TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.

Student Survey

Public Information Office

04/24/21

Background and understanding the data

Survey Dates: April 20 to 23, a total of 4 days.

How was the survey shared: The survey was emailed directly to all students in grades 6-12.

Understanding weighted averages: Survey takers were asked to rank items by importance. Those ranking were compiled to calculate a weighted average score; this allows us to see overall how important survey takers ranked an individual item.

Weighted average is calculated by taking the number of response multiplied by the weighted value, this gives us the weighted sum which is divided by the sum total responses. Let's take an example of ten survey takers ranking three items, 1 being the highest and 3 the lowest rank.

In the table below, we see can how the survey takers ranked the items. To calculate the weighted average we assign each ranking a weight and multiple that weight by the number of responses for that answer, this gives of a weighted sum. We take the weighted sum and divide it by the total survey responses (in this case 10) and we get our weighted average.

Rank 1 = weight of 3 x number of responses = weighted sum / total survey responses = weighted average
Rank 2 = weight of 2 x number of responses = weighted sum / total survey responses = weighted average
Rank 3 = weight of 1 x number of responses = weighted sum / total survey responses = weighted average

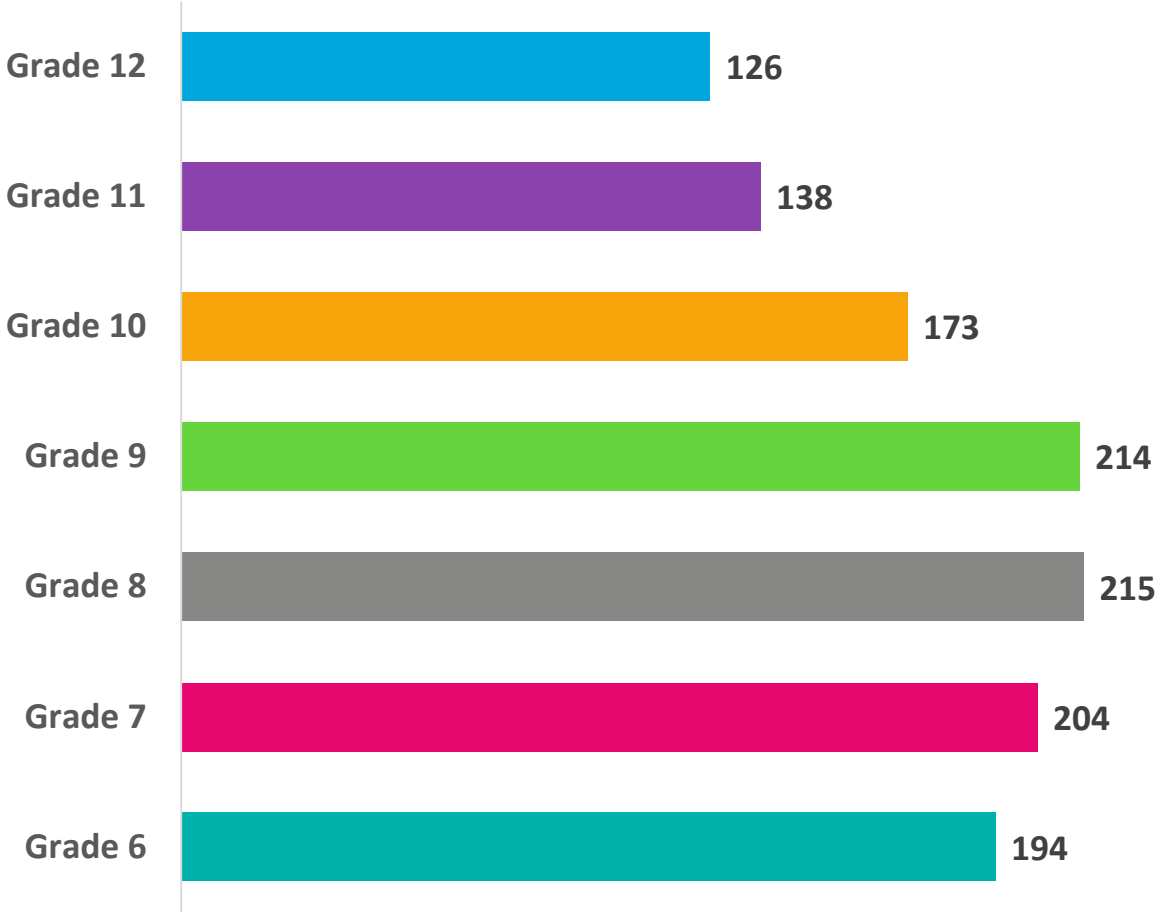
	Ranking			Weighted Sum	Weighted Average
	1	**2**	**3**		
Item A	4	4	2	22	2.2
Item B	1	4	5	16	1.6
Item C	5	2	3	22	2.2

Even though more survey takers ranked Item C as their number 1, it has the same weight as Item A when we consider the second and third rankings.

