

Peak to Peak Response to 2016 Annual Family Survey Results

Summary

The results of the 2016 Peak to Peak Annual Family Survey were provided to the Peak to Peak Board of Directors and administration in the spring of 2016. A report detailing the results of the survey was provided to the Peak to Peak community and is available on the school website ([2016 Family Guardian Survey Report](#)). In general, responses to the survey statements were very positive including data related to the quality of instruction and praise for the dedicated teachers and staff. However, there were areas where parents/guardians expressed concerns either through the rating of the question or in their comments. The Board of Directors, Executive Leadership, and principals take the survey results very seriously and have responded with many changes to address the concerns of the Peak to Peak community. The following report, prepared by the Accountability Committee, summarizes those activities as reported by school leadership. More details about the survey and the response can be found in the remainder of this report.

Elementary School

Parents indicated two areas of concern specific to the elementary school: Homework Policy and students' social-emotional needs.

Homework - Elementary Staff continue to adjust the homework policy with a strong focus on communication. The team has worked hard to standardize expectations and which assignments will come home in students' homework folders. Teachers are providing a cohesive message to students (and parents as necessary) regarding homework to meet individualized needs through customized plans.

Because one of the primary concerns from parents was math progress, a study hall period was added at the Elementary level to create a work time with available teacher support. Homework in 5th grade continues so that students are ready for the responsibilities associated with middle school.

Dedicated Elementary School Counselor - There is currently no budget for a full-time Elementary School Counselor, and it should be noted that there is not a full-time dedicated counselor at any BVSD elementary school, and only one elementary school has a part-time counselor. Based on an ongoing evaluation of our needs, and on the recommendation of other elementary counselors, the administration feels that it is more valuable to have a staff member who is available all day, every day whenever the need arises to support students, as opposed to a specially trained counselor who is only on campus part-time. The Elementary Assistant Principal/Counselor role coordinates with the secondary counselors and participates in ongoing trainings to continue to grow counseling expertise. Additionally, the elementary level is able to utilize the six members of our dedicated counseling team usually assigned to grades 6-12 to support students and staff whenever the need arises.

Secondary School Conferences

Parents indicated a dissatisfaction with the secondary Parent/Teacher conference process.

The staff has made new efforts to let parents and guardians know they are welcome to connect with their student's teachers at conferences and any time throughout the year. The P/T conferences are easy to schedule online and are available to all parents and guardians. Times can be scheduled with the teachers they wish to speak with, eliminating the wait time.

Counseling

Parent comments reflected a desire for counselors to give more weight to financial and logistical family issues regarding the college decision process.

The counseling department has added the *Weekly Counseling Digest* to the wealth of information available to all Peak to Peak families. A link can be found on the weekly digest email as well as on the web site. Feel free to contact your student's counselor with any questions; they are happy to help guide you.

Board of Directors meeting minutes

Parent comments in the survey expressed concern regarding the skeletal minutes from board meetings.

In August 2016, the Peak to Peak BOD developed and approved a BOD *Minutes Template and Minutes Guidelines* with the stated purpose of aiding in the creation of minutes that: 1) record board business, 2) provide a document for institutional history and later reference, and 3) readily inform community members of what transpired in a board meeting. The minutes will capture the substantive nature of discussion and comments of board members and attendees, while avoiding a cumbersome transcript-like document, and will include:

- pros, cons and perspectives raised
- the precise detail of any vote
- the final understanding of discussion of each agenda item
- action items reviewed from the previous meeting, and those arising from the current meeting, including date deliverable and ownership of each
- future business items and any wrap up items raised by board members

The Secretary will report any confusion or disagreement of a substantive nature to the President, who shall raise it at the next meeting for clarification among the full board.

This new format will allow a more accurate recall of the details of agreement, in order to proceed with clarity and hold individuals and others accountable. The Secretary's role is merely to record what transpired, and any substantive uncertainties or disagreements are limited to be more appropriately raised in the next meeting, as a point of clarification for the group.

Fundraising/Scholarship Fund

Comments related to finances and fundraising primarily focused on parents' desire for greater transparency regarding how the Scholarship Fund operates, and clearer delineation between scholarship and school operating funds.

In 2016, the board re-evaluated the Friends fundraising structure and decided to focus the attention of the Major Gifts Officer on external philanthropic sources such as foundations, trusts and corporations. As a result, the annual gift campaign was moved from the Major Gifts Officer job description to the Fundraising and Community Relations Manager job description. Currently, the Major Gifts Officer is a 0.5 FTE position, and the Fundraising and Community Relations Manager is a 0.6 FTE position.

Additionally, the board approved a new procedure in March 2016, to ensure separation of donations to the *Friends of Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund* from all other fundraised monies. A new Friends 'scholarship donation' bank account was established to receive and hold *Friends of Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund* donations until they can be transferred to the Community First Foundation (CFF). A separate Friends 'scholarship disbursement' bank account was established to hold distributions from CFF, which are then awarded to students in the form of scholarships. In addition, a new merchant account was established on the school's website to accept credit card donations that are deposited directly into the new "scholarship donation" bank account. The new procedures are intended to ensure that only donations designated for the *Friends of Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund* go into that account. Further information can be found on the [Financial transparency page](#) of the Peak to Peak website, including flowcharts to clarify how scholarship monies are collected and disbursed.

