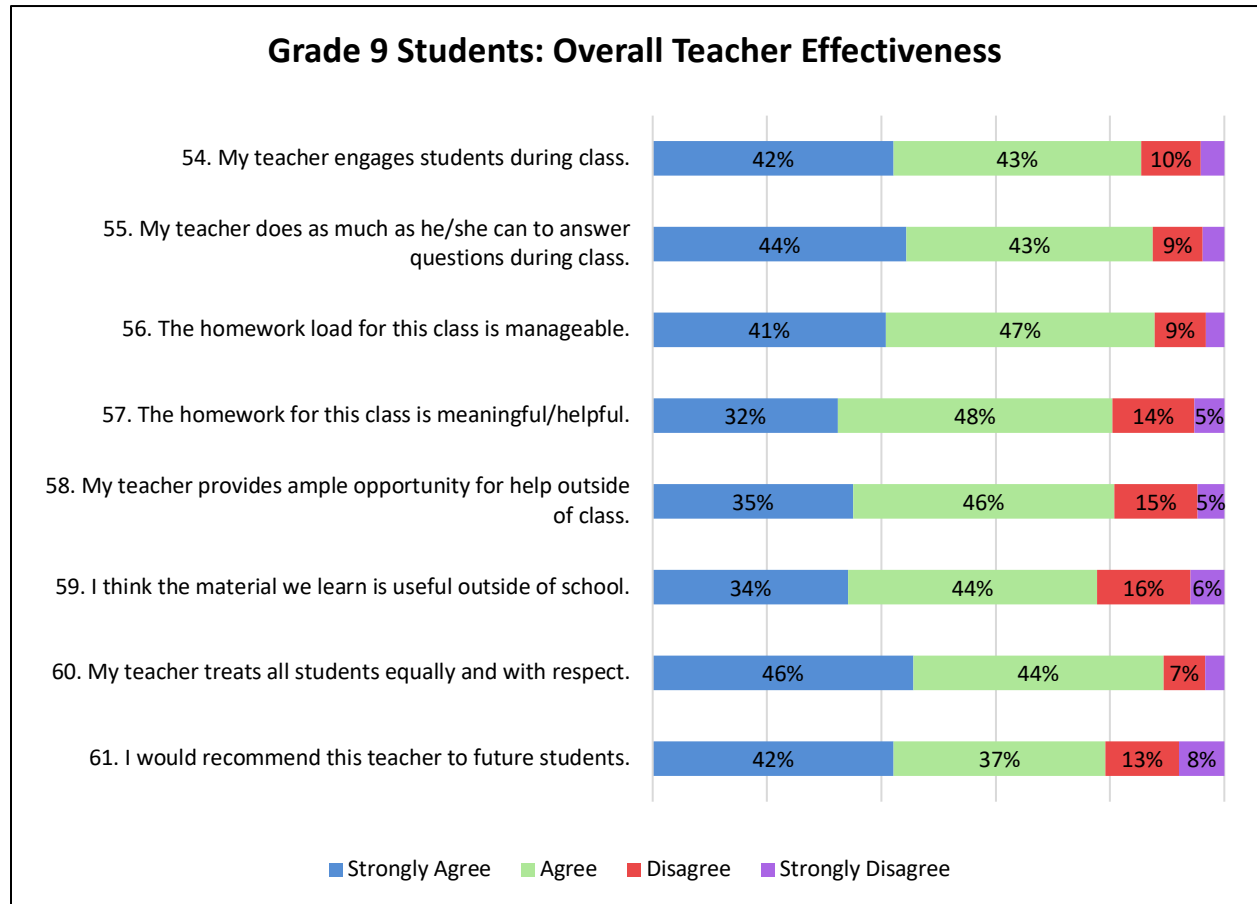
Student Survey Results

My School

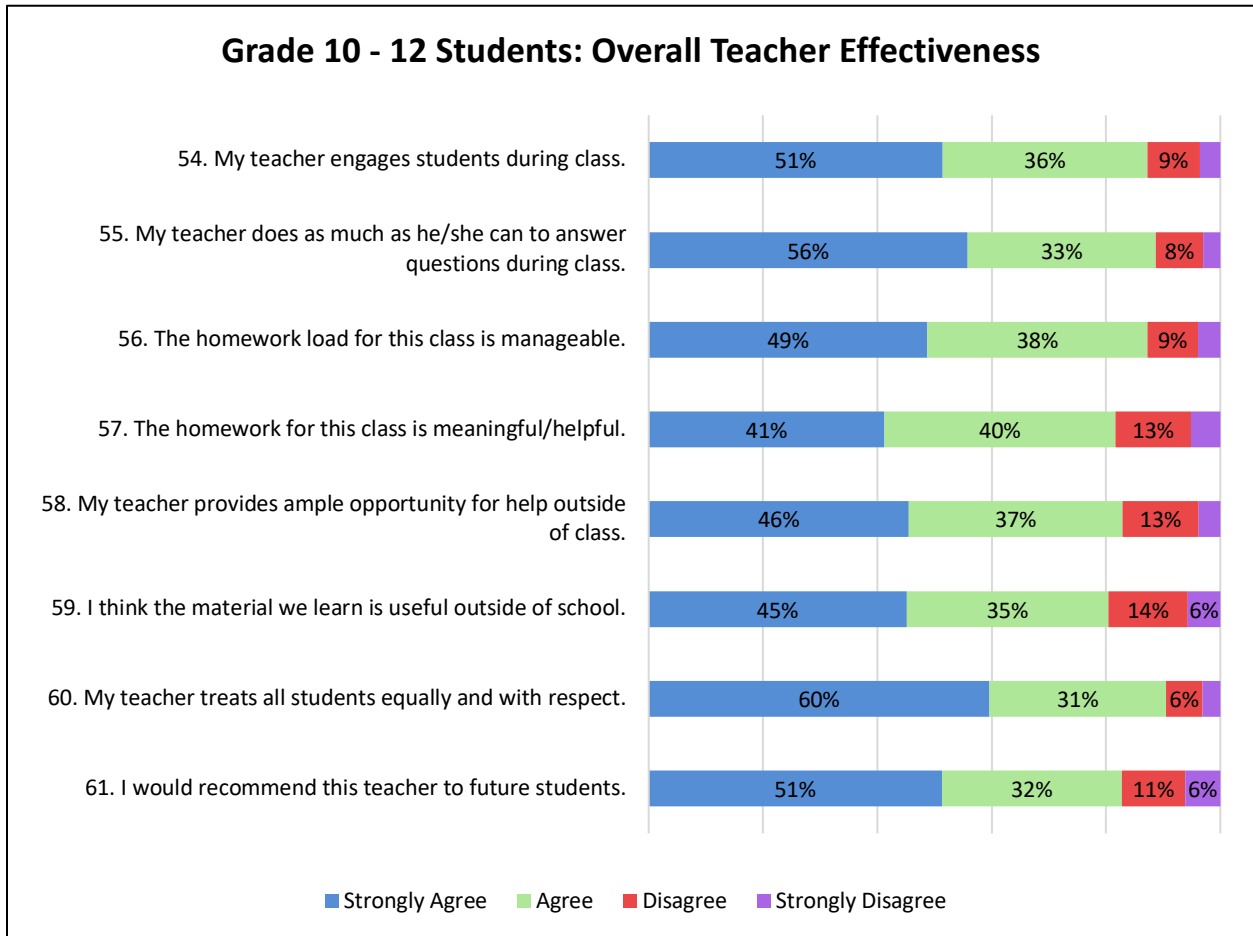


Grade 9 students expressed very positive views of the PCHS environment and of their transition into the school. The overwhelming majority of 9th grade students felt their transition from middle school to PCHS went smoothly (88% / 551 responses), that they felt welcomed in their first few weeks (89% / 560 responses) and that they felt more confident the longer they were at PCHS (90% / 566 responses). Overall, 89% of respondents (560 responses) indicated they were looking forward to their next year at PCHS. The one area in which some 9th graders indicated need for improvement was in their connection to teachers and upperclassmen. Twenty eight percent of 9th graders (172 responses) did *not* feel they had built connections at the time at which they took the survey.

Overall Teacher Effectiveness

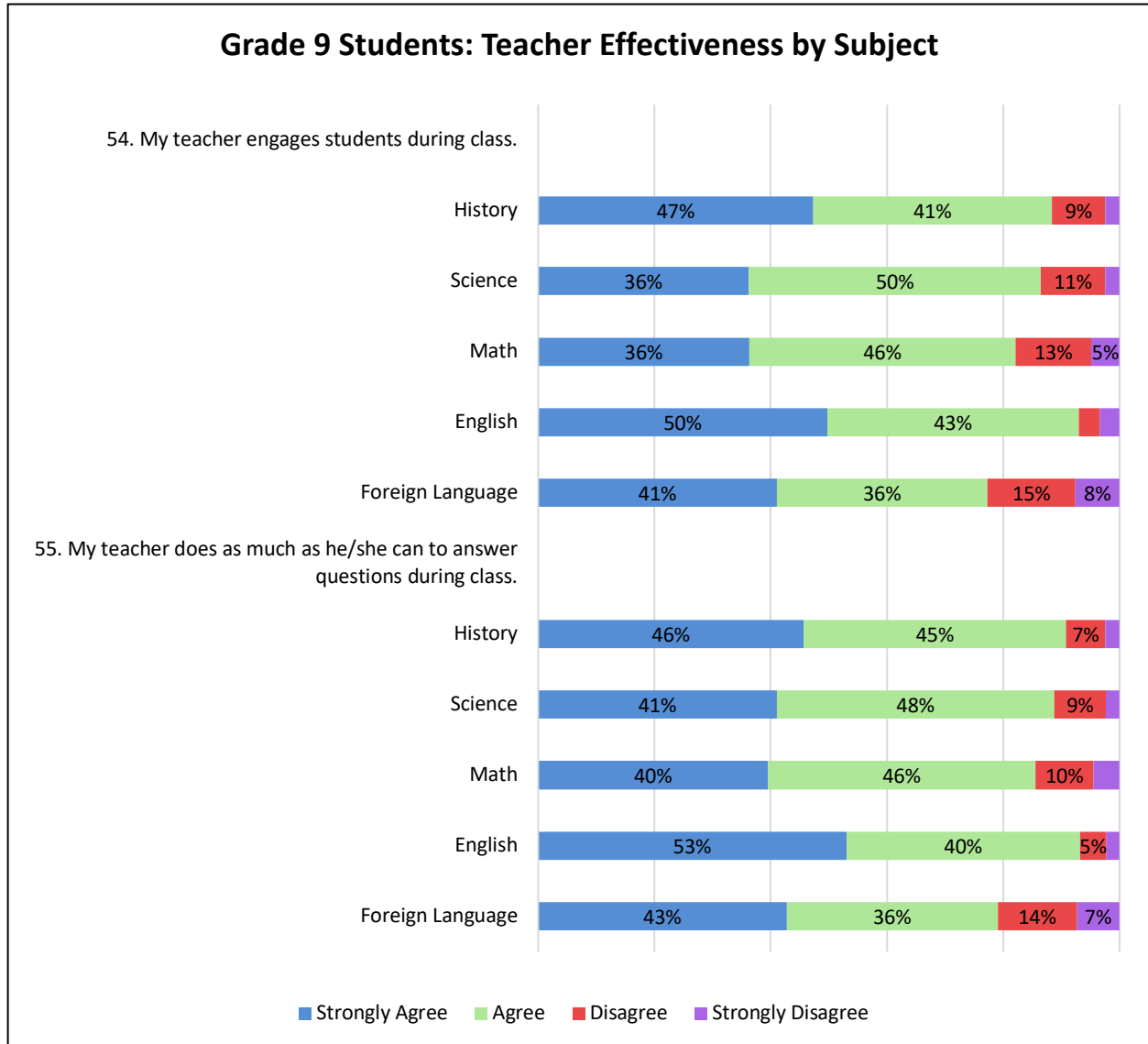


Ninth graders overall had a positive opinion of their teachers. Most students felt their teachers engaged students during class (85% / 427 responses), did as much as they could to answer questions in class (87% / 437 responses), treated all students equally and with respect (90% / 446 responses), and that the homework load for the class was manageable (88% / 436 responses). Slightly fewer respondents, however, felt that the homework was meaningful or helpful (80% / 403 responses). Further, 20% of students felt their teachers did *not* provide sufficient opportunity for help outside of class (95 responses) and 22% did *not* feel the material learned in class was useful outside of schools (112 responses). Overall, 79% of students (396 responses) would recommend their teacher to future students.

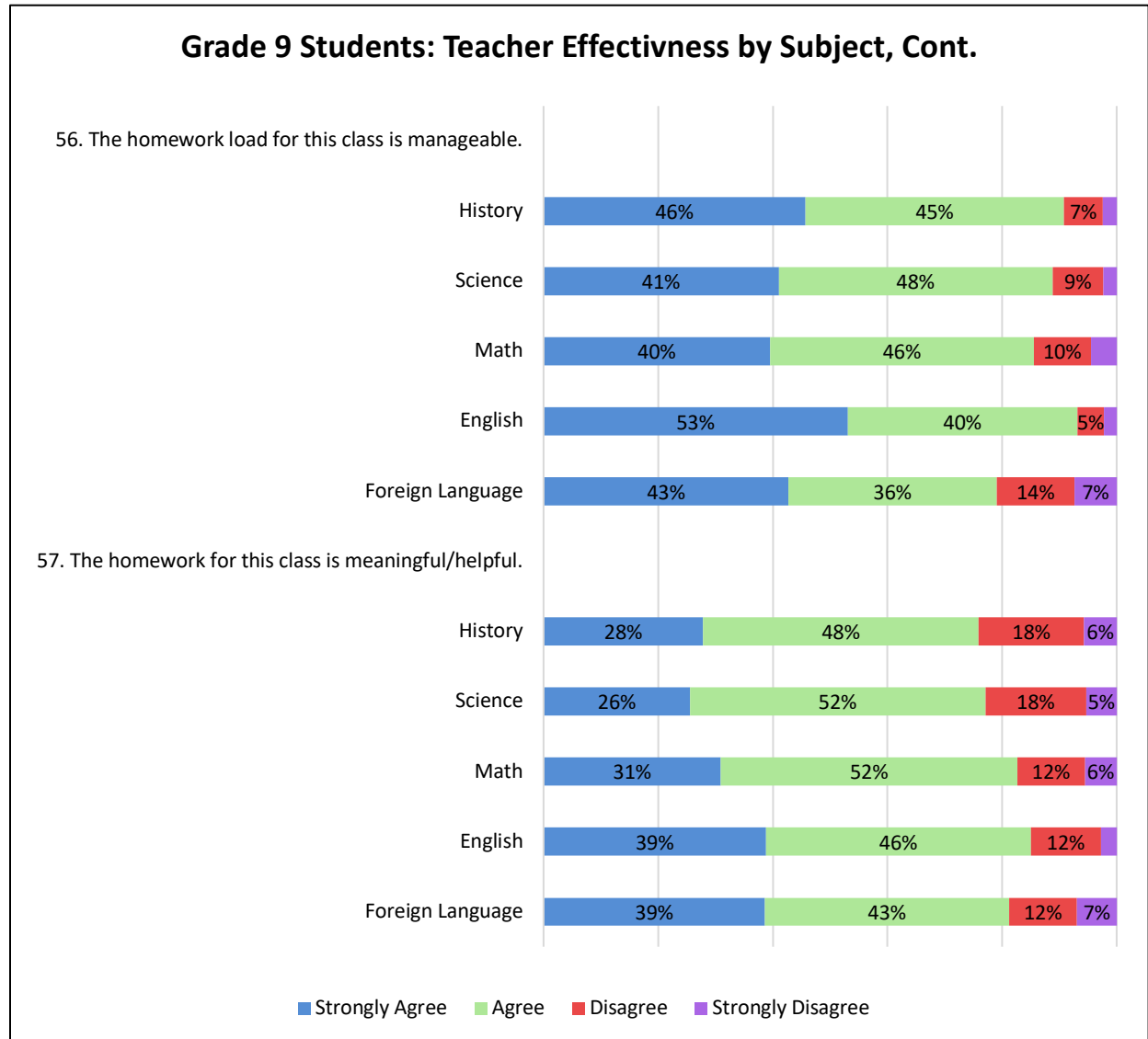


Tenth through 12th grade students, like the 9th grade students, had a positive opinion of their teachers. Most students felt their teachers engaged students during class (87% / 978 responses), that their teachers do as much as they can to answer questions in class (89% / 994 responses), that teachers treat all students equally and with respect (91% / 1,013 responses), that their teacher provided opportunities for help outside of class (83% / 926 responses), and that the homework load for the class is manageable (87% / 975 responses). Slightly fewer respondents, however, felt that the homework was meaningful or helpful (81% / 912 responses). Further, 20% of students did *not* feel the material learned in school was useful outside of school (210 responses). Overall, 83% of students (930 responses) would recommend their teachers to future students.

Teacher Effectiveness by Subject

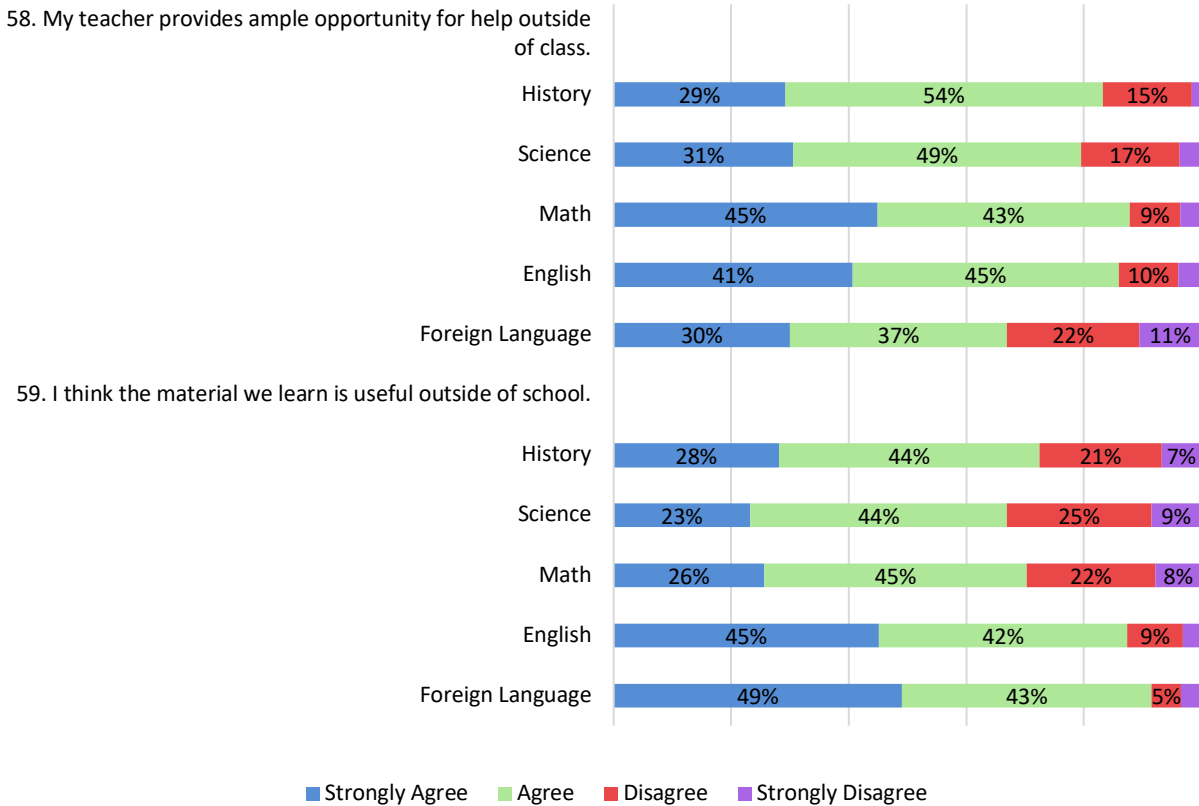


Ninth grade students felt especially positive about their English teachers; 93% of students (503 responses) felt their English teacher engaged students during class and did as much as they could do answer questions during class. Students indicated similar levels of satisfaction with teacher engagement in their history, science and math classes. However, they expressed slightly less positive sentiments about their foreign language teachers, with 23% of students (105 responses) *not* agreeing student engagement was strong or that their teachers did as much as they could to answer questions in class.