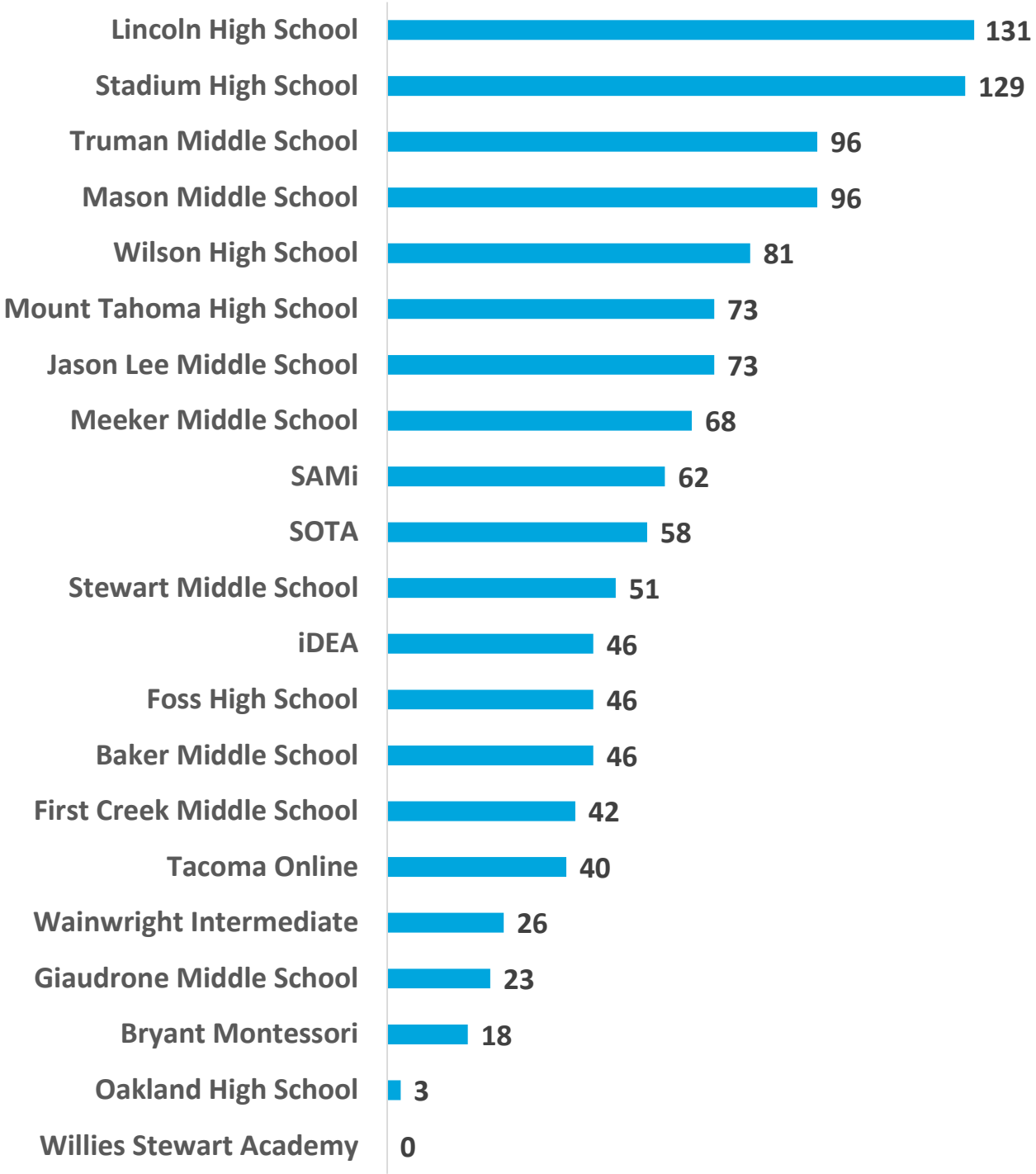
Comparing questions: The more items there are to rank the higher the possible weighted average, ***do not compare the weighted average of an item from one question to another***. For example, do not compare the weighted averages in Teaching Activity to Central Services, with 10 items for Teaching Activities and seven for Central Services, items in Teaching Activities will automatically have higher weighted averages.