Facilities

Survey comments specific to school facilities and their maintenance included anticipation regarding completion of the build-out.

The campus build-out project has been successfully completed, and all new areas are now in use, including additional classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria space, and gym facilities. Items within the existing facilities that require repair and/or replacement are considered as part of the budgeting process, reflected in the replacement reserves and balanced against other financial needs, including educational expenditures. In addition, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is establishing a Capital Needs List with input from stakeholders with the purpose of clearly defining school-wide priorities for capital expenditures. The list will be presented to Board of Directors for discussion and vote in November.

Boulder Valley School District is proposing a mill levy for the November ballot that, if approved, would be intended for use addressing these types of facility needs. One example that has been noted in some comments to the survey over the years is the damage to sidewalks, especially along the north side of the south building. While temporary repairs of these issues are performed periodically, Facilities Director John Wilcox is obtaining an estimate for a more permanent repair. Costs such as this are evaluated with other school needs when determining how the replacement reserves and/or potential capital funding sources are spent.

General cleanliness and repairs to aging facilities

The expansion of campus facilities increases the need for janitorial services. Cleaning of the facility is now contracted with a service provider, Service Master, overseen by Facilities staff. 100% of the facility is cleaned on a nightly basis by Service Master personnel. Daytime cleaning is conducted by Peak to Peak's daytime janitorial supervisor with support from Service Master.

Safety and Security

Parents have expressed concerns in the survey about campus safety, specifically about security and access at school entrances and the openness of the campus.

The campus build-out included measures to increase safety. The most notable of these are the airlocks for the north and south buildings that now require visitors to check in with staff before being granted access into the buildings. In conjunction with this physical change, building access procedures have been updated to keep most exterior doors locked except during passing periods. The main building entrances are visually monitored at all times. While these changes may cause some inconvenience, particularly for visitors, the safety of students and staff is improved.

Food Services

Some parents expressed a desire for more organic/healthier options that still taste good. Other comments questioned why Peak to Peak did not follow the BVSD menu.

Food Options

Peak to Peak is a designated School Food Authority (SFA) which means we operate under strict regulations through the CDE and the USDA. Whenever possible, the cafeteria offers the healthiest, tastiest and most nutritious food options available and continually develops and tests new recipes to evolve and improve offerings. The cafeteria now offers organic beef from

Anderson Farms, all-natural chicken, and 100% organic fruits and vegetables from Fresh Pack. With the advent of the “Smart Snack” program there is additional nutritional information available to parents via your lunch account or the Food Services [webpage](#).

Food Services welcomed the creation of the Food Services Committee last year, which is open to all. Through parent-obtained grants, the cafeteria now has bulk milk dispensers, making hormone-free, antibiotic-free milk available to students. Since the addition of the milk dispensers, sales of white milk have far outpaced that of chocolate milk (the chocolate milk is a TruMoo product with reduced fat and sugar). Even with a focus on more organic, natural and healthy choices, Food Services continues to take on the challenge of maintaining balance and maximizing options for all families to meet as many needs as possible.

Moving forward, Food Services would like to investigate opportunities to tap into the BVSD Farm to School program to provide increased natural, organic, and local options. Storage is a limitation when high quantity purchases are required, but the hope is that with the growth in this sector of the food industry, there will be more options to make low cost purchases in manageable quantities.

BVSD Menu

Food Services sees significant challenges with moving to BVSD provided food including the loss of hot breakfast, the loss of in-house, fresh prepared foods (BVSD has moved to central kitchens with schools reheating food for serving), the loss of personalized service from a dedicated staff that remains in place year over year and knows each student personally. Also, Food Services wants to provide as many options to families as possible and sees a move to BVSD limiting in that regard. Finally, Peak to Peak Food Services predicts that participation rates, currently increasing at the school but decreasing in BVSD, would drop as a result of such a transition, creating economic challenges for the program.

Volunteering

Data regarding volunteering suggested a decrease in the number of respondents who indicated they volunteer in some capacity. Comments indicated that new background requirements may have contributed to this decline, but the historically high response rate is also likely to have skewed the results and created this perception.

In fact, the total number of volunteers increased from 356 volunteers in 2014-2015, to 484 volunteers in 2015-2016. Note that no fingerprinting was required during 2014-2015 but was added in 2015-2016 as an additional safety measure. Of the 484 total volunteers in 2015-2016, 260 were actually fingerprinted as required if they volunteered directly with students in any capacity.

Communication of Survey Results

Presentations at the Annual Meeting have not provided an adequate forum for presenting the Parent Satisfaction Survey results in a clear, complete, and comprehensive manner.

The Accountability Committee, in collaboration with the Executive Leadership Team and Board of Directors, is currently considering expanded channels for delivering survey information. This could include a recorded video presentation of the results that would be posted to the website, and/or focused “town hall” type meetings in which the survey results would be the primary topic. We will continue to explore all avenues to communicate results of this significant component of our overall function and communicate how you can access this information.

Conclusion

There are always areas where Peak to Peak can improve, even given the very positive results of the survey. The Accountability Committee appreciates that families have participated in that improvement through their responses to the survey. The Committee also is grateful that the Board of Directors, the Executive Director of Education, the Executive Director of Operations, the principals, and supporting administration are open and responsive to the survey results and the comments made by parents. Survey reports and responses can be found for this year and previous years on the school website or by clicking [here](#).

The Accountability Committee
October 2016