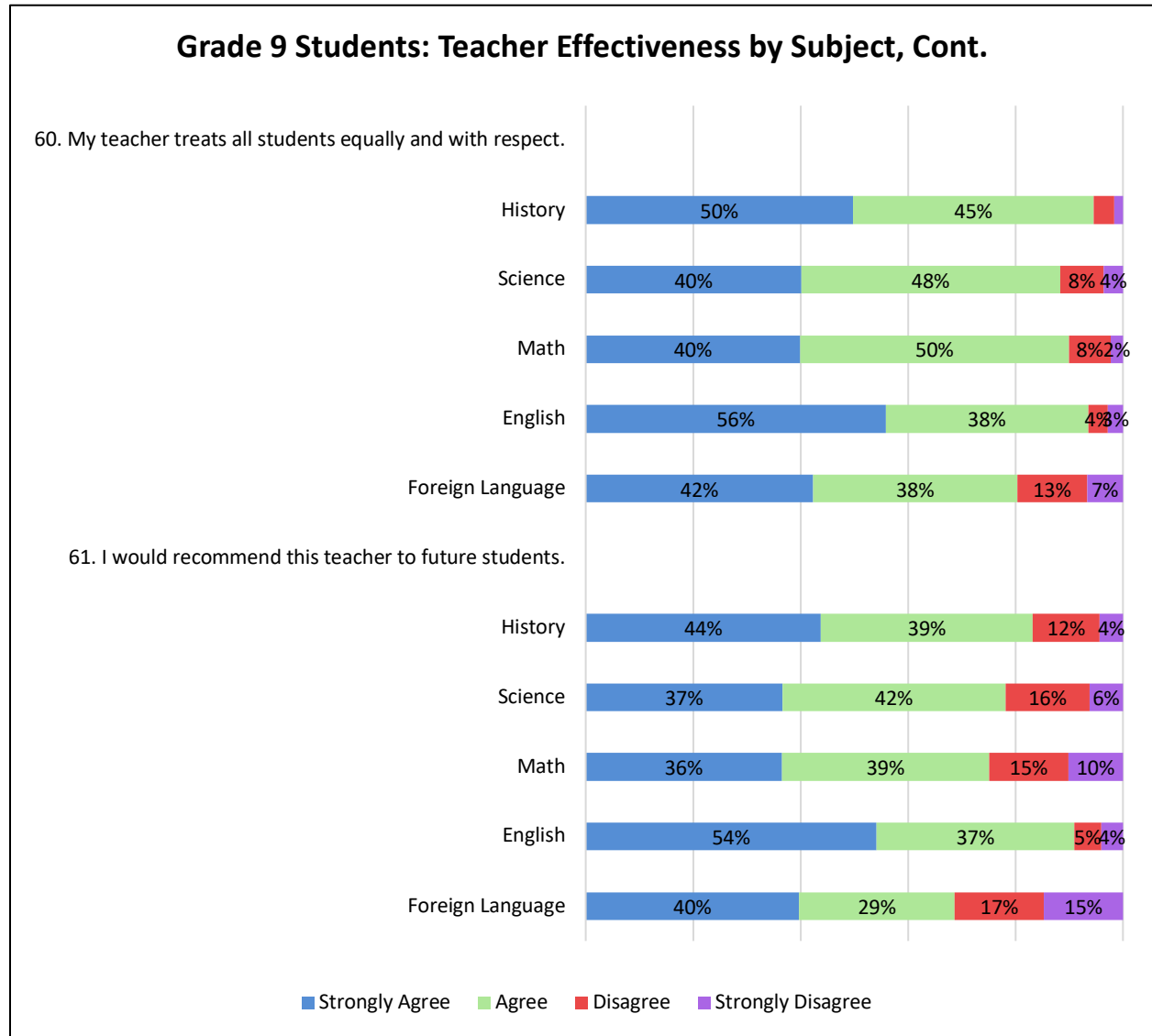


(Cont.) Most students across subject areas felt the homework loads for their classes were manageable, with the smallest proportion of students agreeing with this statement for their foreign language classes (79% / 412 responses) and the largest proportion of student agreeing with that statement for their English classes (93% / 466 responses). Students largely agreed, however, that the foreign language homework was meaningful/helpful (82% / 376 responses). Slightly fewer students agreed that homework was meaningful/helpful for their history (76% / 281 responses) and science (78% / 434 responses) classes.

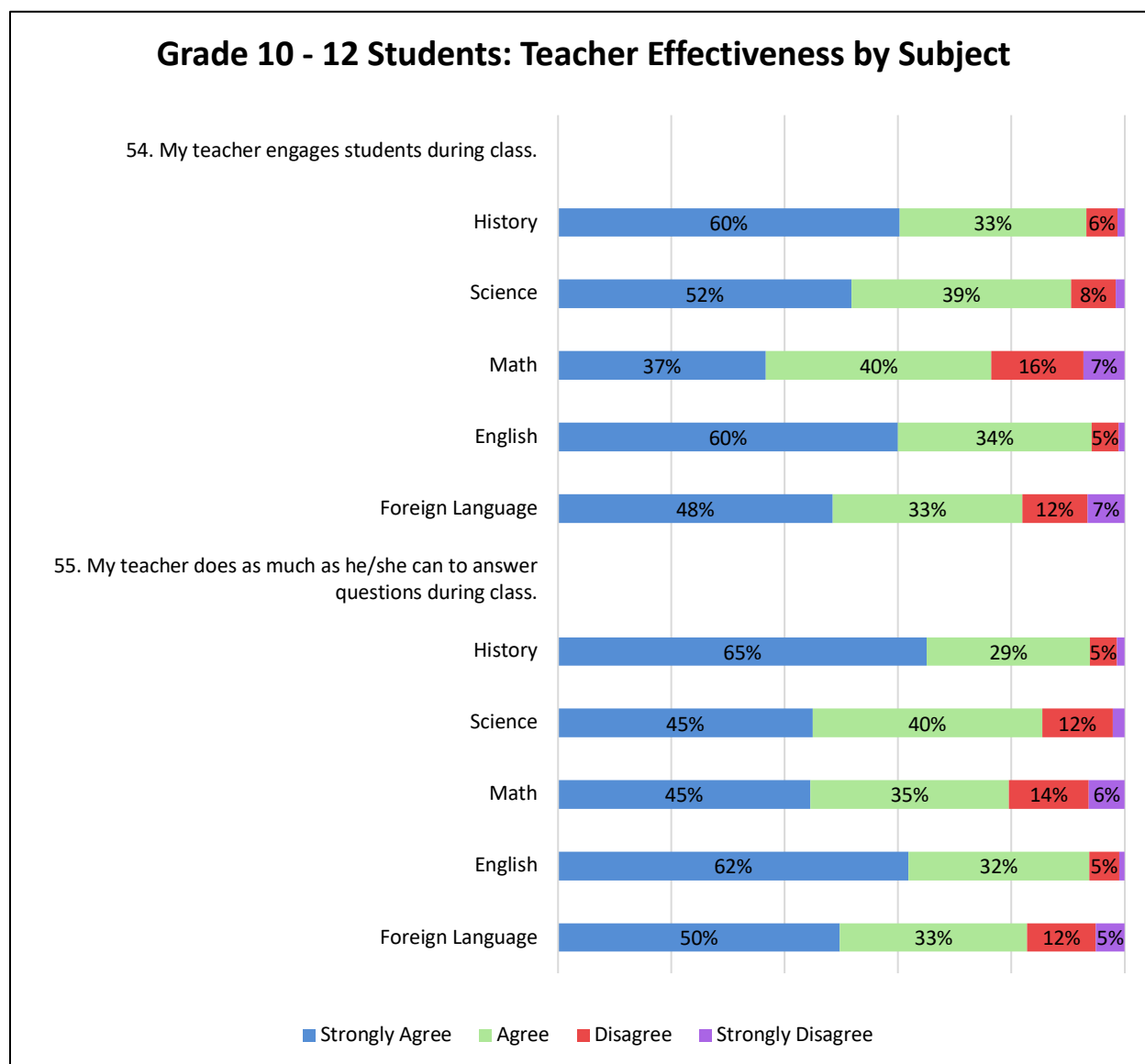
Grade 9 Students: Teacher Effectiveness by Subject, Cont.



(Cont.) Many students did *not* feel supported by their foreign language teachers outside of class (33% / 153 responses) but did feel that their math (93% / 491 responses) and English (86% / 465 responses) teachers provided ample opportunities for help outside of class. Students felt that the material they learned in their English (87% / 473 responses) and foreign language (92% / 424 responses) classes was most useful outside of school, and that the material learned in their science (67% / 377 responses) and math (71% / 393 responses) classes was somewhat less useful outside of school.

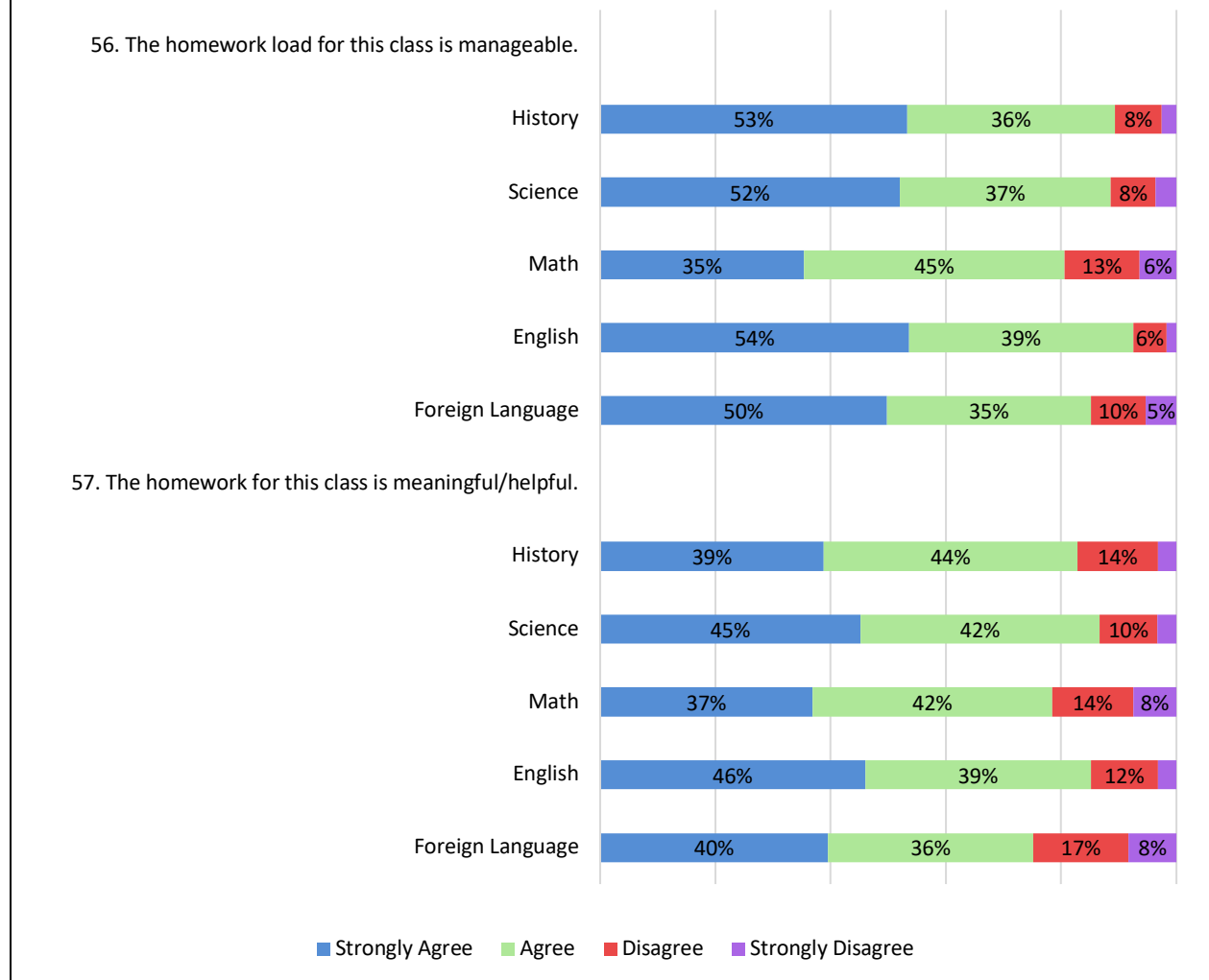


(Cont.) Across all subject areas nearly all students felt their teachers treated students equally and with respect, ranging from 95% of 9th grade respondents (350 responses) agreeing with this statement about their history teachers and 80% of students (372 responses) agreeing with this statement about their foreign language teachers. Overall, students felt most positively about their English teachers, with 91% of respondents (492 responses) agreeing they would recommend this teacher to future students. Eighty-three percent of 9th graders (308 responses) would recommend their history teachers and 79% (440 responses) would recommend their science teachers. Somewhat fewer students would recommend their math (75% / 420 responses) or foreign language (69% / 318 responses) teachers to another students.



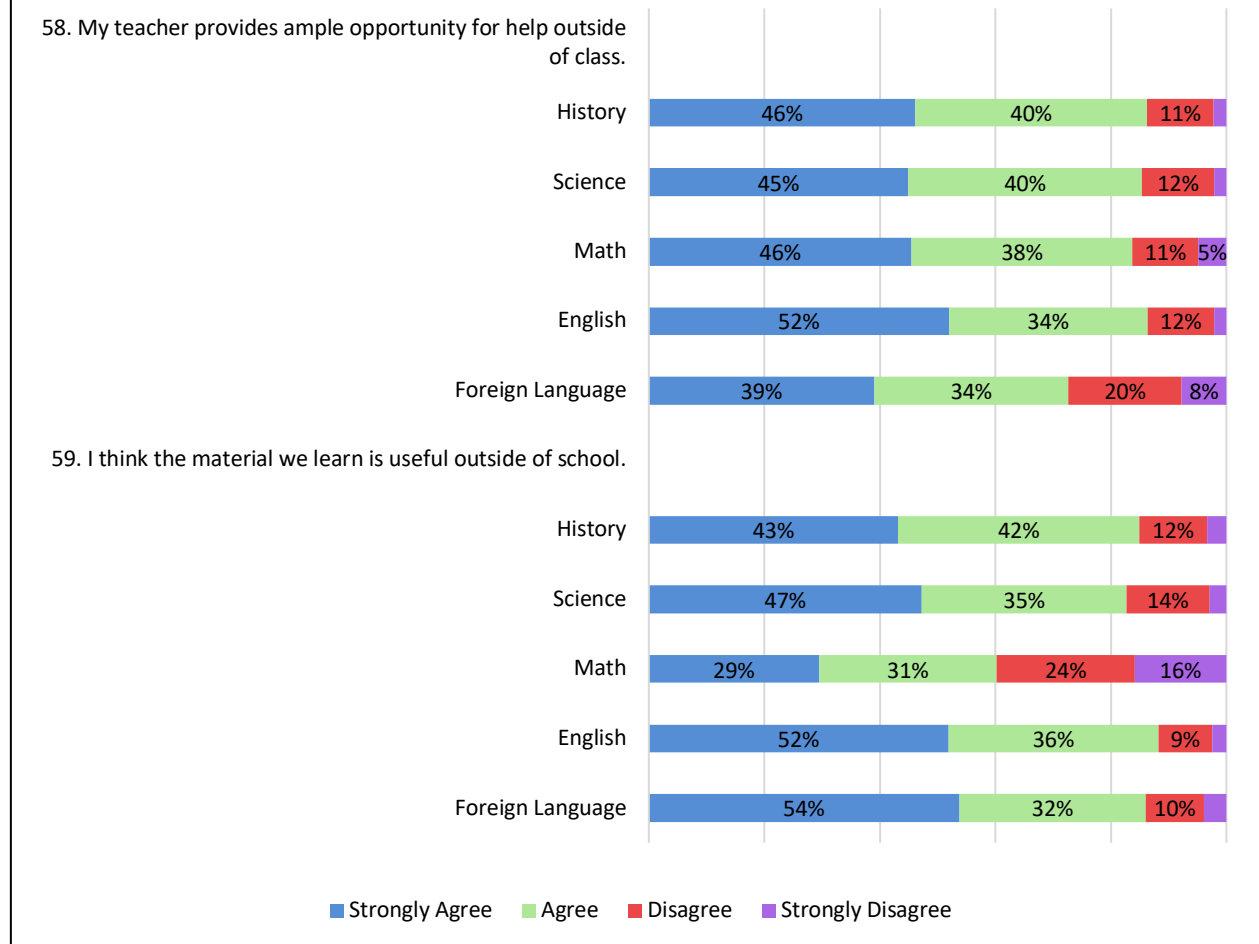
Students in 10th through 12th grade felt similarly positively about their teachers across most subject areas. For math and foreign language teachers, however, survey responses were somewhat more mixed. Only 77% and 81% of students, respectively, reported that their math (744 responses) and foreign language (818 responses) teachers engaged students during class, while nearly all students felt their history (93% / 1,177 responses) and English (94% / 1,166 responses) teachers did. Similarly, 94% of 10th through 12th grade respondents (1,185 responses) indicated that their history teachers did as much as they could to answer questions during class, while 80% of respondents (774 responses) felt similarly about their math teachers. Students expressed slightly less positive sentiments about their foreign language teachers, with 23% of students (181 responses) *not* agreeing their teachers engaged students in class or that their teachers do as much as they can to answer questions in class.

Grade 10 - 12 Students: Teacher Effectiveness by Subject, Cont.



