Patrick Henry Elementary School: Staff and Parent Survey of School Climate 2010-11

September 1, 2011

Department of Accountability

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SUMMATION

DECISION-MAKING

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Executive Summary

School climate refers to the "feel" of a school and tends to be a significant element in discussions about improving academic performance and school reform. As a principal new to the school, Dawn Feltman was interested in staff and parent perspectives of school climate at Patrick Henry Elementary School. For this purpose, she requested the Department of Accountability to prepare two versions of a school climate survey, one for staff and one for parents. Between January and February 2011, surveys were administered online using K-12 Insight. To support parents with limited computer and/or internet access, Patrick Henry Elementary School provided parents with an option to complete a paper version of the survey. There were 24 surveys completed by school employees (17 teachers and 7 other school staff) and 115 by parents or legal guardians. Results are presented first by staff respondents, next by parents and legal guardians, and then by comparing common items between staff and parent surveys. This report provides some background information on school climate before presenting survey results and recommendations.

Highlights
- Staff and parents regarded the school as a welcoming environment.
- Staff and parents viewed main office staff as being somewhat disrespectful to students and parents. In addition, respondents noted disrespectful behavior by students to staff and between students.
- In terms of discipline and bullying, staff and parents were satisfied with supervision over arrival, recess, and dismissal (with a number of parents commenting on the recent improvements for arrival and dismissal); however, there was some concern over how discipline is handled and considering bullying as a major problem at the school.
- Regarding cooperative behavior among staff and between school staff and parents, school employees noted some concern when working with colleagues. However, parents were satisfied with their interactions with staff, especially the administrators and teachers.
- With respect to parental involvement, there was a clear difference between staff (62%) perceiving parents as being interested in helping their children learn and parents (97%) reporting they were interested in helping their children learn. Both staff and parents indicated that communication to parents had room for improvement.
- In terms of an overall school grade for a welcoming and respectful environment, parents gave the school mostly A's and B's (91%) with staff giving nearly two-thirds A's and B's (67%) and nearly a third C's.
- For discipline and school safety, parents awarded even more A's and B's (93%), while staff gave a little over half A's and B's (54%), a third C's (33%) and some D's and F's (12%).

Recommendations
1. Provide more division-wide support to improve school climate at the building level.
2. Provide more professional development opportunities to support school building staff to improve school climate.
3. Have division and school personnel review the practices currently in place to improve or enhance school climate.

Introduction

School climate refers to the "feel" of a school (from the entire school building to the classroom level) and can vary from school to school within the same district. While an individual school can develop a climate independently of the division, changes in school culture at the division level can positively or adversely affect school climate at the building level. School climate tends to be a significant element in discussions about improving academic performance and school reform.

As a principal new to the school, Dawn Feltman wanted to learn more about staff and parent perspectives of school climate at Patrick Henry Elementary School. To this end, she requested the Department of Accountability to prepare two versions of a school climate survey, one for staff and one for parents. Between January and February 2011, surveys for staff and parents were administered online using K-12 Insight. To support parents with limited computer and/or internet access, Patrick Henry Elementary School offered parents the option to complete a paper version of the survey and had staff enter the parental data.

There were 24 surveys completed by school employees (17 teachers and 7 other school staff) and 115 by parents or legal guardians. Survey results are presented first by staff respondents, next by parents and legal guardians, and then by comparing common items between staff and parent surveys. For all questions, percentages might not total 100 due to rounding. For some questions, a note has been inserted to indicate that respondents could select more than one option. For the questions related to incidence of inappropriate behavior or bullying that occurred, respondents were asked to focus on the current school year (i.e., from September 2010 through about January or February 2011). This report provides background information on school climate before presenting summary descriptions of the staff and parent survey data, a comparison of the staff and parent survey data, and recommendations.

Background on School Climate

The characteristics of a school, such as the physical structure of the school building and the quality and nature of the interactions between students and teachers, are just two diverse examples of factors that both affect and help to define the broad concept of school climate. For many years, school climate has been researched with recent studies looking at how it can influence educational outcomes.

Components of School Climate

Although there is no consistent agreement in the literature on the components of school climate or their importance, most emphasize *caring* as a core element[1] followed by *safety* defining school climate as "an orderly environment in which the school family feels valued and able to pursue the school's mission free from concerns about disruptions and safety."[2] One organization

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[1] Gonder, P. O., & Hymes, D. (1994*). Improving school climate and culture* (AASA Critical Issues Report No. 27). Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.
[2] Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth and the Alliance Organizing Project. (2001, June). *The City-Neighborhood Schools Initiative: Improving school climate is everybody's business.*

identified the following eight aspects of the physical and social environment in its assessment of school climate:

- Appearance and physical plant;
- Faculty relations;
- Student interactions;
- Leadership/decision making;
- Disciplined environment;
- Learning environment;
- Attitude and culture; and
- School-community relations.[3]

Why is School Climate Important?

School climate can affect many aspects and people within schools. For example, a positive school climate has been associated with fewer behavioral and emotional problems for students.[4] In addition a positive, supportive, and culturally conscious school climate can significantly shape the degree of academic success experienced by students in urban schools.[5] Furthermore, researchers have found that positive school climate provide boys and high-risk students with a supportive learning environment that promotes healthy development and helps to prevent antisocial behavior.[6]

School climate research suggests that positive interpersonal relationships and optimal learning opportunities for students in all demographic environments can increase achievement levels and reduce maladaptive behavior.[7] Regarding the roles of teachers and administrators, a positive school climate is associated with increased job satisfaction for school personnel.[8] School climate can play a significant role in providing a healthy and positive school atmosphere such that "the interaction of various school and classroom climate factors can create a fabric of support that enables all members of the school community to teach and learn at optimum levels."[9] A positive school climate can also yield positive educational and psychological outcomes for students and school personnel; similarly, a negative climate can hinder optimal learning and development.[10]

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[3] Western Alliance for the Study of School Climate. (No date). Introduction to assessment at the WASSC. www.calsttela.edu/centers/schoolclimate/assesssment.html

[4] Kuperminc, G. P., Leadbeater, B. J., Emmons, C., & Blatt, S. J. (1997). Perceived school climate and difficulties in the social adjustment of middle school students. *Applied Developmental Science*, *1*(2), 76-88.

[5] Haynes, N. M., & Comer, J. P. (1993). The Yale School Development Program process, outcomes, and policy implications. *Urban Education*, 2*8*(2), 166-199.

[6] Haynes, N. M. (1998). Creating safe and caring school communities: Comer School Development Program schools. *Journal of Negro Education*, *65*, 308-314.

[7] McEvoy, A., & Welker, R. (2000). Antisocial behavior, academic failure, and school climate: A critical review. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *8*(3), 130- 140.

[8] Taylor, D. L., & Tashakkori, A. (1995). Decision participation and school climate as predictors of job satisfaction and teacher's sense of efficacy. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 63(3), 217-227.

[9] Freiberg, H. J. (1998). Measuring school climate: Let me count the ways. *Educational Leadership*, *56*(1), 22-26.

[10] *Ibid.*

How Does School Climate Affect School Performance?

Previous research indicates that students in schools with a better school climate have higher achievement and better socio-emotional health.[11] Another study by Michigan State University, found that when students in Detroit schools felt a sense of community with one another and a sense of belonging to their schools, they achieved higher scores on their state assessments.[12] Much of this research, conducted by Search Institute, a nonprofit organization, found that a caring school climate is associated with:

- Higher grades, engagement, attendance, expectations and aspirations, a sense of academic competence, fewer school suspensions, and on-time progression through grades;
- Higher self-esteem and self-concept;
- Less anxiety, depression and loneliness; and
- Less substance abuse.[13]

A best practices brief prepared by Michigan State University takes a comprehensive view and defines school climate in terms of four aspects of the school environment and discusses how each either supports or impedes student learning:

- A **physical environment** that is welcoming and conducive to learning;
- A **social environment** that promotes communication and interaction;
- An **affective environment** that promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem; and
- An **academic environment** that promotes learning and self-fulfillment.[14]

	Supports Learning	*Impedes Learning*
A *Physical Environment* that is Welcoming and Conducive to Learning	▪ School building contains a limited number of students. ▪ Students are, and feel, safe and comfortable everywhere on school property. ▪ Classrooms are orderly. ▪ Classrooms and grounds are clean and well-maintained. ▪ Noise level is low. ▪ Areas for instruction and activities are appropriate for those uses. ▪ Classrooms are visible and inviting. ▪ Staff members have sufficient textbooks and supplies.	▪ School building contains a large number of students. ▪ Students are harassed by other students in halls, restrooms, lunch rooms, or playgrounds. ▪ Classrooms are disorganized. ▪ Classrooms and grounds are dirty, poorly lit, and poorly maintained. ▪ Noise level is high. ▪ Classrooms are in rooms not intended for that use. Space is overcrowded. ▪ Classrooms are hidden and protected from scrutiny. ▪ Textbooks and supplies are insufficient. Deliveries are delayed.

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[11] Brookover, W. B., Schweitzer, J. H., Beady, C., Flood, P., & Wisenbaker, J. M. (1978). Elementary school social climate and school achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 15,* 301-318.

[12] New Detroit: The Coalition. (2003). *A progress report: School improvement in the Detroit Public Schools.* East Lansing: Michigan State University.

[13] Scales, P. C., & Leffert, N. (1999). *Developmental asset.* Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

[14] University-Community Partnerships, Michigan State University. (2004, December). *School Climate and Learning.* (Best Practices Brief, No. 31). Lansing, MI: Author.

	Supports Learning	Impedes Learning
A *Social Environment* that Promotes Communication and Interaction	- Interaction is encouraged. Teachers and students actively communicate. Teachers are collegial. Student groupings are diverse. Parents and teachers are partners in the educational process. - Decisions are made on-site, with the participation of teachers. - Staff are open to students' suggestions; students have opportunities to participate in decision-making. - Staff and students are trained to prevent and resolve conflicts.	- Interaction is limited. Students and teachers do not speak to each other. Teachers are isolated from one another. Students self-segregate. Parents are not treated as equal partners. - All decisions are made by central administration or the principal without teacher involvement. - Students have no role in determining classroom or building activities and decisions. - Bullying and conflicts are ignored.

	Supports Learning	Impedes Learning
An *Affective Environment* that Promotes a Sense of Belonging and Self-Esteem	- Interaction of teachers and staff with all students is caring, responsive, supportive, and respectful. - Students trust teachers and staff. - Morale is high among teachers and staff. - Staff and students are friendly. - The school is open to diversity and welcoming to all cultures. - Teachers, staff, and students are respected and valued. - Teachers, staff and students feel that they are contributing to the success of the school. - There is a sense of community. The school is respected and valued by teachers, staff, students, and families. - Parents perceive the school as warm, inviting and helpful.	- Interaction of teachers and staff with students is generally distant and minimal. Students are subject to favoritism. Some students are overlooked. The circumstances of some students are ignored. - Students do not see teachers and staff as acting in their interest. - Morale is low among teachers and staff. - Staff and students are unfriendly. - The school "belongs" to the majority students. - Teachers and staff feel unappreciated. Students receive no positive reinforcement for work or actions. - Teachers, staff and students do not feel they have any impact on what happens in the school. - Teachers, staff, students, and families do not feel they are part of the school community. - Parents do not feel welcome at the school. Parents feel "blamed" for their child's difficulties.

An *Academic Environment* that Promotes Learning and Self-Fulfillment

Supports Learning	*Impedes Learning*
■ There is an emphasis on academics, but all types of intelligence and competence are respected and supported. Teaching methods respect the different ways children learn.	■ Academic performance is downplayed or not rewarded. Teaching methods do not allow for a variety of learning styles.
■ Expectations are high for all students. All are encouraged to succeed.	■ Expectations are low. Some students are expected to fail.
■ Progress is monitored regularly.	■ There is minimal or no periodic assessment.
■ Results of assessments are promptly communicated to students and parents.	■ There is little communication about results of assessments. Students do not know how to improve their performance. Parents discover that their child is struggling academically at report card time.
■ Results of assessments are used to evaluate and redesign teaching procedures and content.	■ Results are not used to improve teaching and learning. Teachers and students repeat the same cycle of failure.
■ Achievements and performance are rewarded and praised.	■ Rewards and praise are minimal.
■ Teachers are confident and knowledgeable.	■ Teachers are unsure or under-prepared.

Chapter 1: Staff Survey Summary

Quick View
Figures 1-10
Tables 1-2

Participants
- Respondents included non-teaching staff and teachers who taught in roughly equal numbers across the grade levels (see Figure 1). Staff respondents were predominantly female (83%) and white (71%) with 17% black, 4% Asian, 4% Hispanic, and 4% other (see Figure 2).
- The 24 staff to complete the survey represented 44% of all the teaching staff (17 out of 39 teachers, including ELL, special education, physical education, preschool, specials, etc.) and 30% of other school employees (7 out of 23 other school staff including other licensed professionals, paraprofessionals, school nutritionists, etc.) at the school.
- Nearly all staff (92%) who completed the survey hold a Bachelors Degree or higher (of which 71% hold a Masters Degree or higher) (see Figure 3).

Discipline
- A majority of staff observed instances of inappropriate behavior by school employees to students and/or their parents/guardians with 83% reporting staff yelling (with 46% noting 6 or more occasions) and 63% reporting disrespectful behavior (with 37% noting 6 or more incidents) (see Figure 4).
- Nearly all staff had students report at least one incidence of bullying or teasing (see Figure 5). All staff respondents observed students being disrespectful to an adult and nearly half had referred one or more students for discipline (see Figure 6).

School Setting & Climate
- Most items for school setting and about half of the items for school climate had over 80% of the respondents selecting the options "strongly agree" or "agree." These are presented in a tabular format along with the percentage of respondents selecting these options (see Tables 1 & 2). For questions that had less than 80% selecting either of these two options, the results are presented in charts to provide a more detailed review (see Figures 7 & 8).
- Two-thirds of staff awarded an A or a B grade to the school for providing a welcoming and respectful environment and about half a B or higher for discipline and safety (see Figures 9 & 10). About a third gave the school a C and a small number giving D's or F's for each question.
- For the open-ended responses, school staff were invited to comment on what they like or dislike about the school or to provide additional comments. Comments were lengthy and touched upon multiple areas. The numbers in parentheses next to the comment threads below indicate the number of respondents who commented on this area.
    - Like: Principal's leadership (16), colleagues and work environment (13), school/staff care about students (13), and school community and welcoming climate (12).
    - Dislike: School/teaching culture/environment not supporting learning (13), poor student behaviors (8), distrust of administration (other than Principal) (5),

narrowing of curriculum (5), lack of parental involvement (3), and staff disrespectful to students (2).
- o Other: Comments on survey questions (2) and new school complex (1).

Chapter 2: Parent Survey Summary

Quick View
   Figures 11-24
   Tables 3-4

Participants
- Parental respondents were predominantly female (66% with 19% male and 13% having multiple guardians) (see Figure 11).
- The ethnic breakdown for female respondents was 39% black, 22% Hispanic, 12% white, and 10% Asian. For males, it was 25% black, 16% Hispanic, 7% white, and 10% Asian (see Figure 12).
- The majority of parents/guardians (83%) who completed the survey reported that they had a high school diploma or higher (of which 22% hold a Bachelors Degree or higher) (see Figure 13).
- Nearly two-thirds of the families reported household incomes up to $60,000 (see Figure 14). It is useful to note that for the past three years, over 70% of students at Patrick Henry Elementary School have qualified for free and reduced price meals.
- Regarding the number of children in the household, 25% have one child and 40% having two, 15% having three, 10% having four (see Figure 15). For the number of school-aged children by household, 48% have one in school, 27% have two, 10% have three, and 7% have four (see Figure 16). For the survey respondents, their children who attend Patrick Henry Elementary School are spread across the grade levels (see Figure 17).

Discipline
- A majority of parents reported not having observed any instances of inappropriate behavior by school employees to students and/or their parents/guardians with 77% reporting no incidents of staff yelling (with 18% noting one or more occasions) and 83% reporting no incidents of disrespectful behavior (with 13% noting one or more incidents) (see Figure 18).
- About half of the parents had children report at least one incidence of bullying or teasing. Nearly one-fifth of parents reported physical harm to their children (see Figure 19).

School Setting & Climate
- Most items for school setting and about half of the items for school climate had over 90% of the respondents selecting the options "strongly agree" or "agree." These are presented in a tabular format along with the percentage of respondents selecting these options (see Tables 3 & 4). For questions that had 90% or fewer selecting either of these two options, the results are presented in charts to allow for a more detailed review (see Figures 21 & 22).
- Nearly all of the parents (91%) awarded an A or a B grade to the school for providing a welcoming and respectful environment with a slightly higher percentage (93%) giving a B or higher for discipline and safety (see Figures 23 & 24). Nearly all of the rest gave a C for each question with very few if any D's or F's.
- For the open-ended responses, parents were invited to comment on what they like, dislike, and other. Some comments were lengthy and touched upon multiple areas. The number in parentheses indicates the number of respondents who commented on this area.