Who responded by grade

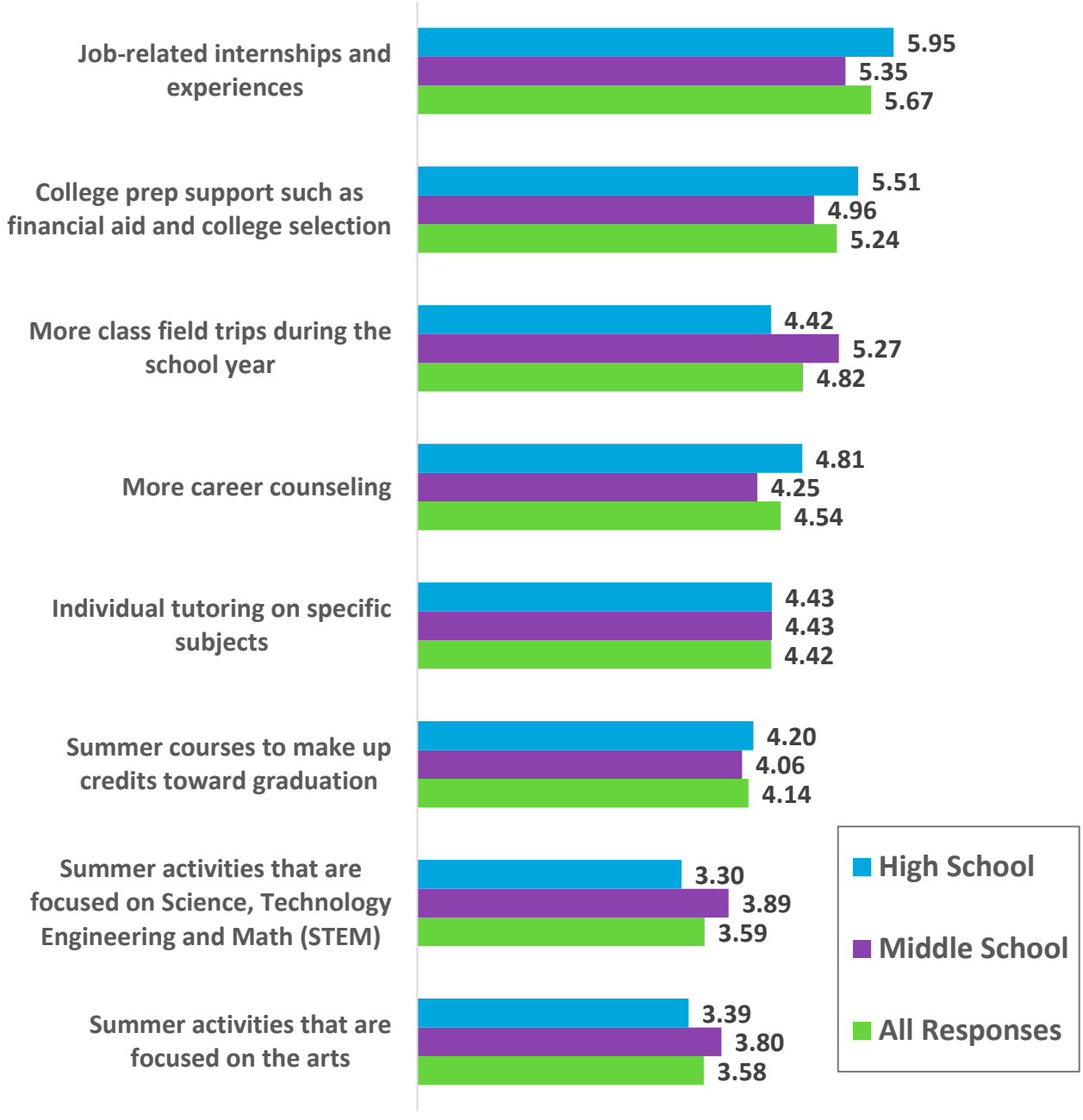
Grade 6	194	15.3%
Grade 7	204	16.1%
Grade 8	215	17.0%
Grade 9	214	16.9%
Grade 10	173	13.7%
Grade 11	138	10.9%
Grade 12	126	10.0%
Total Responses:	**1264**	