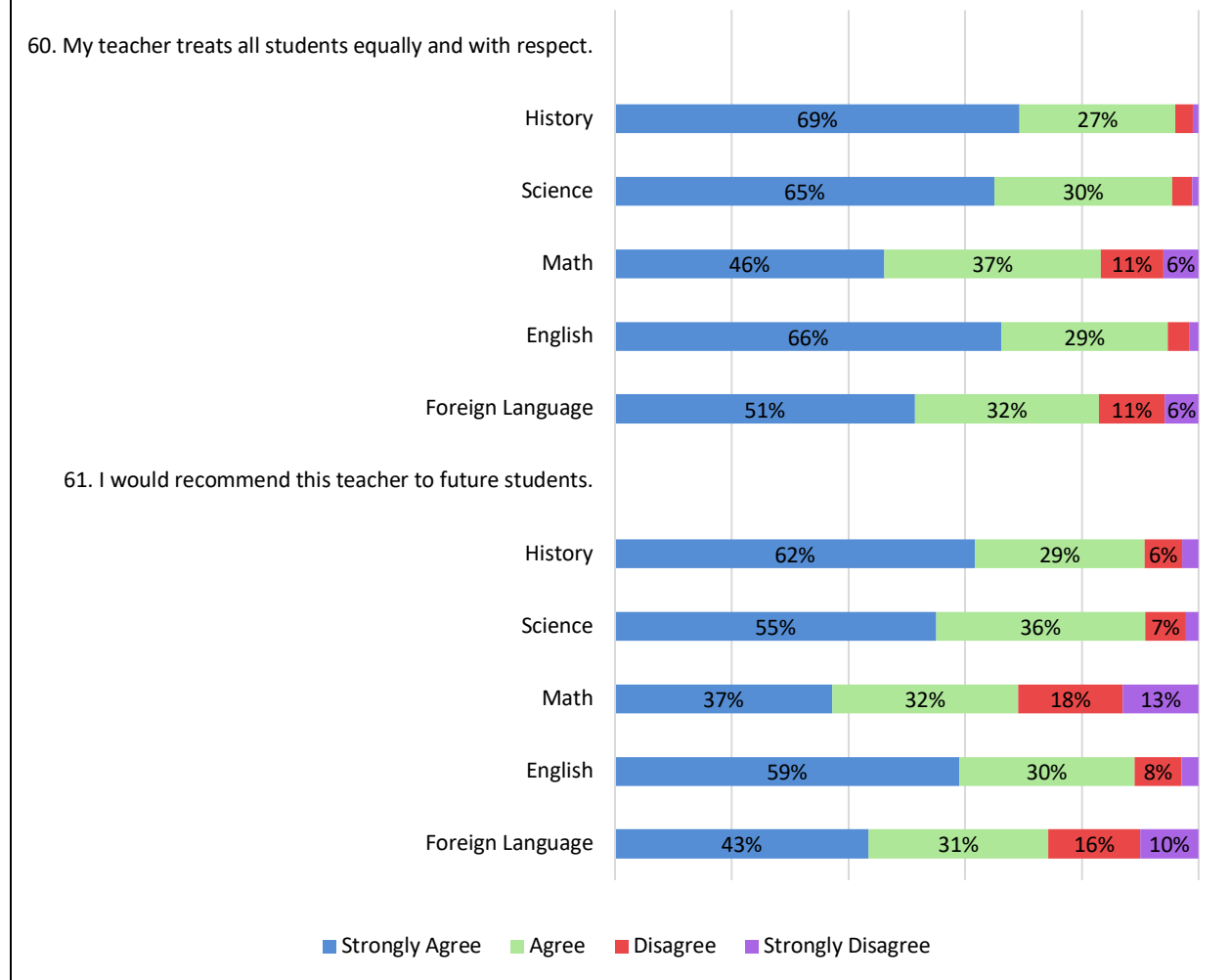
(Cont.) Most students (approximately 90%) across subject areas felt the homework loads for their classes were manageable, although slightly fewer agreed with this statement about their math classes (80% / 784 responses). Similarly, students were slightly less likely to agree that the homework for their math (79% / 763 responses) or foreign language (76% / 751 responses) classes was meaningful than for other subject areas.

Grade 10 - 12 Students: Teacher Effectiveness by Subject, Cont.



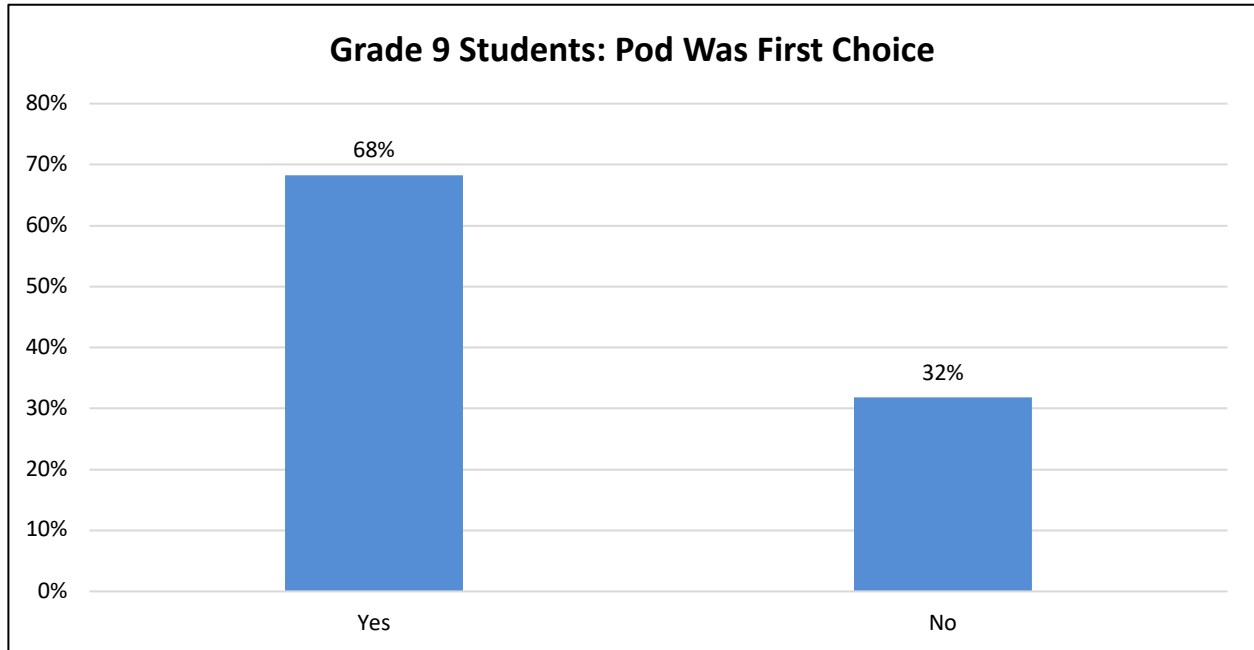
(Cont.) While some students did *not* feel supported by their foreign language teachers outside of class (28% / 273 responses), they otherwise indicated receiving ample opportunities for help outside of class from teachers in other subject areas, particularly English (86% / 1,070 responses). Students felt that the material they learned in their English (88% / 1,093 responses), foreign language (86% / 860 responses), history (85% / 1,073 responses) and science (82% / 901 responses) classes was useful outside of school. In math, however, 40% of students (387 responses) did *not* feel that what they learned in class was useful outside of school.

Grade 10 - 12 Students: Teacher Effectiveness by Subject, Cont.

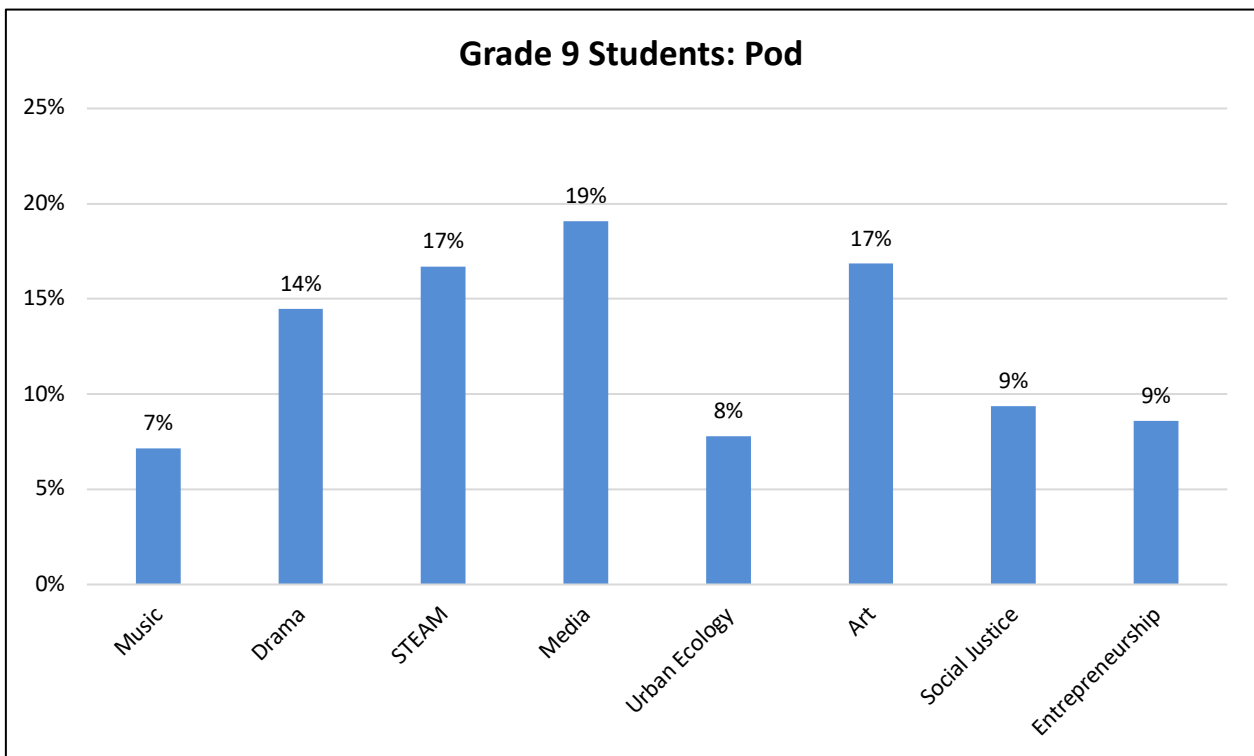


(Cont.) In history, science and English nearly all students felt their teachers treated students equally and with respect. For their math and foreign languages teachers, however, a group of students disagreed with this statement (17% / 163 responses). Overall, students felt most positively about their history, science and English teachers, with 91% of respondents (1,146 responses) agreeing they would recommend their science and history teachers to future students and 89% (1,103 responses) agreeing they would recommend their English teachers. Somewhat fewer students would recommend their math (69% / 672 responses) or foreign language (74% / 742 responses) teachers to future students.

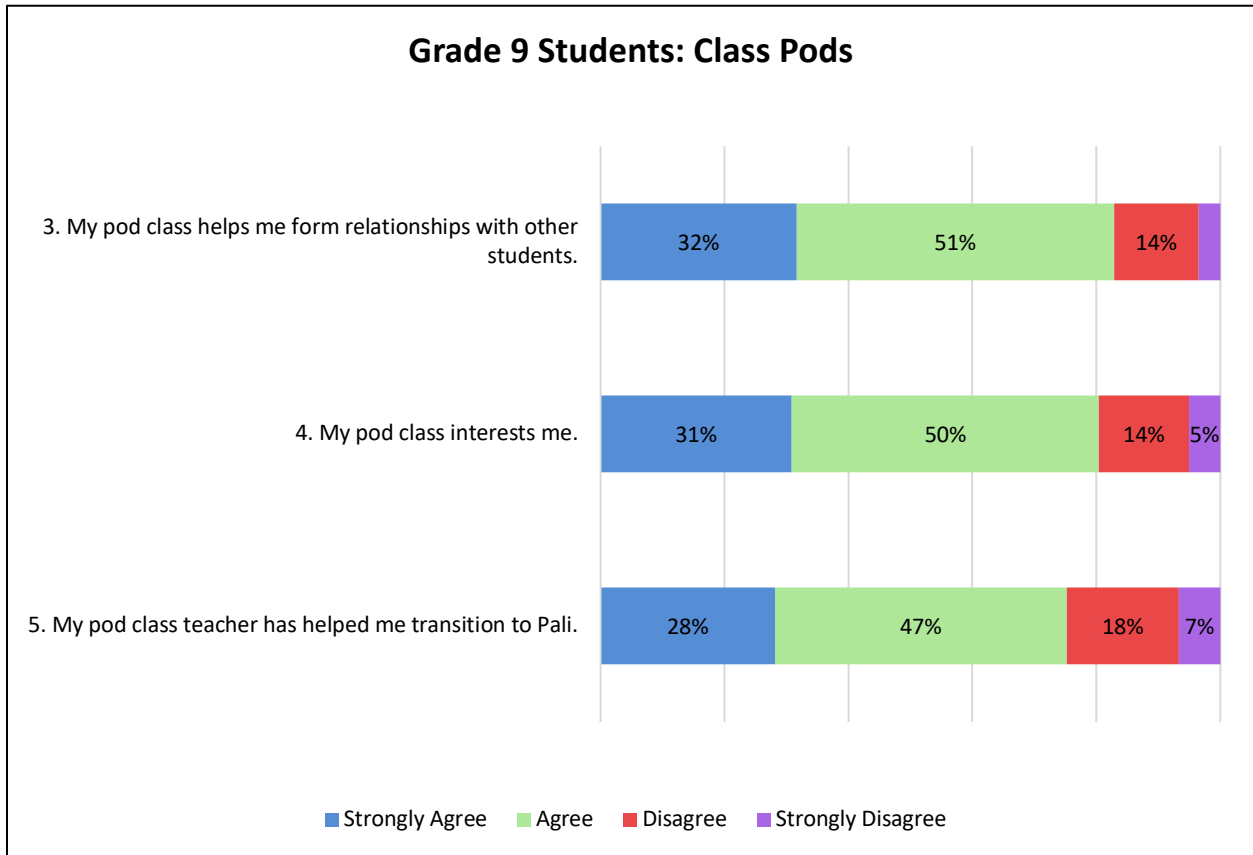
Grade 9 Pods



Over two-thirds of ninth grade respondents was placed in their first-choice pod group (68% / 429 responses).

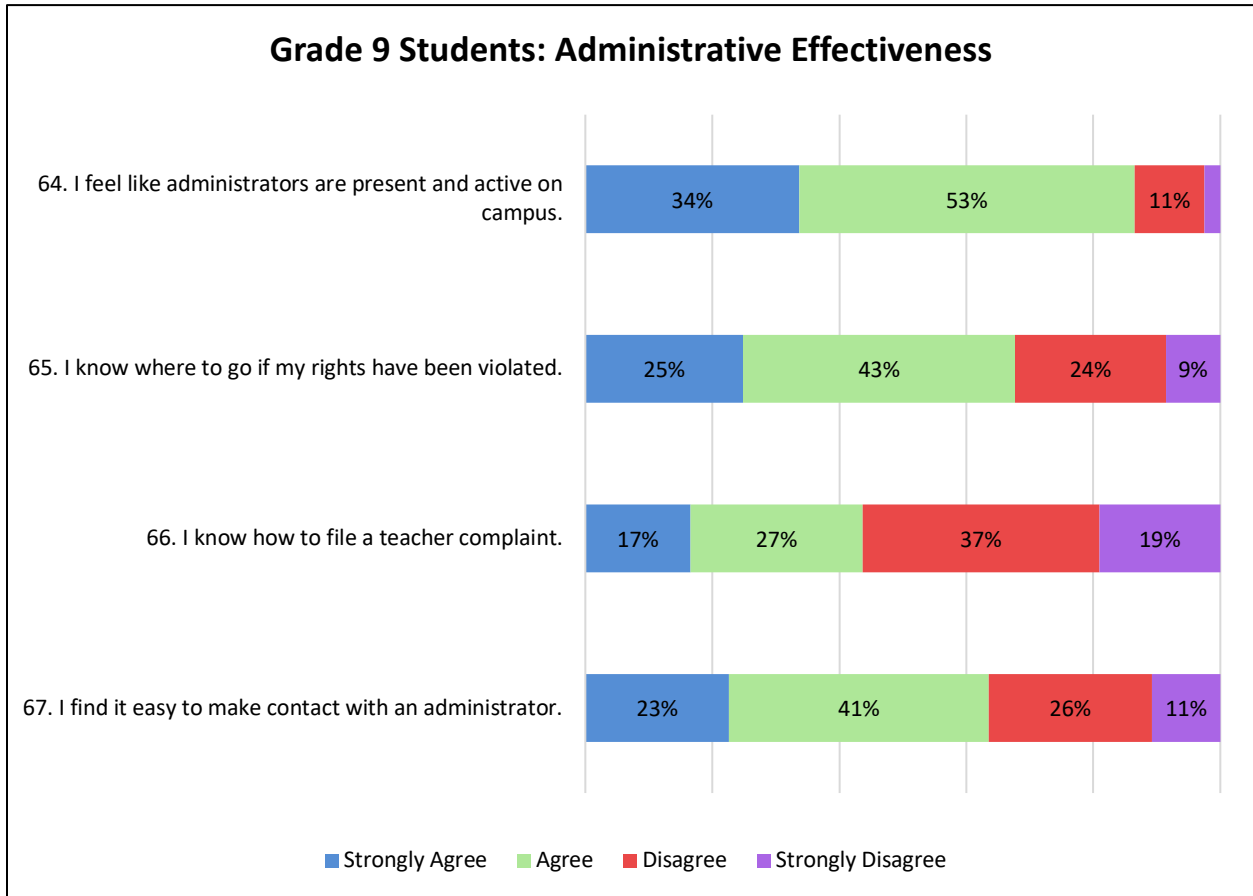


In this survey, the most represented pod groups were media (19% / 120 responses), STEAM (17% / 105 responses), and art (17% / 106 responses). The least represented pod groups were music (7% / 45 responses) and urban ecology (8% / 49 responses).

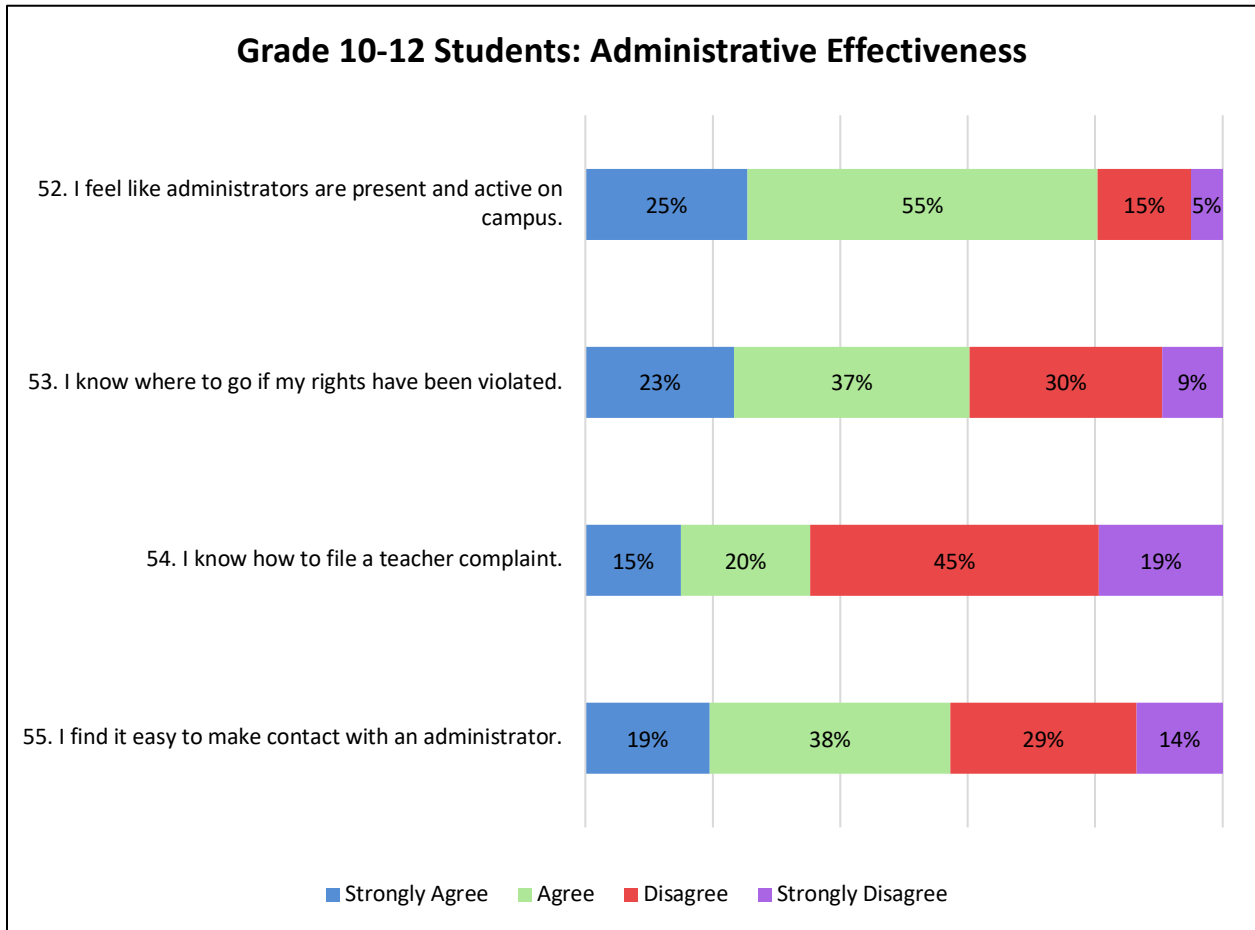


Overall, ninth grade students felt very positively about their pods. Eighty-two percent of student respondents felt their pod classes helped them form relationships with other students (521 responses), and 81% were interested in their course (506 responses). It should be noted, however, that one-quarter of student respondents *did not* feel their pod class teachers helped them transition to PCHS (25% / 156 responses).