- Like: School environment (51), classroom teacher and school staff (36), Principal's leadership (16), teaching students to be responsible (7)
- Dislike: Unprofessional or disrespectful behavior by staff (24), poor student behavior at school or on bus (9), poor communication between school and home (3), low parent involvement (3), teaching approach and/or teacher conference (3).
- Other: Comments on survey (3), want school uniforms (2), want healthy food on cafeteria menu (1), schedule conflicts (1), extra-curricular activities (1), appreciate not closing for snow days (1).

Chapter 3: Staff and Parent Survey Comparison Summary

Quick View
   Figures 25-33

Discipline
*   A greater percentage of staff reported a greater number of incidences of inappropriate staff behavior than parents (see Figure 25). This pattern is similar for incidences of bullying and teasing reported by students to staff and parents (see Figure 26).

School Setting & Climate
*   Overall, staff and parents regarded Patrick Henry Elementary School as a welcoming environment (see Figures 27 & 28).
*   Respondents gave somewhat low ratings to the main office staff for disrespectful behavior to students and parents. In addition, they noted disrespectful behavior by students to staff and between students (see Figures 29 & 30).
*   In terms of discipline and bullying, staff and parents were satisfied with supervision over arrival, recess, and dismissal (with a number of parents commenting on the recent improvements for arrival and dismissal); however, there was some concern over how discipline is handled and considering bullying as a major problem at the school (see Figure 31).
*   Regarding cooperative behavior among staff and between school staff and parents, school employees noted some concern working with colleagues (see Figure 32). However, parents were satisfied with their interactions with school employees, especially the administrators and teachers.
*   With respect to parental involvement, there was a clear difference between staff (62%) perceiving parents to be interested in helping their children learn and parents (97%) reporting they are interested in helping their children learn (see Figure 33). It is important to keep in mind, the respondents are self-selected (e.g., those who took the time to complete the survey are more likely to be interested in their children's education). Both staff and parents have indicated that communication to parents has room for improvement.
*   In terms of an overall school grade for a welcoming and respectful environment, parents gave the school mostly A's and B's (91%) with staff giving nearly two-thirds A's and B's (67%) and nearly a third C's (see Figure 34).
*   Similarly, for discipline and school safety, parents awarded even more A's and B's (93%), while staff gave a little over half A's and B's (54%), a third C's (33%) and some D's and F's (12%) (see Figure 35).

Grades Taught: Staff Survey (N=24)

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.
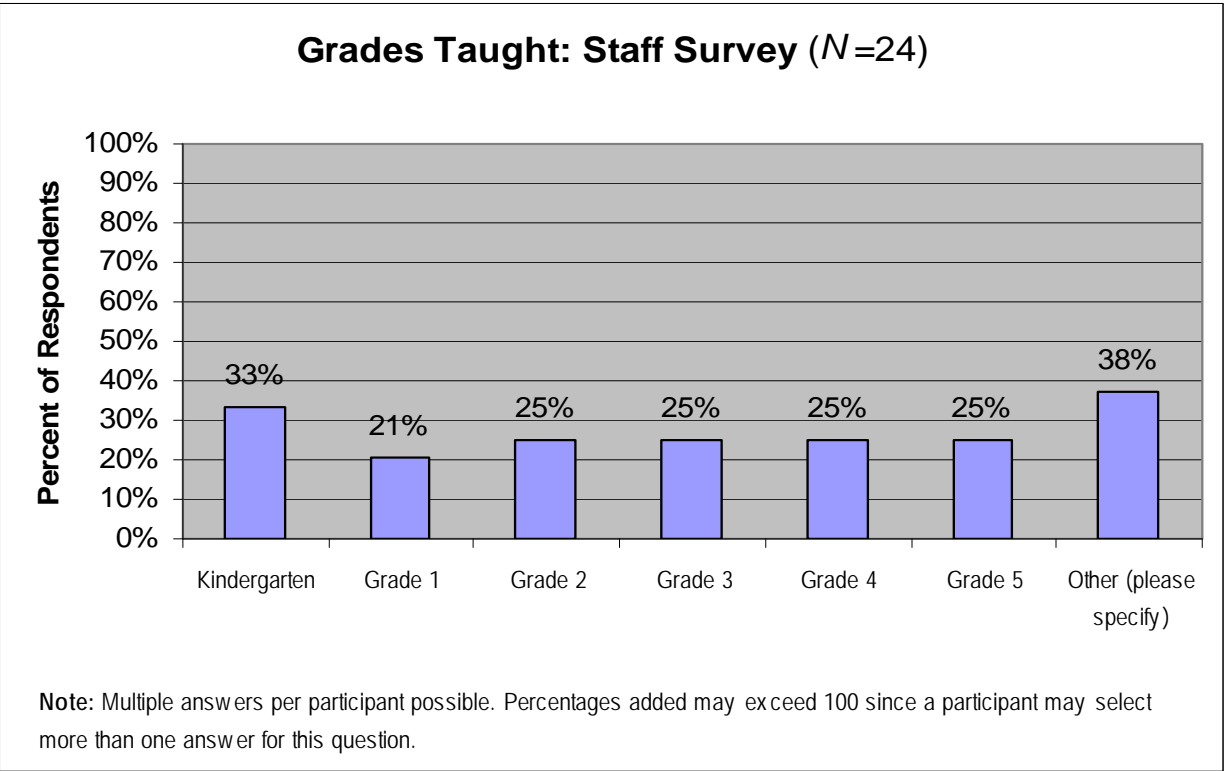
Figure 1. Grades Taught: Staff Survey

Race/Ethnicity: Staff Survey (N=24)

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.
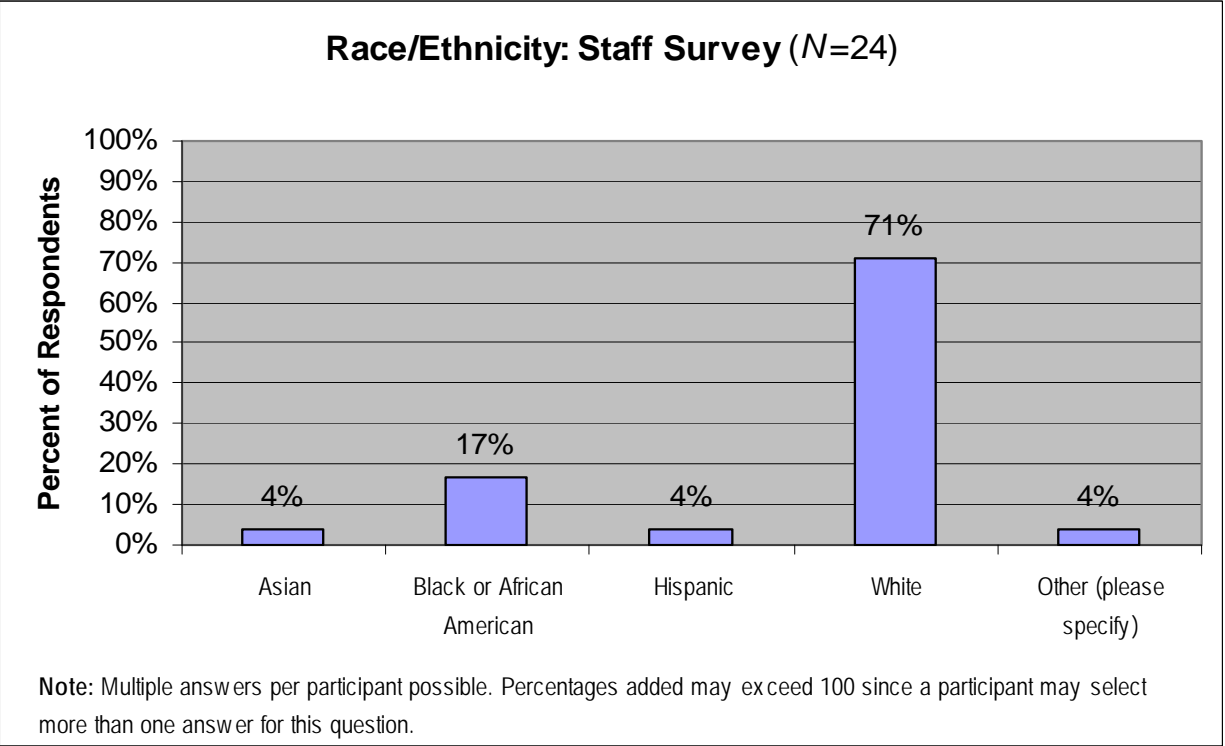
Figure 2. Race/Ethnicity: Staff Survey
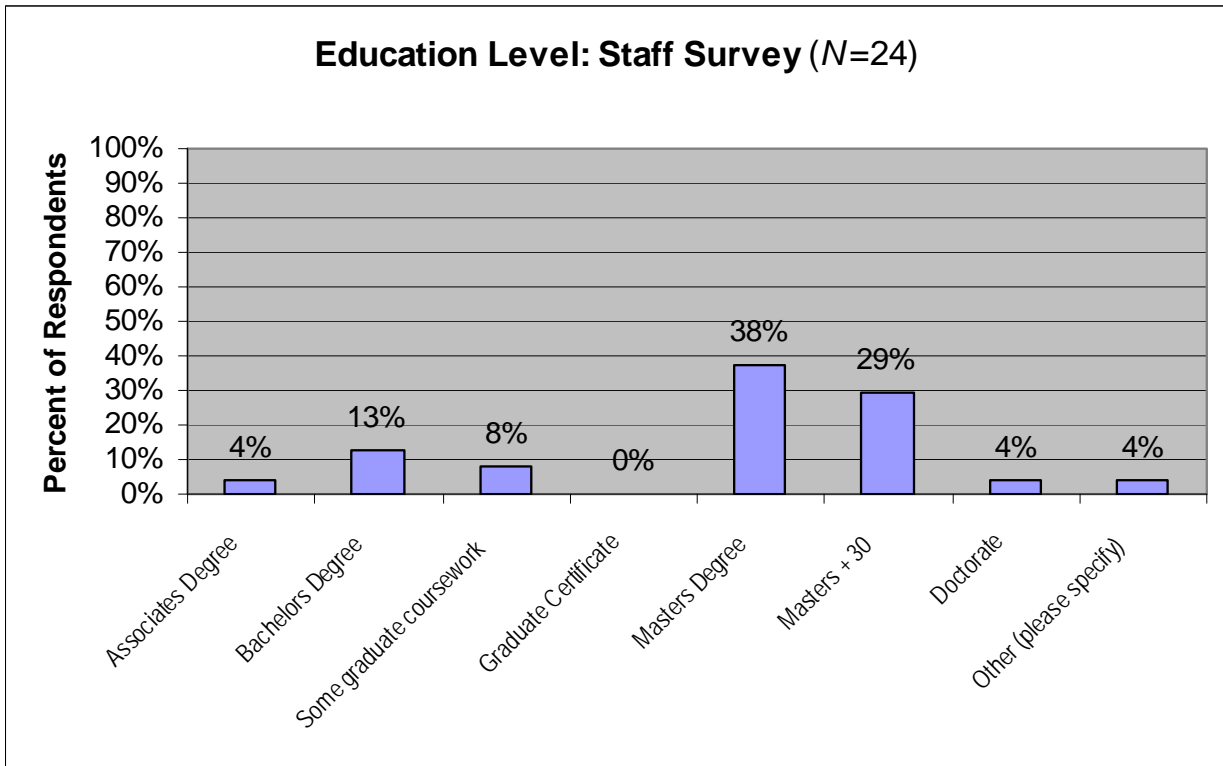
Figure 3. Education Level: Staff Survey
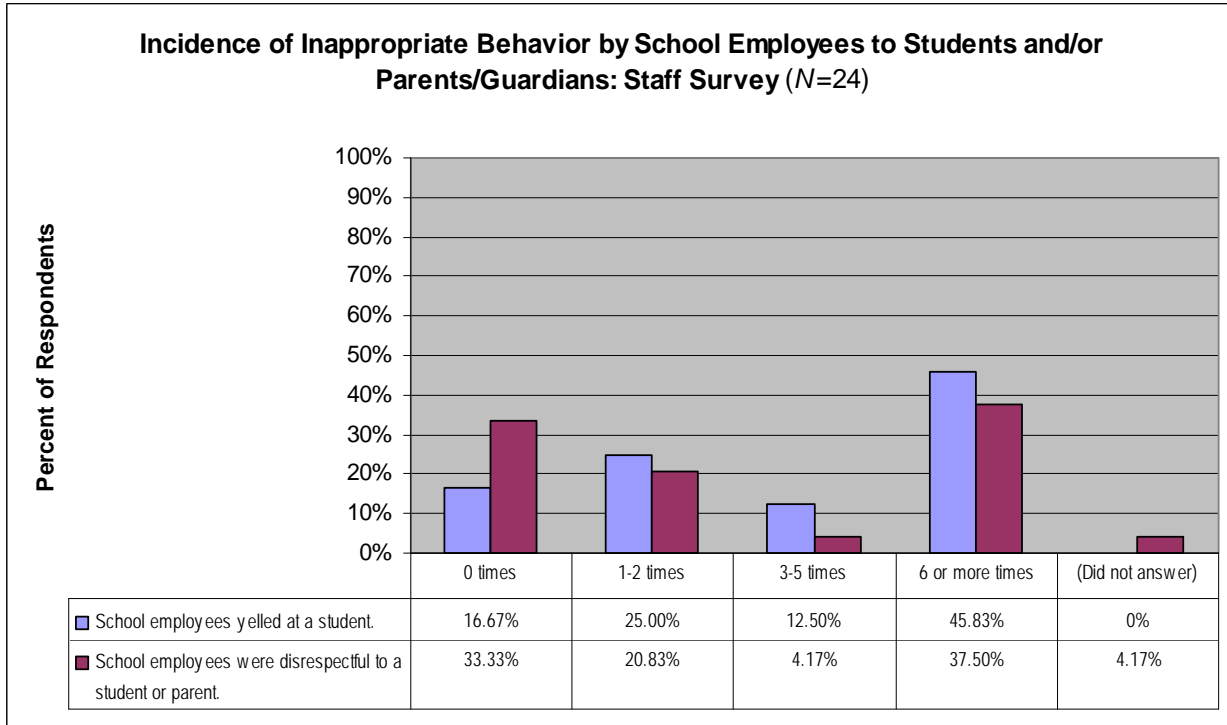
Figure 4. Incidence of Inappropriate Staff Behavior: Staff Survey

Incidence of Bullying Reported by Students to Staff: Staff Survey (*N*=24)

	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times
■ A student reported that someone threatened or bullied him/her.	12.50%	33.33%	25.00%	29.17%
■ A student reported that someone had teased or hurt his/her feelings.	0%	33.33%	16.67%	50.00%
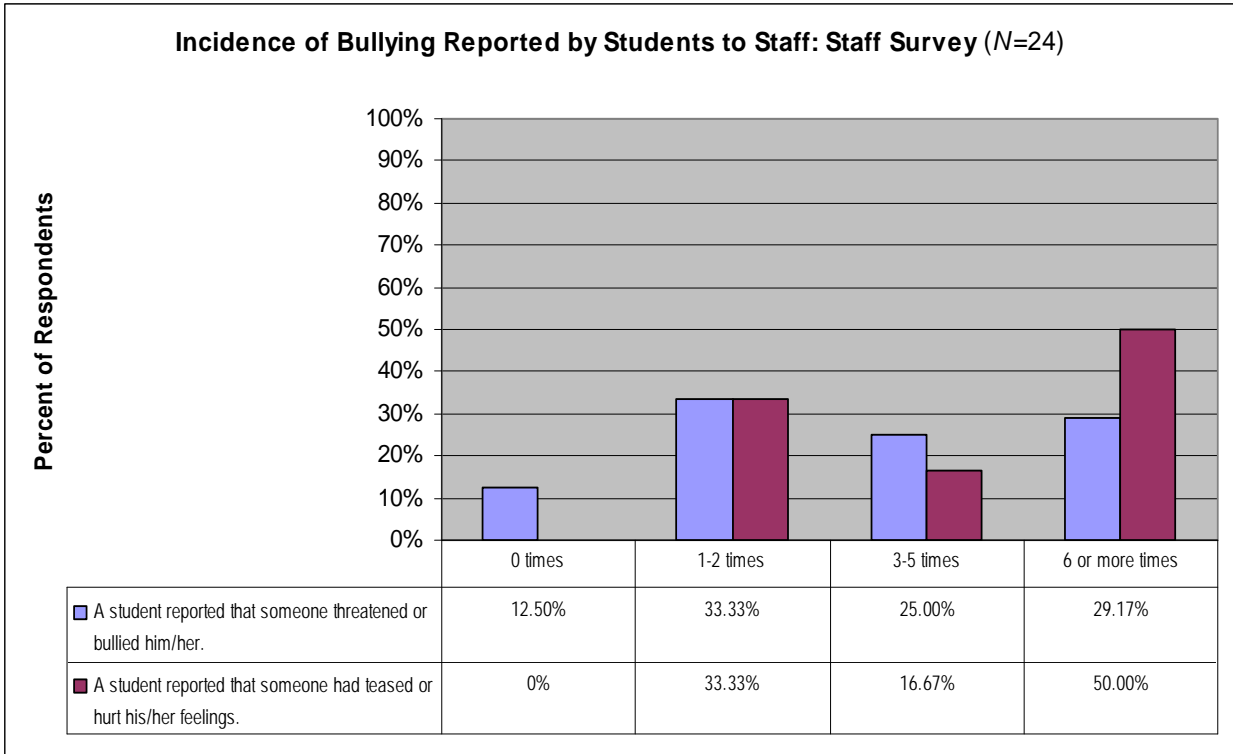
Figure 5. Incidence of Bullying and Teasing: Staff Survey

