

RESULTS

(Combined results from Summit clickers, hard copy questionnaire, and online questionnaire.
Results are in bold, top answer is in red and comments received are at the end).

SCHOOL TALK SUMMIT

October 21, 2009

1. Most parents give the Salem-Keizer School District high marks for its operation and performance.

True **585 (75%)**

False **195 (25%)**

Number of Responses: **780**

2. Most local residents learn about our school district by talking to one another.

True **646 (81%)**

False **151 (19%)**

Number of Responses: **797**

3. We give our students letter grades of A, B, C, D, and F to show how well they're doing in each class. Suppose we graded Salem-Keizer schools the same way. What letter grade would you give our local schools?

A **72 (9%)**

B **490 (61%)**

C **199 (25%)**

D **36 (4%)**

F **6 (1%)**

Number of Responses: **803**

4. Which source do you trust the most for accurate information about our school district?

District/school employees **474 (60%)**

News media **45 (6%)**

District publications/Website **204 (25%)**

Other citizens **72 (9%)**

Number of Responses: **795**

5. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

The district makes wise decisions about educating our children.

Strongly agree **188 (24%)**

Somewhat agree **500 (63%)**

Somewhat disagree **83 (10%)**

Strongly disagree **24 (3%)**

Number of Responses: **795**

6. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
The district makes wise decisions about spending money.

Strongly agree **132 (16%)**
Somewhat agree **418 (52%)**
Somewhat disagree **200 (25%)**
Strongly disagree **53 (7%)**

Number of Responses: **803**

7. How much of our budget is spent on salaries and other expenses directly related to classroom instruction?

50-60 percent **71 (9%)**
60-70 percent **184 (24%)**
70-80 percent **306 (39%)**
80-90 percent **215 (28%)**

Number of Responses: **776**

8. The district always uses public input when it makes important decisions.

Strongly agree **119 (15%)**
Somewhat agree **410 (51%)**
Somewhat disagree **212 (26%)**
Strongly disagree **60 (8%)**

Number of Responses: **801**

9. Our district is transparent about its problems.

Strongly agree **100 (12%)**
Somewhat agree **379 (48%)**
Somewhat disagree **237 (30%)**
Strongly disagree **80 (10%)**

Number of Responses: **796**

10. The public is overloaded with information about schools that it does not understand.

Strongly agree **136 (17%)**
Somewhat agree **350 (44%)**
Somewhat disagree **222 (28%)**
Strongly disagree **89 (11%)**

Number of Responses: **797**

11. We made about \$27 million in budget cuts this year due to decreased state funding. Based on what you know about the economy, what would you predict for next year's state funding for education as compared to this year?

Increase over this year **59 (7%)**
About the same **371 (47%)**
Slight decrease **252 (32%)**
Significant decrease **109 (14%)**

Number of Responses: **791**

12. If state funding decreases, we will likely make reductions in several areas. Which of these strategies should get the highest priority?

Increase class size **70 (9%)**

Further reduce purchases **313 (39%)**

Further reduce reserves **375 (47%)**

Further reduce compensation for administrators, teachers, classified staff **45 (5%)**

Number of Responses: **803**

13. The following were our priorities as we made budget cuts for this year. Which one of these values is most important to you if we need to make further cuts next year?

Minimize the impact on students **431(54%)**

Provide security for our employees by saving jobs as much as possible **163 (20%)**

Position ourselves for future years (i.e. remain financially strong and optimize student achievement opportunities) **143 (18%)**

Move forward in a way that brings us closer together **62 (8%)**

Number of Responses: **799**

14. In which area have you seen the most improvement in our district?

Improving student achievement **202 (27%)**

Effective organization to support student achievement **246 (33%)**

Leadership development **72 (10%)**

Public engagement **227 (30%)**

Number of Responses: **747**

15. In what way are you most likely to support our students?

Volunteer my time **184 (23%)**

Through my work **433 (54%)**

Contribute financially **25 (3%)**

Be an informed advocate for schools **158 (20%)**

Number of Responses: **800**

16. I am (if you are a district employee and a parent of S-K students, please choose District Employee):

District Employee **490 (61%)**

Parent of a Current Student **259 (32%)**

Non-Parent Citizen **56 (7%)**

Number of Responses: **805**

COMMENTS (a few people submitted comments on the hard copy questionnaire):

- Grade School in West Salem: Why can't SK take over the grade school on College Dr. that Blanchett or Salem Academy used up until 8/09, that would save money and would be room for growth. Having a 3rd grade school so close to 2 schools with no potential for student growth.
- Library: School libraries have books, computers and resources for our students to complete homework and do research. The libraries close very quickly after school – 3:30 set McNary. How can we work with volunteers to keep these vital resources open longer to benefit young people constructively occupied after school.
- Website: Our high school website (McNary) is extraordinarily inadequate. Current information, eg recent PSAT day, is not available. Senior scholarship (I have a senior) is out of date – I got current information from staff who had it but couldn't get it posted. This is a CRITICAL information portal. Keep it current! Events, community links, schedule changes ... like weird Wednesdays, programs, sports schedules, etc.
- Power Program: This program has grown into a wonderful asset to our community. The Whiteaker program is very well attended by students. Kudos to Michelle Hussman!
- You need to explain the charts (PowerPoint) to give parents a better understanding of the purpose of the schools.
- I hope the district will focus more on character development and leadership in our students.
- Meeting Date: Do not hold (could not read word) on a Wednesday night and hold it by feeder system at the feeder schools.
- What eco-friendly improvement are we making as we improve, fix or build new schools? Solar on roofs, (could not read word) water collection for irrigation.
- Closing the gap means lowering the bar for many of our students especially in elementary schools. The Board should be proud of our superintendent's work. She is building trust by engaging the public. You didn't answer the question about the spelling program. Open up school to in-district transfers by school strengths like Portland.
- Keep communication open as possible – provide the highlights and show how you are bringing the low lights up. Never be afraid to ask the community for help and support. They will support if you share with them the whys, where you are going, benefits to students and community, the list goes on.