

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
SEPTEMBER 13, 2021 @ 6:00 P.M.
REMOTE MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Shepardson Watson-Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman-Vice Chairperson, Dean Antipas, Jane Giulini, Liz Porter, Rosemary Robertson, Rita Volkmann, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Philip Piazza, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Kim Watson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

II. BOE REGULAR BUSINESS

MOTION: Robertson, White: To approve the COW minutes of August 9, 2021.
YES – Watson, Ackerman, Antipas, Giulini, Robertson, Volkmann, Weitlauf, White
ABSTAINED - Porter
PASSED

III. REPORT ON THE OPENING OF SCHOOL

Ms. Austin noted:

- She and Dr. Piazza visited all schools along with Mark Russell who took pictures;
- Ms. Austin stated that the parents and teachers were glad to have the children back in school;
- Ms. Austin noted that the PreK, Preschool, and Kindergarten students began today. Ms. Austin noted that she is working with the STA on any necessary adjustments needed in the bus routes. Dr. Piazza stated that he was very impressed with the first day opening.
- Ms. Austin noted that the first vaccination clinic was held today; second shot will be given on October 4, 2021. There will be an addition clinic in November. The Pfizer shot for kids ages 5-11 years old will be coming in October.
- Ms. Austin gave a shout out to bus drivers on how they have been handling the new bus routes.

IV. UPDATE RE: TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Kilpatrick stated that STA does not have enough drivers and the new 2-tier system is working very well.

V. 2020-2021 SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY RESULTS FOR GMS & FHS (Attachment #1)

Dr. Piazza gave an overview of 2020-2021 Safe School Climate Survey Results for GMS and FHS noting the percentage results at the secondary level for each slide. He noted areas that generated a positive response from parents, staff and students, and also identified areas of improvement. Dr. Piazza and Ms. Austin will work with the building principals to develop goals as a result of the survey results that the individual buildings will be working on this year. Dr. Piazza also stated that he and Ms. Austin will be visiting schools at least twice a month to improve communication and monitor progress.

VI. SUSTAINABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Dr. Clint Kennedy noted that he is looking at the technology in 3 ways: system running, staff, and end user devices:

- System Running – He will be reviewing the hub of PowerSchool and all the other systems running in the district.
- Staff – He has hired 2 new technicians.
- End User Devices – There are 1 to 1 computers at the elementary, middle, and high schools and additional computer in the schools.

Mr. Kennedy noted that he and the technicians are working to implement new technologies in the two new elementary schools.

VII. BUDGET PRIORITIES AND TIMELINE (Attachment #2)

Mr. Knight gave an overview of the FY 2022 – 2023 budget calendar.

VIII. REVIEW OF REFERRAL LIST

The Board reviewed the Referral List.

REMOVED – R2008-12 Assessment of what went well and what went wrong with distance learning and the inequities.

Mrs. Volkmann made referrals to the COW:

- Discussion of Educational Rising
- Timeline for returning school to the Town

XI. SUGGESTED FUTURE TOPICS

NONE

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Robertson: To adjourn at 7:42 p.m.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY



Groton Public Schools Climate Survey

2020-2021



TOPICS COVERED IN SURVEYS

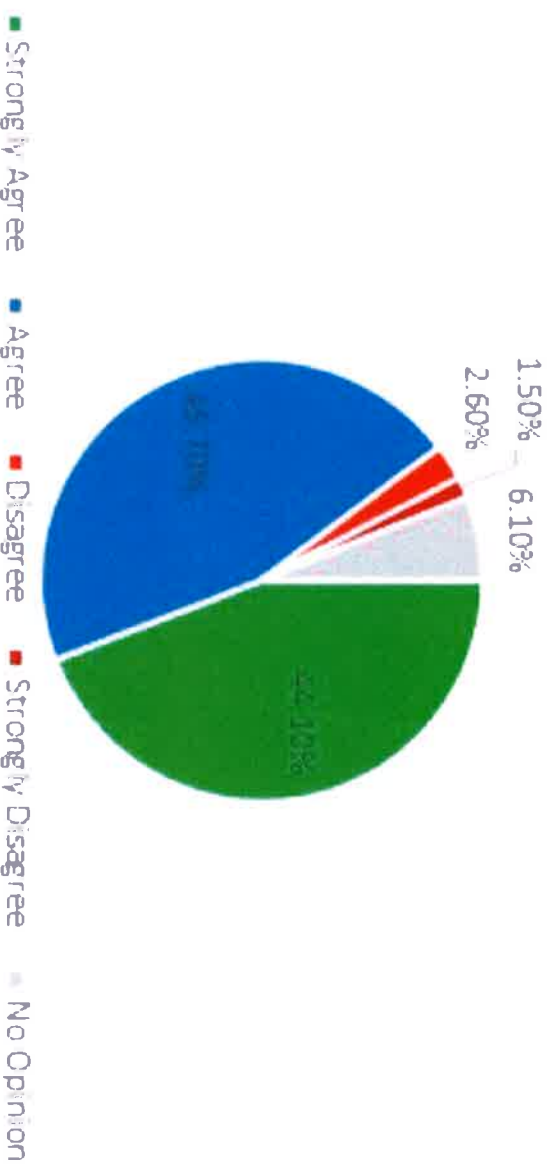
- **Communication**
- **Safety**
- **Sense of Belonging**
- **Respect and Diversity**
- **Transportation**

Communication



Communication: Staff

Our building communicates frequently with parents so that they are informed about events and activities at school.