Incidence of Inappropriate Behavior of Students: Staff Survey (*N*=24)

	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times
■ A student was disrespectful to an adult.	0%	16.67%	20.83%	62.50%
■ A student was referred by you for discipline action.	54.17%	20.83%	12.50%	12.50%

Figure 6. Incidence of Inappropriate Student Behavior: Staff Survey

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Table 1. Percent Selecting Strongly Agree or Agree on School Setting Items: Staff Survey

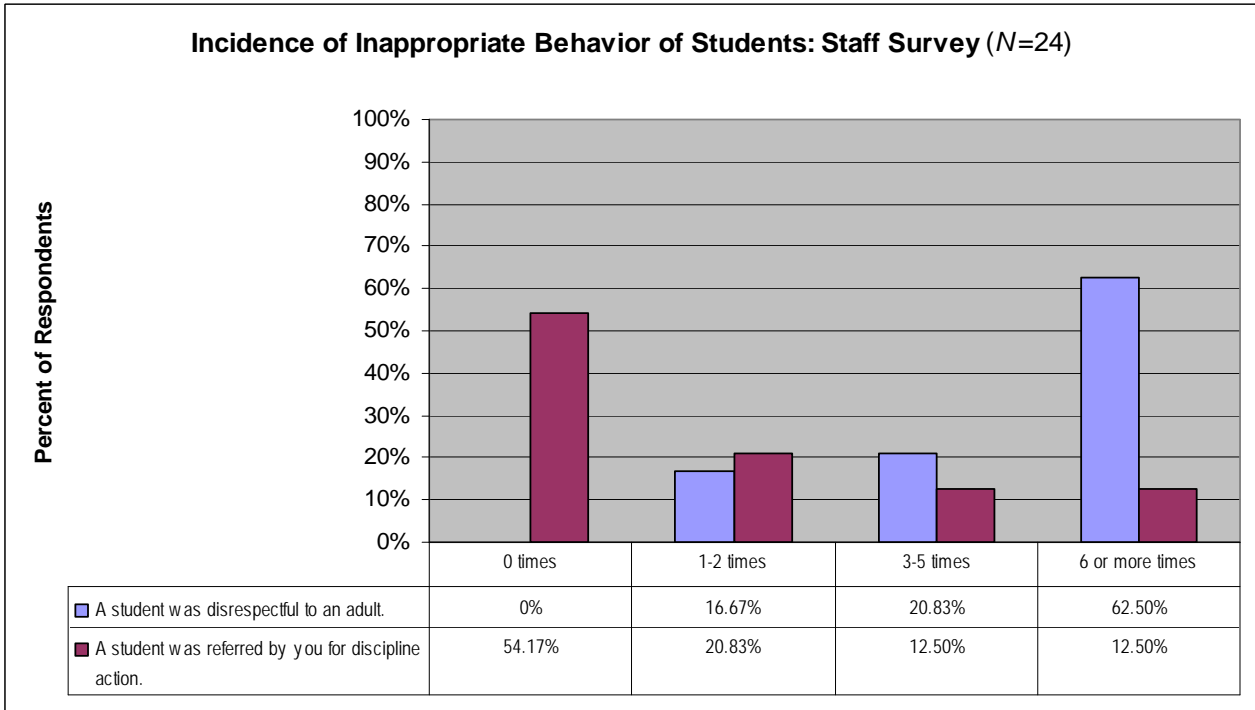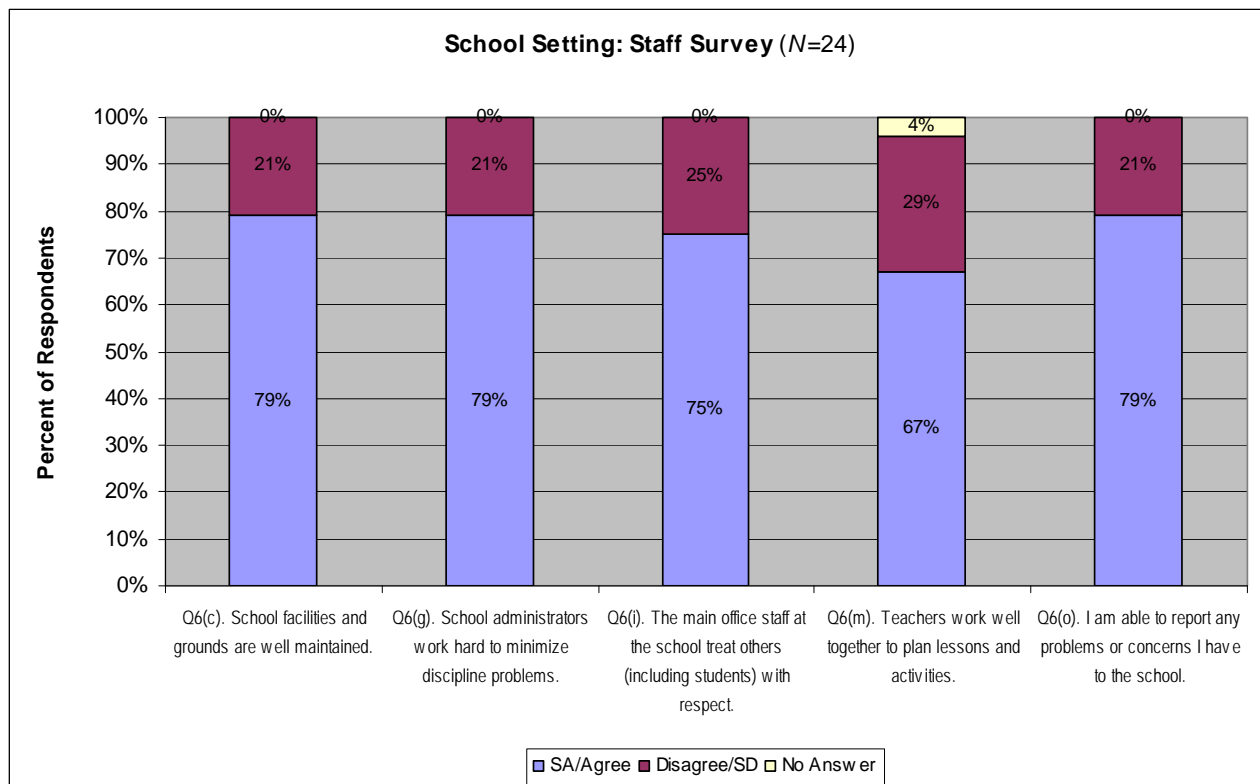| School Setting: Staff Survey (*N*=24)	SA/Agree
Q6(a). People who work at this school really care about the students.	88%
Q6(b). The principal is someone I can talk to if I need to.	83%
Q6(c). School facilities and grounds are well maintained.	79%
Q6(d). This school has clear rules and consistent policies.	83%
Q6(e). The school encourages respect between school staff, parents, and students.	83%
Q6(f). I am treated with respect by students at school.	83%
Q6(g). School administrators work hard to minimize discipline problems.	79%
Q6(h). My school has an inviting and welcoming environment.	88%
Q6(i). The main office staff at the school treat others (including students) with respect.	75%
Q6(j). Teachers effort to maintain discipline are supported by administrators at this school.	83%
Q6(k). I am satisfied with the communication I get from the school.	83%
Q6(l). I am treated with respect by the administrators.	88%
Q6(m). Teachers work well together to plan lessons and activities.	67%
Q6(n). I am treated with respect by parents.	92%
Q6(o). I am able to report any problems or concerns I have to the school.	79%

Figure 7. School Setting Items with Lower Staff Agreement (<80%): Staff Survey

Table 2. Percent Selecting Strongly Agree or Agree on School Climate Items: Staff Survey

School Climate: Staff Survey (*N*=24)	SA/Agree
Q9(a). Arrival, recess, and dismissal of students is well supervised at this school.	88%
Q9(b). Bullying is a major problem at this school.	21%
Q9(c). Students of all racial groups get along with each other.	92%
Q9(d). Student discipline problems are handled appropriately at school.	71%
Q9(e). The views and opinions of teachers and staff are listened to and respected.	88%
Q9(f). I find the administrators to be helpful and responsive.	83%
Q9(g). People who work at the school seem to work well with one another.	67%
Q9(h). Students at this school treat each other with respect.	46%
Q9(i). I have a good understanding of Habits of Mind.	83%
Q9(j). Parents are involved in school activities.	33%
Q9(k). School communication to staff is poor.	12%
Q9(l). I have a good understanding of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS).	79%
Q9(m). I find my colleagues to be helpful and responsive.	83%
Q9(n). Parents are interested in helping their children learn.	62%
Q9(o). School communication with parents is poor.	12%
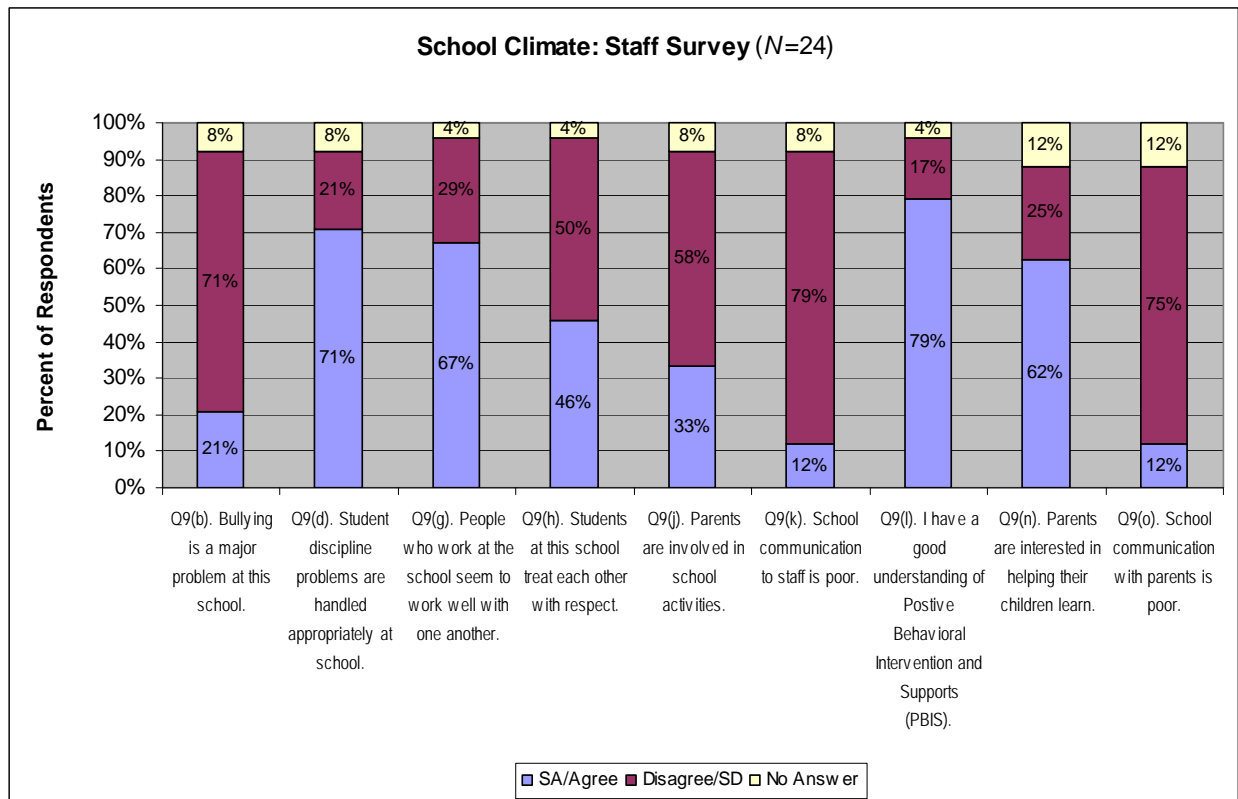
Figure 8. School Climate Items with Lower Staff Agreement (<80%): Staff Survey

School Grade for Welcoming and Respectful Environment: Staff Survey (*N=24*)

Percent of Respondents

Grade	Percent
A	25%
B	42%
C	29%
D	0%
F	4%

Figure 9. School Grade for Welcoming and Respectful Environment: Staff Survey

School Grade for Discipline and Safety: Staff Survey (*N=24*)

Percent of Respondents

Grade	Percent
A	21%
B	33%
C	33%
D	4%
F	8%
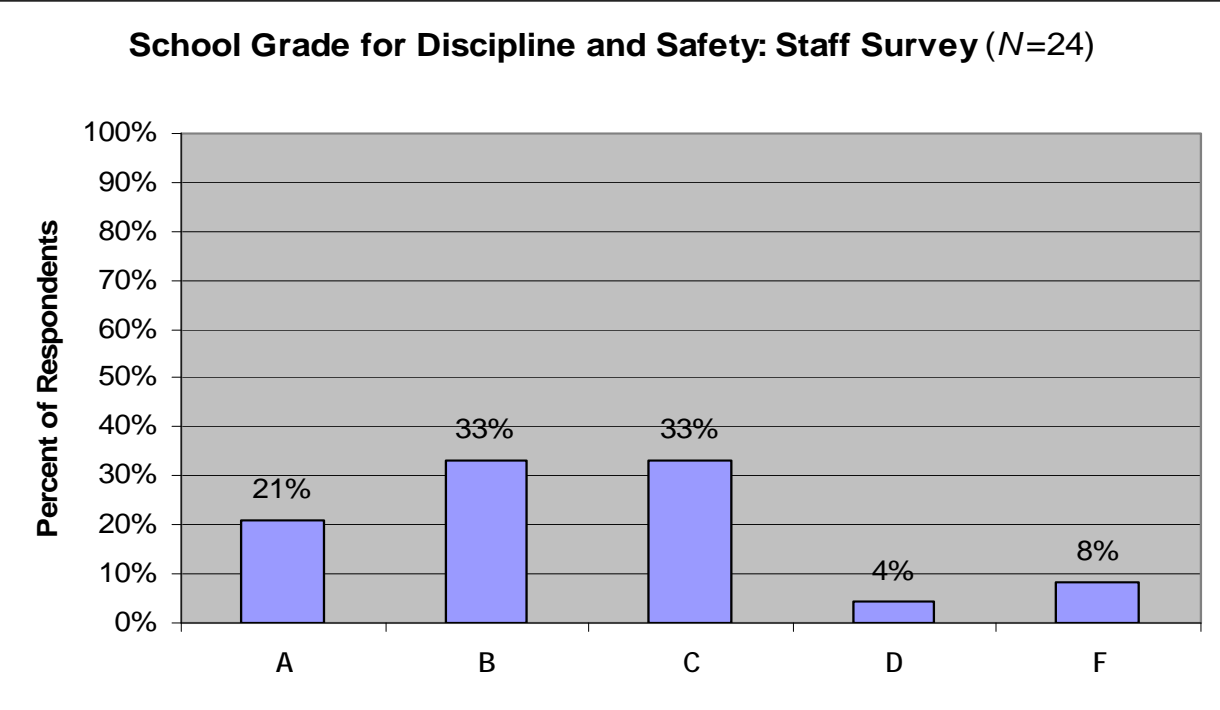
Figure 10. School Grade for Discipline and Safety: Staff Survey

Respondents: Parent Survey (*N*=115)