Administrative Effectiveness

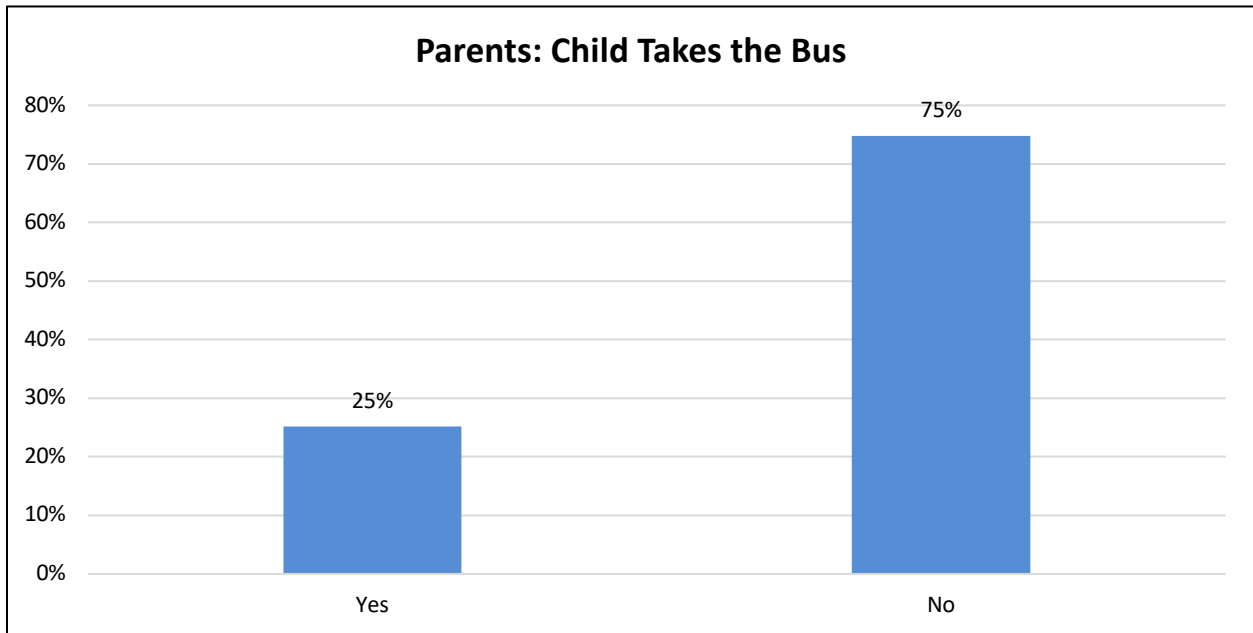


Ninth grade students provided mixed feedback about administrative effectiveness at Palisades. Positively, 87% (313 responses) of students felt administrators were present and active on campus. However, student responses indicated room for growth in communication between students and administrators. One-third of students (117 responses) did *not* know where to go if their rights were violated, 37% of 9th graders (132 responses) did *not* find it easy to contact an administrator and over half of 9th grader respondents (56% / 204 responses) did *not* know how to file a teacher complaint.

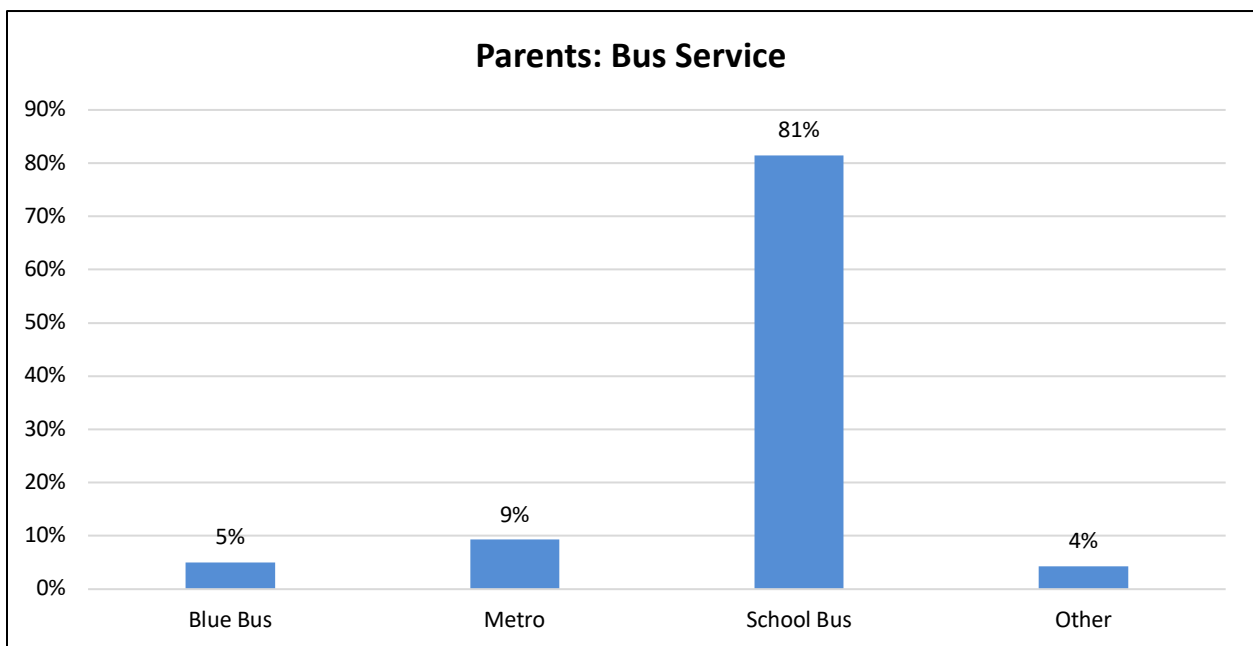


Tenth through 12th grade respondents were even less knowledgeable about administrative processes than the 9th grade respondents. Thirty-nine percent of respondents (381 responses) did *not* know where to go if their rights were violated, 43% of 10th through 12th graders (410 responses) did *not* find it easy to contact an administrator, and nearly two-thirds of students (64% / 621 responses) did *not* know how to file a teacher complaint. Eighty percent of 10th through 12th grade students (771 responses), however, did feel like administrators were present and active on campus.

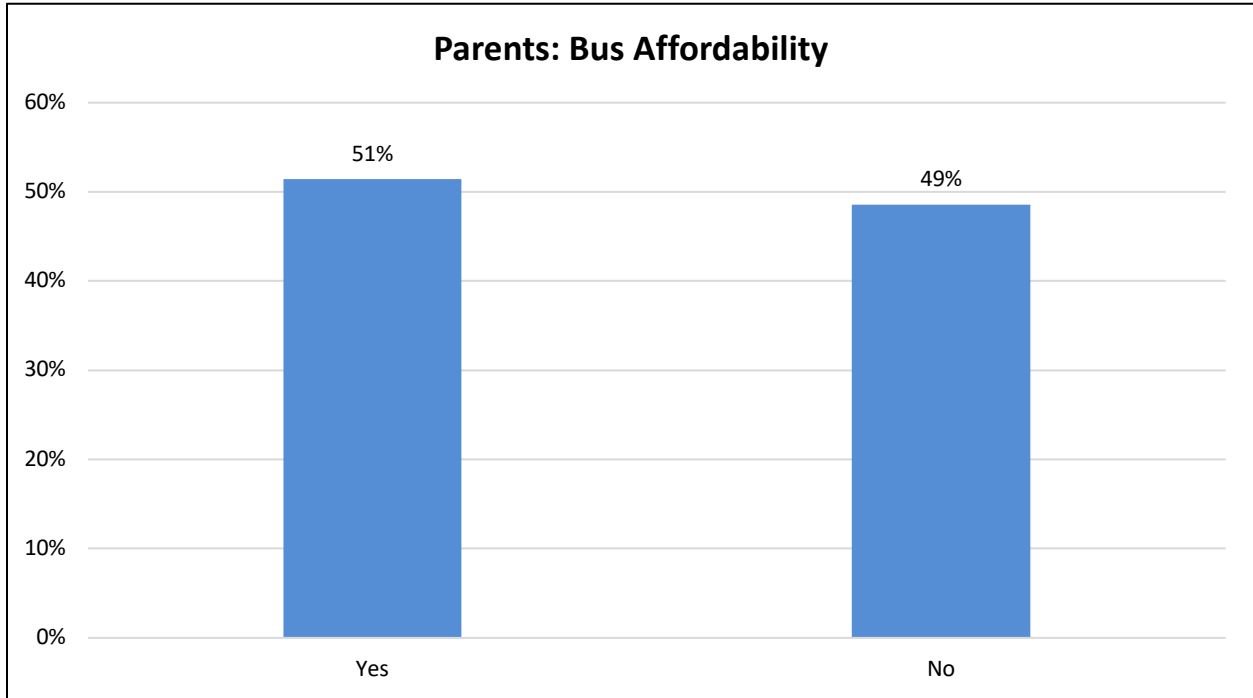
Bus Services



This year, only 25% of parent respondents indicated that their child took the bus to school (147 responses).



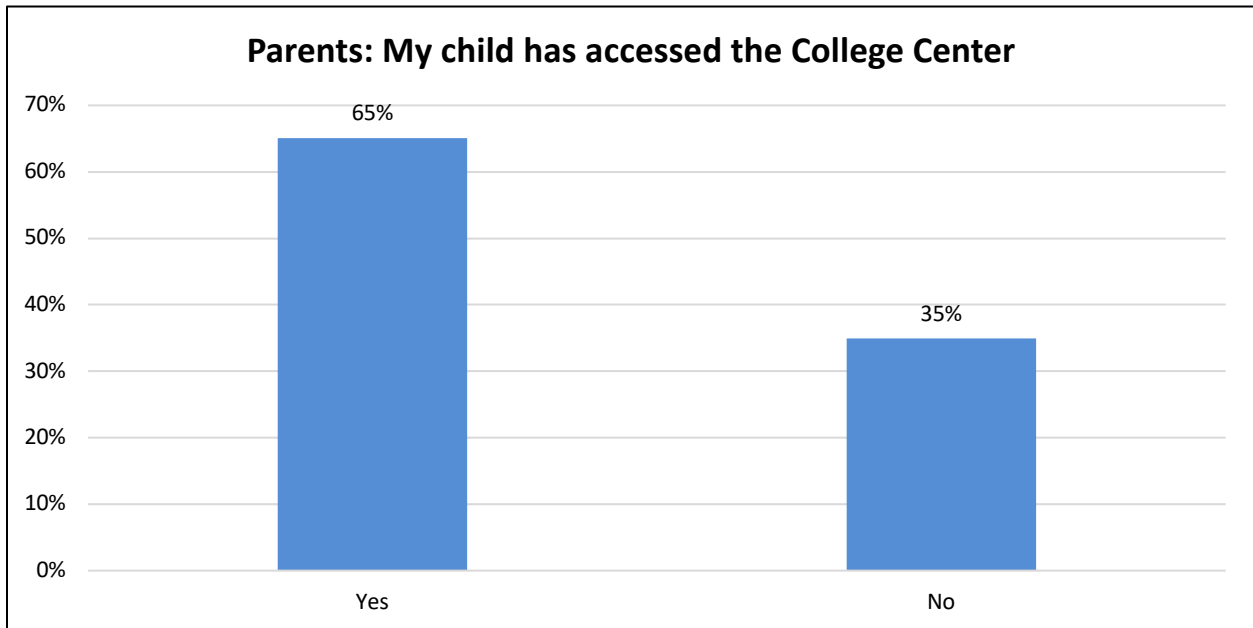
Of the parents whose child rode a bus to school, 81% indicated that their child rode the school bus (114 responses).



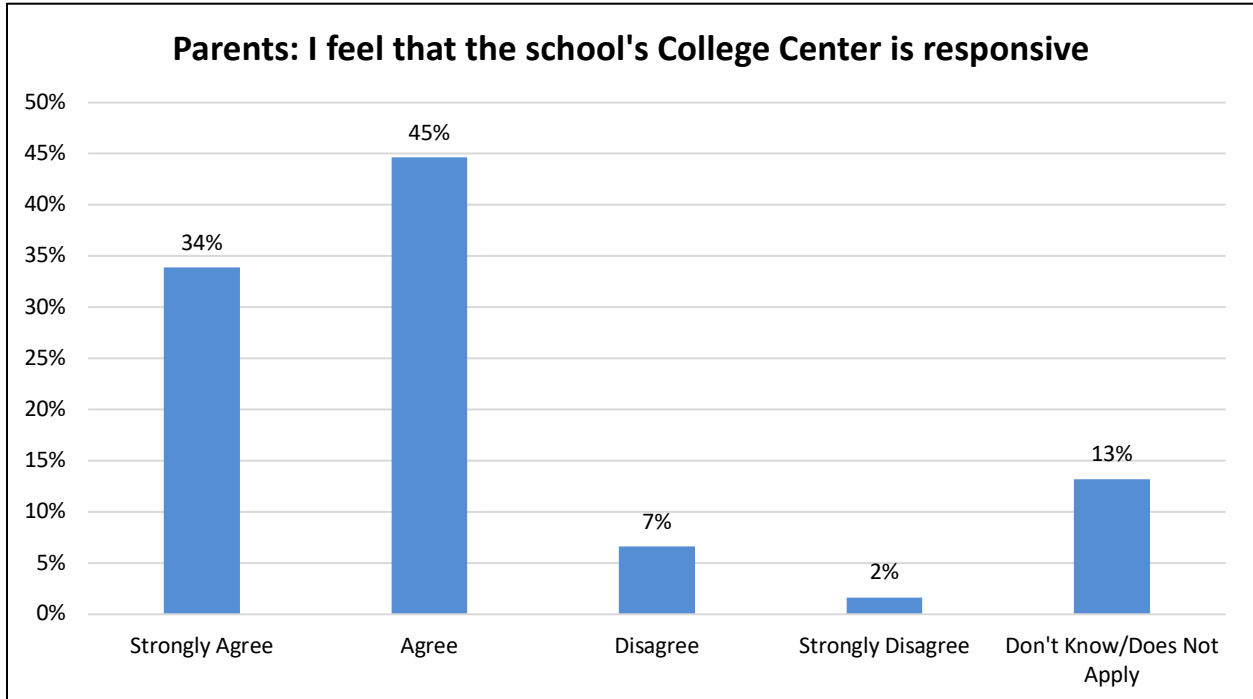
Roughly half of all families whose children rode the bus felt the buses were affordable (51% / 72 responses), but the other half *did not* agree that the buses were affordable (49% / 68 responses)

School Support Services

College Center

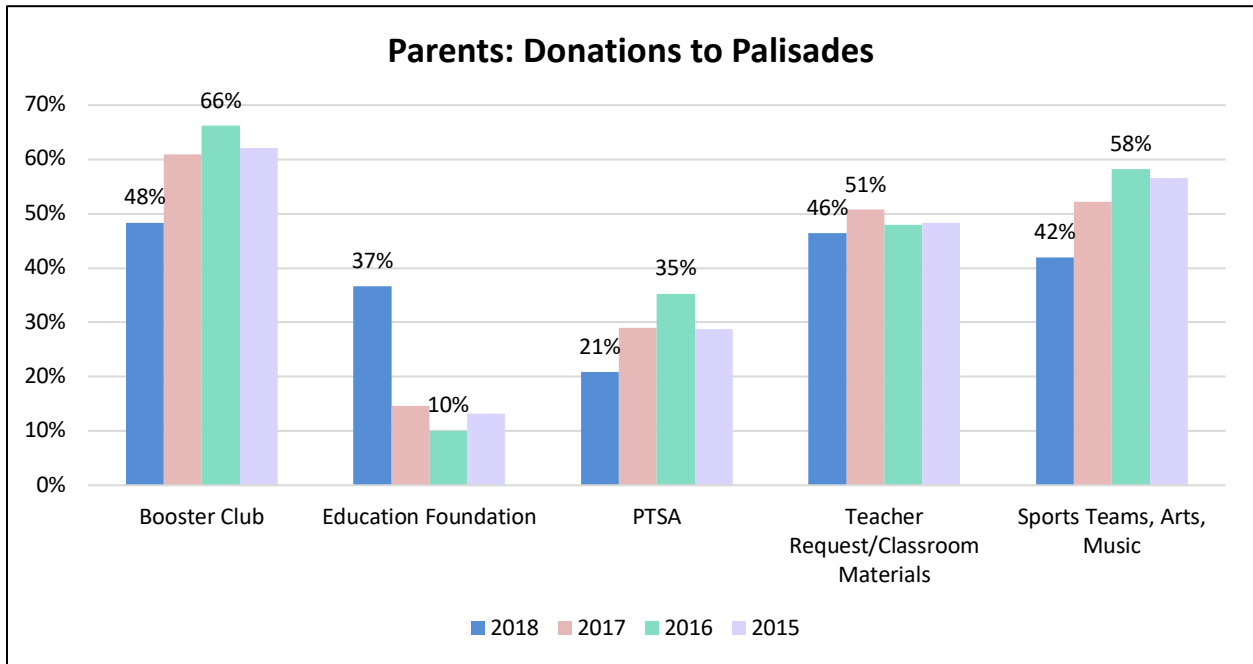


Roughly one-third of parent respondents indicated that their child had accessed the College Center at the time of the survey (65% / 263).