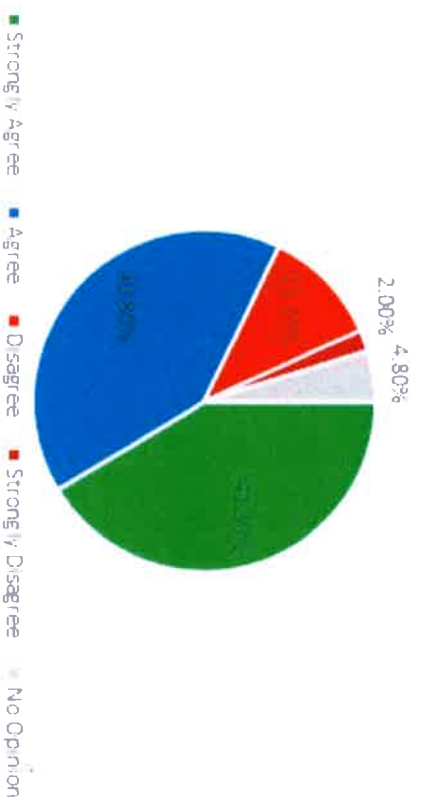


Communication need to be improved both in the building and at the district level. Authentic and transparent conversations need to take place - Staff Member

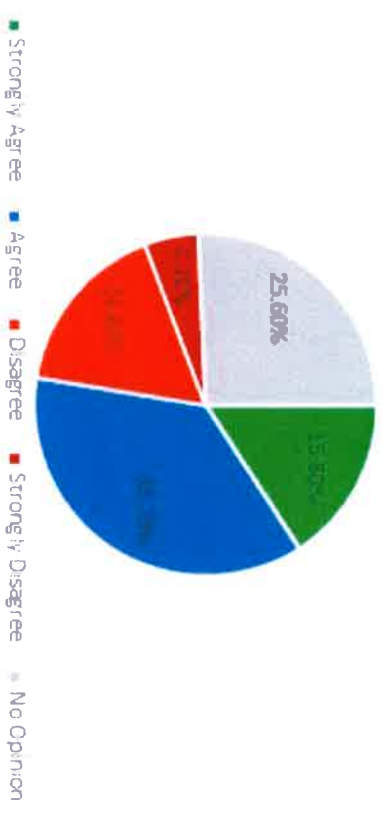
I feel so fortunate to work at GPS. I love that the district specifically told us that the social-emotional health of our students is our top priority this year. - Staff Member

Communication: Staff

I feel I can approach the building administrators with concerns, issues or ideas.



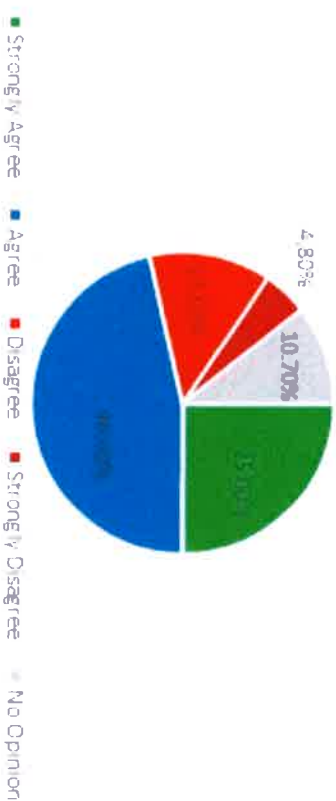
I feel I can approach the district administrators with concerns, issues or ideas.



As paras we are left out of the loop. We are often unaware of things going on in the building. - Staff

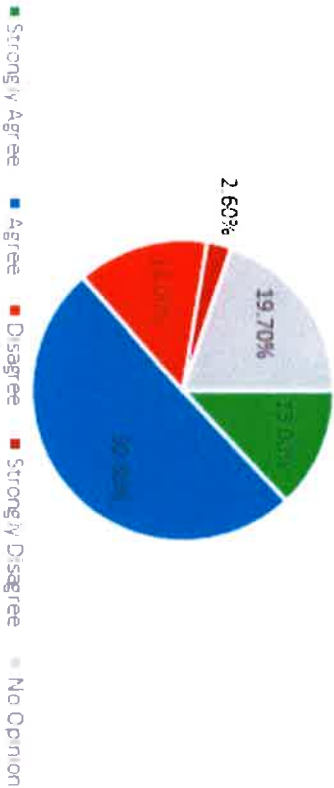
Communication: Staff

Building administration communicates well and informs staff of expectations, new developments, ideas, and issues.



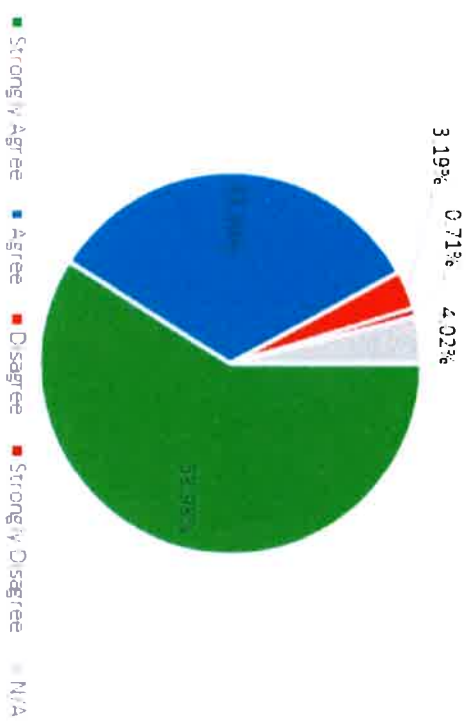
Increased communication at the building level and from the district would be appreciated. - Staff

District administration communicates well and informs staff of expectations, new developments, ideas, and issues.



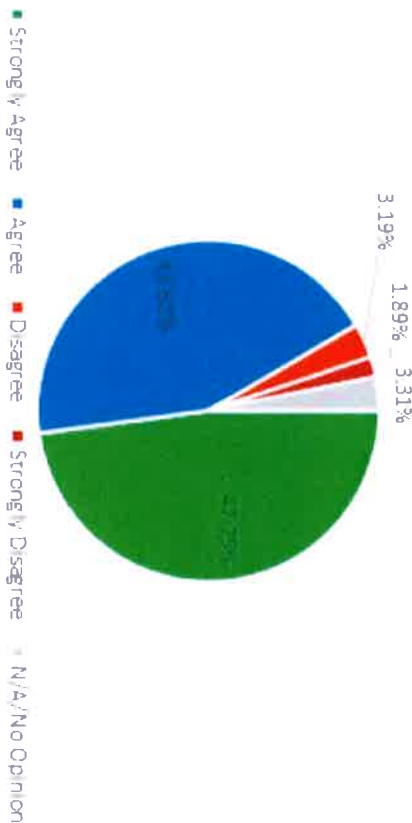
Communication: Parents

I feel comfortable talking to my child's teachers.



