

2025 Community Budget Survey Summary Initial Report

April 2025

INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Shoreline School District conducted a community budget survey to gather input from staff, families, students, and community members. This feedback was one element that helped guide decisions about how to reduce expenditures while protecting services most important to students.

To support continued budget planning, the district again used the same prioritization and open-ended survey prompts in 2025. This allowed for both updated input and comparison to prior results, helping the district assess where perspectives have remained consistent and where new concerns may have emerged.

2023 SURVEY SUMMARY

The [2023 survey](#) played a role in guiding the district's multi-year budget alignment strategy. Community input emphasized protecting student-facing services and beginning reductions furthest from the classroom. In alignment with this guidance, the district eliminated central office and administrative positions, including directors, instructional coaches, and other non-school-based roles. Additional measures included furlough days, contract suspensions and concessions, and benefit reductions for central office staff. The district also paused curriculum adoptions, reduced professional development for non-classroom staff, and implemented across-the-board cuts to school and department budgets. Non-essential expenditures such as travel, printing, and district-sponsored events were also scaled back. Together, these steps reflect a consistent effort to honor community priorities and minimize the impact of reductions on student learning.

SURVEY DESIGN

As with the 2023 survey, respondents were first asked to prioritize a range of district services and support for students, families and staff.

For the second part of the survey, respondents were asked to reply to two prompts.

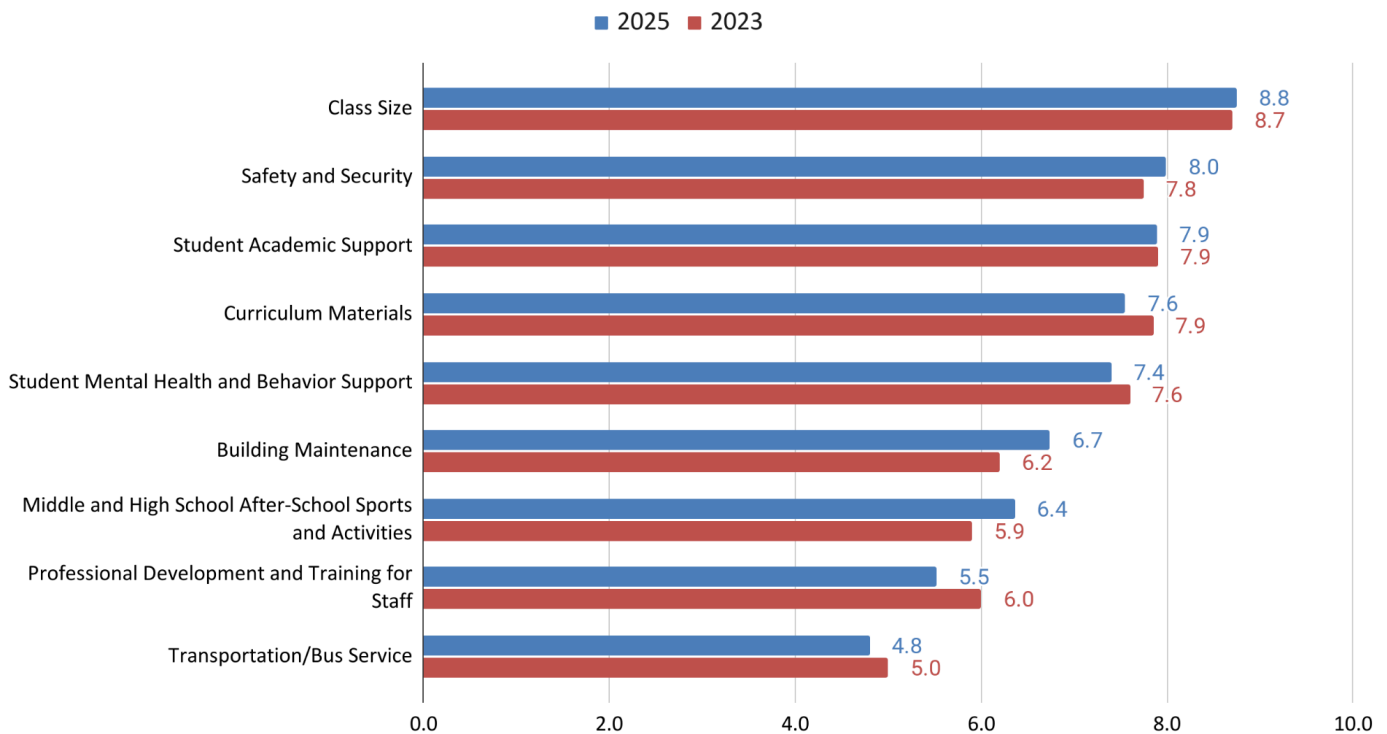
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2025 SURVEY RESPONSES

