Instrumental Lessons Survey

February 2026



Introduction to Survey

The elementary schools in both Berlin and Boylston have offered an instrumental music program for students in Grades 4 and 5 for many years. Students in this program participate in one 30-minute small group instrumental lessons lesson and one 45-minute whole group lesson each week. The bands at each school perform for the community several times throughout the year, including and a joint BES/BMS concert at the end of the school year. The elementary instrumental music program also contributes to the continuation of instrumental music opportunities at Tahanto Middle/High School.

As the district reviews how instructional time and enrichment opportunities are structured during the school day, we are seeking feedback from families about their perspectives on instrumental music at the elementary level and how it fits within the overall student learning experience. Please understand that this survey is focused on the small instrumental lessons and not the 45 minute block of whole group band instruction.

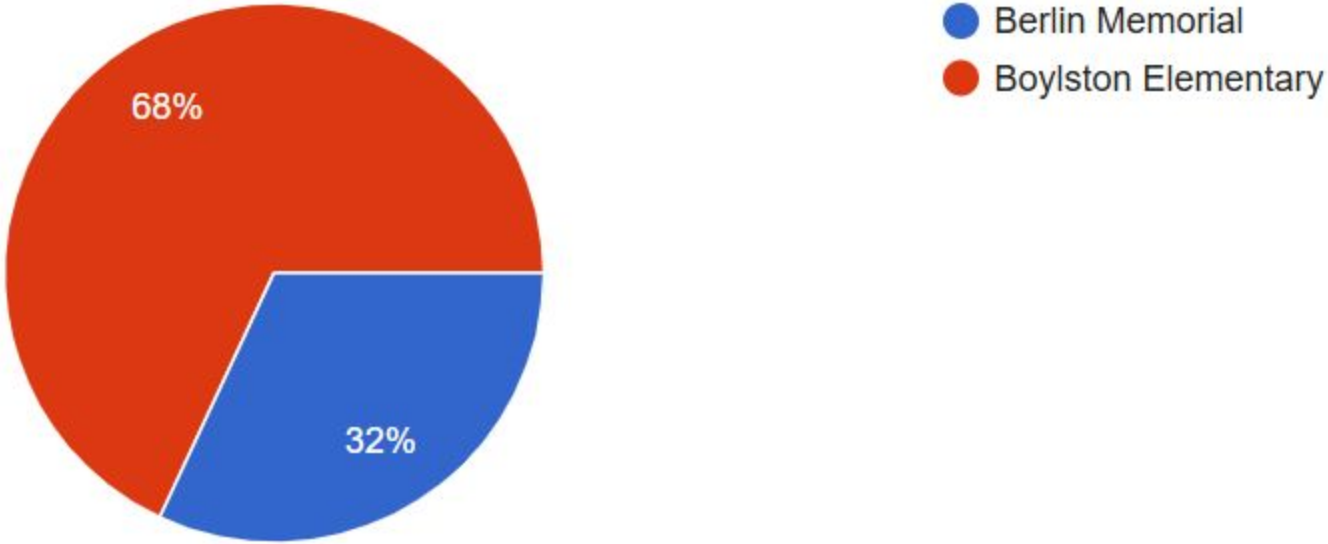
The goal of this short survey is to better understand current community perspectives and priorities related to this program. We appreciate your input.

Important Notes:

- **I brought Holley (the band and instrumental instructor) in on the conversation as she has a great deal of insight from her colleagues for creative solutions**
- **Partnered with Holley to brainstorm scheduling ideas based on feedback**
- **There is a consensus that band, chorus, and art - as well as many other elective opportunities throughout the educational journey -are incredibly valuable and important**
- **The concern focuses on scheduling INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS - not on the value of these opportunities**
- **Some students take: Chorus and Band and have Instrumental lessons - and this often equates to more total time than the total time spent in either science or social studies**