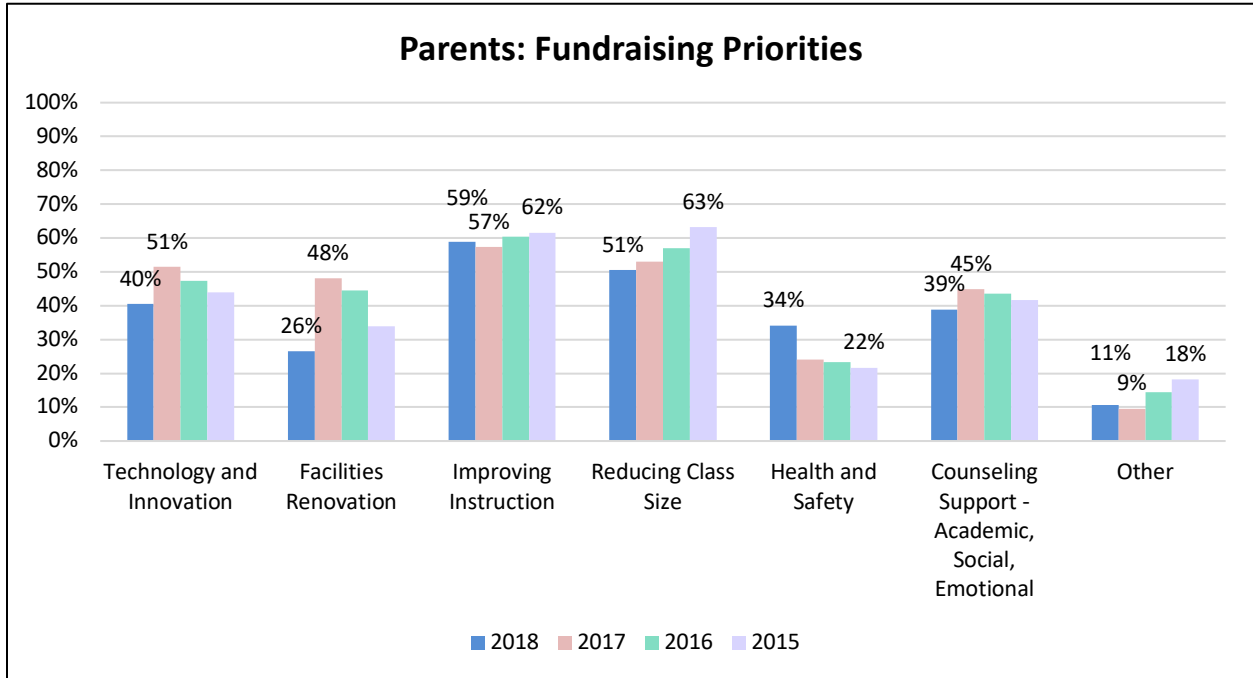


Of the parents whose children had accessed the College Center, 80% agreed that the College Center was responsive (190 responses).

Philanthropy

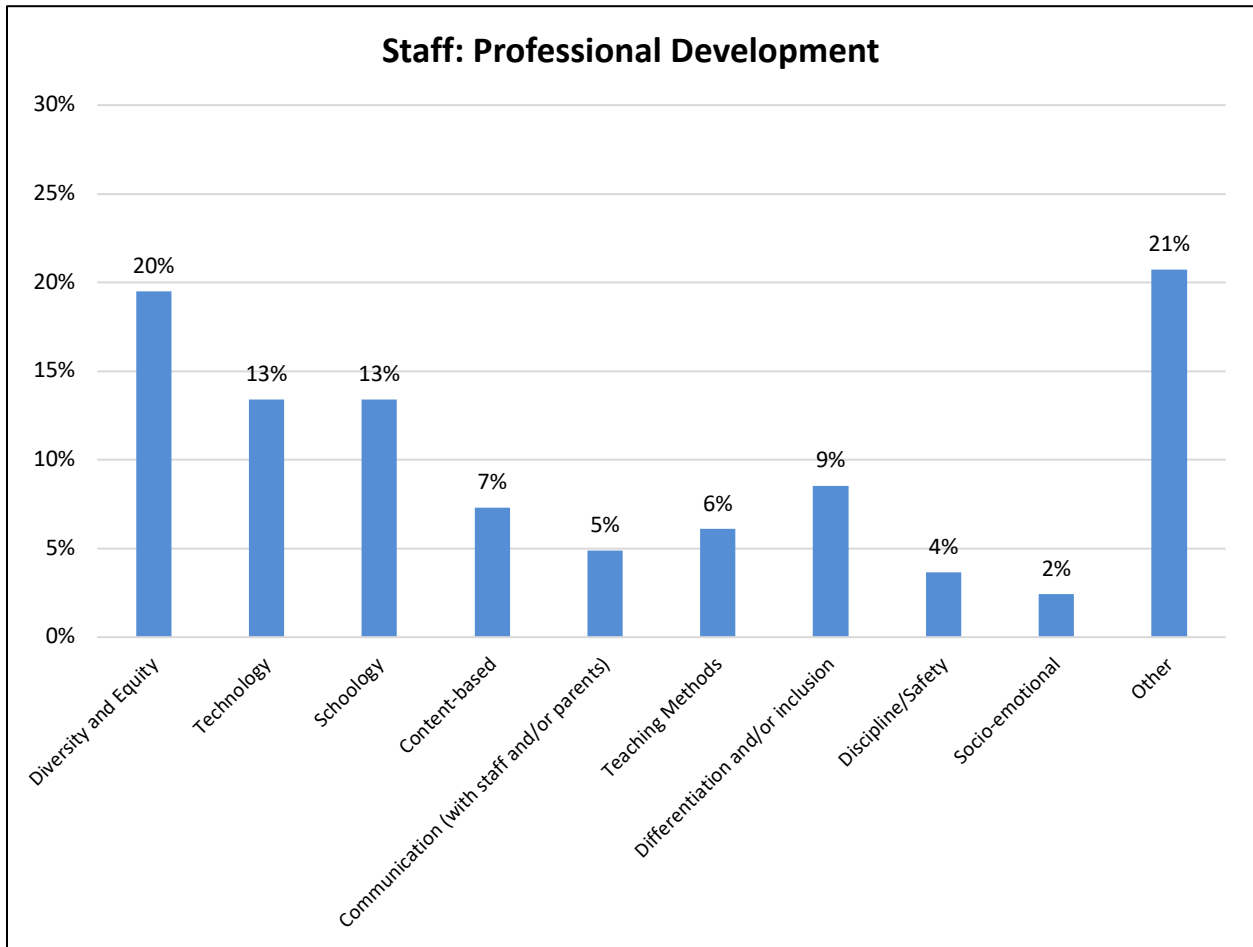


Parental donations to PCHS have remained fairly constant over the past four years, although parents appear to be shifting the allocation of their donations to the education foundation and away from other recipients in 2018. This year, fewer parent respondents indicated that they donated to the booster club (48% / 283 responses) as compared to in 2017 (61% / 162 responses). However, a notably larger proportion parents said they had donated to the education foundation in 2018 (37% / 215 responses) than in 2017 (15%). Slightly under half of the parents noted they donated both to individual teacher requests (46% / 272 responses) and to extra-curricular activities (42% / 246 responses). Continuing a trend from 2016 and 2017, fewer parents donated to PTSA than in the prior year (21% compared to 29%).



Mirroring parent open-ended responses under the “school environment and safety” section, parents were more concerned about fundraising for health and safety purposes in 2018 (34% / 200 responses) than in prior years. Parents in 2018 were also slightly more likely than in 2017 to prioritize fundraising for improving instruction (59% compared to 53%) and less concerned about fundraising for technology and innovation (40% compared to 51%) or facilities renovation (26% compared to 48%). The proportion of parents favoring fundraising for reducing class size (51% / 296 responses), and counselling support (39% / 228 responses) remained relatively stable when compared to 2017 results.

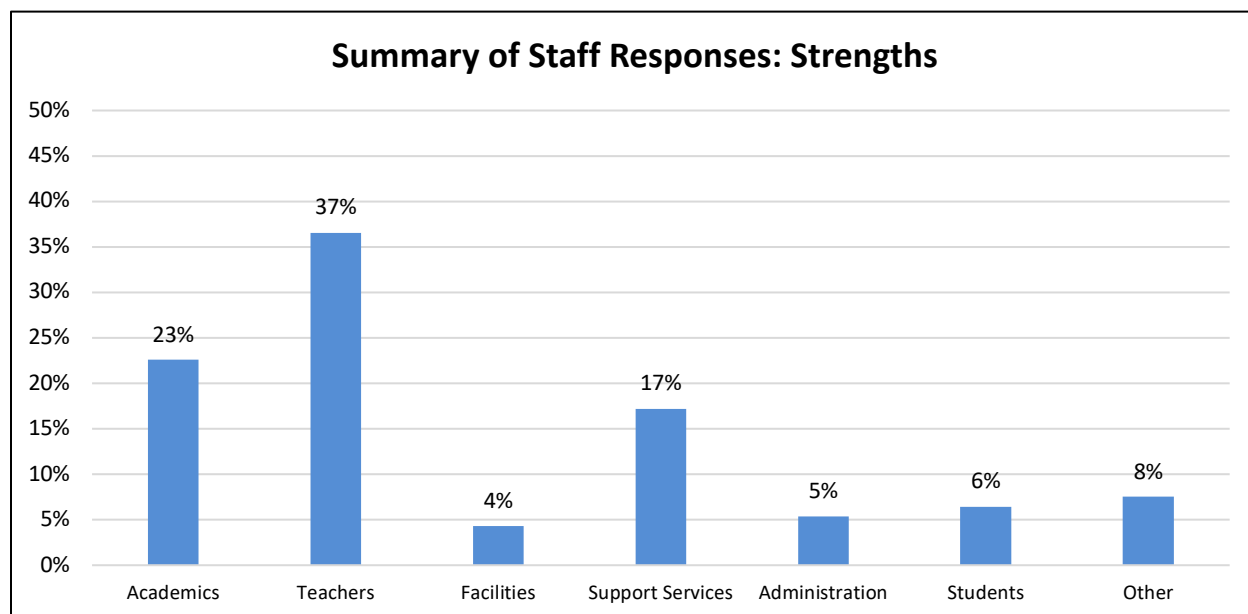
Staff Professional Development



While recommendations for professional development represented a broad range of topics, twenty percent of faculty respondents indicated an interest in professional development on diversity and equity (16 responses). These faculty members most commonly requested PDs on cultural awareness, equity, and supporting diverse student populations, among similar themes. Thirteen percent of staff surveyed (11 responses) requested more training on technology and an additional thirteen percent (11 responses) specifically requested additional trainings on using Schoology. Another nine percent (7 responses) of staff responses requested professional development on differentiated instruction and/or inclusion training, while seven percent (6 responses) asked for content-specific PD, including training on new science standards, curriculum alignment, and content-specific differentiation techniques. Other staff comments requested trainings on teaching methods (6% / 5 responses), communicating with staff and/or parents (5% / 3 responses), discipline and/or safety (4% / 3 responses), and addressing student socio-emotional concerns (2% / 2 responses). Feedback on professional development that did not fit into any broad categories often included feedback about how PDs could be organized: some mentioned that PD trainings should be tailored to the needs of multiple groups of teachers, while others asked that PD have a clear focus and build over the course of the year.

Open-Ended Responses: Strengths

Staff



PCHS staff members were most satisfied with their school’s teachers (39% / 34 responses) and academics (23% / 21 responses). Additionally, 16 members of the staff selected school support services as a strength, 6 staff members selected students, five selected the administration, and four identified the facilities as a strength. The eight percent of staff who selected ‘other’ mentioned the services PCHS offered to students, discussed the school’s commitment to improvement, or mentioned a combination of strengths.

Staff: What do you like most about the school?

Staff responses fell into seven broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

Teachers (34 responses)

The passion and dedication of all teachers on this campus is what makes Pali such a special and progressive campus.

The majority of the teachers are excellent in their subject, work hard, and truly care about their students.

This is the most talented social studies department that I have ever worked with.

The majority of our teachers do outstanding work to serve students in terms of delivering content and encouraging personal growth.

Teachers in my department (for the most part) seem to care about the achievement of students and their growth as people.

Academics (21 responses)

Honors classes are given first, then you can opt out

There is a college-going culture. Students learn a lot from the diversity on campus and this prepares them for life after Pali.

The quality of courses offered, and the academic counseling office give students generous opportunities to succeed.

The reason I came to Pali to teach is the academic rigor it requires.

We offer a wide variety of Honors/Advanced Placement classes, in addition to various elective classes that are in high demand with our students.

Administration (5 responses)

Chris Lee is an awesome administrator. He constantly shows his support and care for the teachers.

Tom Seyler is the most effective administrator I've worked with in 30 years!

I feel we have an excellent admin team. They have an open-door policy and even when they are extremely busy, admin is available to the staff.

Admin always has my back and always treats me with respect. I am never afraid to approach an admin for help or advice. I feel safe and supported here because a member of the admin team is always available to help me and/or approve and support my initiatives.

Facilities (4 responses)

I like the open space.

The facilities are state of the art.

Support Services (16 responses)

Mental health counselors have saved the students!

There are so many types of counselors, and mental and physical health providers. Many other schools just don't have the staff to this extent.

If students have special needs (emotional and academic), there is an effort to accommodate them---as well as identify needs.

Resource and Special Ed support is amazing

Students (6 responses)

Our students will always be our greatest strength. They are the reason we are here.

We serve a unique mix of students here at PCHS and they should be celebrated as such.

The athletic programs here are outstanding and should be talked about more. We should especially praise all the athletes who go to a 4-year college for athletics. Stipends need to be raised to keep the excellent head coaches in each sport.

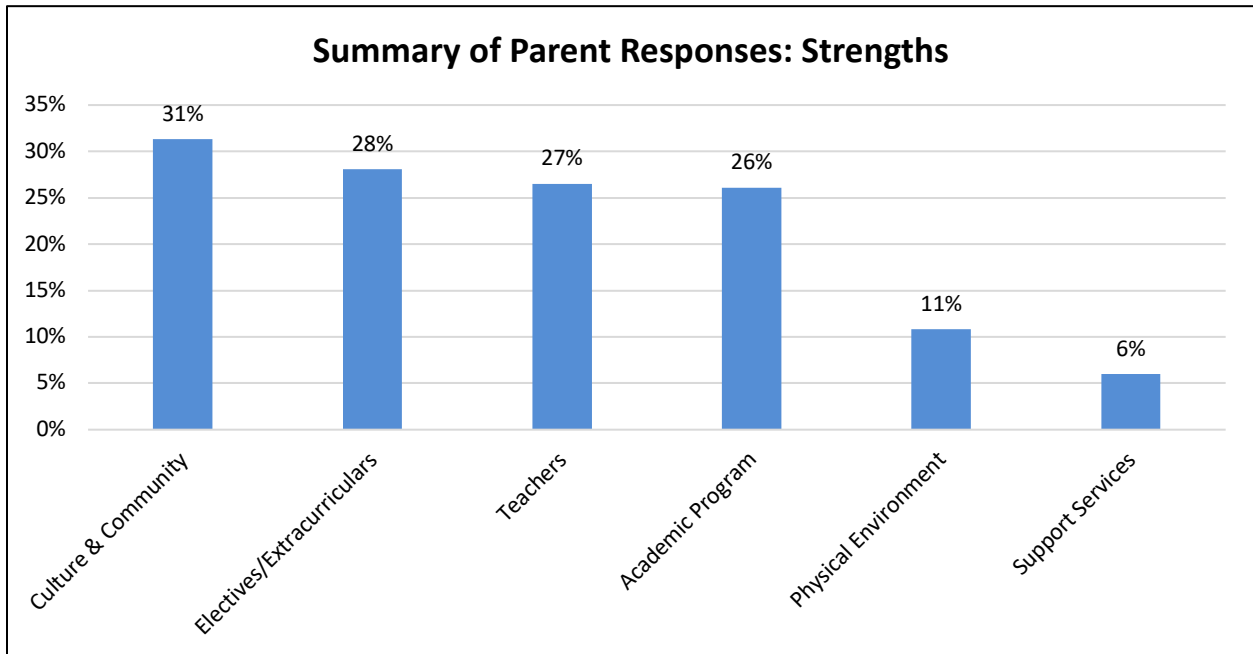
Other (7 responses)

Our school ranks really high against other schools and that's because our executive director and supporting staff always work towards improvement and are open to conversations about said improvements.

None of the above standing solo is the top strength of PCHS. The ability to set goals which get us closer to the mission of educating every student to the best of their ability is what I call the strength of Pali. All staff members, teachers, admin, support personnel pulling on the same string when it comes to do the best for the pupils is what I consider the top strength of PCHS. Having a beautiful campus certainly helps. So please keep the vision and goals alive. With stakeholder input, we can move mountains.

All adults on campus care about the children.

Parents



Nearly a third of parents (31% / 78 responses) praised the culture and community of PCHS as its greatest strength. Parents also noted the elective and extracurricular opportunities offered at PCHS as strengths (28% / 70 responses). Twenty-seven percent of parent comments (66 responses) identified teachers and 26% (65 responses) identified the academics at PCHS as strengths. Further, 11% of parents (27 responses) positively commented on the physical environment and facilities while a final six percent of comments (15 responses) praised the support services offered to students.

Parents: I am most happy with the following aspects of my child's school.

Parent responses fell into six broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

School Culture & Community (78 responses)

There is a strong, engaging sense of community and support, with a diverse range of many wonderful activities for students and parents to participate in (concerts, performances, musical shows).

I like the administration's ability to help promote a variety of cultures and backgrounds where kids can express their ideas and strengthen their foundation as they strive to be better people of this world.

I love how most of the students seem to respect and support each other.

I like the campus culture, open mindedness, security, and approachability with most teachers.

I am most happy with the diversity of the school, and how the administration is responsive to my communications with them, particularly teachers and counselors.

Elective & Extracurricular Opportunities (70 responses)

The music program is phenomenal.

There are lots of choices and ways for kids to participate.

There is a terrific choice of extracurricular activities.

The theater and arts programs are great.

Teachers (66 responses)

The teachers that love teaching make school worthwhile.

My child has always had strong language arts teachers.

Junior/senior teachers are mostly strong/excellent

I2th grade teaching staff in advanced classes is excellent. Up to now, teacher quality has been mixed.

The really awesome teachers that clearly love what they do and make their students love learning. There are many of these gems at Pali.

Academic Program (65 responses)

We like that it offers challenging courses and is focused on preparing students for college. We appreciate access to homework help, but quality of help varies widely.

Diverse AP classes are available with engaged teachers

My child's social justice pod has been very eye-opening and enriching.

Pali High students that apply themselves and maintain good academic standing are prepared for college-level work.

There are high academic standards.

Physical Environment & Facilities (27 responses)

The campus is beautiful.

I feel the school is safe.

The school is clean.

I love the proximity to the ocean.

Support Services (15 responses)

The many resources here at Pali are amazing. I'm grateful for the tutoring offered as well as the homework rooms/study halls that are made available by the teachers.