Survey Prioritization

For the first part of the survey, respondents were asked to rank nine service areas on a scale of 1 – 9. A score of 9 below indicated the area that was the most important to the respondent and a score of 1 was the least important. No two items could receive the same score. Scores from 2023 are added for comparison.



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Survey Open-Ended Prompts

In addition to prioritizing services, respondents were also asked to reply to the following prompts:

1. Is there anything you want to share about the items you ranked above?
2. Do you have a specific suggestion for reducing the district's expenditures?

This follow-up served two purposes: (1) to inform current budget development decisions, and (2) to assess whether community perspectives have shifted in response to reductions implemented over the past two years.

The survey also provided an opportunity for families, staff, and students to share their views on the district's proposed Reduced Educational Program (REP) for 2025–26.

Major themes and sample responses from the open-ended responses follow.

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2025 Themes: Maintain or Prioritize Services

Class Size and Instructional Support (Approx. Mentions: 45)

Respondents emphasized the importance of maintaining and/or restoring manageable class sizes and supporting teachers with paraeducators or small group instruction. This was often tied to concerns about student safety, academic progress, and teacher sustainability.

Sample Comments:

- “Class sizes at the high school are already too large. My son has classes of 34 and 33...”
- “A class of 32 with one teacher is a huge difference from a class of 32 with a para.”

Student Mental Health, Safety, and Counseling Supports (Approx. Mentions: 40)

Respondents offered several comments regarding mental health resources, counseling staff, and behavior support positions such as deans and intervention specialists.

Sample Comments:

- “We need more support for students’ mental health and SEL resources, not less.”
- “Please don’t cut the mental health counselors who help students in distress.”
- “The intervention and prevention counselor... is one of the only adults who follows students from grades 6–12.”

Equity in Reductions / Avoiding Cuts to Lowest Paid Staff (Approx. Mentions: 25)

Many respondents opposed cutting lower-wage or student-facing roles. Several called for wage reductions or freezes.

Sample Comments:

- “The reductions seem to always come from the lowest paid employees.”
- “Cut at the top, not the bottom.”

Facilities and Grounds Maintenance (Approx. Mentions: 20)

This theme was linked to school pride, student safety, and public perception. Some noted visible deterioration due to previous cuts.

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Sample Comments:

- “We lose equipment longevity, building safety, and community pride when our buildings fall into disrepair.”
- “It would be a travesty to see our beautiful learning environments further deteriorate.”
- “The properties aren’t watered. It’s an absolute disgrace.”

Extracurriculars, Sports, and Arts (Approx. Mentions: 20)

Respondents described extracurriculars as essential—not expendable—for student motivation, well-being, and connection to school.

Sample Comments:

- “Sports, drama, music... these activities give kids the opportunity to explore themselves and build relationships.”
- “Taking [arts and activities] away destroys vital support systems.”
- “Many students only go to school for these things.”

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2025 Themes: Potential Reductions or Adjustments

Administrative and Central Office Staffing (Approx. Mentions: 35)

One of the most common suggestions involved reducing central office positions, consultants, and administrative overhead.

Sample Comments:

- “Drastically reduce staffing at the district office first.”
- “Eliminate the dean position in high school OR one admin.”
- “Centralize admin staff, dispose of excess property.”

School Consolidations and Building Closures (Approx. Mentions: 18)

Respondents often framed school closure as a necessary response to declining enrollment.

Sample Comments:

- “Closing a couple of elementary schools will solve the problem...”
- “Please consider consolidating elementary schools.”
- “Why are we keeping buildings open instead of solving the problem directly?”

Wage Reductions or Freezes (Approx. Mentions: 15)

Some respondents suggested temporary pay reductions or furloughs as alternatives to cutting staff positions.

Sample Comments:

- “Optional staff salary reduction/furloughs.”
- “I would take a small cut if it meant not losing key positions.”
- “Pause or reduce annual raises. Act like a private corporation.”