Teachers kept communication open and was always so easy to talk to if there was ever a concern or problem -
Parent

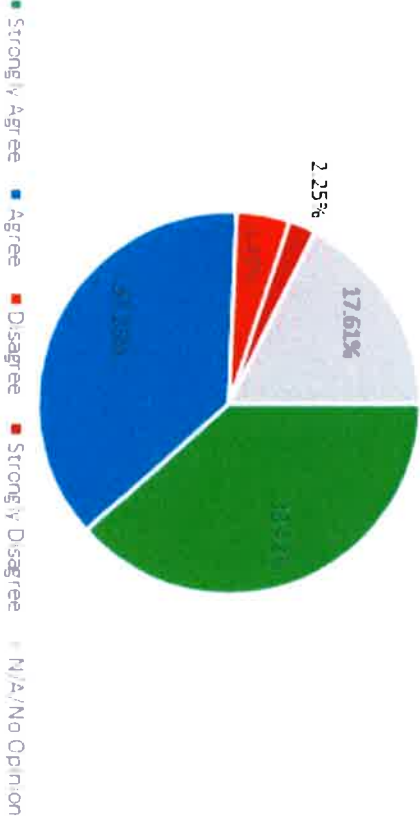
I am kept up to date about school events and activities.



I am unable to find current information (on the website) regarding school and district current events. -
Parent

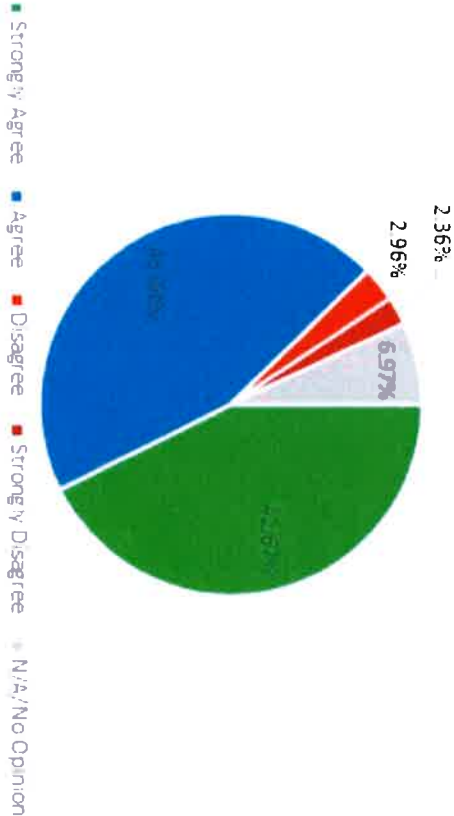
Communication: Parents

At my child's school, parental input is welcome.



Town halls and surveys like this one may offer school administrators and teachers opportunities to learn. - Staff

Home and school communication is encouraged.



The principal and vice principal have my son's best interest at heart and are receptive to parental feedback. - Parent

Safety

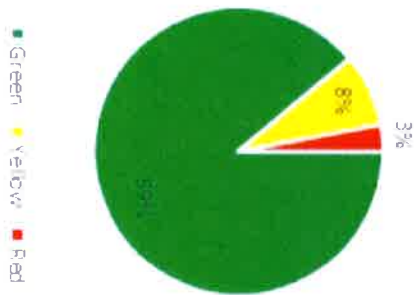


Health

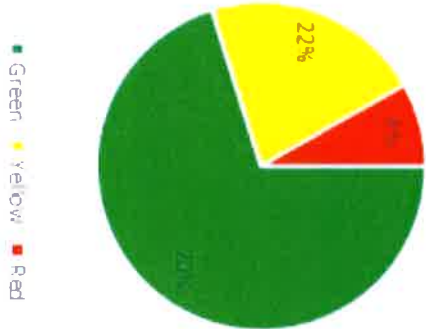
Safety

Safety: Early Elementary

This is how safe I feel in the classroom in school
or in my remote classroom:

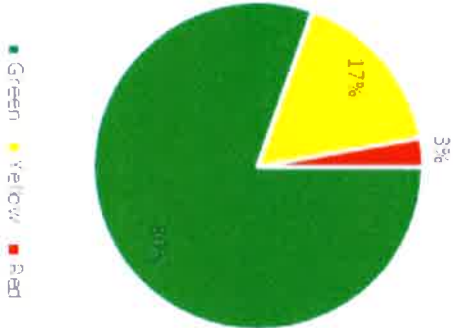


This is how safe I feel in the bathroom:

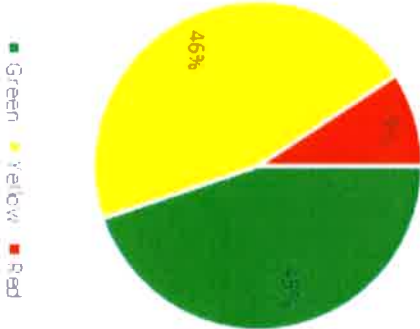


Safety: Upper Elementary

In this school, I feel safe.