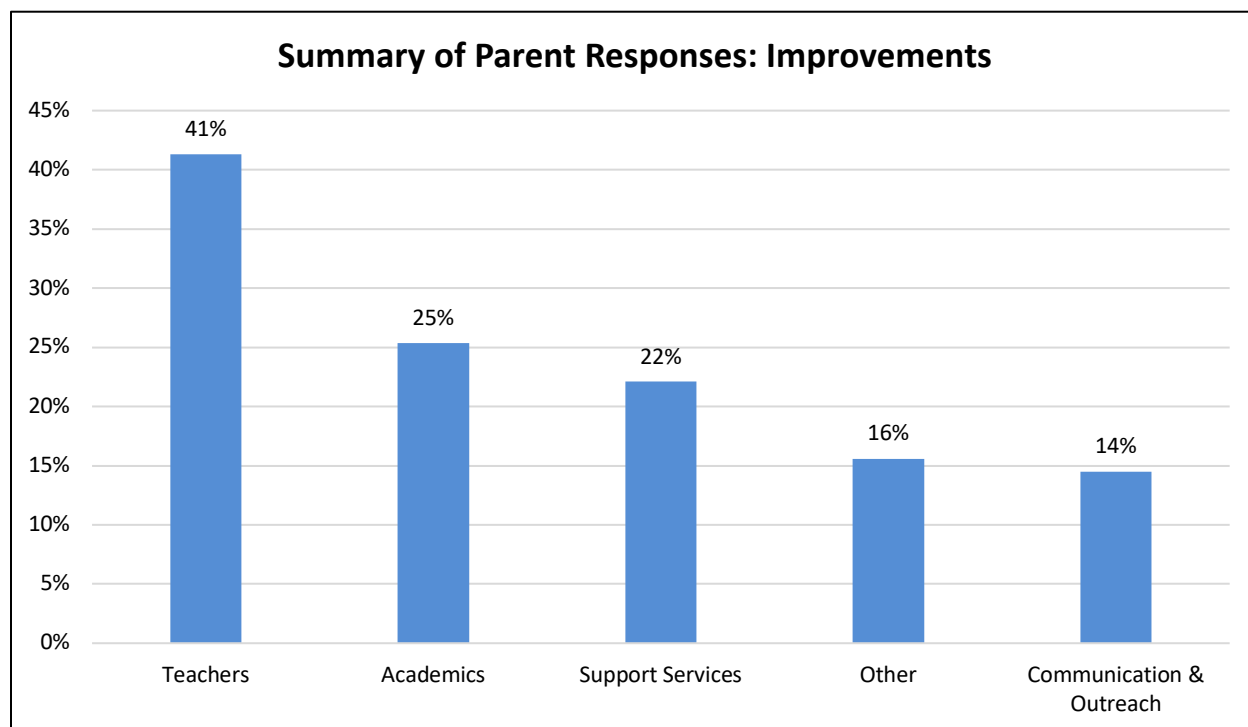
I like the study center. The availability of tutoring help is amazing.

My child's counselor is helpful.

The 504 program is excellent.

Open-Ended Responses: Improvements

Parents



Regarding improvements to Palisades Charter High School, a plurality of parents (41% / 114 responses) felt that the teaching staff could be more effective. Thirty-seven percent of suggestions (70 responses) pertained to the academic program at PCHS and 22% (61 responses) to the support services offered. Fourteen percent of comments (40 responses) requested improvements in the quality of communication and outreach.

Parents: I feel that my child's school needs improvement in the following areas.

As noted above, parent responses fell into five broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

Teachers (114 responses)

Talk to teachers and heads of departments about teacher accountability and different learning styles.

Remove ineffective teachers, particularly in the math department. Everyone knows who they are. We are an independent charter, so I do not understand why these teachers are still at our school. They do not teach and as parents we are forced to find other options to teach our children the material.

Ensure hiring/retention standards are met. We've experienced a couple of teachers/IEP coordinators who are ineffective or worse.

Get better math teachers; that department has been terrible for years.

Get teachers that are passionate about teaching!

Academics (70 responses)

I think the school should consider the following: limit the number of AP classes a student can take in a single year. It might vary from year to year, with more possible by 12th grade and fewer possible as a freshman. I also think the school should have a strict policy that does NOT allow teachers to post homework assignments after 7pm. This year, some of my daughter's teachers posted homework at close to midnight. I find that to be unacceptable, especially since it creates more unnecessary stress and anxiety for students.

Make classes smaller so teachers can better understand each student's work personally and the student can feel that they're noticed.

There should be more hands-on activities and projects, smaller class sizes and more field trips.

Get rid of the 9th grade humanities pod program. Most of the kids I know hate it and would rather have a regular history class and actually learn something. The 8th grade curriculum at Revere is far more arduous than 9th grade at Pali as a result. Kids then get slammed in 10th grade, which creates tremendous stress.

Support Services (61 responses)

More college counselors and more communication from the College Center office are needed.

Have more counseling hours and more counsellors available.

More support for mental health and teenage challenges are needed.

Emphasize mental health and how important it is. Give a real office to the people who work for support services because giving them a trailer shows that you do not care, when in fact mental health is more important than anything else.

More attentive academic counseling is needed.

Other (43 responses)

The buses started out reasonable but get more expensive each year. Make the school bus more affordable to all.

Be more conscious of lower-income students.

Address the drug problem.

Have a later start time so kids can get appropriate sleep.

More real inclusiveness is needed, not just lip service.

More funding for music.

Communication & Outreach (40 total responses)

Ask students what they feel would help them and seriously take the suggestion to heart.

Get the community involved and get a school leader who visibly walks the campus and makes the students and community believe that she doesn't think she is too good for this school.

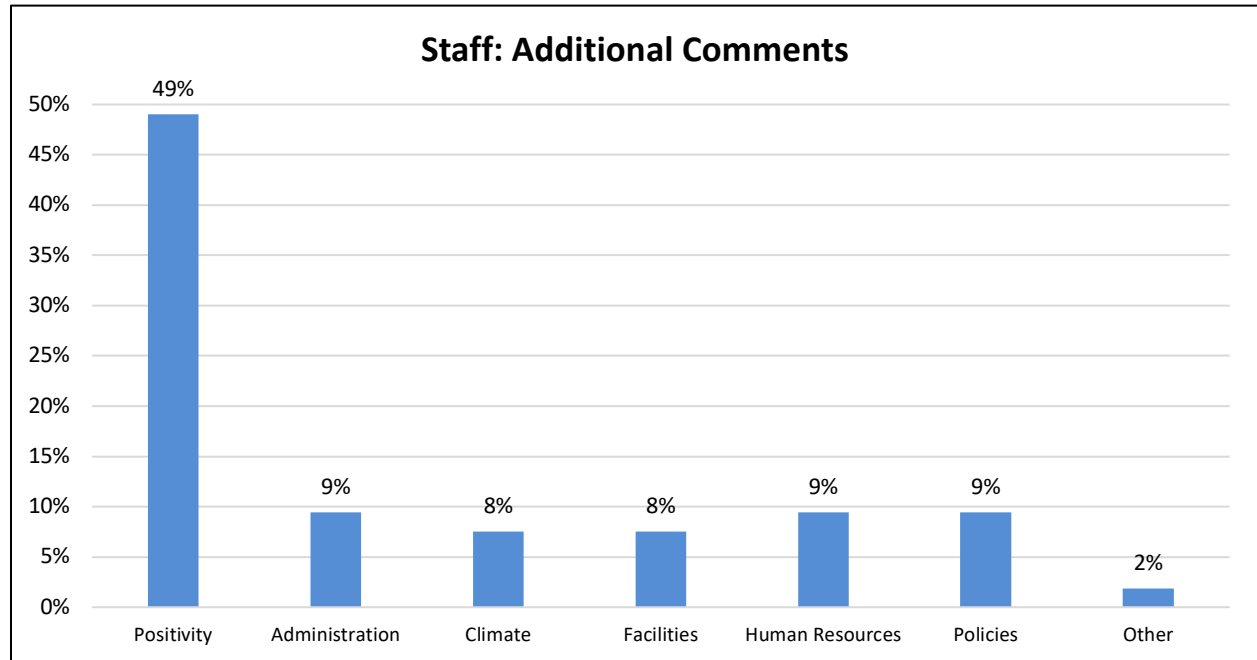
Listen to the students and parents, and not have everything be a top down decision.

Promote ALL sports and extracurricular events on campus so that students support school activities.

Ensure that all teachers use and communicate via Schoology or Infinite Campus, so parents can know what is happening in all classes.

Open Ended: Satisfaction with School Functioning

Staff



Of the comments provided by staff, almost half expressed positive feelings about PCHS (49% / 26 responses). Other comments revolved around potential areas of improvement for the school. Nine percent of staff respondents brought up administrative improvements (5 responses), while another 9% each did the same for human resources (5 responses) and other school policies (5 responses). Four staff members each discussed school facilities (8%) and school climate (8%).

Staff: Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience at PCHS?

Staff responses fell into seven broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

Positivity (26 responses)

I really love and admire the teachers I work with, the admin has been beyond understanding and supportive, and we teachers have all the resources necessary to do our jobs well.

I've felt genuinely welcomed, and when needed, capably assisted whenever I've asked! Tom Seyler is the most effective and caring administrator I've worked for in 30 years! Pali Academy teachers deal daily with students' varied academic, social, and emotional needs while helping students fulfill their graduation requirements (early or on-time.)

I have enjoyed my time at Pali as I work with a wonderful group of students and a wonderful admin team. It has not been a smooth ride in the College Center for me but I feel supported by the administrators as things are worked out.

I really enjoy the camaraderie I've developed with teachers and staff in all areas of the school. I think it is essential to staff morale to focus a lot of time and energy into integrating new teachers and staff members in a thoughtful way. That way they have support throughout the school, not just in their dept.

Administration (5 responses)

Although the principal's job is demanding and time consuming, Dr. Magee should interact more with teachers and students. She should be walking around campus during lunch time so she can get to know students and students know who is the principal.

I think some admin decisions are made without getting feedback from the staff that will be affected by their decision. These situations don't create a sense of partnership or help with morale.

I think the Executive Director needs to be more available to staff/teachers during non-teaching hours. It is very frustrating when 5-6 times a week I can't get a hold of her or she is unable to return e-mails. Granted she might have a huge number to return, but it is frustrating.

Climate (4 responses)

I have all good things to say about Pali, except that student academic performance has fallen. Grades and graduation rates are up, but only because there is so much pressure on teachers to lower their own standards. No one says, "lower your standards," but the counseling office pulls students out of classes when they are not doing well, rather than holding students accountable. Schoology is extremely destructive because it puts the onus on teachers rather than students to keep a planner. Students in regular classes don't know how to plan their lives. They constantly rely on input from teachers' emails and the "remind" texts, which take the accountability off students. These "supports" do not really teach; they are short term Band-Aids to get the kids through to graduation, but students will have trouble later. As one administrator once said to me, "Our job is not what they do when they leave here, it is getting them through to graduation." When that is the attitude from the A-building, students' academic abilities will falter. It's unfortunate. Not all technology is a good thing.

I'm astonished that the academic departments often seemed fractured & strong leadership is missing in matters such as problem math teachers. Although clearly the tolerance for poor teachers has been reversed in the past year.

Pali advocates the need for diversity, however, PCHS actions do not equal the talk. Pali needs follow-up meetings on diversity, not just a meeting when something occurs on campus. As a school community, we lack "follow-up" and "follow through" skills.

Facilities (3 responses)

We need a full functioning faculty cafeteria.

I really think all classrooms should have the same tech setup (mounted projectors and speakers, etc.)

Human Resources (5 responses)

I would like there to be more uniformity regarding protocol about the teacher absence policy.

I'm not complaining - really like our HR people - but I think revamping our hiring protocol - making it more transparent would help to eliminate some of the campus rumors.

I would like to see more transparent and consistent processes/procedures for hiring and for payroll.

Policies (5 responses)

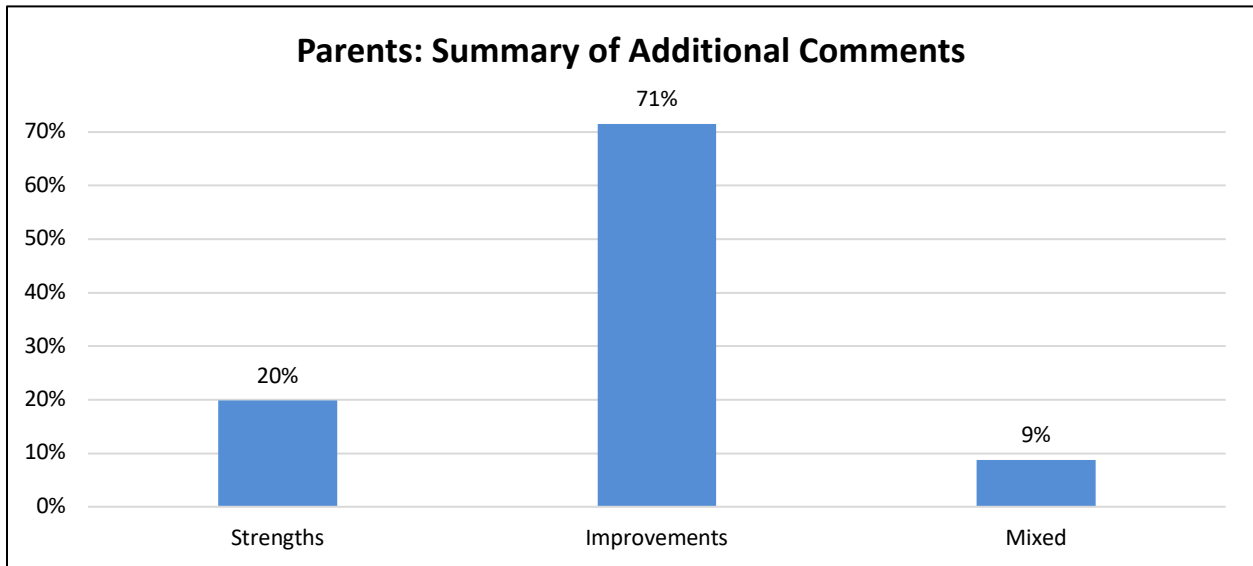
Can we stop full-day PLC pull-outs?

The math department needs smaller classes with more individualized instruction. For the most part, teachers are excellent...with a few exceptions.

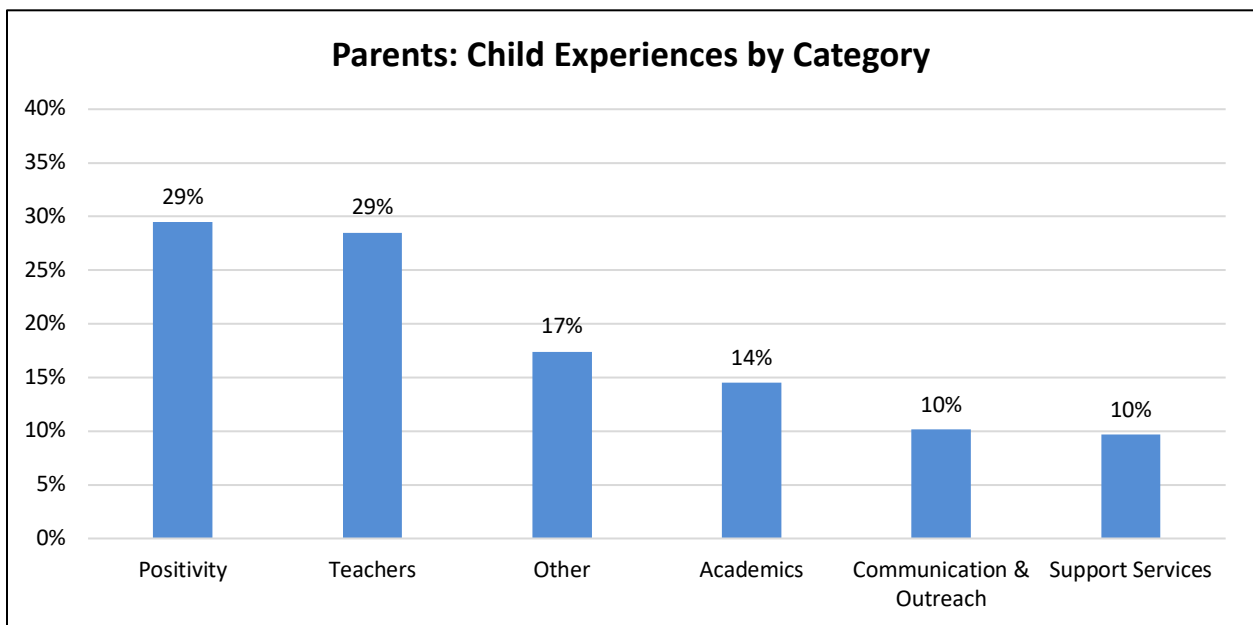
I think Pali should bring back student of the month, which promotes student success. Bring back AVID, which supports a diverse student population. Bring back the faculty cafeteria, which promotes faculty unity.

Open Ended: My Child’s Experiences

Parents



Of the comments provided by parents on their child’s experiences, 20% (41 responses) provided only positive feedback, while 71% (148 responses) offered suggestions for improvement. A final 9% (18 responses) of comments acknowledged both strengths and areas for growth.



When broken down into categories, 29% of comments (59 responses) expressed concerns about PCHS teachers, 14% (30 responses) about academics, and 10% each about communication and outreach (21 responses), and support services (20 responses). Of the comments addressing academics and teachers, over half explicitly mentioned the math department as an area for growth. An additional 17% of comments (36 responses) provided suggestions for improvements in ‘other’ areas and 29% of comments (61 responses) praised positive aspects of their child’s experience at PCHS.

Parents: Is there anything else you'd like to share about your child's experience at PCHS?

Parent responses fell into six broad categories. The frequency of responses per category is specified in parentheses and the categories are listed in descending order. Representative responses are listed, below, under each category.

Positivity (61 responses)

So far, my son has had a stellar experience. We are very pleased with the school.

A very happy environment where students are put first, and teachers and staff are friendly, great educators and the many educational and extracurricular student led activities, as well as sports teams, are truly top notch!

It is a very positive, engaging and supportive environment with staff/teachers, particularly the music department (marching band, drumline, orchestra).

So far, our experience has been good, and I've received positive feedback when needed, as well as prompt assistance on urgent matters. We look forward to continuing through graduation!

Teachers (59 responses)

The quality of teachers that care about their students is not great. There has been a teacher who told my son to look up the answer on Google, instead of taking the time to make sure his students understood. This is just one example of several undesirable teacher experiences. Also, it would be nice for teachers to input grades for student work in a timely manner.

The math department is still an issue...I have had two students both 99% on SAT in math and both students had regular C's in math because the teachers do not explain concepts fully. Math must be explained properly and I think Pali should raise money to buy out one teacher a year and have them go elsewhere so we get a good math department. I love the administration's efforts for sure, but the math department is not good.

Different teachers seem to have different standards in giving grades. Some teachers are hard to get good grades and I heard kids are switching classes due to this.

I am very disappointed in the lack of best practices and instruction in the math and science departments. We have had to pay for private tutoring for two years because of the lack of instruction. I know that there are some effective teachers in each department, however, my child has not received the benefit yet. I am hopeful for her junior and senior year, but it's very frustrating to have to consistently go outside the school for my child to learn the subject matter.

Other (36 responses)

The environment is on the impersonal side, but then with almost 3000 students I guess that's to be expected.

Cell phone use during school hours should not be allowed. Teachers are too lax regarding this rule.

My child has experienced several teachers who have strongly forced their political opinions on students, numerous times, with the result that students with different opinions were silenced.

The after-school traffic is sometimes impossible. There should be a place for cars to wait.

Academics (30 responses)

The math department is sub-par, this is known by school management, yet year after year nothing changes.

It is disappointing how rampant cheating is and how teachers/admin choose to ignore the issue. I have two students who take pride in their work, to only have kids cheat and affect the curve, and integrity of the classroom. At the private school I sent my oldest, they had an honors council and took cheating very seriously.

There is too much homework and it counts too heavily on grades. Students are graded every moment they are in school. The class size is limited only by the number of chairs that can be crammed into a room.

Communication & Outreach (21 responses)

I feel completely disconnected from my child's education. More interaction with teachers would be nice.

It is difficult to get prompt responses from counselors.

The notifications are too frequent on general info and too complicated or not informative enough regarding classroom assignments and grades, with some teachers not using online resources at all.

I have reached out to school administrators twice in the past two years. In both cases, responses were either very delayed or non-existent.

Support Services (20 responses)

The school psychologist is booked for the entire year; we need more school psychologists.

Very good school but very big and too much for counselors to manage effectively.

The school does a terrible job of supporting the 504 plan regulations; it is a constant battle.