Category	Percent
Mother/Female Guardian	66%
Father/Male Guardian	19%
Both or Multiple Guardians	13%
Other (please specify)	2%
(Did not answer)	0%
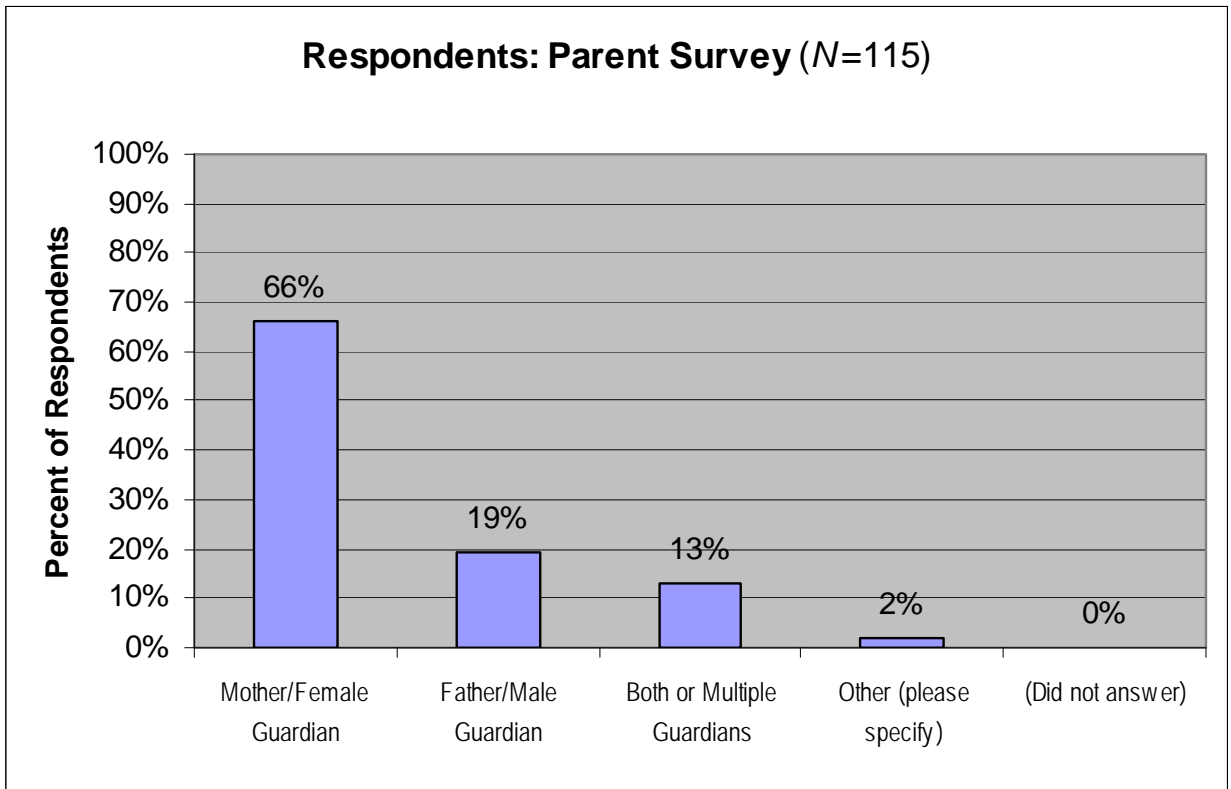
Figure 11. Repondents: Parent Survey

Race/Ethnicity: Parent Survey (*N*=115)

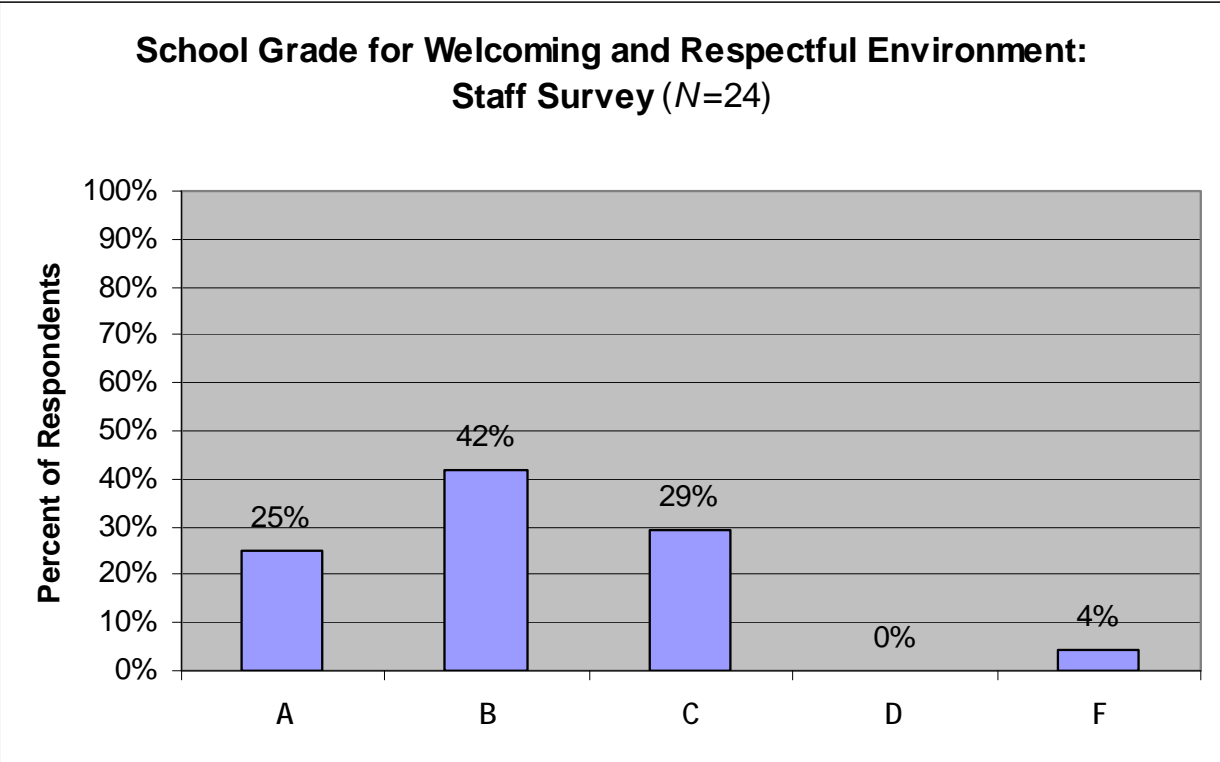|	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	White	Hawaiian or Other Pacific	Other
Mother/Female Guardian	1%	10%	39%	22%	12%	0%	5%
Father/Male Guardian	0%	10%	25%	16%	7%	0%	3%
Other Guardian	0%	2%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Figure 12. Race/Ethnicity: Parent Survey

Education Level: Parent Survey (*N*=115)

	No high school diploma	High school diploma	Some college	Certificate	Associates Degree	Bachelors Degree	Some graduate coursew or	Masters Degree	Masters plus courses	Doctorate	Other	(Did not answer)
■ Mother/Female Guardian %	8%	28%	19%	6%	9%	13%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	7%
■ Father/Male Guardian %	7%	22%	17%	2%	4%	12%	1%	2%	5%	1%	0%	27%
□ Other Guardian %	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	95%

(Y-axis: Percent of Respondents, 0% to 100%)

Figure 13. Education Level: Parent Survey

Household Income: Parent Survey (*N*=115)

(Y-axis: Percent of Respondents, 0% to 100%)

Less than $20,000: 17%
$20,000-$50,000: 31%
$40,000-$60,000: 16%
$60,000-$80,000: 10%
$80,000-$100,000: 10%
$100,000-$120,000: 1%
$120,000-$140,000: 2%
$140,000-$160,000: 2%
$160,000-$200,000: 2%
More than $200,000: 1%
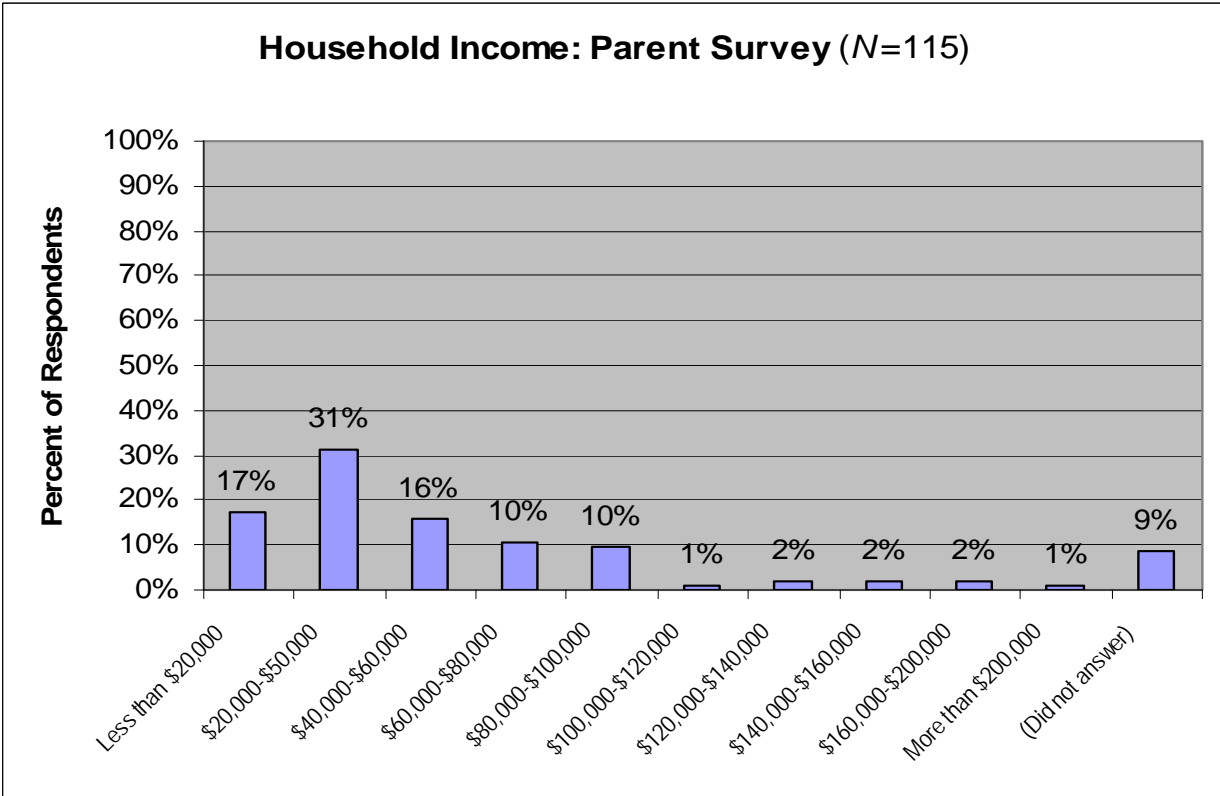(Did not answer): 9%

Figure 14. Household Income: Parent Survey

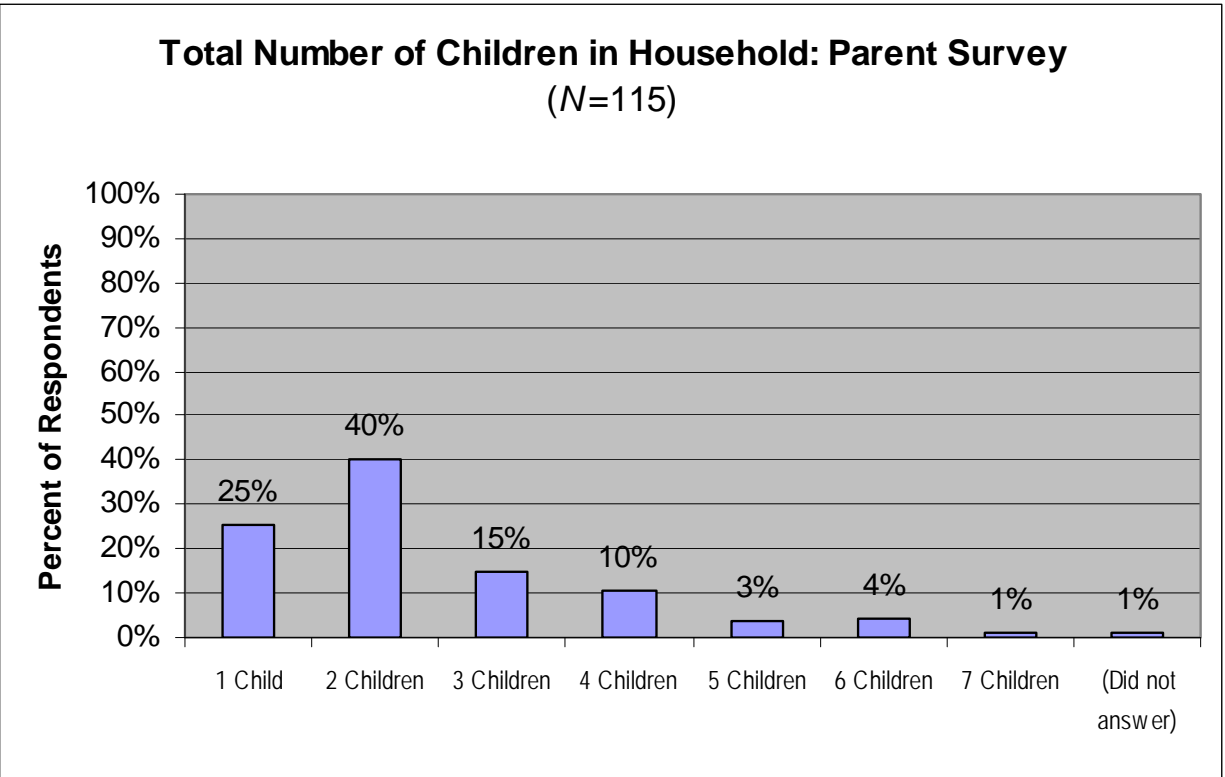18

Total Number of Children in Household: Parent Survey
(*N*=115)