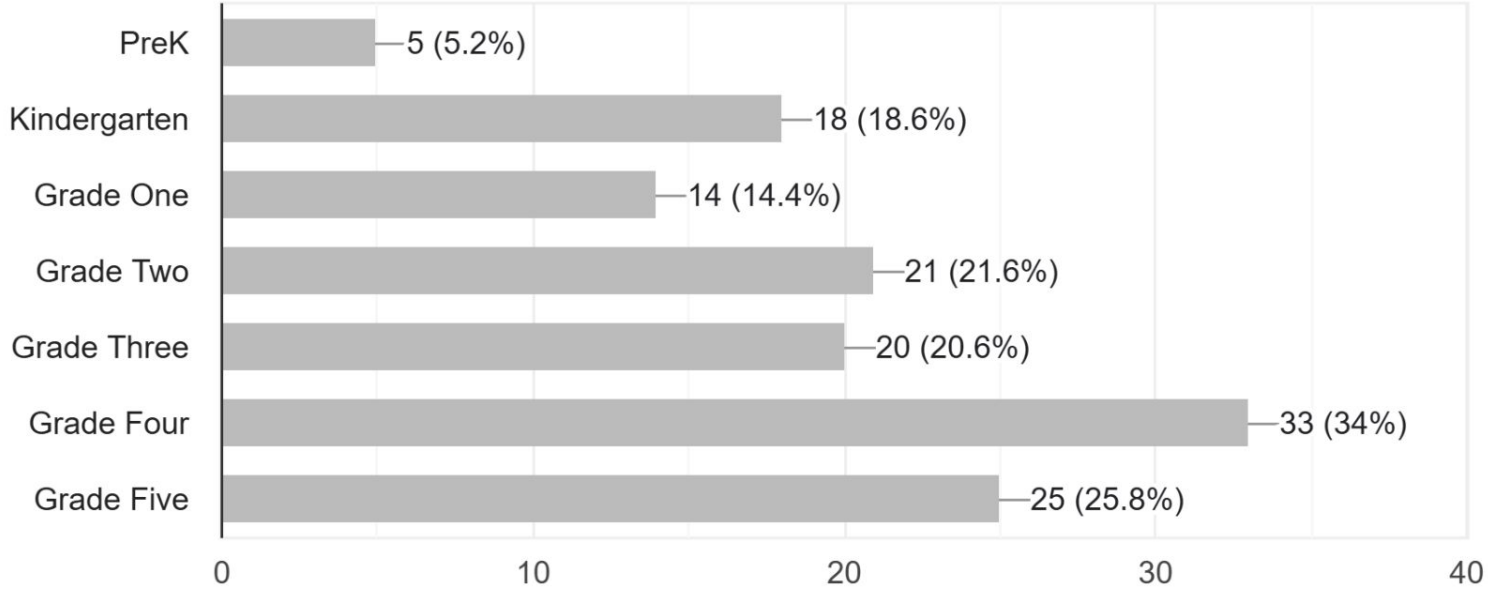
Which elementary school does your child/children attend?

97 responses



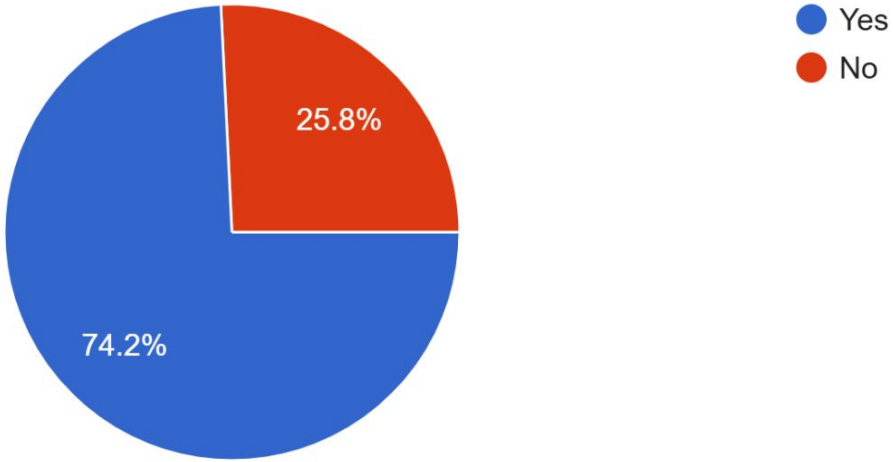
What grade or grades do you have children in? (Check all that apply)

97 responses



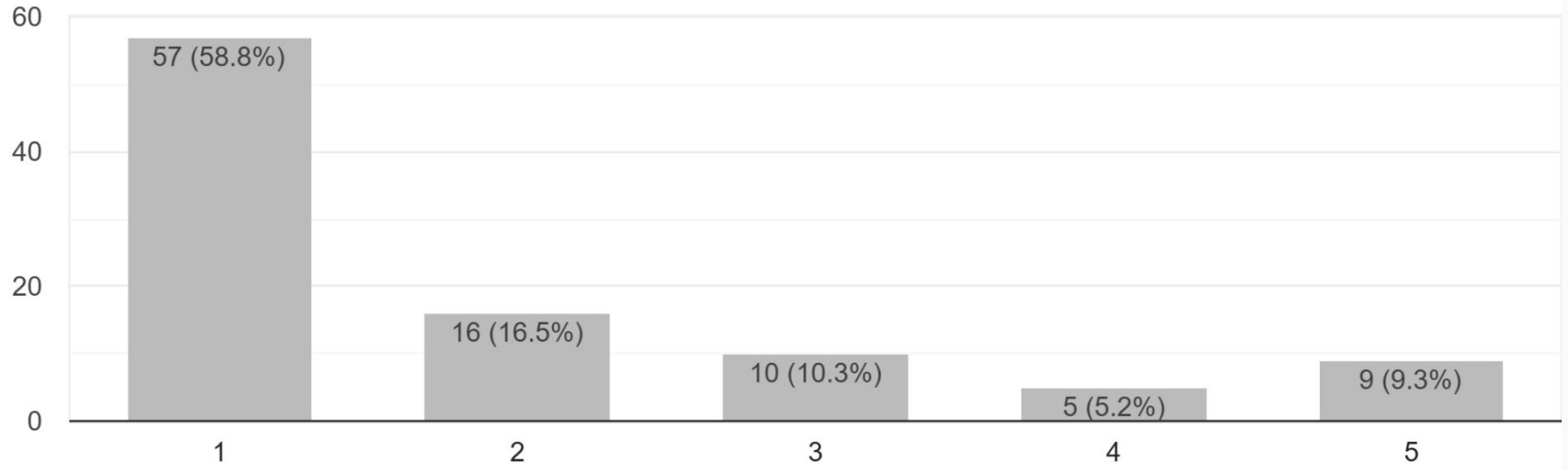
Do you now, or have you in the past, have children who have participated in the instrumental music program?