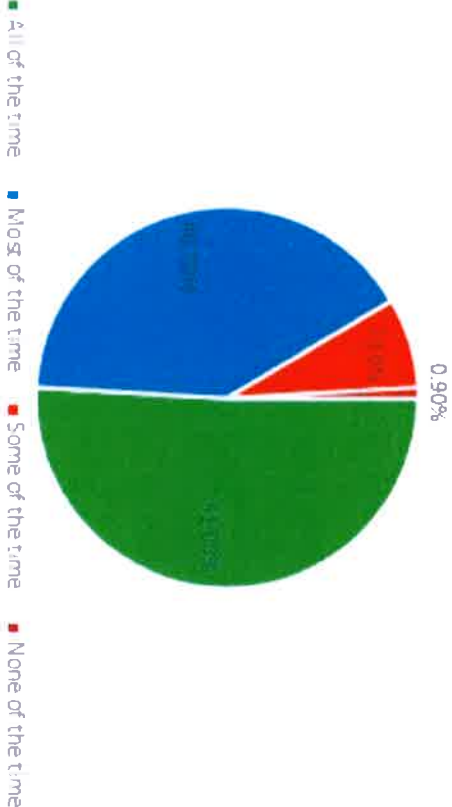


This is how safe I feel in the bathroom:

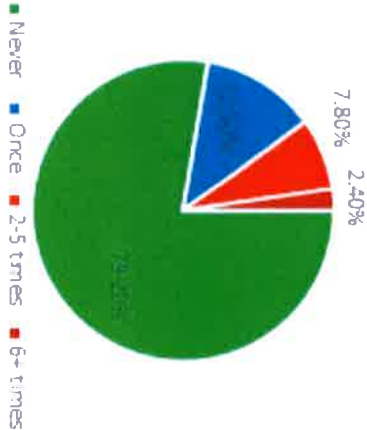


Safety: Secondary

I feel physically safe at school.

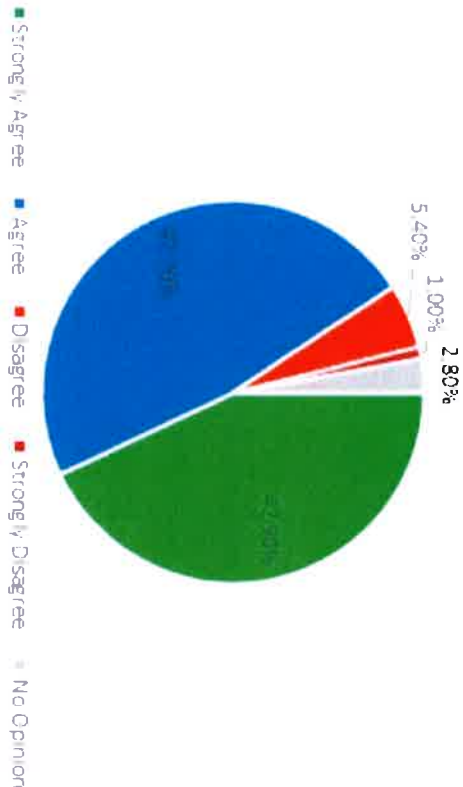


I have been the target of hurtful communications by peers at my school this school year through social media.



Safety: Staff

My building is safe and secure.

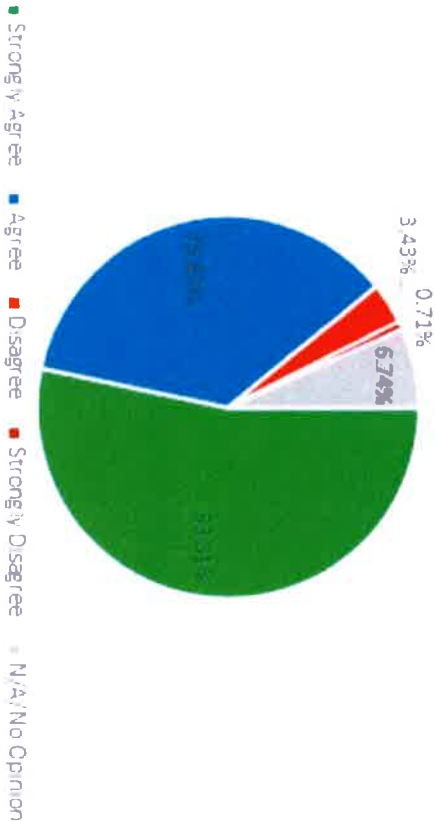


Administration, health services,, and custodial staff did an exceptional job keeping us as safe as possible! - Staff

I feel grateful to have been at a school that really honored the safety and health of our students and staff this year. - Staff

Safety: Parents

The school is a safe and secure place for my child.



***The staff should be commended
for their efforts in providing a
safe, living learning
environment for their students.***

- Parent

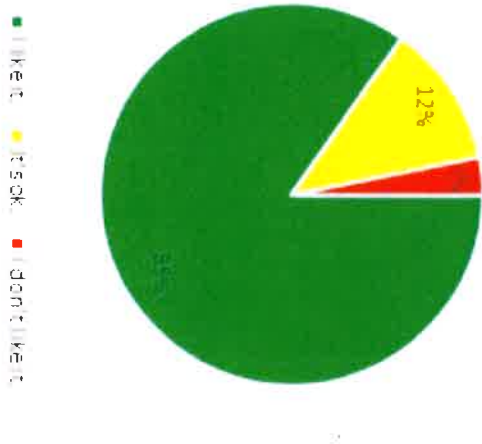
***There needs to be better consequences
for repeated bullying.*** - Parent

Belonging

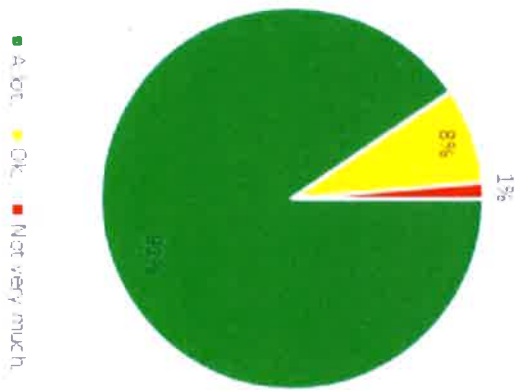


Belonging: Early Elementary

This is how I feel about my school:

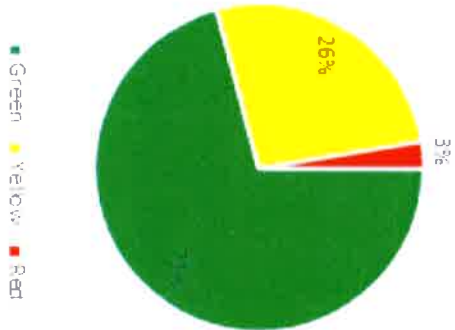


The adults in this school care about me:

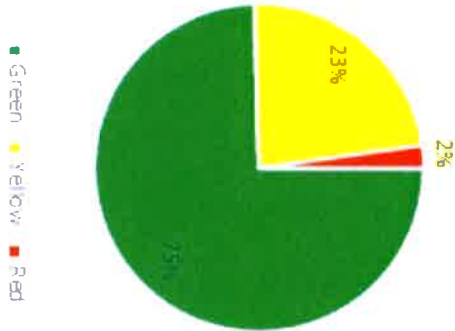


Belonging: Upper Elementary

This is how I feel about my school:

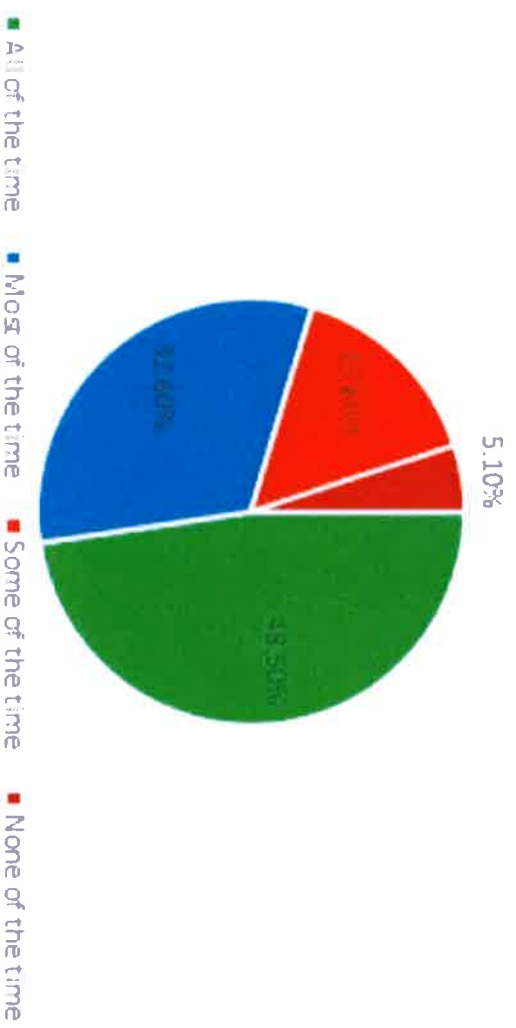


The adults in this school care about me:



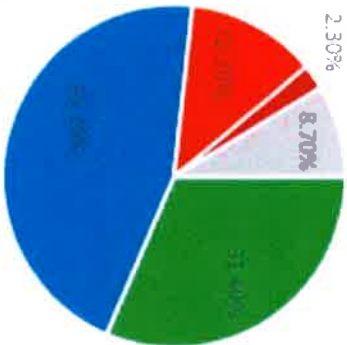
Belonging: Secondary

I feel there are trusted adults in the school who I can go to/talk to for help.



Belonging: Staff

At my building I feel I am a part of a school community.

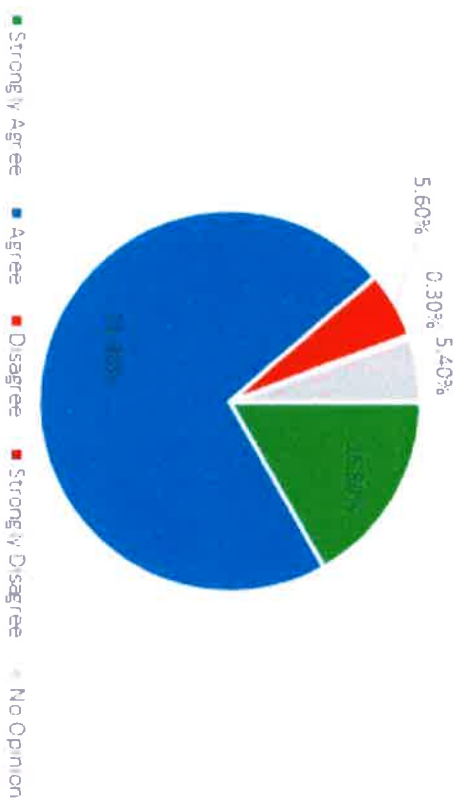


Our building administrators have gone above and beyond this year to support staff, students and their families. They should be commended for their actions. - Staff

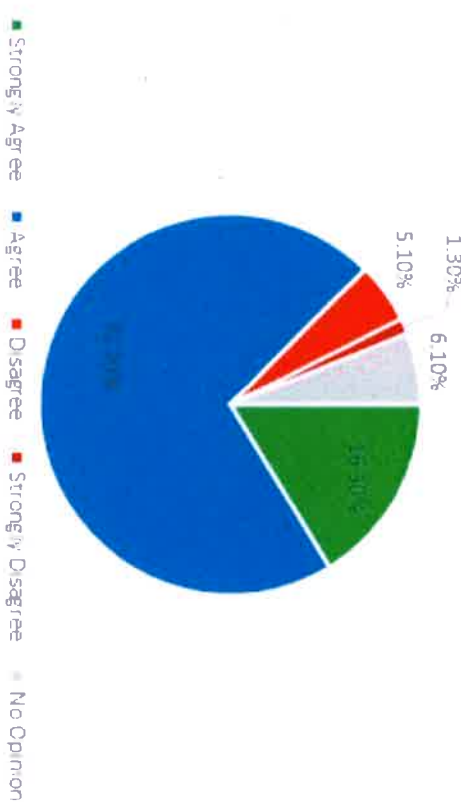
I have been trying to create a sense of community, but it is hard. - Staff
A little patience, understanding and recognition every now and then would be appreciated - Staff

Belonging: Staff

Students generally treat each other with respect.