Figure 15. Total Number of Children in Household: Parent Survey

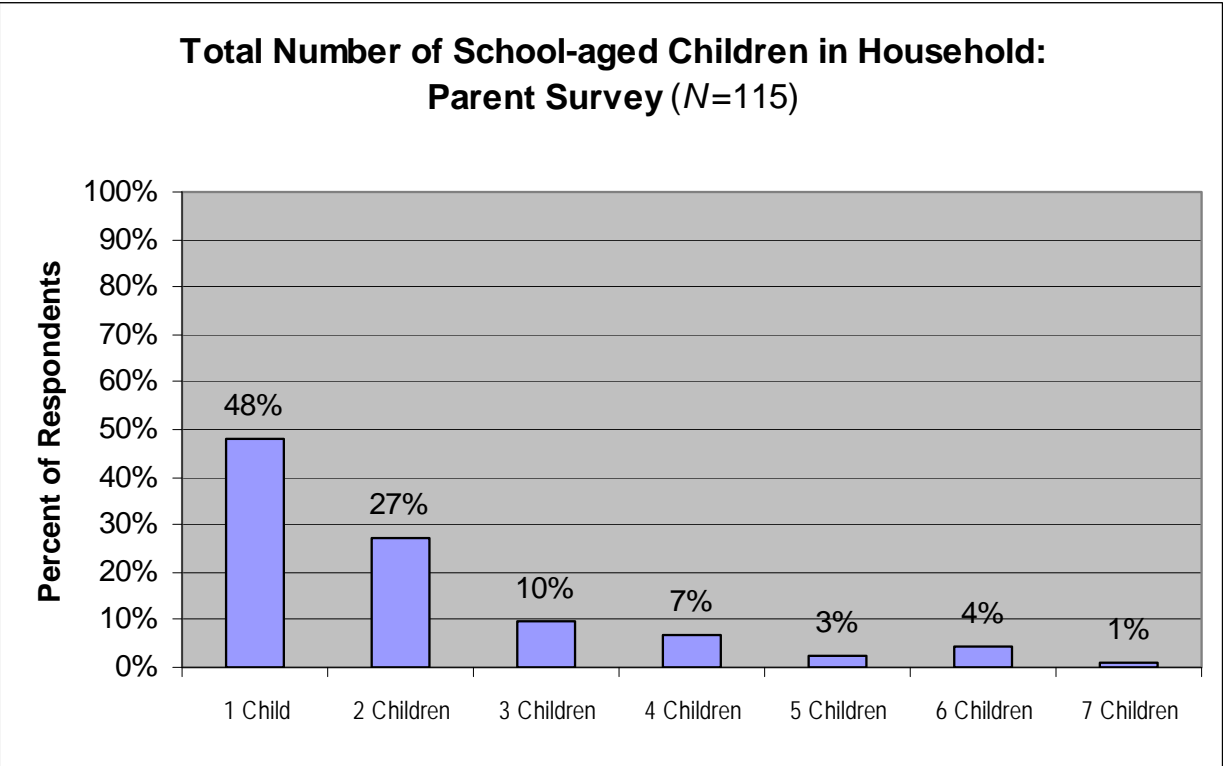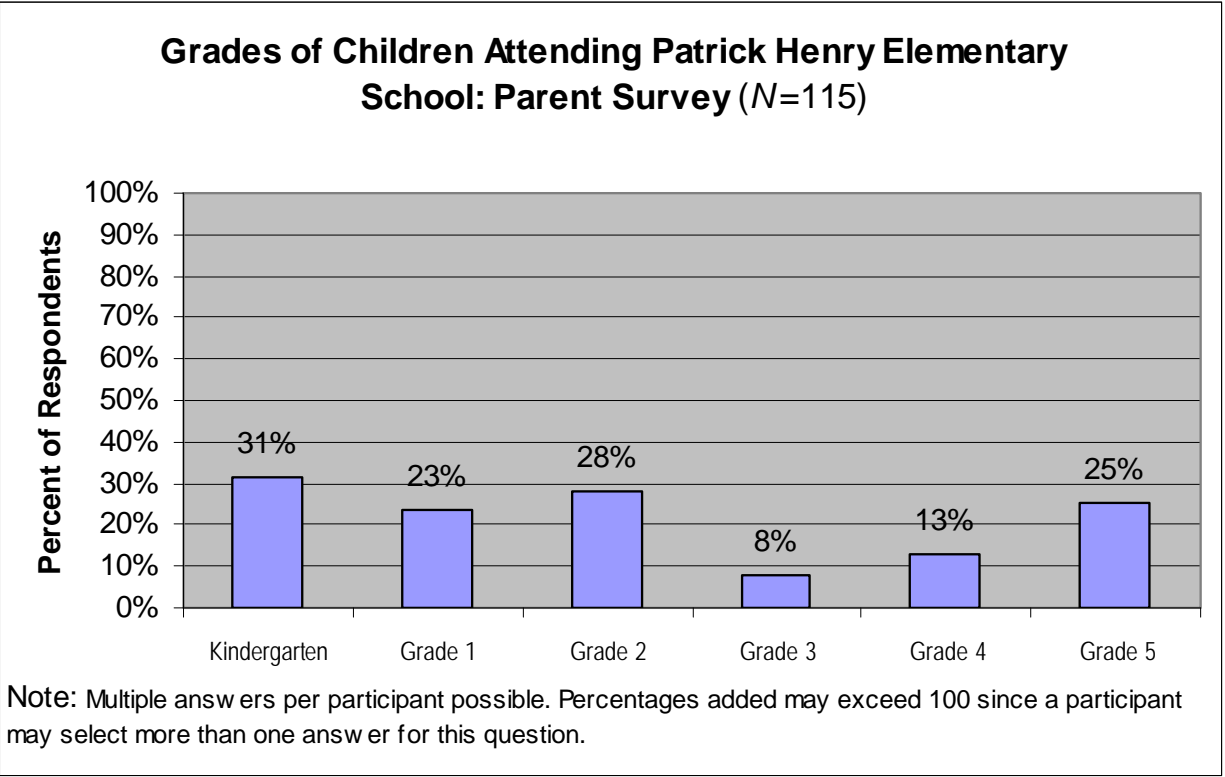**Total Number of School-aged Children in Household: Parent Survey** (*N*=115)

Figure 16. Total Number of School-aged Children in Household: Parent Survey

Figure 17. Grades of Children Attending Patrick Henry Elementary School: Parent Survey

	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times	(Did not answer)
School employees yelled at my child(ren)	77%	10%	6%	2%	4%
School employees were disrespectful to me or my child(ren)	83%	9%	3%	1%	3%
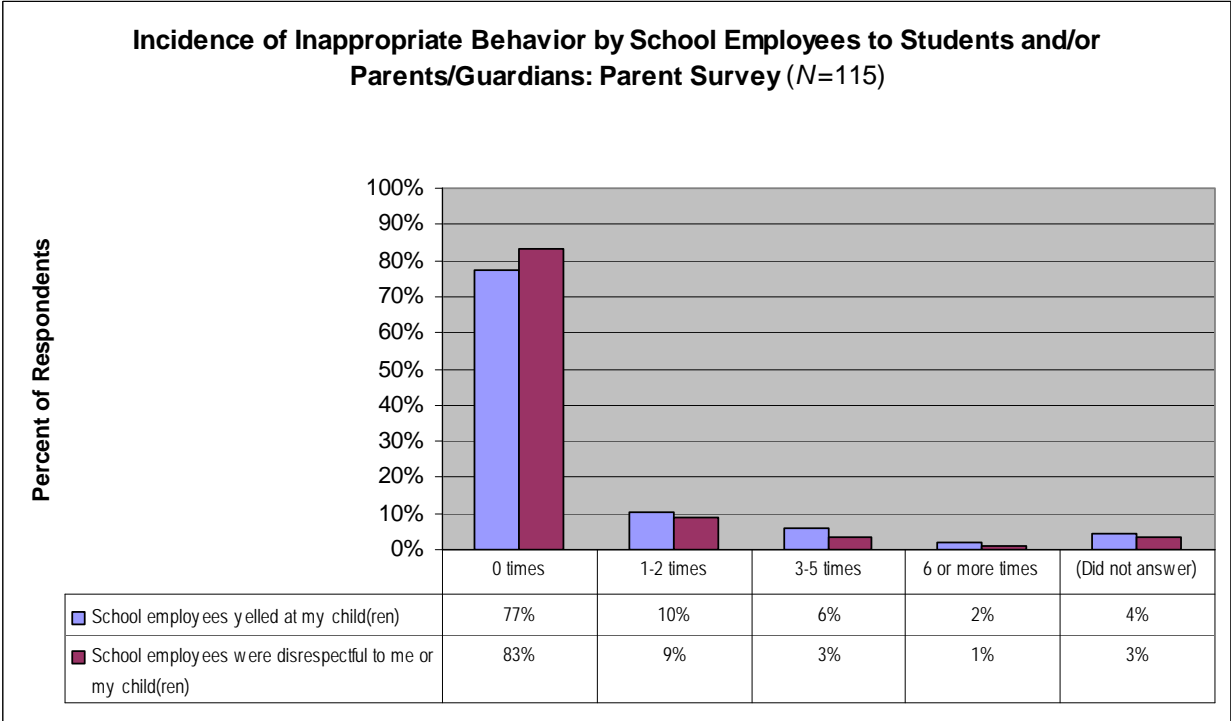
Figure 18. Incidence of Inappropriate Staff Behavior: Parent Survey

Incidence of Bullying Reported by Students to Parents/Guardians: Parent Survey (*N*=115)

	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times	(Did not answer)
■ Someone teased or hurt my child(ren)'s feelings	56%	25%	11%	4%	3%
■ Someone beat up or physically hurt my child(ren)	79%	16%	1%	0%	4%
□ Someone threatened or bullied my child(ren)	74%	17%	2%	2%	5%

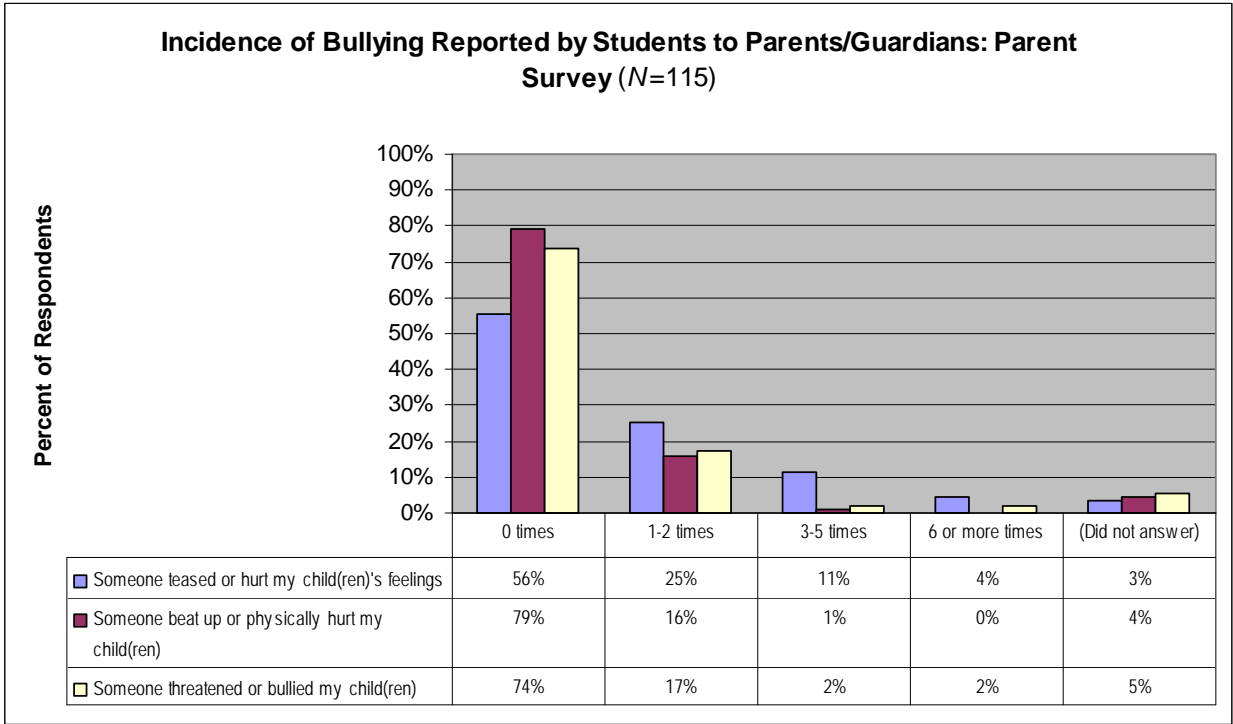**Figure 19. Incidence of Bullying and Teasing: Parent Survey**

Other Concerns Reported by Students to Parents/Guardians: Parent Survey (*N*=115)

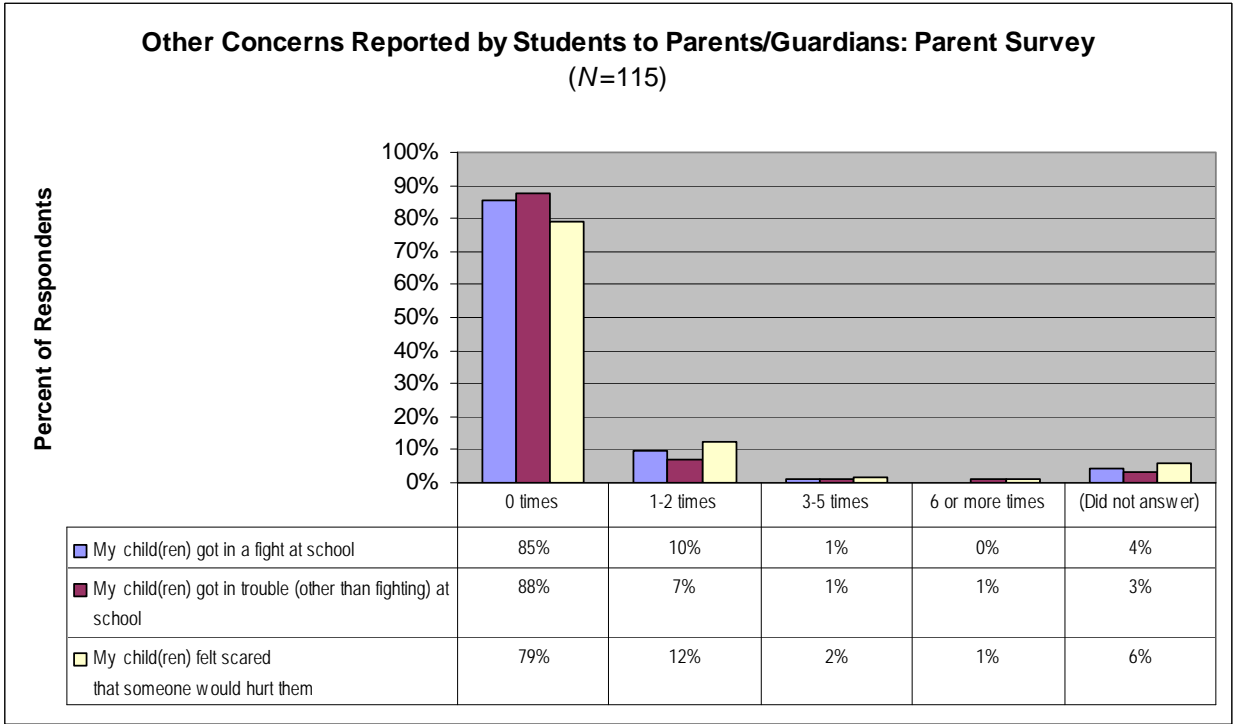|	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times	(Did not answer)
■ My child(ren) got in a fight at school	85%	10%	1%	0%	4%
■ My child(ren) got in trouble (other than fighting) at school	88%	7%	1%	1%	3%
□ My child(ren) felt scared that someone would hurt them	79%	12%	2%	1%	6%

Figure 20. Other Concerns Reported by Students to Parents/Guardians: Parent Survey

Table 3. Percent Selecting Strongly Agree or Agree on School Setting Items: Parent Survey

School Setting: Parent Survey (*N*=115)	SA/Agree
Q8(a). My child(ren) feel welcome at school.	96%
Q8(b). The principal is someone I can talk to if I need to.	96%
Q8(c). School facilities and grounds are well maintained.	91%
Q8(d). This school has clear rules and consistent policies.	93%
Q8(e). The school encourages respect between school staff, parents, and students.	95%
Q8(f). Teachers encourage my child(ren) to do their best at school.	94%
Q8(g). I feel welcome at my child(ren)'s school.	95%
Q8(h). My child(ren) feel(s) safe at school.	97%
Q8(i). The main office staff at the school treat me and my child(ren) with respect.	89%
Q8(j). I am well informed about school events, programs, policies, and rules.	90%
Q8(k). I can talk to my child(ren)'s teachers if I need to.	97%
Q8(l). The school has an inviting and welcoming environment.	94%
Q8(m). My child(ren) like(s) going to school.	95%
Q8(n). I feel welcome by the office staff.	89%
Q8(o). I like visiting the school.	93%

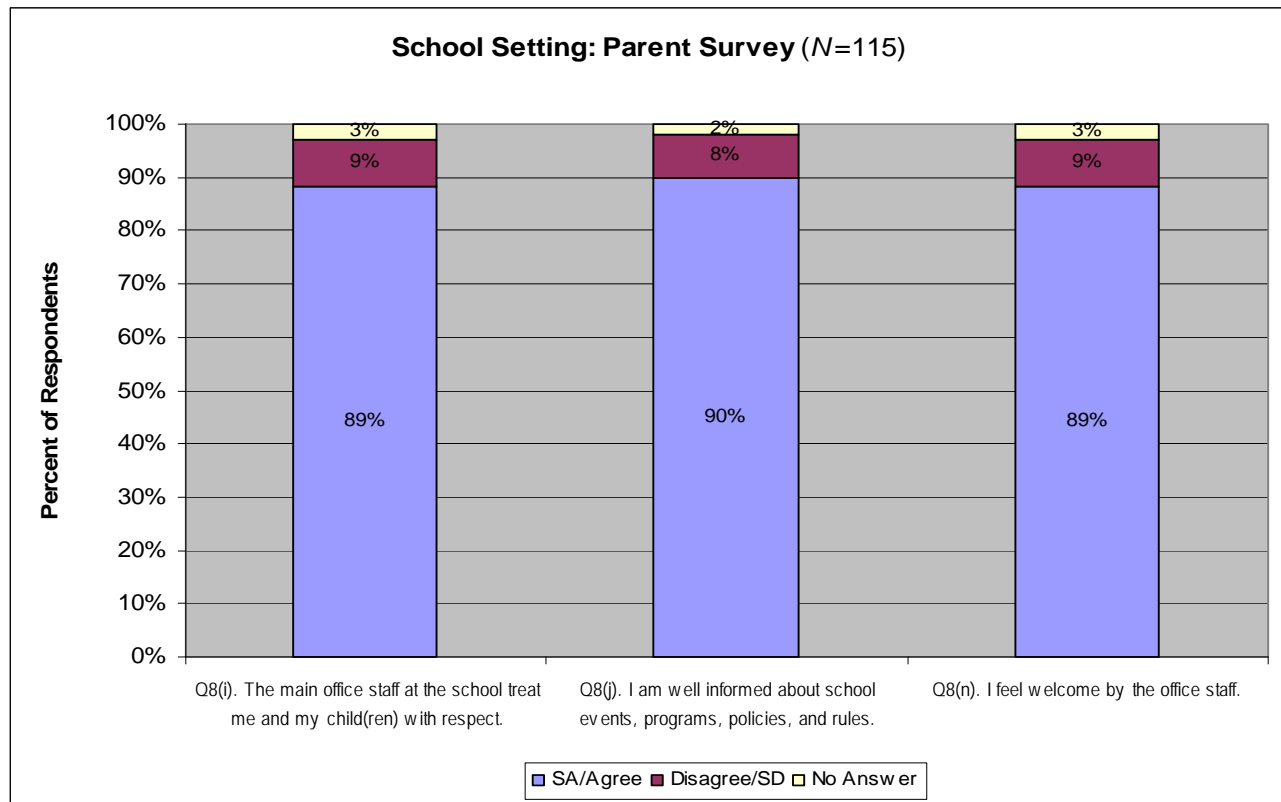**Figure 21. School Setting Items with Lower Parent Agreement (≤90%): Parent Survey**