Professional Development and Curriculum Purchases (Approx. Mentions: 12)

While not opposing PD or curriculum outright, several respondents called for postponing updates and relying more on teacher-developed materials.

Sample Comments:

- “My professional development can wait.”
- “Stop buying expensive curriculum.”

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Other Suggestions

(Reported by fewer than 5 respondents each)

- Outsourcing or consolidating custodial and courier services
- Eliminating the co-teaching model in high school
- Using PTA or grant funds to support specific programs
- Exploring transportation changes or public transit
- Moving to a four-day school week
- Generating revenue through advertising or property sales

Comparison of 2023 and 2025 Survey Themes

Many of the themes from 2025 mirror those identified in 2023, suggesting that core community values have remained stable despite multiple rounds of reductions. In both years, respondents emphasized protecting class size, mental health supports, and student-facing roles. Calls to reduce administrative and non-instructional expenditures before cutting classroom services were also consistent across both surveys.

However, new concerns emerged in 2025. While some respondents still called for central office reductions, others acknowledged that many non-classroom positions had already been eliminated. More comments expressed concern about the sustainability of continued cuts and the strain placed on school-based staff. Several also noted the impact of losing roles such as instructional coaches, library technicians, and family advocates, highlighting growing awareness of the trade-offs involved.

Sample Comments Reflecting Continued Sentiment

- “Please don’t cut the mental health counselors who help students in distress. Supporting students socially and emotionally is essential if we want them to be able to learn.” (2025)
- “Class size has a domino effect on everything. The larger the class, the harder it is to meet academic, social, and behavioral needs.” (2023)

Sample Comments Reflecting Shifting Sentiment

- “I know we’ve already made a lot of reductions, but it’s getting harder to do our jobs well. Teachers and school staff are stretched thin, and we’ve lost a lot of support.” (2025)
- “It seems like many of the positions that were cut—like library technicians, family advocates, and instructional coaches—were actually pretty critical. We’re starting to feel the impact.” (2025)

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Comments Related More Specifically to the Reduced Education Plan

Approximately 15 to 20 percent of open-ended comments addressed the proposed Reduced Educational Program (REP) for 2025–26. The most common concern was the potential loss of mental health and behavior support positions. Respondents emphasized the importance of counselors, intervention specialists, and other staff who build long-term relationships with students and support their well-being. Many expressed concern that these reductions could compromise student safety and undercut the district’s goals around equity and inclusion.

Several comments also focused on proposed cuts to behavior technicians, technology assistants, and operational roles such as warehousing and print services. These positions were described as essential to daily school functioning, even if less visible. A smaller number of respondents urged the district to revisit administrative reductions before making cuts that directly affect students.

Conclusion

The 2025 Community Budget Survey provided an important opportunity to hear directly from families, staff, and students as the district continues to navigate complex financial challenges. While participation was lower than in 2023, the consistency of responses across both surveys reinforces a set of shared values: protecting class size, preserving student mental health supports, and prioritizing reductions away from the classroom whenever possible.

At the same time, the 2025 feedback reveals growing concern about the cumulative impact of ongoing cuts. Respondents voiced greater awareness of the strain on school staff and the loss of roles and resources that contribute to a well-rounded educational experience. As the district moves forward with planning and decision-making, this feedback underscores the importance of transparency, thoughtful prioritization, and continued engagement with those most affected by budget decisions.

The district remains committed to honoring these priorities while working within available resources to provide a safe, supportive, and high-quality learning environment for all students.

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APPENDIX: RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