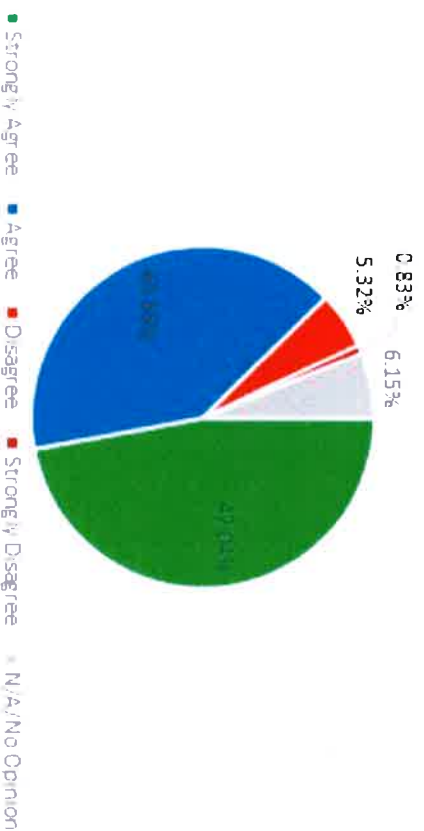
Students generally treat adults with respect.



Culture, climate and morale should be a priority - Staff

Belonging: Parents

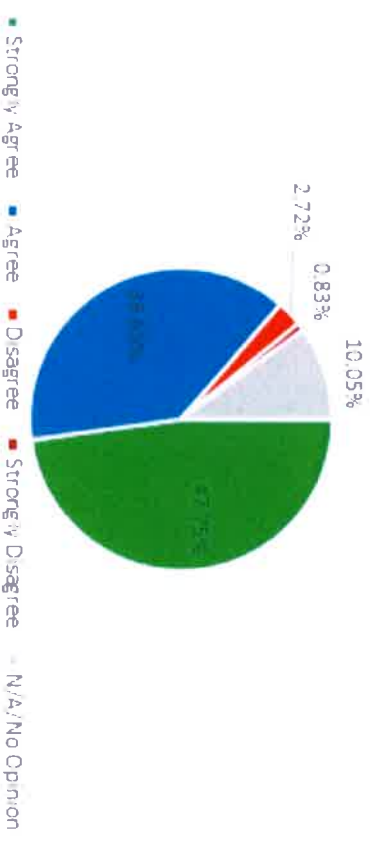
My child likes to come to school each day either in-person or remotely.



They have created an environment in which my child wants to go to school. Every teacher he had from K-5 grade has been exceptional in providing a warm and fun atmosphere the has kids excited to learn and be at school. - Parent

School has been amazing working together with me and my daughter to help her work through her medical issues and stay on track academically. - Parent

There is an adult (administrator, teacher, staff) at my child's school that my child can talk to if he/she has a problem.

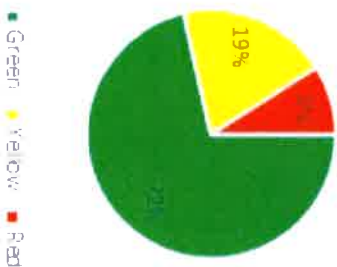


The school should promote more extra curricular activities such as Science fairs, Spelling bees, elocution, to name a few. - Parent

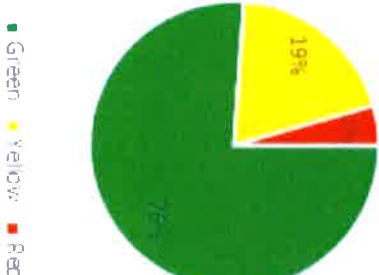
Respect and Diversity

Respect and Diversity: Early Elementary

How often does this happen to you during the day? Another child says something that hurts my feelings.

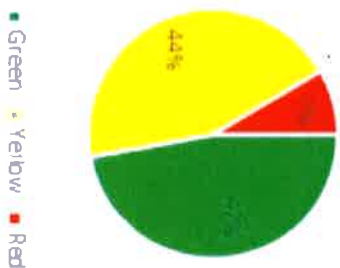


How often do you say something kind to someone?

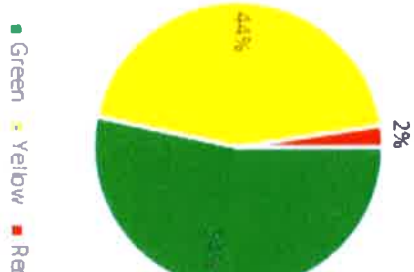


Respect and Diversity: Upper Elementary

How often does this happen to you during the day? Another child says something that hurts my feelings.

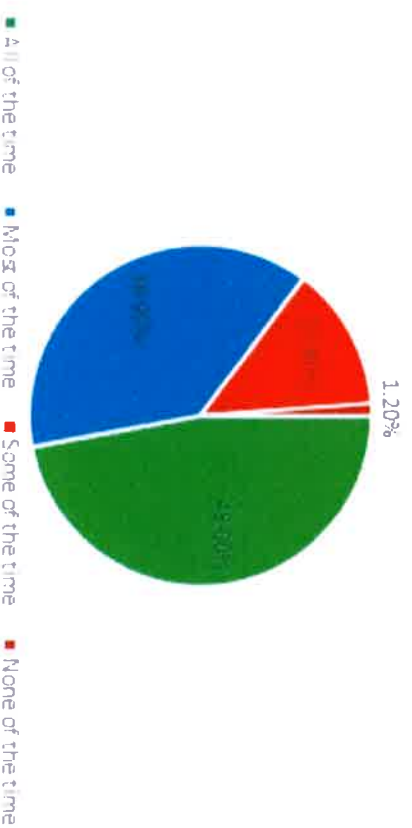


How often do you say something kind to someone?