Table 4. Percent Selecting Strongly Agree or Agree on School Climate Items: Parent Survey

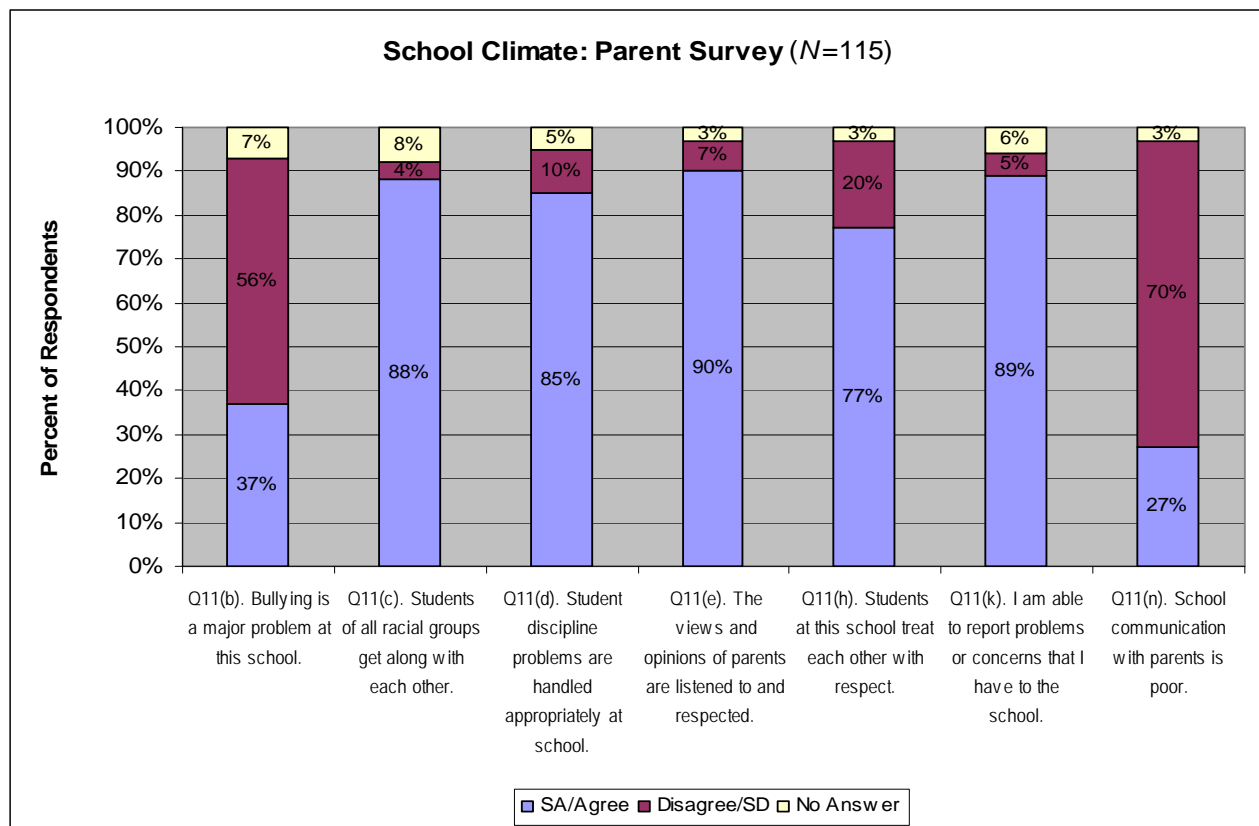| School Climate: Parent Survey (*N*=115)	SA/Agree
Q11(a). Arrival, recess, and dismissal of students is well supervised at this school.	95%
Q11(b). Bullying is a major problem at this school.	37%
Q11(c). Students of all racial groups get along with each other.	88%
Q11(d). Student discipline problems are handled appropriately at school.	85%
Q11(e). The views and opinions of parents are listened to and respected.	90%
Q11(f). I find my child(ren)'s teachers to be helpful and responsive.	92%
Q11(g). People who work at the school seem to work well with one another.	95%
Q11(h). Students at this school treat each other with respect.	77%
Q11(i). My child(ren) know and understand the school rules.	98%
Q11(j). People who work at the school treat me with respect.	93%
Q11(k). I am able to report problems or concerns that I have to the school.	89%
Q11(l). I find the administrators to be helpful and responsive.	92%
Q11(m). I am interested in helping my child(ren) learn.	97%
Q11(n). School communication with parents is poor.	27%

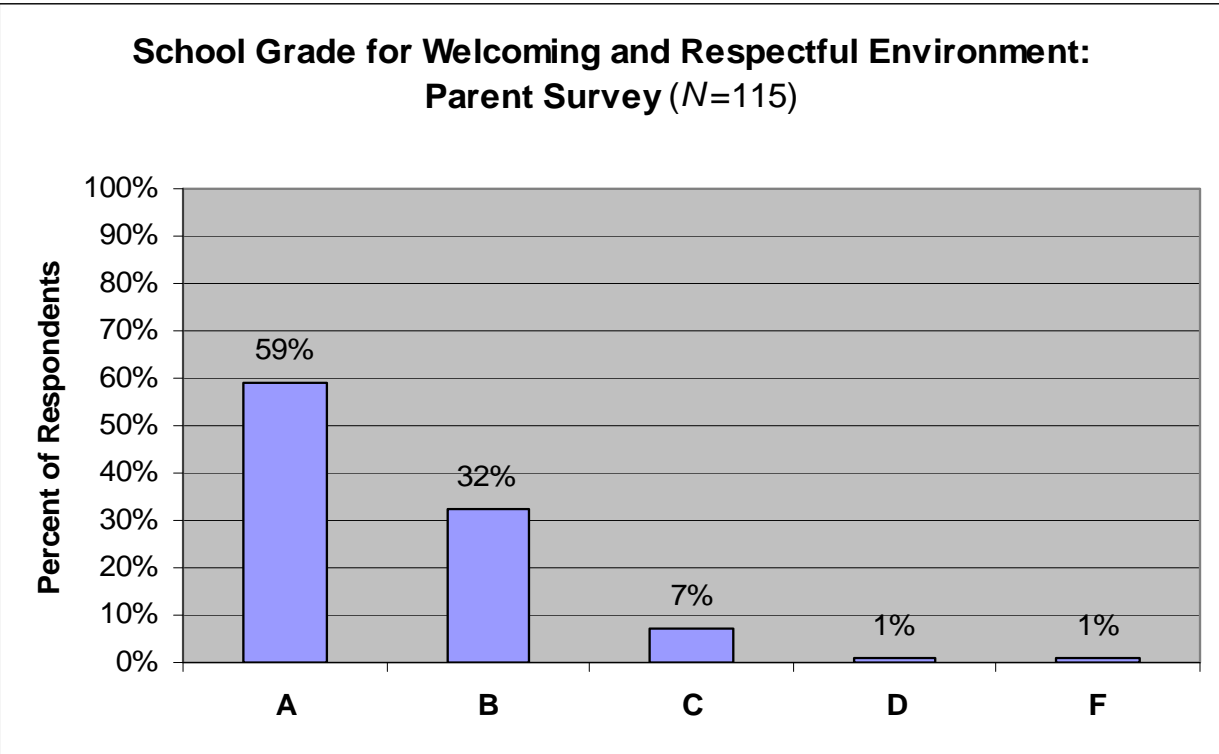**Figure 22. School Climate Items with Lower Parent Agreement (≤90%): Parent Survey**

School Grade for Welcoming and Respectful Environment: Parent Survey (*N*=115)
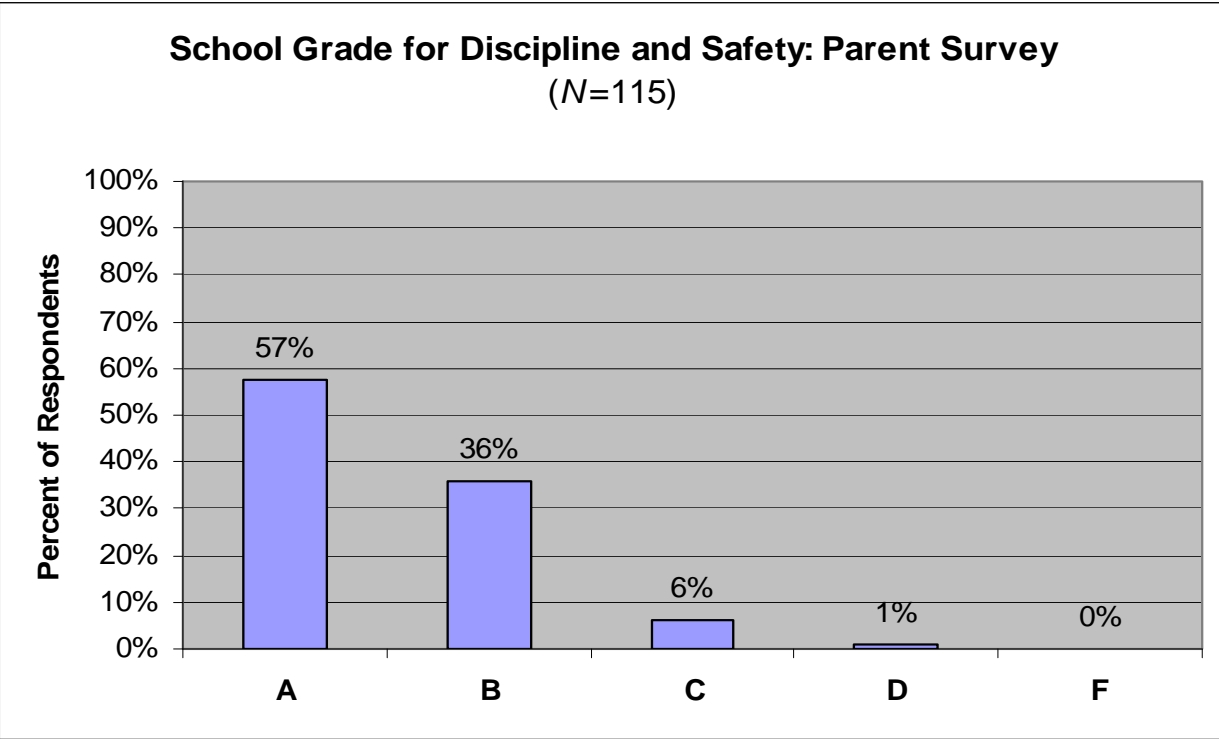
Figure 23. School Grade for Welcoming and Respectful Environment: Parent Survey

School Grade for Discipline and Safety: Parent Survey (*N*=115)
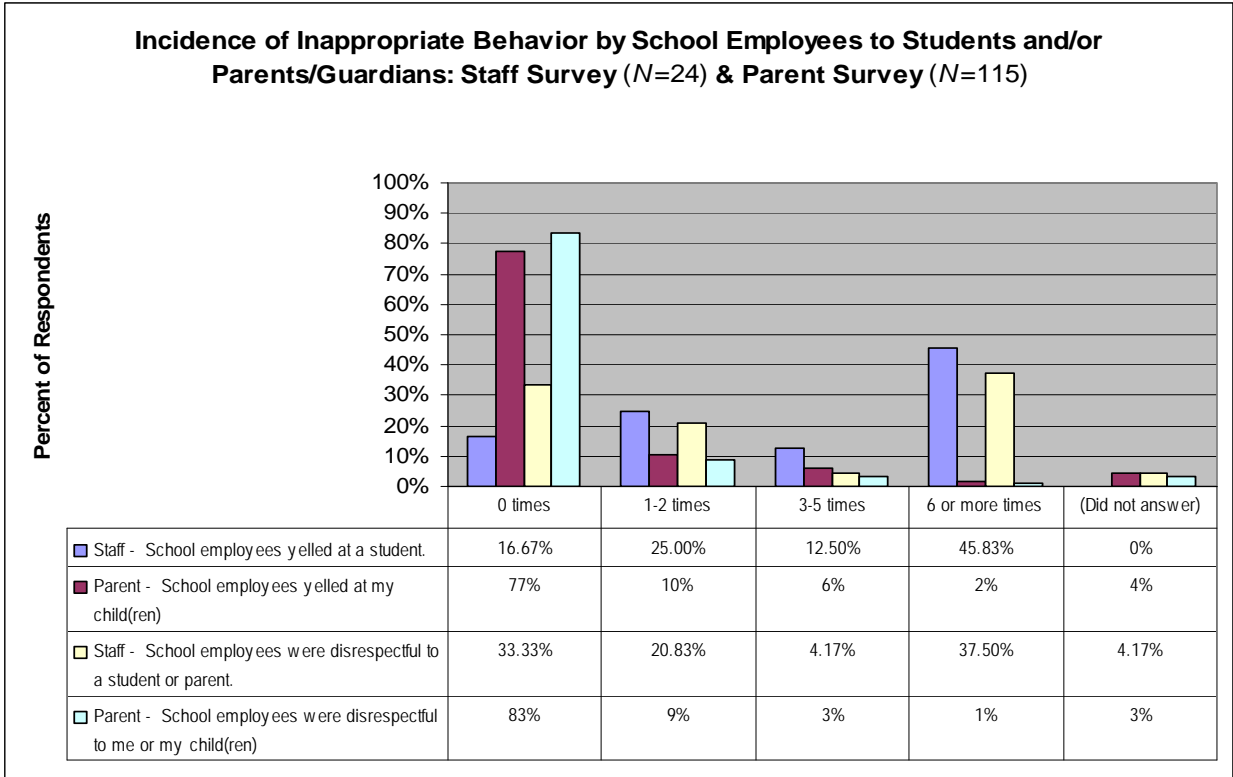
Figure 24. School Grade for Discipline and Safety: Parent Survey

Incidence of Inappropriate Behavior by School Employees to Students and/or Parents/Guardians: Staff Survey (*N*=24) & Parent Survey (*N*=115)

	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times	(Did not answer)
■ Staff - School employees yelled at a student.	16.67%	25.00%	12.50%	45.83%	0%
■ Parent - School employees yelled at my child(ren)	77%	10%	6%	2%	4%
□ Staff - School employees were disrespectful to a student or parent.	33.33%	20.83%	4.17%	37.50%	4.17%
□ Parent - School employees were disrespectful to me or my child(ren)	83%	9%	3%	1%	3%

Figure 25. Incidence of Inappropriate Staff Behavior: Staff & Parent Surveys

Incidence of Bullying and Teasing Reported by Students: Staff Survey (*N*=24) & Parent Survey (*N*=115)