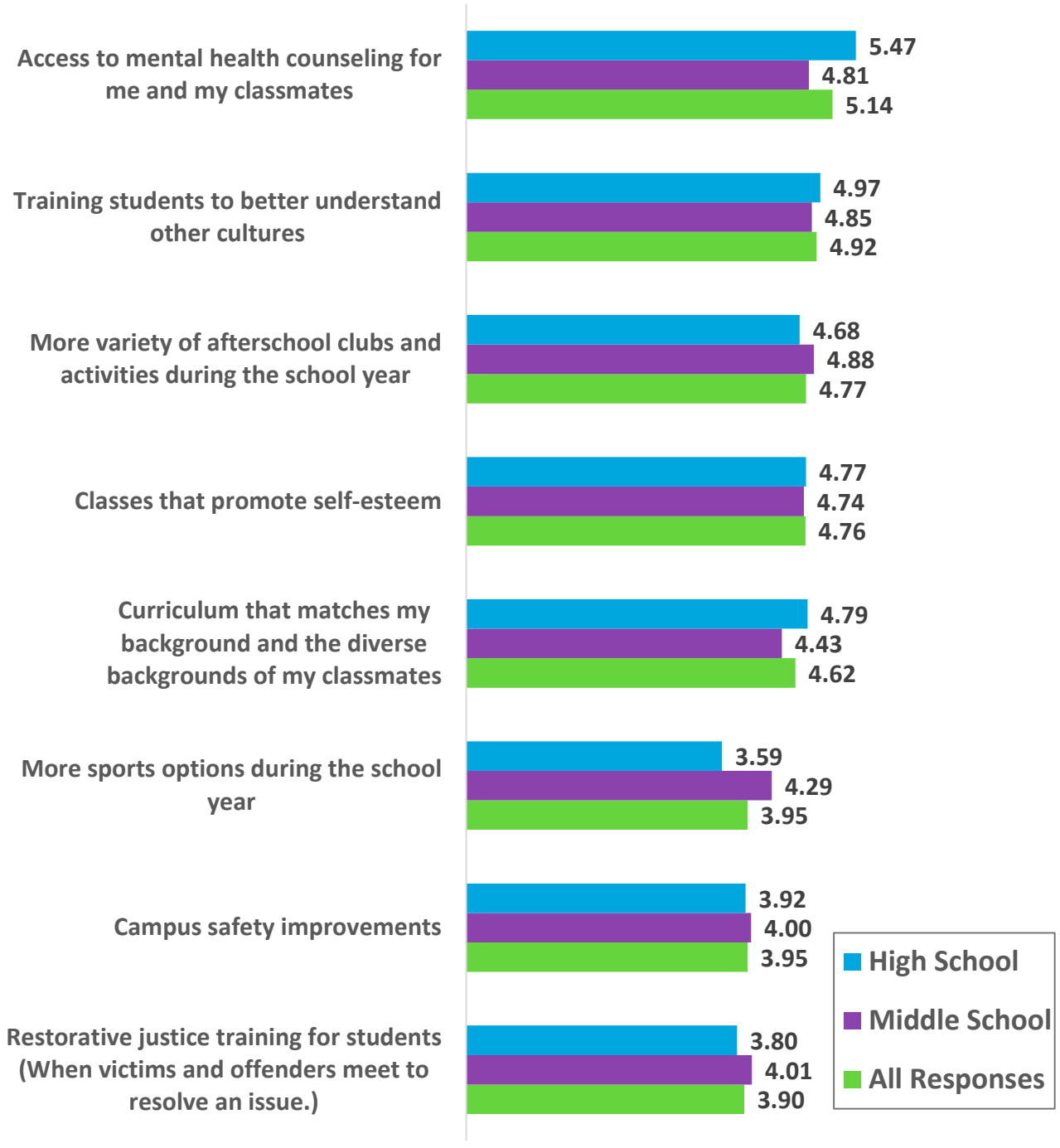
Who responded by school



Q1) To feel supported in my education, I would benefit from: *(Ranked in order of importance)*



Q2) To feel better connected to classmates and schools, I would benefit from:
(Ranked in order of importance)



Q3) Other suggestions for what TPS could invest in to help you and other students:

There were a total of 690 student comments on this question, below are three of the comment themes and examples of comments:

1. Suggestions on a variety of classes or programs…

- *"art class for an elective would be nice"*
- *"Better funding for the arts, and new and updated textbooks/curriculums. I would also appreciate it if stuff you learn in Avid was integrated into every students classes."*
- *"Classes about Racial Equality."*
- *"Classes focusing on career."*
- *"Classes on gender and sexuality"*
- *"Classes to teach us Taxes, how to apply for loans, and other things with real world applications instead of the biology of brine shrimp." (many, many comments on financial classes)*
- *"Electrical engineering programs"*

