

# PARENT FOCUS GROUP

# REPORT

## STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

8

### FOCUS GROUPS

- Conducted virtually
- 3 elementary groups
- 3 middle school groups
- 2 high school groups
- 3 Spanish groups (one per school level)

44

### PARTICIPANTS

- Participants pulled at random from fall 2020 survey list of respondents interested in possible focus group
- Controlled for race/ethnicity and grade of child

### ▼ PURPOSE

To gain parent insight on how to improve messaging and communication between teachers, the school system, and families as SPS prepares for the 2021-2022 school year.

### ▼ KEY FINDINGS

Parents acknowledge that 2020 was a hard year for everyone. Many praised the tireless efforts of teachers and the administration under very uncertain conditions. However, participants said the timing and content of information was not as helpful as it could have been.



#### INCONSISTENCIES

How schools and teachers communicate with families varies widely by school, and even within a school, making it hard for caregivers to get the information they're looking for regarding their child.



#### TECHNOLOGY

Families on top of emails, mobile apps, and PowerSchool feel more connected to their child's school but access to knowledge about these many platforms is lacking.



#### LANGUAGE

More language support and translation services need to be available to families. Non-English speaking families feel they are often seen as uninterested when what they are missing are ways to engage with schools meaningfully in the language they feel most comfortable using.



#### TRANSPARENCY

Families want to see more transparency from the district about plans, Board of Ed decisions, and from teachers about issues relating to their child. Parents who consider themselves "engaged" felt finding this desired information took a lot of effort.

### ▼ RECOMMENDATIONS

#### IMPROVE LANGUAGE ACCESS

Ensure all materials are translated into multiple languages and make translation services available to families when engaging with schools at events like parent/teacher conferences or with the district at things like Board of Education meetings or central office.

#### LINK INFORMATION & UPCOMING EVENTS

Parents generally liked and mentioned Dr. Lucero's weekly message. Using this platform to expand the information provided to parents in language that is easily understood would reach a lot of families.

#### COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK

Use teachers and administrators along with parents to help draft communication guidelines that help streamline and standardize school and parent communication.