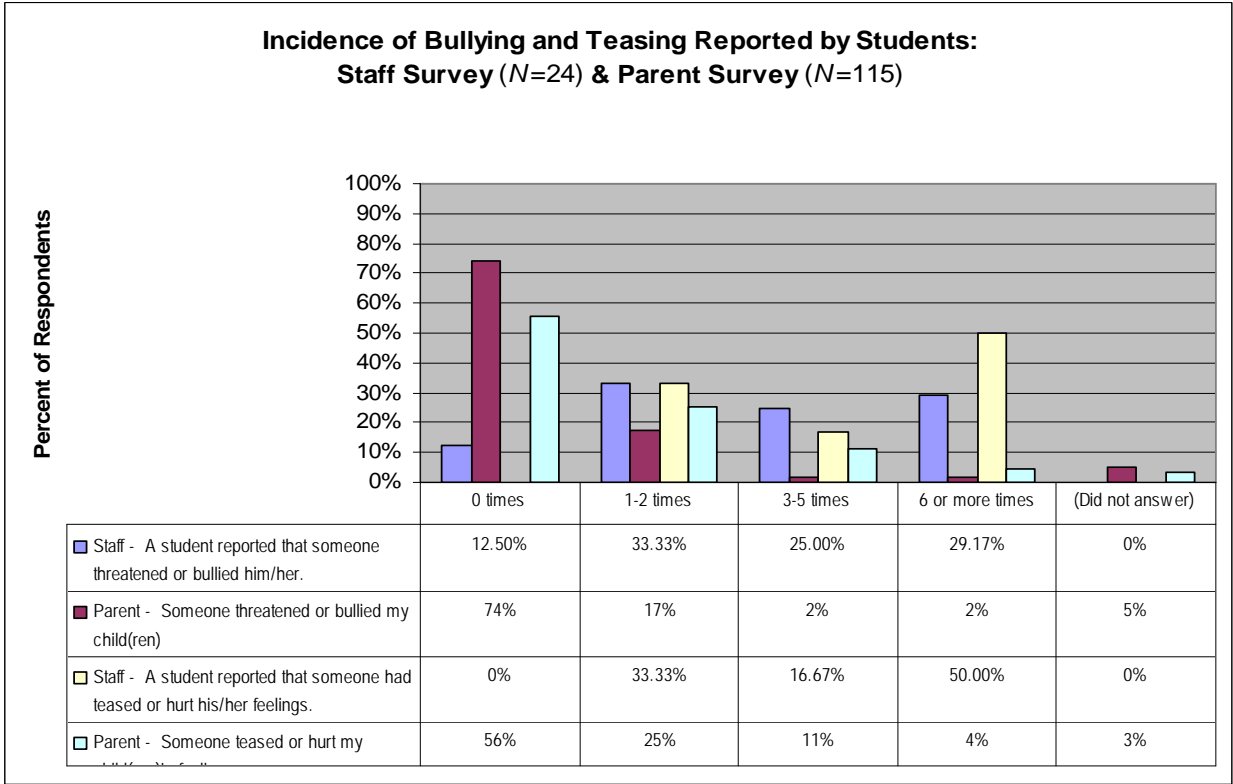|	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6 or more times	(Did not answer)
■ Staff - A student reported that someone threatened or bullied him/her.	12.50%	33.33%	25.00%	29.17%	0%
■ Parent - Someone threatened or bullied my child(ren)	74%	17%	2%	2%	5%
□ Staff - A student reported that someone had teased or hurt his/her feelings.	0%	33.33%	16.67%	50.00%	0%
□ Parent - Someone teased or hurt my child(ren)'s feelings	56%	25%	11%	4%	3%

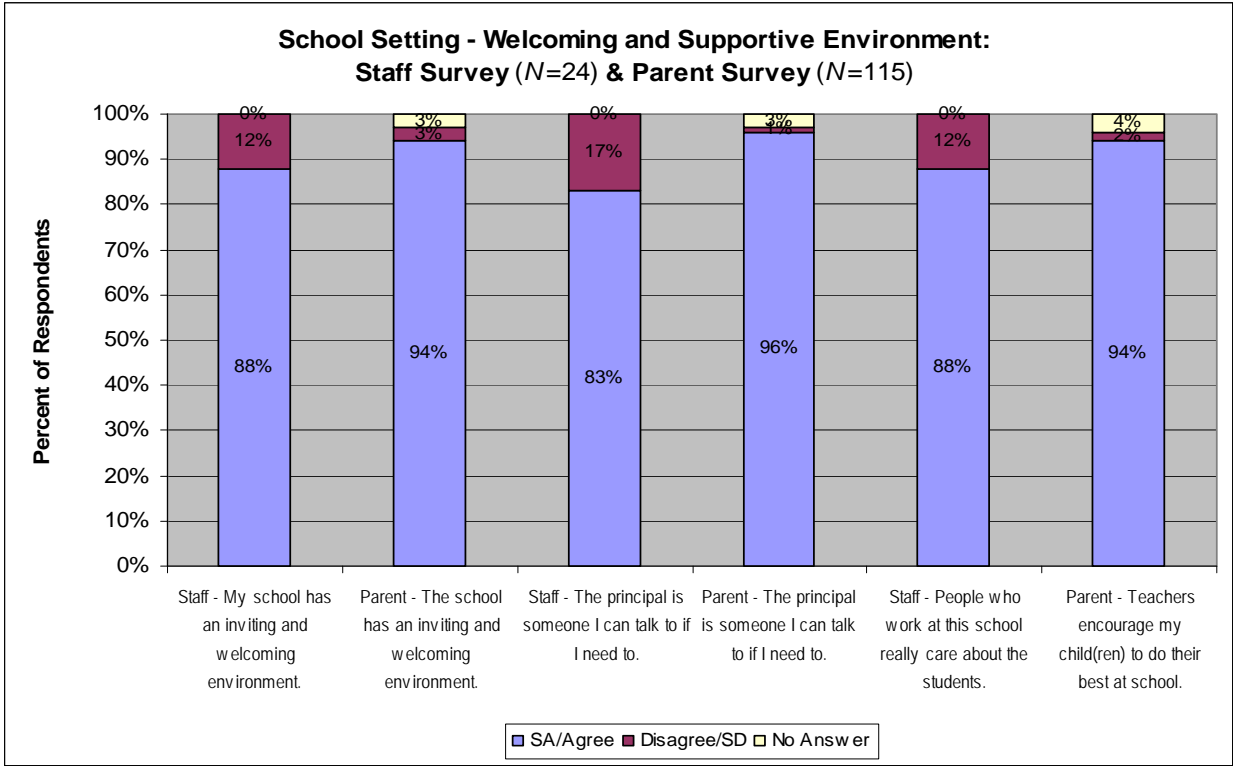**Figure 26. Incidence of Bullying and Teasing: Staff & Parent Surveys**

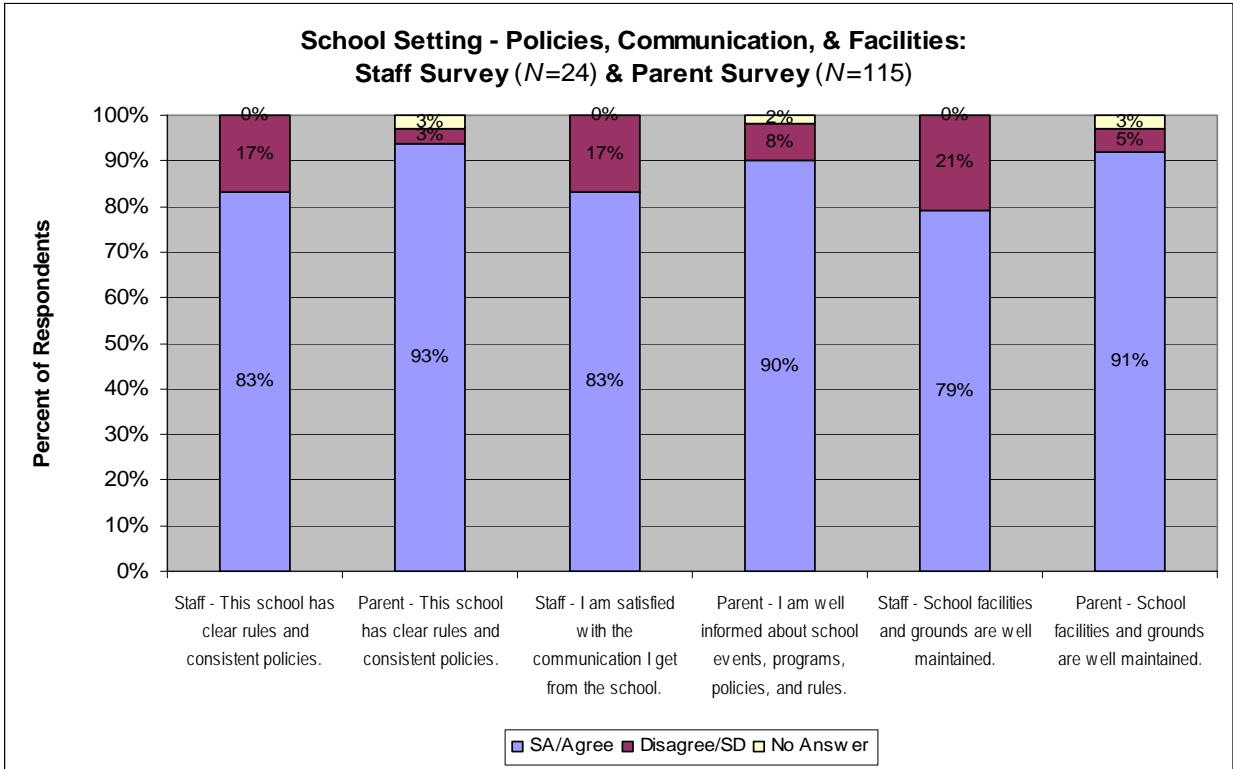**Figure 27. School Setting – Welcoming Environment: Staff & Parent Surveys**

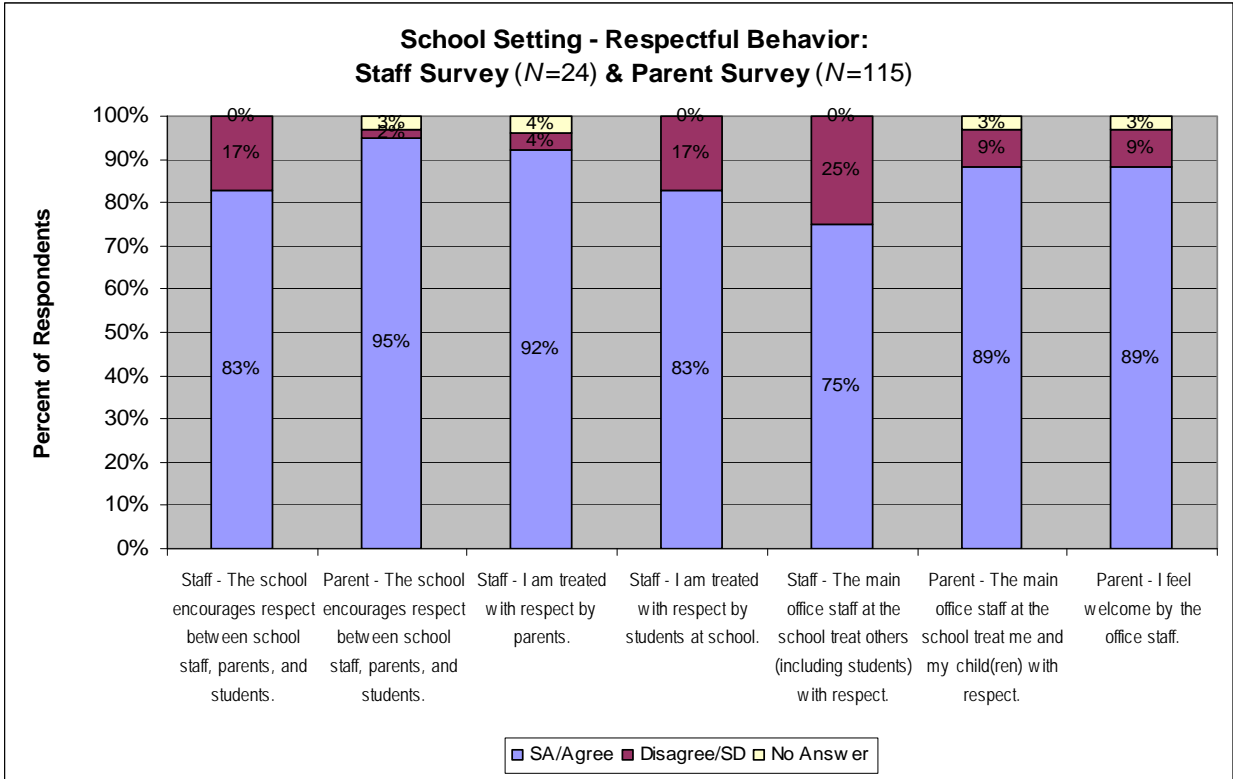**Figure 28. School Setting – Policies, Communication, & Facilities: Staff & Parent Surveys**

Figure 29. School Setting – Respectful Behavior: Staff & Parent Surveys
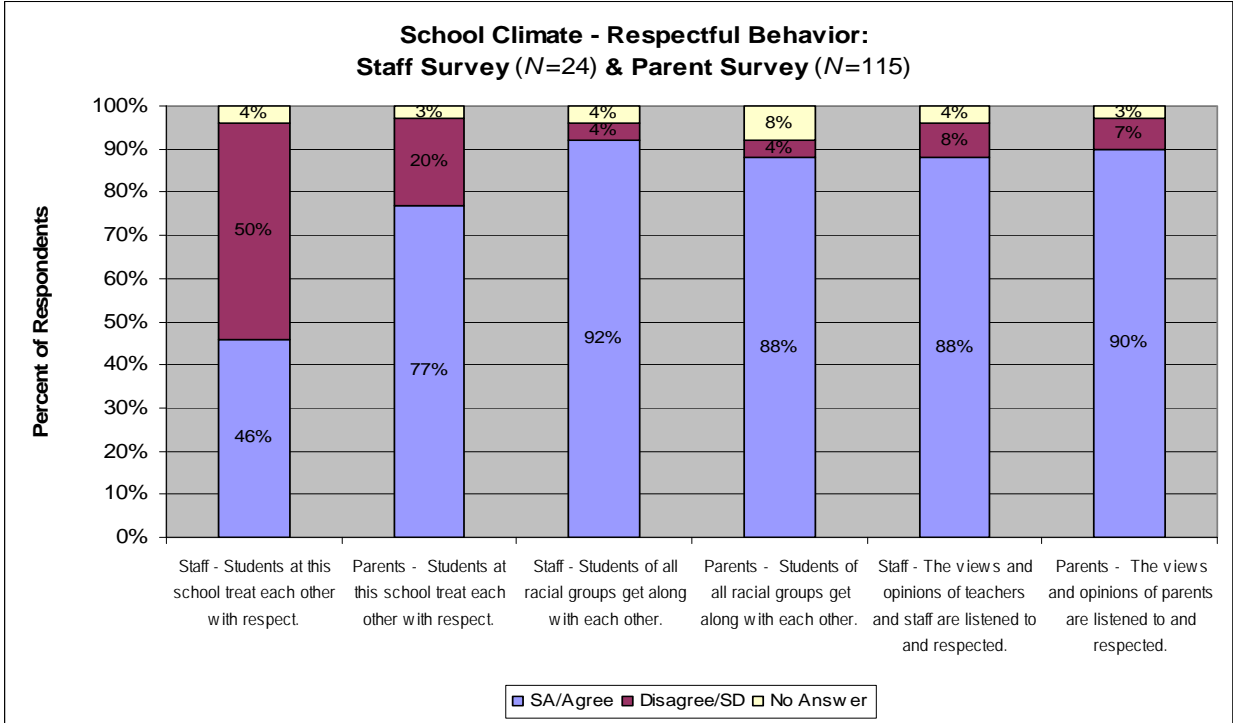

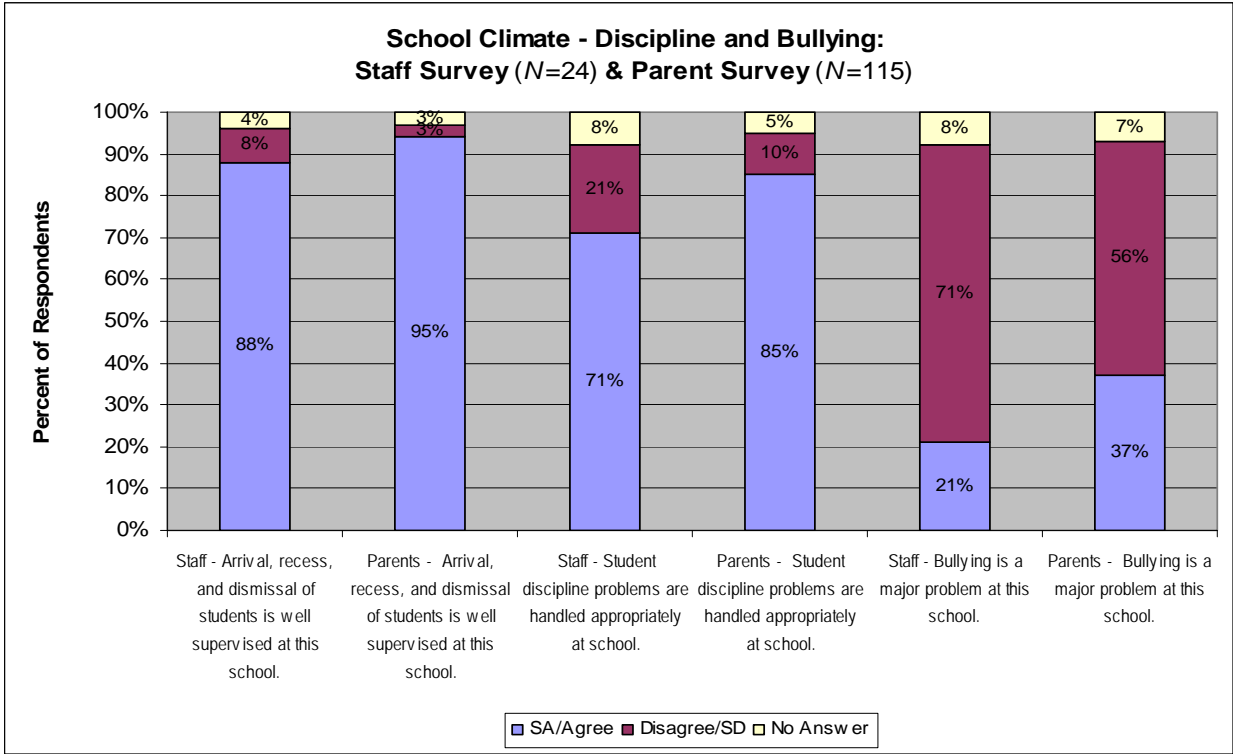**Figure 30. School Climate – Respectful Behavior: Staff & Parent Surveys**