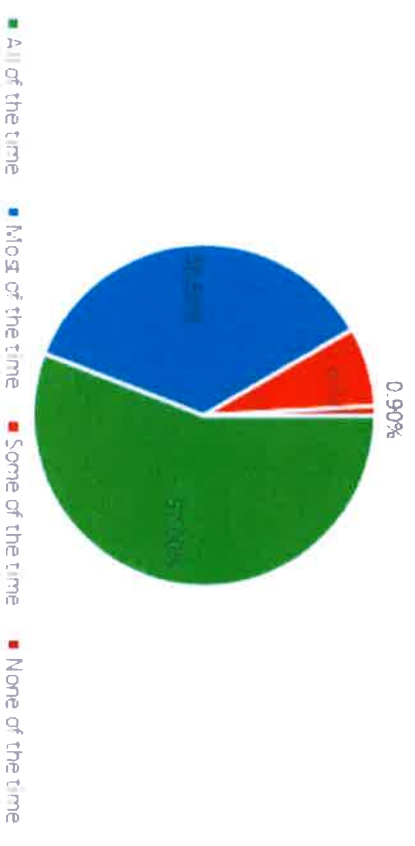


Respect and Diversity: Secondary

I feel my peers treat me respectfully in this school.

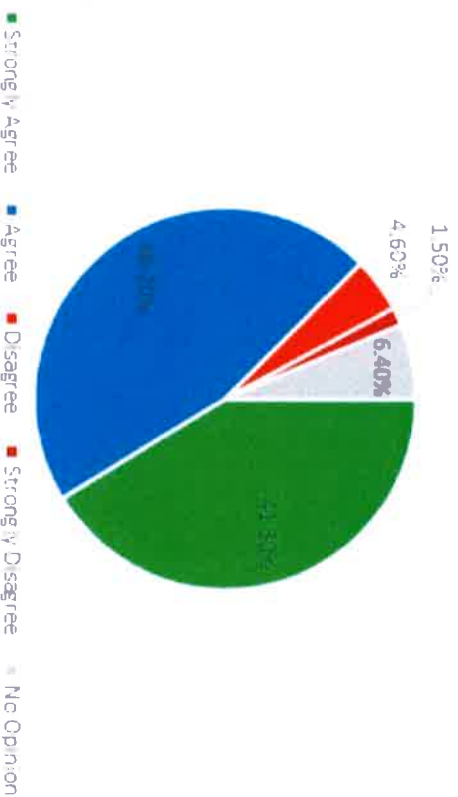


I feel the adults interact with me in a respectful manner in this school.



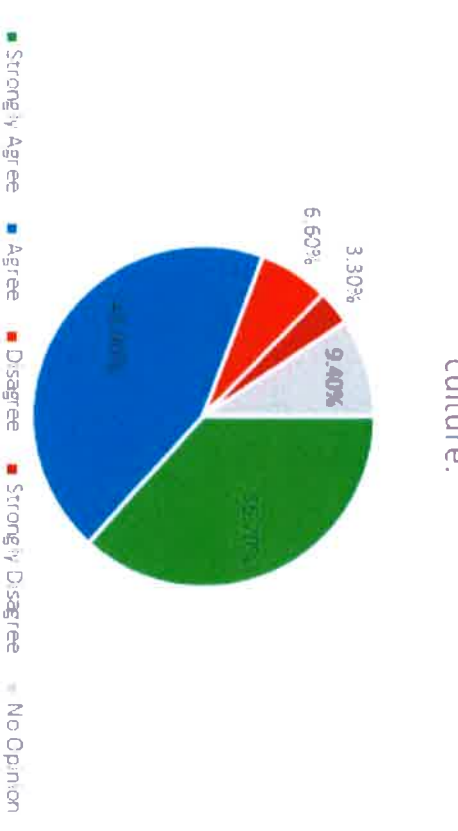
Respect and Diversity: Staff

I work with people who treat me with respect.



I think GPS is a special community of people passionate about children's education, social emotional health and well being. I am Groton Proud! - Staff

Administrators foster a respectful climate and culture.

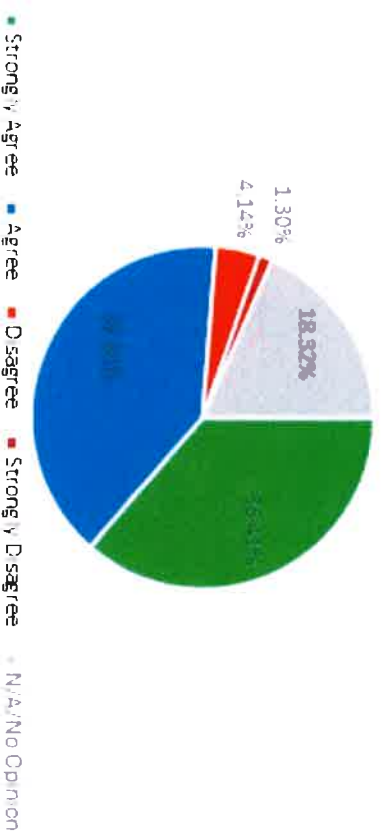


We need equity and anti-racism training and continue to have heavy, ongoing, training in these areas or else this district will not thrive as it should. - Staff

Respect and Diversity: Parents

Students should be taught good manners and right conduct and apply strict discipline about bullying discrimination and racism. - Parent

My student feels his or her differences are respected by others.



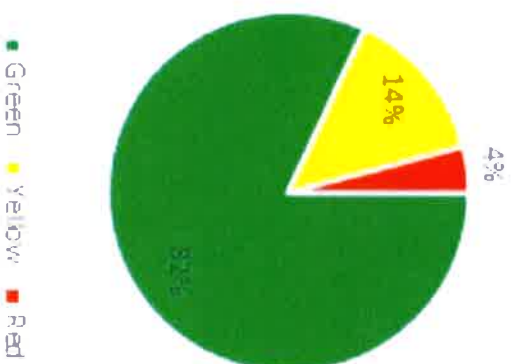
Teachers, Families, and students have worked together to support the Educational process in a positive way so that all students can be successful. - Parent