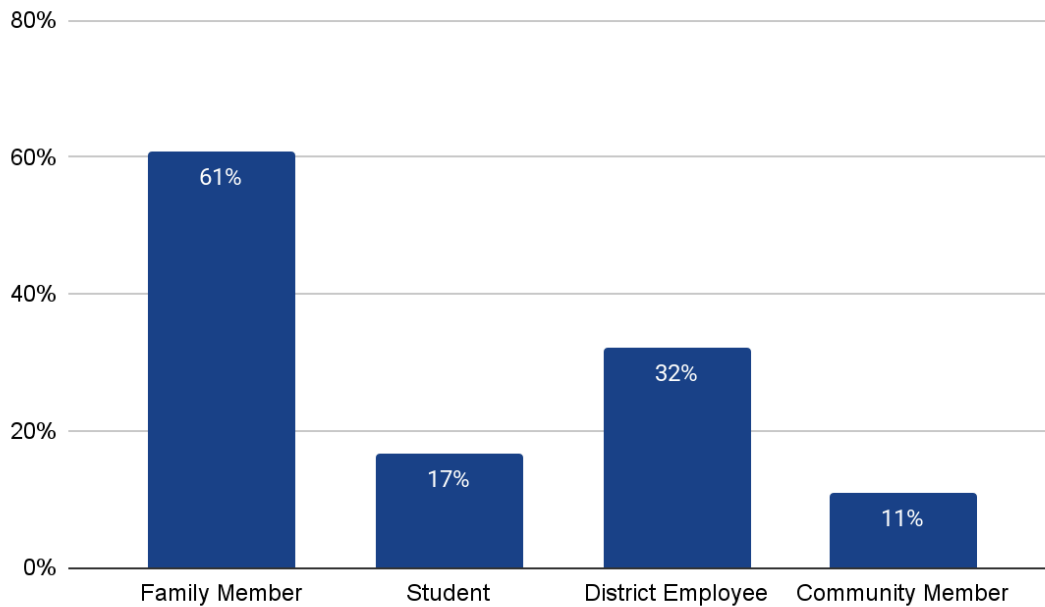
Survey Respondents

The 2025 Community Budget Survey has received 574 responses from families, students, district employees, and community members through April 13. While participation so far is lower than in 2023, the responses reflect a broad cross-section of stakeholders and provide valuable insights into current community priorities.

Roles of Respondents*

| Role | % | Number |
|-------------------|-----|--------|
| Family Member | 61% | 349 |
| Student | 17% | 95 |
| District Employee | 32% | 184 |
| Community Member | 11% | 62 |

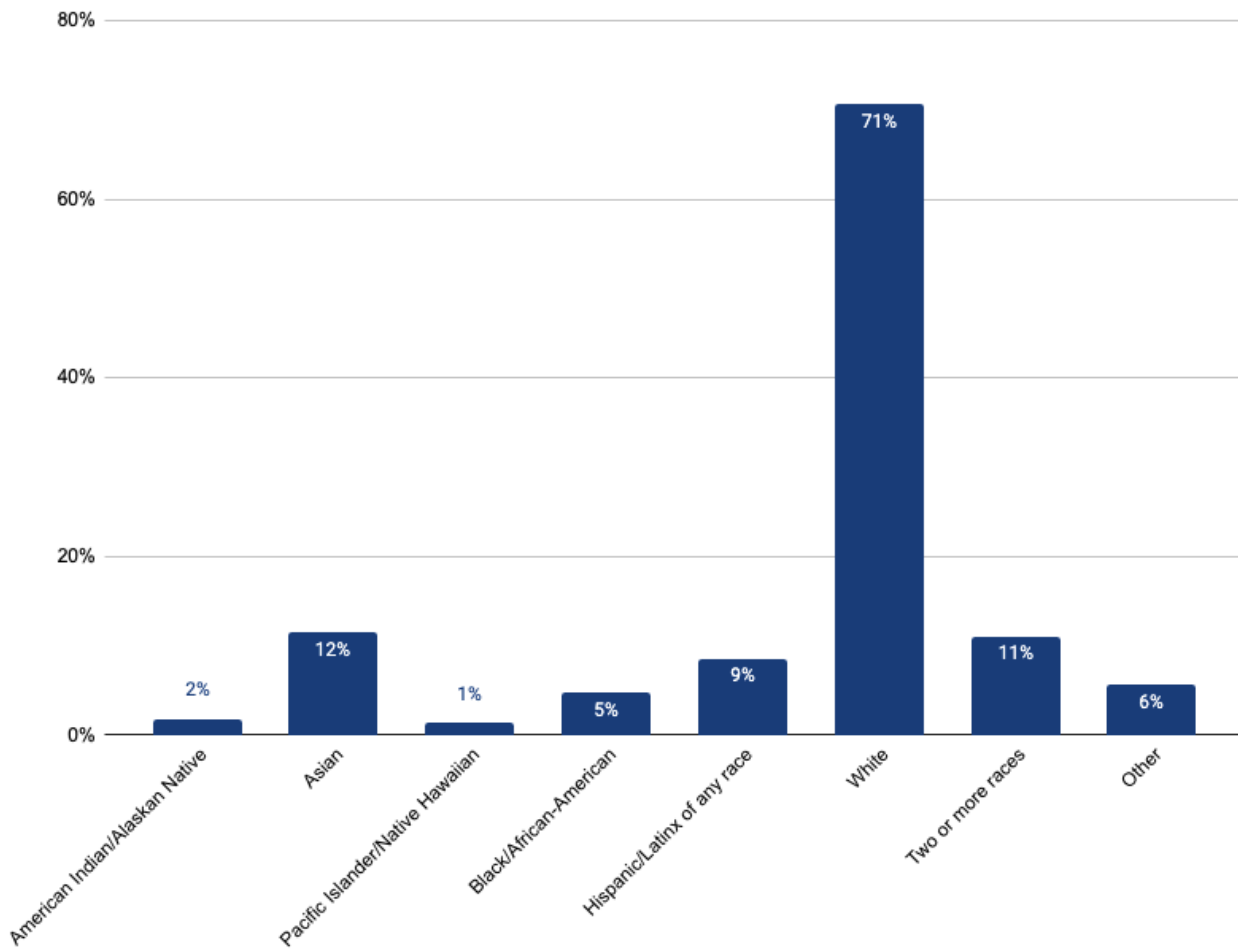
**Respondents could select more than one role.*