2. Suggestions on extracurricular and afterschool programming…

- *"more music or art clubs and activities"*
- *"a STEP team, maybe a after school art club, sounds crazy but karate"*
- *"After or before school personal free tutoring"*
- *"Field trips/afterschool activities"*
- *"Maybe more of a variety of sports/Athletics"*

3. Mental health assistance…

- *"Actual help and therapy for students struggling with mental health and victims of sexual abuse"*
- *"Better access to mental health tools and counselors"*
- *"Counselors that understand students and don't spill everything to the parents."*
- *"Having days that focuses on mental health."*
- *"Help recognizing when you are failing into mental heath traps"*

Q4) What I like best about school is:

There were a total of 1,155 student comments on this question, below are three of the comment themes and examples of comments:

1. Social, including many comments on in-person…

- *"Being able to connect with other people."*
- *"I feel like I have the motivation to actually do things (when attending in person classes), gives me time to myself outside of the house, being able to hear other people's opinions."*
- *"Getting to socialize and learn about things in a fun way."*
- *"The community and sense of interconnectedness that only happens when you are in-person."*
- *"being in person and having different classroom opportunities for enrichment/engagement"*
- *"meeting new people"*

2. Learning, some listed specific classes or subjects…

- *"art class and the fun teacher (and seeing my friends)"*
- *"Is how fun hands-on learning can be, like labs in my science class."*
- *"i love my history classes"*
- *"What I like best about school is the variety of opportunities & activities we have."*
- *"Learning new stuff"*
- *"Sports and math"*

3. Teachers and staff…

- *"Teachers that engage with their students."*
- *"That my teachers communicate with me and help me achieve my goals in each class"*
- *"That the teachers and staff are understanding."*
- *"The atmosphere and the constant support i have with teachers and staffs."*
- *"The best thing about school is everything, teachers, seeing other students, even the homework."*
- *"The classes I got into, I got into higher classes and a lot of my teachers are kind people."*

Q5) What I like least about school is:

There were a total of 1,152 student comments on this question, below are three of the comment themes and examples of comments:

1. Workload, the amount of homework…

- *"tons of homework."*
- *"What I like least about school is the stress that comes from large workloads. (I have trouble focusing & organizing)"*
- *"there is a lot of assignments in each class."*
- *"Homework sometimes it seems the homework I receive is jsit busy work I would way rather prefer homework that's more meaningful"*
- *"The workload can be too much at times."*

2. Changes dues to COVID such as social distancing and schedules…

- *"I dont like being social distanced"*
- *"Social Distance requirements, masks, and hybrid learning systems"*
- *"It is hard to interact with classmates in class with COVID-19 restrictions."*
- *"not being able to go everday"*
- *"Having to wear a mask"*
- *"Having to do P.E. in your school clothing"*
- *"we barely get time to be their and we have to eat in our classroom"*
- *"Only going to school 2 half days, I wish it was all week."*

3. Specific subjects (especially math)…

- *"Art class. I don't like art but the teacher is amazing."*
- *"when the class gets boring "*
- *"The class I like least is science."*
- *"math it is so hard."*
- *"little to no PE classes"*
- *"How hard the math is"*
- *Having to take classes that I don't want*

Q6) Think about your favorite teacher(s), what makes them such a good teacher(s)?:

There were a total of 1,150 student comments on this question, below are three of the comment themes and examples of comments. Please note hundreds of individual teachers were listed, but names have been left out of the example comments.

1. Kindness, compassion, relationship…

- *"Kind, helpful and caring. Very supportive, and compassionate."*
- *"Very supportive, gives alot of positive feedback, and cares about everyone in class as an individual."*
- *"Their ability to connect with students, and the fact that they put in the effort to build strong relationships with students. They have conversations and discussions and try to understand students better, and they are not uptight and mean/strict with rules."*

2. Makes the topic/class fun…

- *"In my opinion, attributes of a good teacher: welcoming to all students, knows when it's okay to go off track and have a nice fun conversation once in awhile, but makes sure we're on track for success, is open to us talking to him/her about our personal concerns, loves answering questions, teaches in multiple ways until every student understands, assigns a reasonable amount of homework for the course"*
- *"science is the only subject i can do without wanting to cry or commit an arson on the classroom. idk how she finds out how to make science fun like i need answers."*
- *"Relating to the students, being passionate about the topic they are teaching, using humor to make said topic more interesting, finding ways to keep students engaged"*

3. Push students…

- *"They all push me to do better in school"*
- *"what makes them a good teacher is that they push you to success and do whatever it takes to make you have a good future and teaches well."*
- *"she challenged me and pushed me to my limit. The work was very complex, but this is a good thing for me because I like hard work."*