There should be more diversity lessons at every grade level. - Parent

Transportation

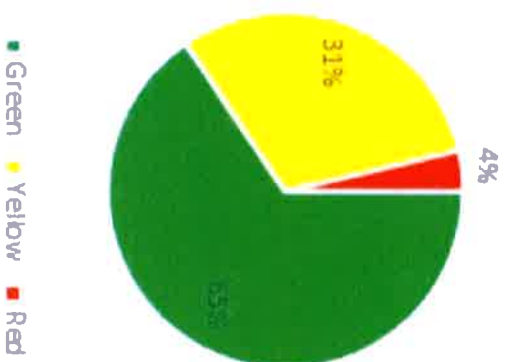
Transportation: Early Elementary

This is how safe I feel on my trip to and from school:



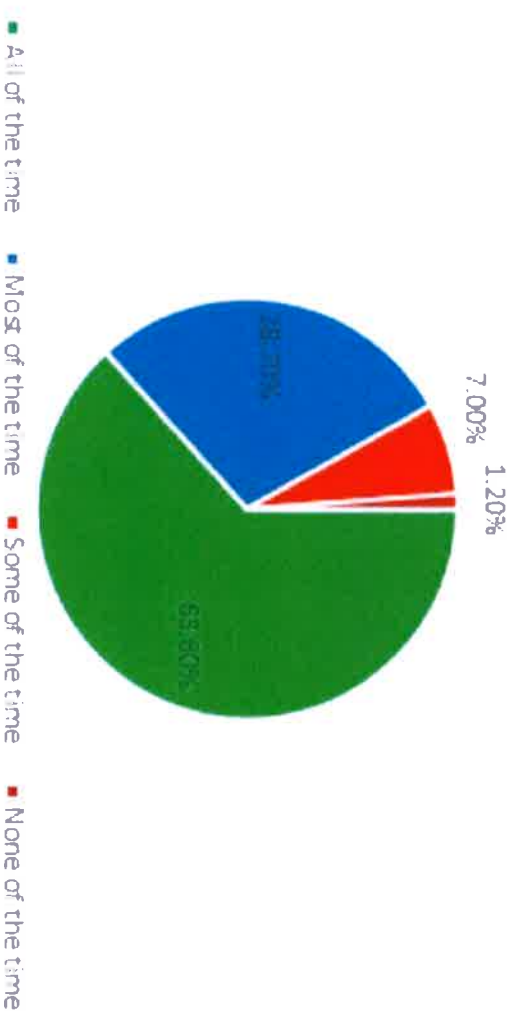
Transportation: Upper Elementary

This is how safe I feel on my trip to and from school:



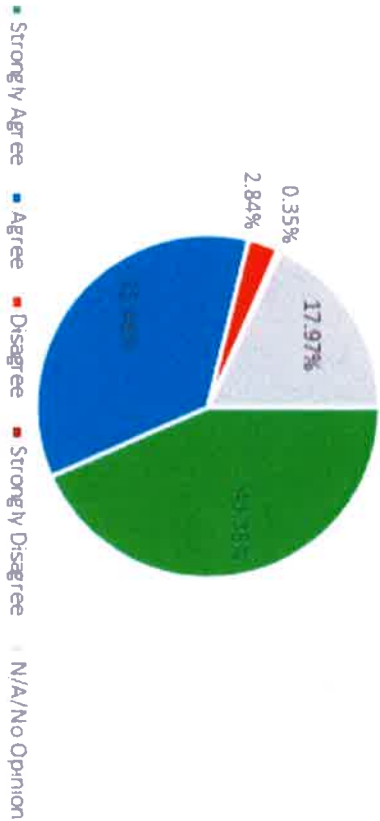
Transportation: Secondary

I feel my trip to and from school is a positive/safe experience.



Transportation: Parents

My child's trip to and from school is a positive experience.



TAKEAWAYS

- Communication will remain a priority
 - In buildings
 - District-wide to parents and families
 - Improvements sought between district and buildings
- Safety will remain a priority
 - Back to in-person learning
 - Move forward with SEL and Pupil Personnel Services for kids
 - Improvements sought in improving feeling of safety in non-supervised areas (i.e. bathrooms/hallways)
 - Improvements sought in student/family knowledge of proper social media presence
-

TAKEAWAYS

- Building a sense of community will remain a priority
 - Continuing town halls and surveys to gain valuable input and feedback
 - Improvements sought in making all groups (parents/students/staff) more a part of the school community
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will remain a priority
 - Improvements sought in making all students feel safe and welcome others and embrace differences
 - Continued training for staff on creating culturally responsive classrooms.
 - Positive school cultures set the tone
- Transportation safety will remain a priority
 - Overall, parents and students feel safe going to and from school
 - Monitoring our 2-tiered busing system will be a priority w/feedback from students and families

FY2022/2023 BUDGET CALENDAR

Monday, October 4, 2021	Administrators' meeting/Business Office begins preparing budgets for 2022/2023 school year
Friday, November 19, 2021	Principals submit budget data to Business Manager
Monday, November 29, 2021	Business Office enters 2022/2023 budget data and prepares draft documents
December 1 - 17, 2021	Superintendent and administrators review and discuss
Monday, December 6, 2021	Review with BOE Finance/Facilities Committee
Monday, January 3, 2022	Superintendent presents budget to the Board of Education
Monday, January 10, 2022	2022/2023 budget work session
Tuesday, January 18, 2022	Public Hearing/Board of Education Special Meeting on the budget & 2022/2023 budget work session
Monday, January 24, 2022	2022/2023 budget work session
Monday, January 31, 2022	2022/2023 budget work session
Wednesday, February 2, 2022	Joint BOE/Town Council/RTM budget meeting & 2022/2023 budget work session
Monday, February 7, 2022	2022/2023 budget work session
Wednesday, February 16, 2022	2022/2023 budget work session
Monday, February 21, 2022	Board of Education adopts 2022/2023 budget
Monday, February 28, 2022	Business Office makes revisions and prepares adopted budget for submittal to Town Manager
By March 15, 2022	Printed budget book to Town Council & RTM (Town Manager transmits to Town Council by March 15)
March - April, 2022	Town Council budget review
By April 28, 2022	Town Council adopts 2022/2023 budget
April – May, 2022	RTM budget review
By May 25, 2022	RTM adopts 2022/2023 budget