I think there needs to be more guidance when it comes to AP classes...how many to take, etc.

Conclusion: Comparing Stakeholder Responses

Overall, stakeholders expressed very positive views of Palisades Charter High School in 2018 and upward trends in stakeholder satisfaction from 2015 through 2018 were apparent for many indicators. All groups provided overall favorable reviews of the academic program, school environment, administrators, and teachers. However, each group had concerns in specific areas and gave suggestions for how PCHS could improve. Parents and students were displeased with certain academic departments. Parents also expressed some concerns about communication, counselling services and school security. It is useful to explore the questions and categories in which the school received less enthusiastic responses to identify potential areas for growth and improvement.

Academic Program

Overall, stakeholders had a very positive view of the academic program at Palisades Charter High School. In particular, parents and students praised the English and social studies departments, and the AP courses offered. Staff, parents, and students all agreed that rigorous classes were available to students regardless of their background, and that all students were held to high standards.

However, as in prior years, parent and student open-ended responses expressed deep concern with the PCHS math department and the foreign language department to a lesser extent. Parents and students felt that the math department was unresponsive to criticism and that issues with both faculty and instructional quality had persisted for years. Parents described feeling compelled to seek external tutoring because of the deficits they perceived in the quality of the math program at PCHS. It is important to note, however, that these critical comments in the open-ended responses, while representative of an important constituency of PCHS stakeholders, do not represent the majority of respondents. Most parents and students indicated positive feelings about the math and foreign language departments in response to Likert-Scaled questions. Further, in the open-ended responses some parents did single out AP and upper-level math courses as providing a satisfactory math education for their child.

That said, given how persistent the critiques of the math and foreign language departments have been over the years in which this survey has been administered, steps should be taken to address them. First, PCHS should consider administering student evaluation surveys of the math and foreign language department faculty to identify teachers whom students feel are providing inadequate academic support. Further, consider conducting more frequent informal observations of faculty in those areas. This could include both observations from administrators and “peer to peer” observations in which high-performing teachers can serve as models and peer coaches to those needing improvement. Currently, a notable proportion of staff respondents reported that school personnel did *not* share constructive criticism with each other. This practice could help counter this trend, and could even be inter-departmental, with math and foreign language teachers observing the well-regarded history faculty and vice versa. Building relationships and sharing practices *across* as well as *within* subjects could strengthen and diversify the pedagogical strategies of the teachers whom students and parents feel are disinterested or stagnant in their teaching practices. To incentivize buy-in, explore whether completing a certain amount of peer observations, debriefings and collaborative planning could be used to fulfill teacher professional development requirements.

Further, consider offering content specific professional development on how the math department could better engage its students. Given how critical success in math is for many post-secondary pathways, PCHS should be open to serious investment in improving the instructional quality of its math faculty, which may include financially sponsoring teachers to undertake summer professional development. As parents most commonly prioritized “improving instruction” when asked about where PCHS should concentrate its fundraising endeavors, it is likely they would be supportive of such an initiative. It is understandable that teachers in the subject areas singled out here may feel that their hard work is being diminished and become defensive about the critiques they have received over the years, so it is important that most conversations between teachers, administrators and instructional mentors prioritize an emphasis on growth in teaching rather than on punitive consequences.

Finally, some students indicated feeling they received inadequate supplemental academic assistance from teachers, particularly for their foreign language classes. Three quarters of the staff surveyed agreed that more academic support for low-performing students was necessary at PCHS. As such, consider standardizing the structure of tutoring school-wide so that academic assistance in each subject is evenly available before and after school and at lunch. The hours and locations of tutoring should be publicized widely. Departments can internally divide up office hours so that students know there is *always* an instructor they can seek out for help in the subject they need (even if is not their own), but no individual teachers feel they are having to dedicate unsustainable amounts of non-instructional work time to tutoring.

School Environment & Working Conditions

Staff, parents, and students at PCHS had positive opinions of the environment and culture. Parents and students felt that all students were treated equally, and staff reviews of their working conditions continued to improve. Staff felt that morale was higher than in previous years and that the administration was more likely to include them in important decision making for the school. Further, unlike in prior years, very few stakeholder respondents raised concerns about school facilities or cleanliness.

An issue that, in light of current events, received much more attention from parents in both Likert-Scaled and open-ended response questions in 2018 was that of campus safety. This is a challenging issue for administrators nationwide to grapple with, particularly because parent sentiment on how best to address the anxiety that families and students hold towards campus security is very mixed. At PCHS, many parents expressed positive views about the steps that have already taken to keep students safe from school-based violence. A contingent of parents at PCHS wished to see more visible security including more armed security and police officers, fewer entry points, and more substantial physical security measure like walls and fences. Other parents in the open-ended response section noted, however, that most school shootings are the results of individuals already inside the school and that instead of adding more security measures, the school should augment their provision of mental health services and counselling. Some parents on both sides of the debate indicated that their child had high levels of anxiety about violence in school. On the technical details of campus security PCHS should consult with expert firms on best practices. PCHS should also consider expanding its provision of counselling and

mental health services to provide students with outlets to process emotional struggles and the anxiety induced by a fear of school-based violence. Because of the understandable level of emotional investment from parents and students on this issue, thoughtful messaging and community engagement is critical. Consider holding an assembly or town hall at the beginning of the year to allow the community to express their opinions and for the school to explain its strategy for keeping students safe and ensuring students *feel* safe. Inviting an expert to explain your security procedures may also help maintain confidence in campus safety at PCHS.

An additional concern expressed in the open-ended response section by some parents was a perceived prevalence of on-campus drug use. Review both the National Institute on Drug Abuse for drug prevention suggestions and your existing campus policies. Then, hold professional development for staff and administration on following these guidelines and handling drug offenses when they occur. Ensure that enforcement of drug use policies is consistent for all students and increase surveillance of “problem” areas to deter drug use before it occurs. Consider forming a student committee to invite dialogue and peer-to-peer conversations about the harms and risks of on-campus drug use.

Teacher Effectiveness

All three stakeholder groups gave positive reviews of the teachers at PCHS. Staff identified the teaching faculty as the school’s greatest strength and praised the comradery, dedication and caring attitudes of teachers. Parents noted how invested teachers were in their child’s success and highlighted English and history faculty as well as teachers of older grade levels as highlights of the school. Further, students expressed the sense that their teachers genuinely cared about them, were passionate about teaching, and wanted them to succeed.

A consistent minority of parents again expressed concerns with the effectiveness of the math and foreign language teachers. In addition to considering the recommendations provided in the “Academic Program” section, the school should also make a concerted effort to show parents and students that they are actively listening to concerns about those departments. PCHS could, for example, hold listening sessions in which parents can discuss their child’s experiences with their math or foreign language teachers and provide suggestions for improving academic outcomes in those subjects.

Another concern brought up again by parents in 2018 was the challenge of communication from teachers about their child’s academic progress. While most parents knew how to use Infinite Campus and Schoology, some complained that these platforms were not updated frequently enough by teachers to be useful. Further, some said that teachers would upload assignments too late for students to have adequate time to complete them. To ensure that parents and students receive timely information the school should institute explicit policies on teacher engagement with these platforms. For instance, teachers may be expected to have all assignments uploaded by the beginning of a unit and update grades within a week of an assignment being collected. Considering the busy schedules of teachers, maintaining two different platforms to update parents on assignments and grades is a significant time investment, so try to provide additional time and support to teachers to complete these tasks. Allow for training and worktime for constructing

their course platforms and uploading assignments *before* the school year begins. If teachers have regular staff or departmental meetings set aside time for teachers to update their online gradebooks at those meetings. PCHS could also consider offering an incentive to the department who best meets these expectations for communication of student assignments and achievement.

Administrator Effectiveness & Support Services

The results of the 2018 survey show that opinions of the administration at PCHS have continued to improve. While some parents felt that administrators such as the dean were not approachable, and that some communication issues between PCHS teachers and parents persisted, most parent respondents provided positive feedback. Students of all grade levels indicated positive feelings about the administration but had a mixed understanding of how to report complaints to administrators. To counter this, make sure to cover the processes for student reporting of rights violations and other issues at beginning of the year assemblies, and post the complaint procedures in highly visible locations including in the administrative offices.

A frequent concern expressed by parents in open-ended responses was a perceived inadequacy of the current college counselling staff to effectively serve such a large student body. Some parents felt their child was not receiving enough individualized attention in terms of their college preparation and trajectory. PCHS should review the current case-loads and responsibilities for counselling staff to confirm if counsellors do indeed have adequate time available to serve all students, or if the hiring of additional staff should be considered. In the event that such hires are not feasible for budgetary reasons, consider bringing in external organizations like AVID to work with high-need sub-populations, Survey students on the areas in which they feel counselling is necessary and hold group information sessions wherever there is substantial overlap in student need, such as if many students are considering applying to the same schools, or a lot of students have questions about soliciting letters of recommendation. College students may also be willing to volunteer to work with students on writing college essays or preparing for the SAT/ACT, so consider reaching out to local post-secondary institutions, such as UCLA.

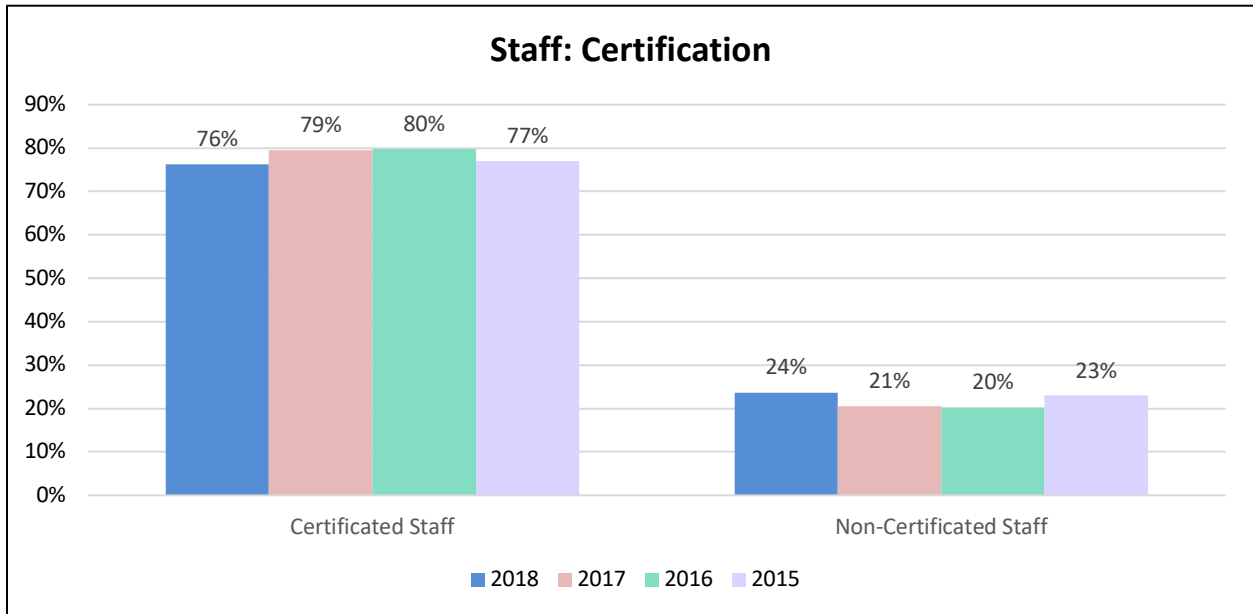
Staff perceptions of the administration continued to improve in 2018. Staff indicated feeling more recognized and appreciated for their work, but still expressed a belief that this could be improved. Many felt they had little role in shaping the school's policies and practices. Consider creating a joint teacher-administrative advisory committee including teachers in different subject areas and with varying levels of seniority, in which school policy is discussed and the faculty are provided with an opportunity to advance their perspective. Further, a substantial proportion of the staff felt that the teacher evaluation system did not provide constructive feedback and was not fair and transparent. Consider increasing the frequency of informal, formative evaluations so that teachers become used to being observed and provided with feedback. Ensure that teachers are substantive collaborators in their professional goal setting and that observations and debriefs are centered around aspects of instructional practice that teachers have themselves identified as important to their professional and pedagogical growth. This way, teachers will feel they are being set up for success on their formal, cumulative evaluations and that the standards on which they are being evaluated are meaningful to them.

Moving Forward

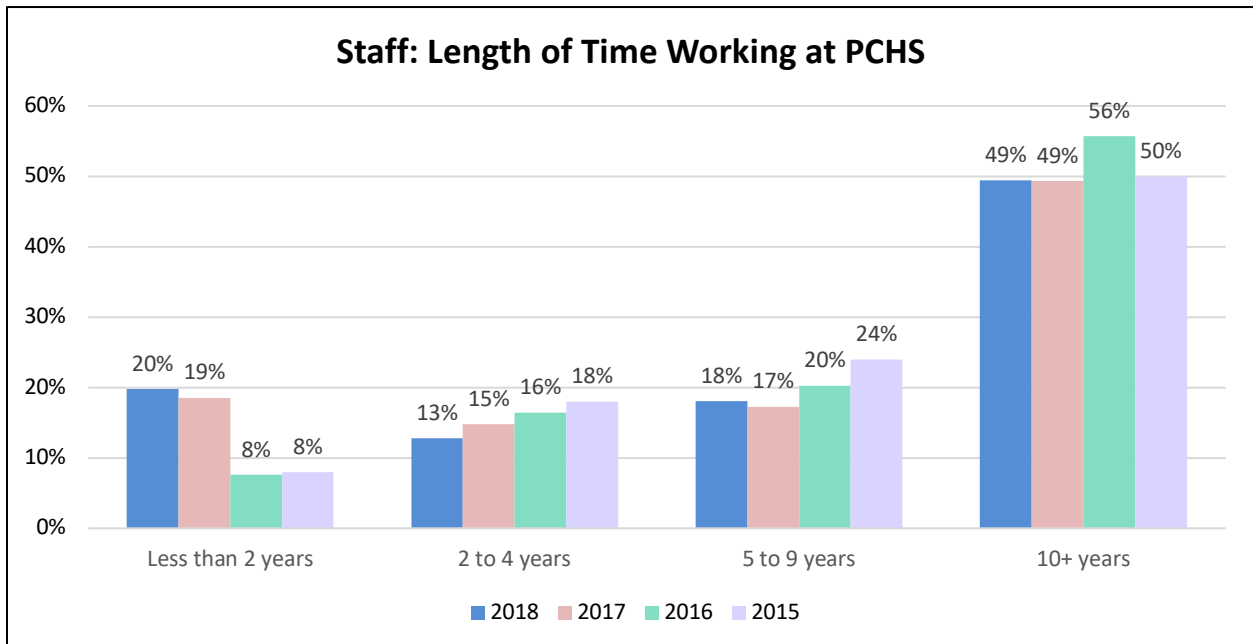
Consider adjusting the academic program section for the staff survey as the current items are not always getting specific responses. For instance, the survey could ask about staff as a whole instead of asking faculty to only evaluate themselves. Further, to follow up on the mixed parent views about campus security, consider asking more specific questions about school safety in 2019. Additionally, consider partnering with SRI to administer teacher evaluations for the math and foreign language departments, or to provide more specific instructionally focused questions to the faculty in those departments next year. This may allow for PCHS to address more specific issues with the math and foreign language departments instead of receiving repetitious general feedback.

Appendix: Respondent Demographics

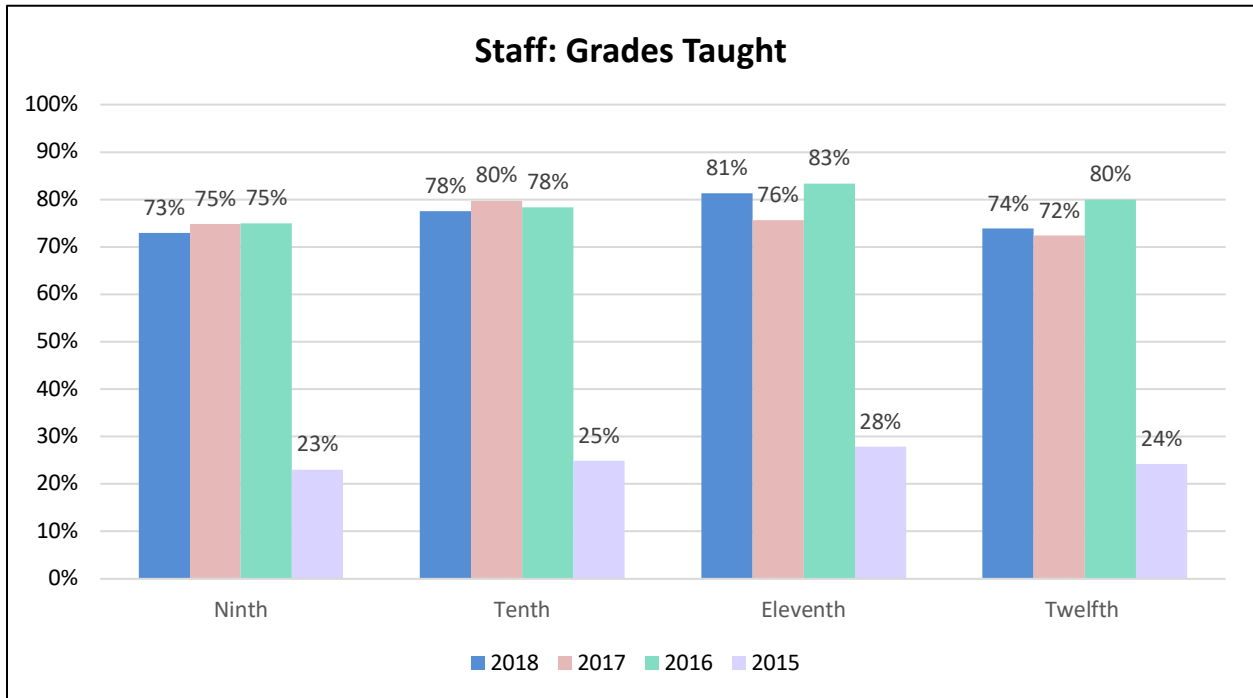
Staff



A clear majority of staff respondents to the 2018 survey were certificated staff (76% / 132 responses).