Figure 31. School Climate – Discipline and Bullying: Staff & Parent Surveys
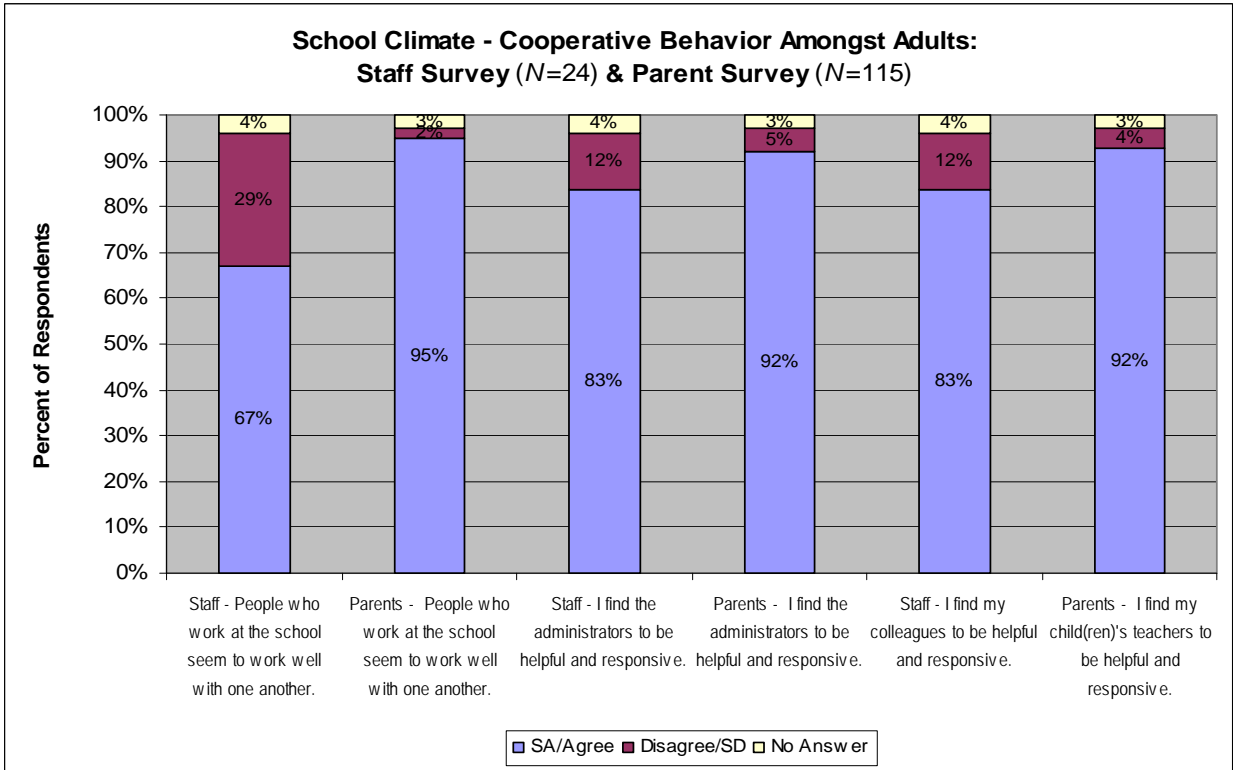

Figure 32. School Climate – Cooperative Behavior Amongst Adults: Staff & Parent Surveys
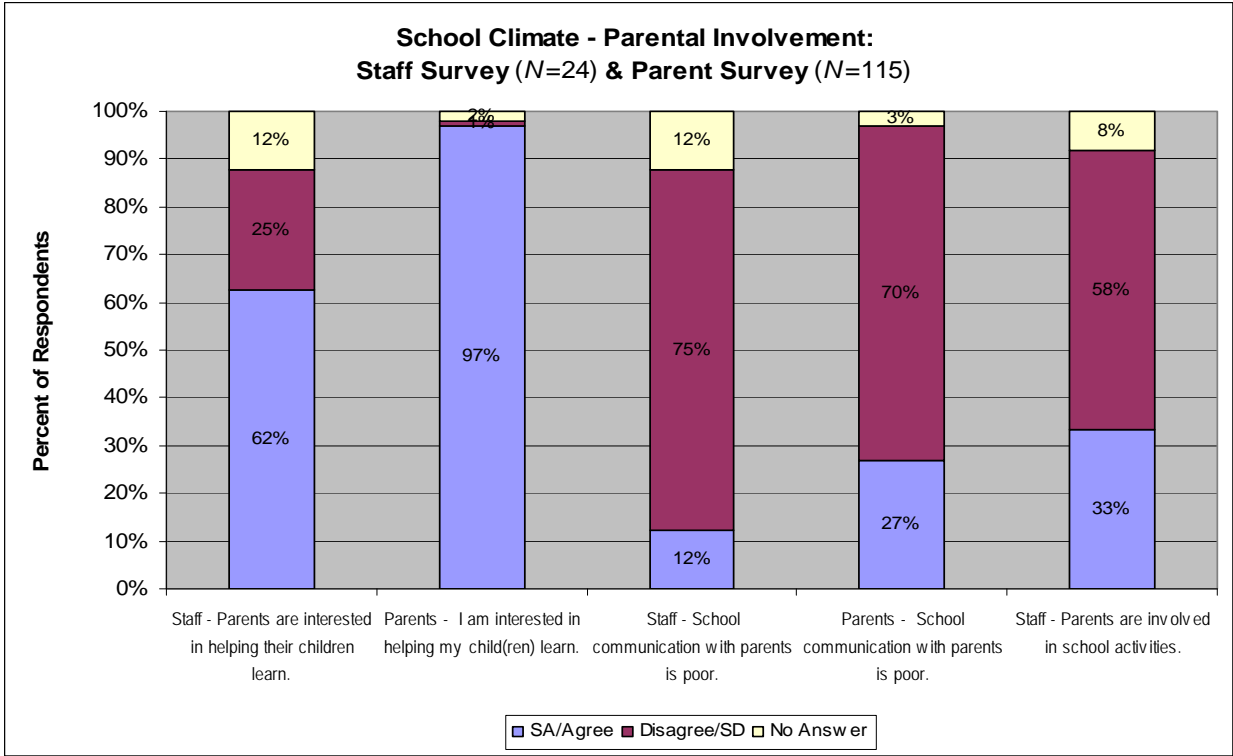
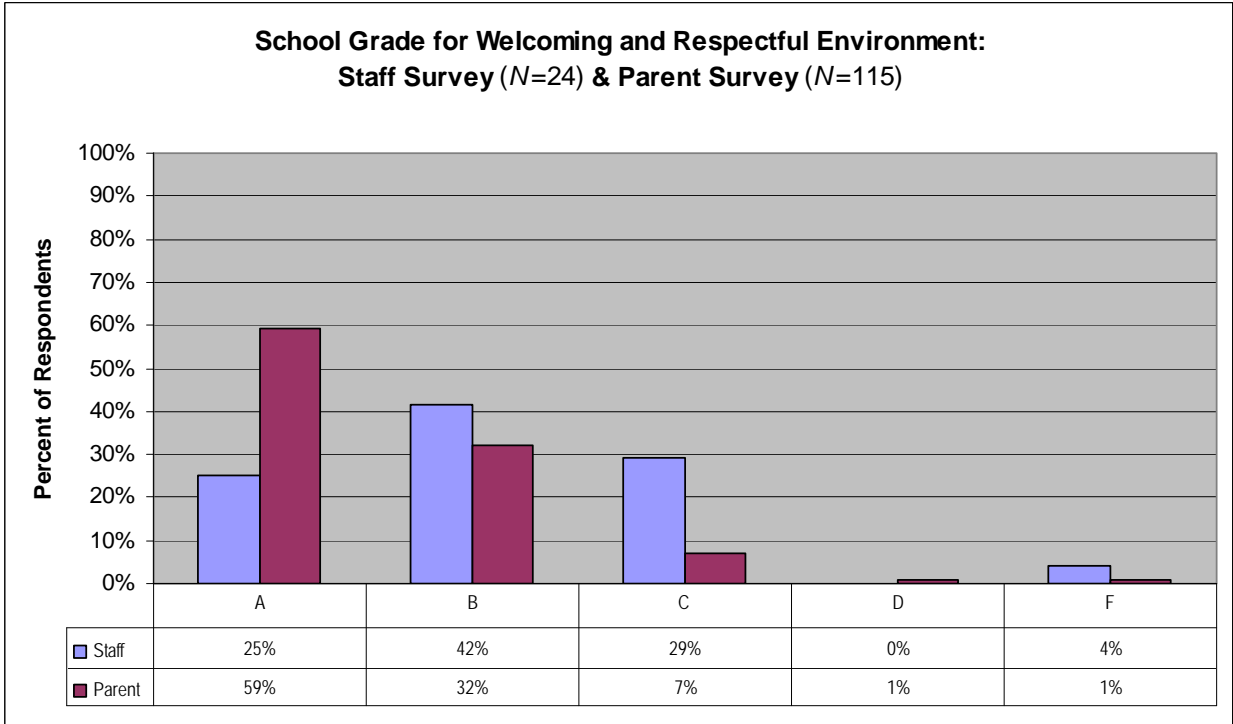**Figure 33. School Climate – Parental Involvement: Staff & Parent Surveys**

Figure 34. School Grade for Welcoming and Respectful Environment: Staff & Parent Surveys

School Grade for Discipline and Safety:
Staff Survey (*N*=24) **& Parent Survey** (*N*=115)

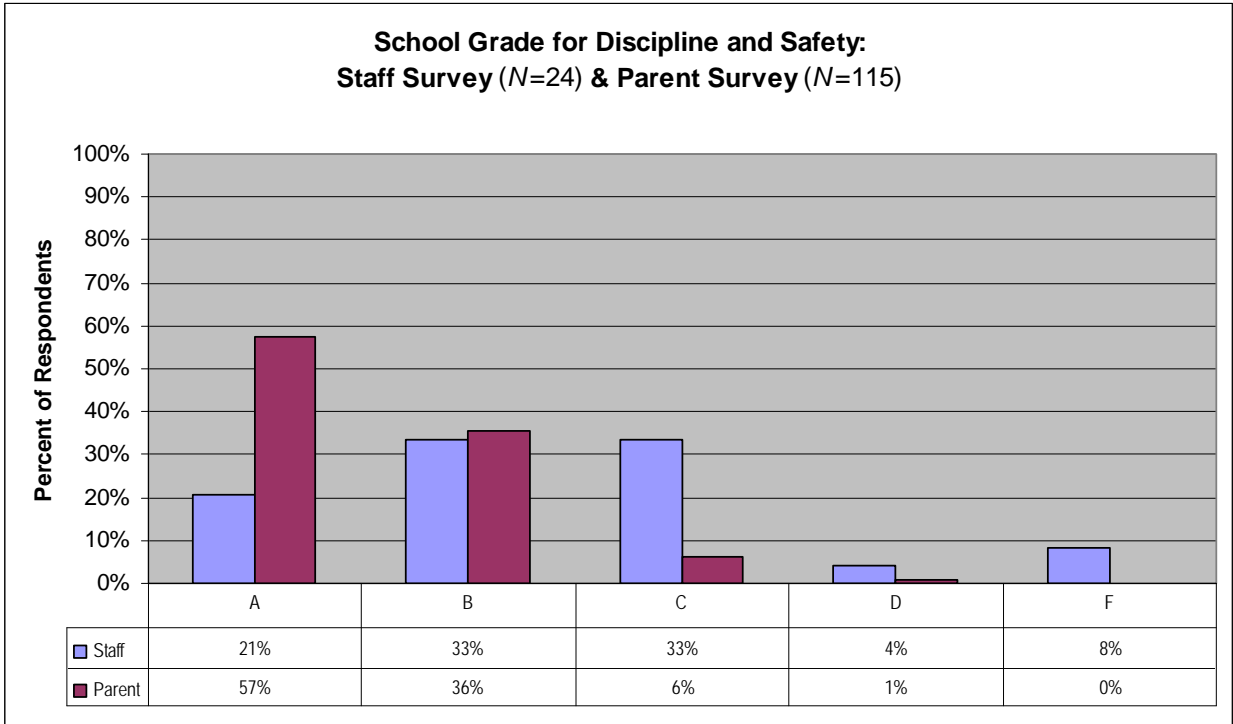|	A	B	C	D	F
Staff	21%	33%	33%	4%	8%
Parent	57%	36%	6%	1%	0%

Figure 35. School Grade for Discipline and Safety: Staff & Parent Surveys

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Provide more division-wide support to improve school climate at the building level.

Implementing change at the building level to develop or enhance a positive school climate requires support from the superintendent, central office staff, and building personnel, backed by the school board. For example decisions on building size, budget allocations, staff selection, as well as communication, policies, and procedures all help to influence and encourage change.[15]

Recommendation 2: Provide more professional development opportunities to support school building staff to improve school climate.

Within the school building, the principal plays a primary role, providing leadership, defining the goals and behavioral expectations of teachers, and supporting staff in developing an effective school.[16] Site-based management and the organization of principals, teachers, and staff into a learning community[17] are routes to participatory decision making. When teachers are actively involved in mapping change, the result is improved morale and willing participation. When teachers are supported, students are supported.

Recommendation 3: Have division and school personnel review the practices currently in place to improve or enhance school climate.

The division and schools should self-assess current practices, e.g., Individual Achievement Plans (IAPs), and programs, e.g., Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), that affect school climate in relation to best practices. Below are some examples of best practices suggested by Michigan State University:[18]

Promoting a Safe and Orderly Environment
- Maintain buildings in good physical condition
- Reward students for appropriate behavior
- Enforce consequences for inappropriate behavior
- Use contracts with students to reinforce behavioral expectations
- Post behavioral policies on bulletin boards; periodically announce them over the public address system
- Initiate anti-bullying, conflict resolution, and peer mediation programs
- Engage students, staff, and parents in planning school safety activities
- Increase number and accessibility of counselors, social workers, and mentors
- Create anonymous tip lines or suggestion boxes for reporting potentially dangerous situations or providing ideas to improve school climate
- Provide in-school options to "blow off steam"
- Provide in-school suspension programs with academic supports and consistent staffing

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[15] University-Community Partnerships, Michigan State University. (2004, December). *School Climate and Learning.* (Best Practices Brief, No. 31). Lansing, MI: Author.

[16] Gonder, P. O., & Hymes, D. (1994*). Improving school climate and culture* (AASA Critical Issues Report No. 27). Arlington,VA: American Association of School Administrators.

[17] Senge, P.M. (1994). The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization. New York: Currency Doubleday.

[18] University-Community Partnerships, Michigan State University. (2004, December). *School Climate and Learning.* (Best Practices Brief, No. 31). Lansing, MI: Author.

- Develop strategies to ensure safety during lunch periods and between classes; provide more structured activities during lunch hour

Facilitating Interaction and Relationships
- Use team teaching
- Provide for small group activities
- Provide multiple and varied opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities

Promoting a Positive Affective Environment
- Use summer school rather than retention in grade for failing students
- Promote cooperation rather than competition; avoid winners and losers
- Assure that every student has an active connection to at least one adult in the school
- Provide professional development on such issues as cultural and class differences, emotional needs of other children, parental involvement, and bullying and harassment