97 responses



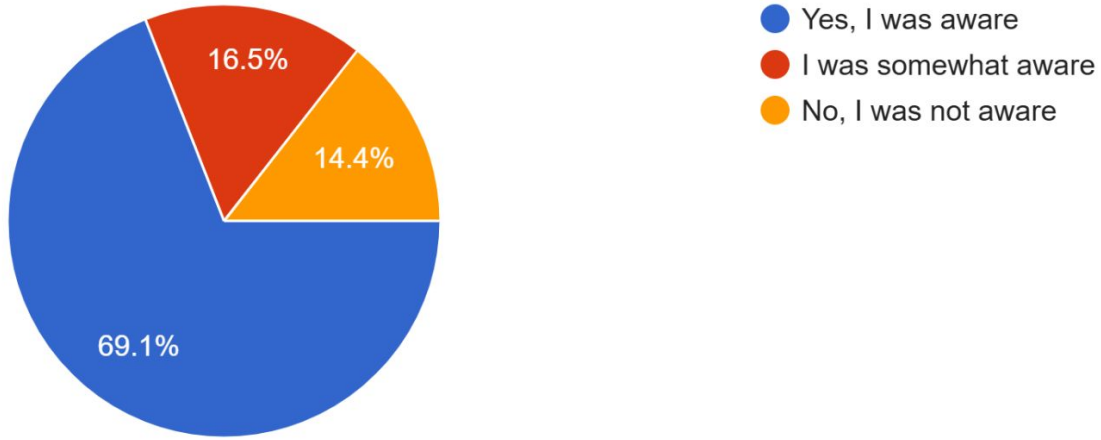
How important do you feel instrumental music (band) is for students in Graded 4-5?

97 responses



Prior to this survey, I was aware that instrumental lessons occur during the regular academic school day and may require students to miss some classroom instruction.

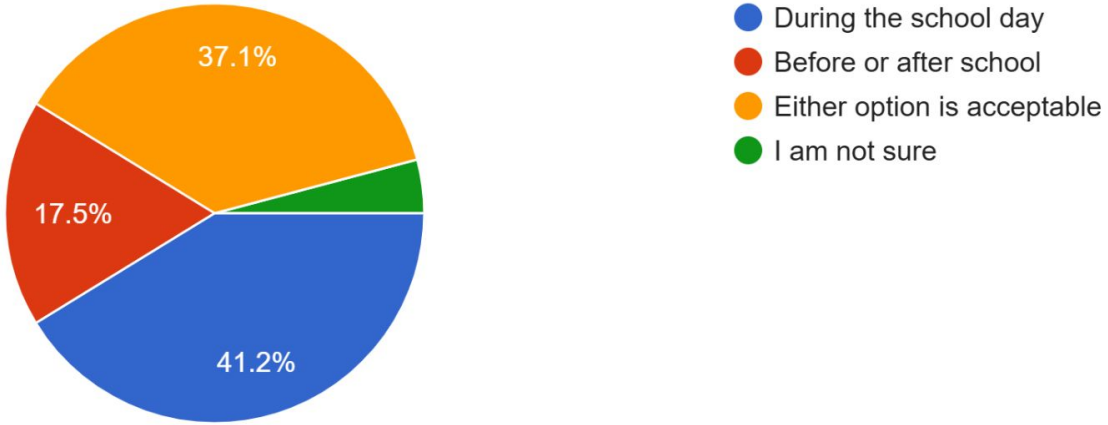
97 responses



When should instrumental lessons happen?

In your opinion, when should small group instrumental music instruction be offered?

97 responses



Key Takeaways from Family Feedback

- **Strong Support for Instrumental Music:** Families widely value the program for its benefits to creativity, confidence, teamwork, and overall student engagement.
- **Scheduling Concerns:** Many comments focused on students missing core academic time, with suggestions to rotate lessons or schedule during recess, lunch, specials, or before/after school.
- **Importance of In-School Access:** Families noted that moving lessons outside the school day could create transportation barriers and significantly reduce participation.
- **Ideas for Expansion:** Suggestions included earlier grade access, additional instruments (e.g., strings), improved coordination with classroom schedules, and expanded arts and STEM enrichment opportunities.