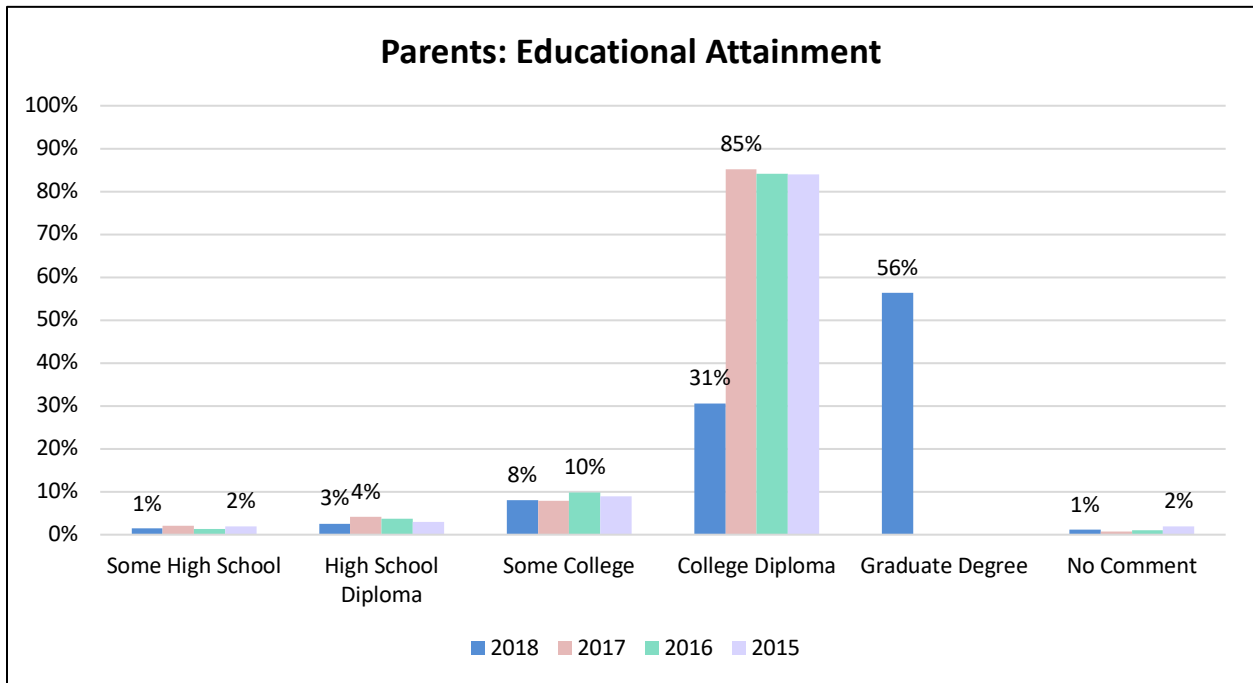


Roughly half of staff respondents have been working at PCHS for ten or more years (49% / 85 responses). One fifth of staff respondents (20% / 34 responses) have been working at PCHS for less than two years.

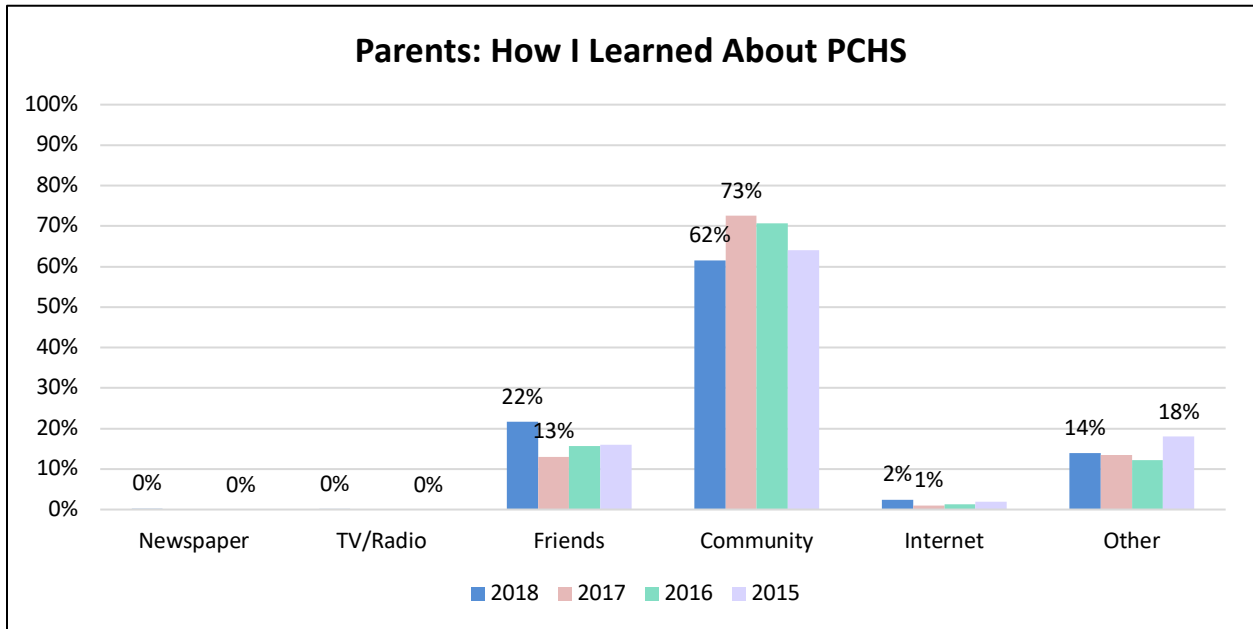


High school teachers were relatively evenly represented by grade, with eleventh grade teachers being slightly overrepresented (81% / 87 responses), and ninth grade teachers being slightly underrepresented (73% / 78 responses).

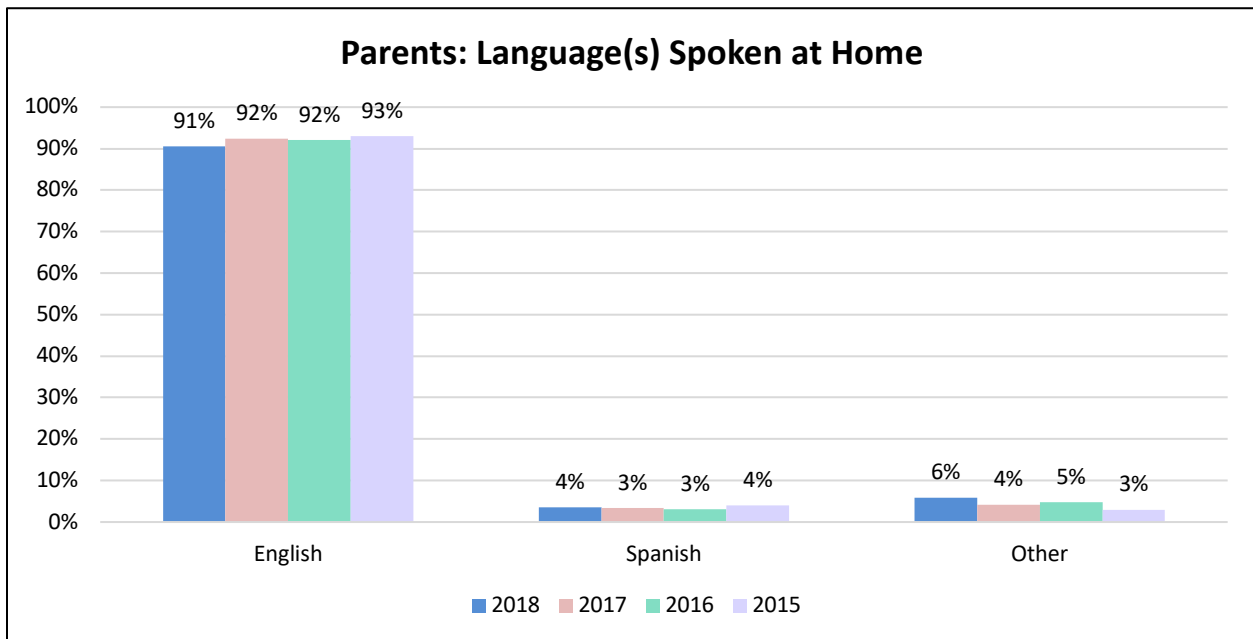
Parents



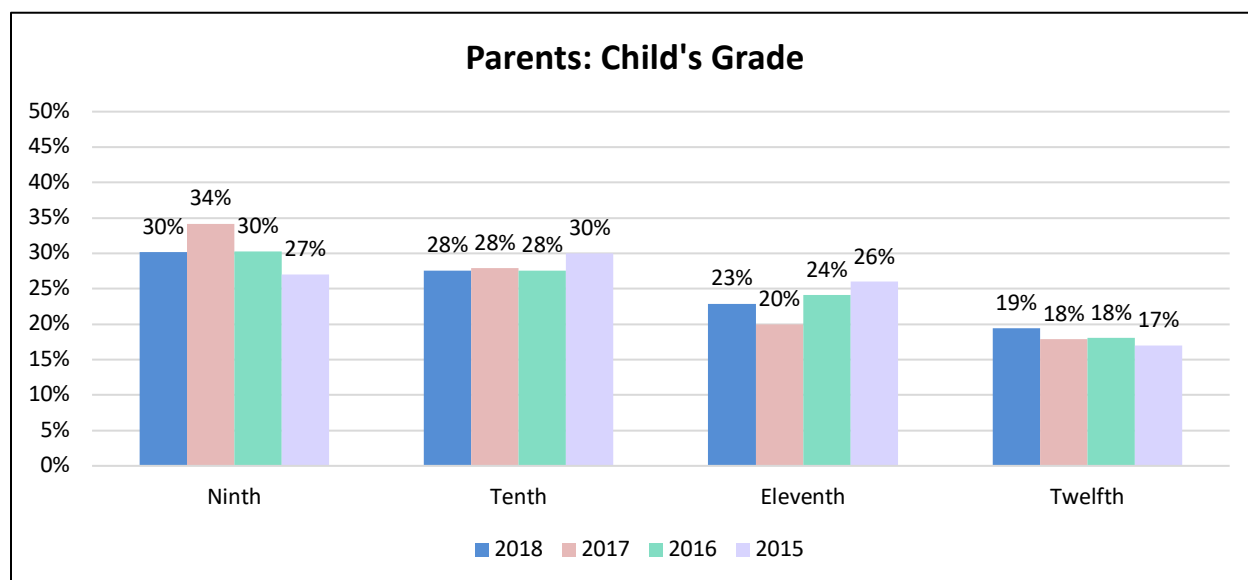
Just over half of parent respondents in 2018 had received a graduate degree (56% / 232 responses). Altogether, parent respondents who reported graduating college (including graduate degrees) increased slightly in 2018 (87% / 357 responses), compared to 2017 (85% / 248 responses). Other rates of educational attainment remained relatively consistent across years that data were collected. In 2018, twenty-three parents completed some college (8%), twelve received a high school diploma (4%) and six completed some high school (2%). Two parents chose not to respond (1%).



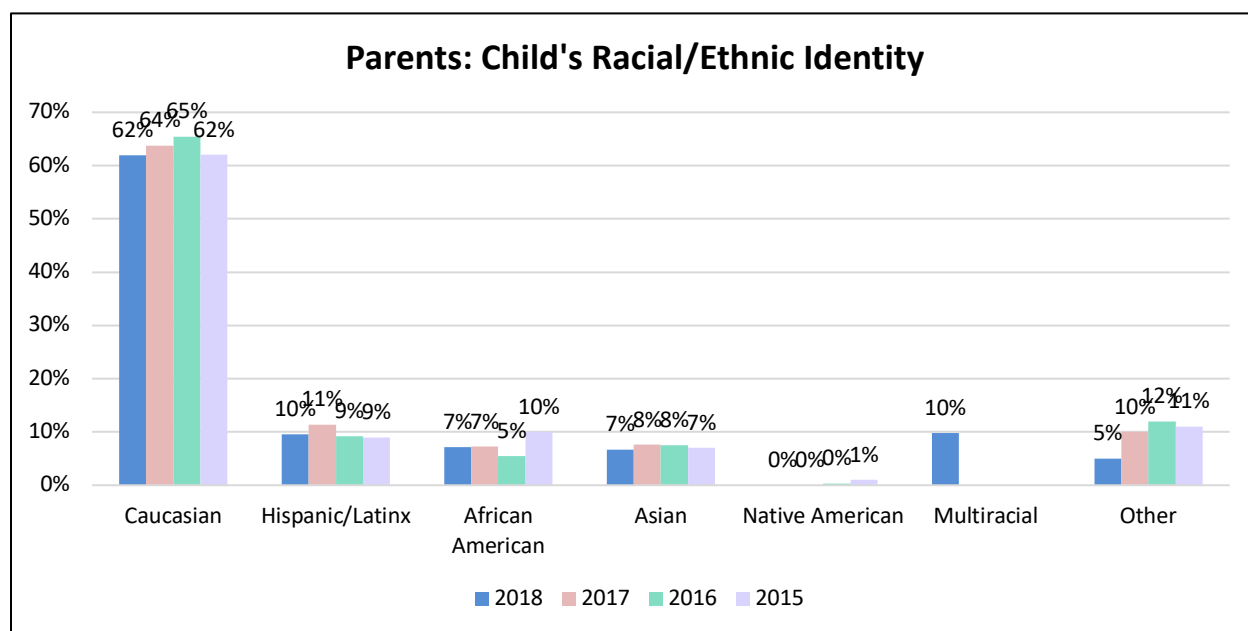
Across years that data were collected, most parents learned about Palisades Charter High School through their community. However, in 2018, an increased share of parent respondents reported learning about PCHS from friends (22% / 254 responses), compared to 2017 (13% / 38 responses). In 2018, twenty-nine parents learned of the school through the Internet (2%), compared to three parents (1%) in 2017. In 2018, fourteen percent (164 responses) of parent respondents reported learning about PCHS through other venues, a proportion relatively consistent with previous years.



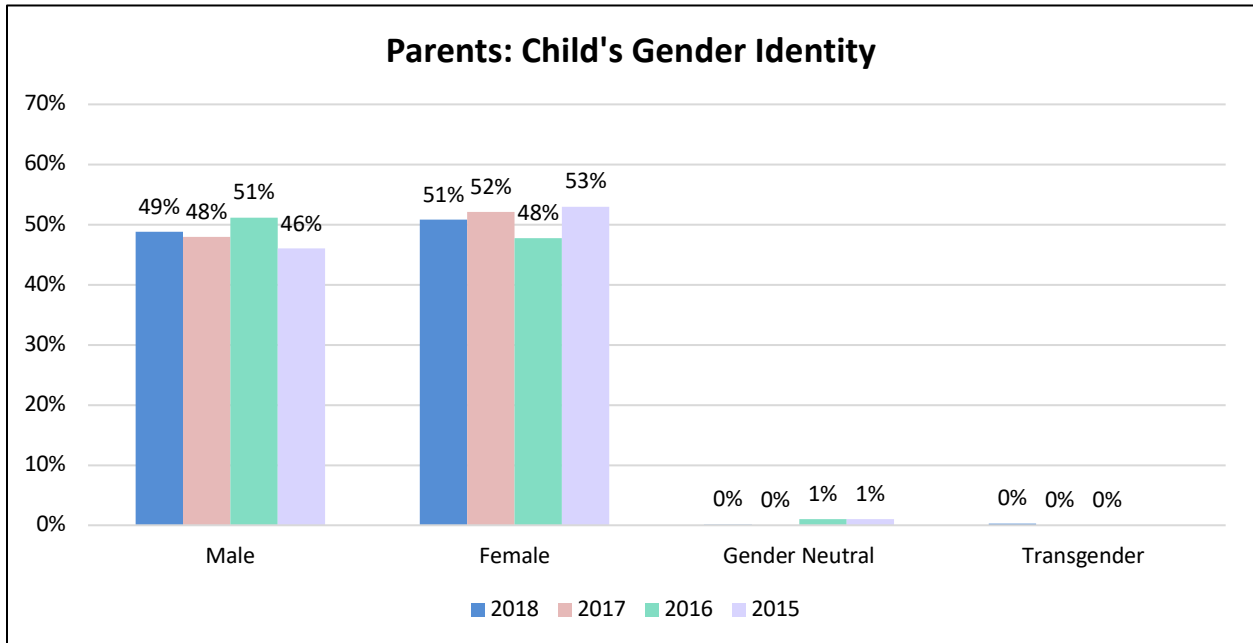
Across survey years, nearly every parent indicated English was the primary language spoken in their home. This portion decreased by one percentage point in 2018 (91% / 893 responses). Thirty-five parents stated that Spanish was their home language (4%) in 2018, and fifty-eight parents spoke a language other than English or Spanish at home (6%).



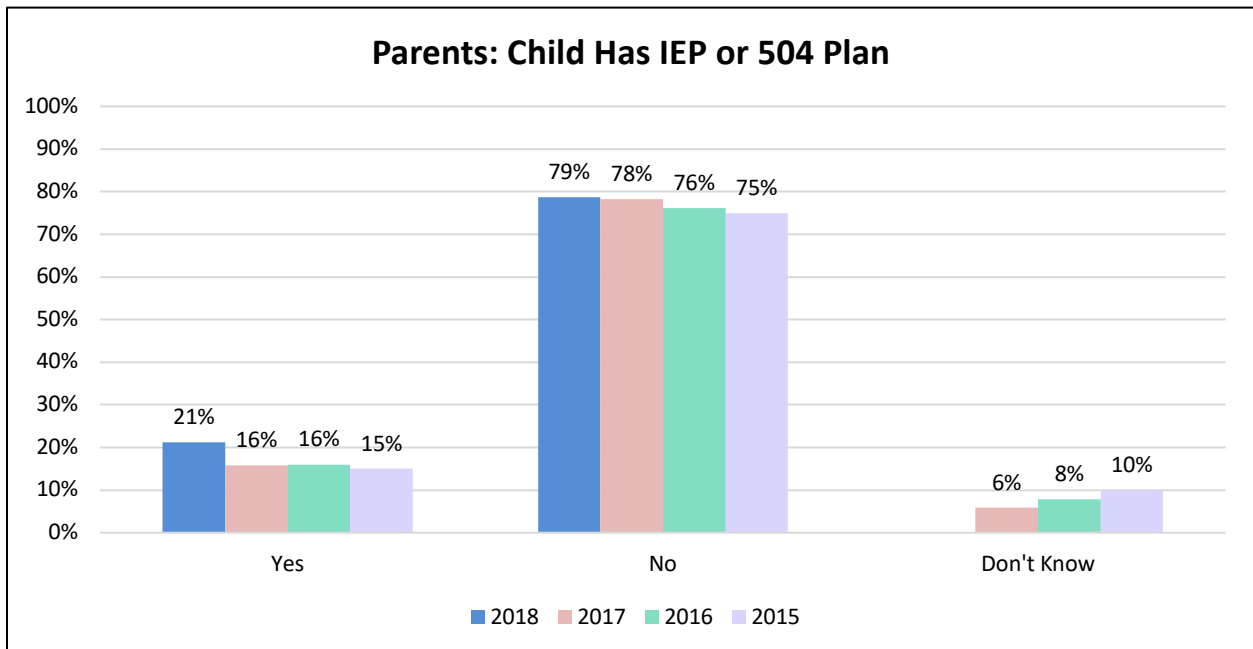
Parents of younger students were consistently the most represented in the surveys between 2015 and 2018. In 2018, 30% of parent respondents had children in ninth grade (99 responses), and 28% had children in the tenth grade (280 responses). Twenty-three percent of parents had children in eleventh grade (232 responses), and 19% were parents of twelfth-grade students (197 responses).



Across years of comparison, roughly two-thirds of parents identified their child as Caucasian; the portion decreased slightly in 2018 (62% / 610 responses). The percentages of parents who identified their children as Hispanic/Latinx, African American, and Asian also remained relatively consistent across comparison years, though there was a slight decrease in percentage of African American students in 2018 (7% / 70 responses) compared to 2015 (10% / 36 responses). Though there was a sharp decline in respondents who reported their children as other races in 2018 (5% / 49 responses), this may be explained by responses to the “multiracial” option added in 2018: ten percent of parents (96 responses) identified their children as identifying with this category.



Parents of male and female children were split almost evenly in half across years of comparison. Fifty-one percent of parents identified their child as female (501 responses) and forty-nine percent identified their child as male (481 responses) in 2018. While two parents (1%) in 2015 and three parents in 2016 (1%) identified their children as gender neutral, no parents did so in 2017 or 2018.



The percentage of parents whose children had an IEP or 504 Plans increased in 2018, when compared to the previous survey years. In 2018, twenty-one percent of parents reported their child as having an IEP or 504 Plans, compared to sixteen percent in 2017 (46 responses) and 2016 (47 responses), and fifteen percent in 2015 (52 responses).