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Race and Ethnicity of Respondents

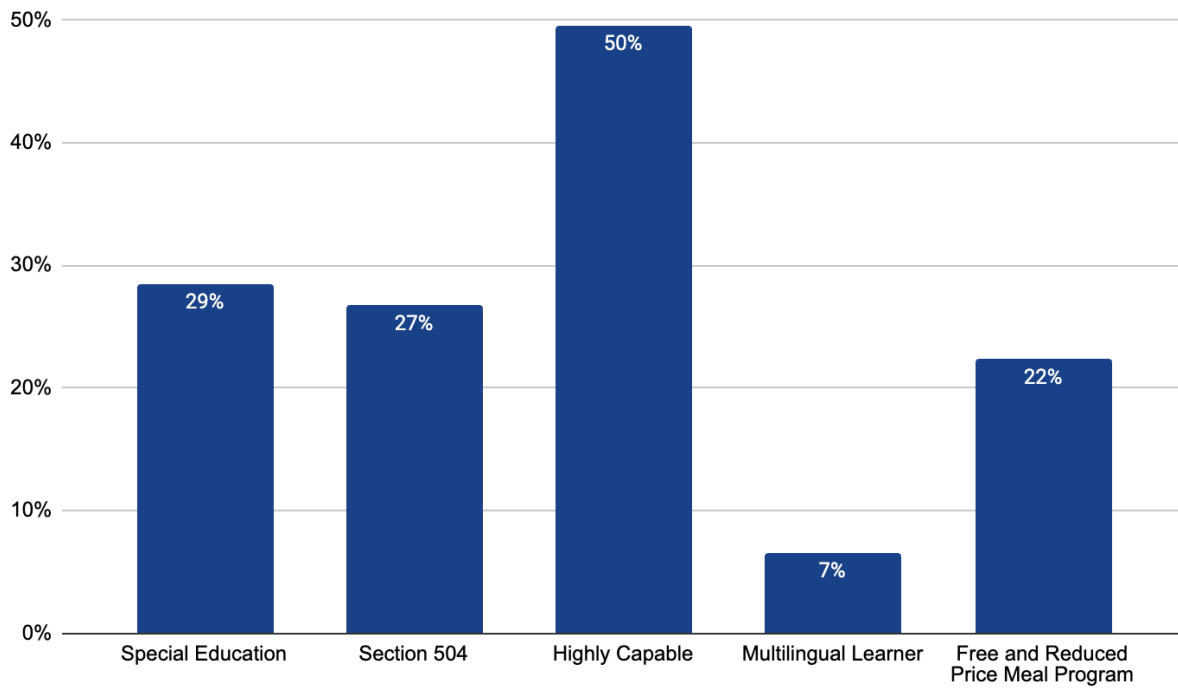
| Race and Ethnicity | % | Number |
|----------------------------------|-----|--------|
| American Indian/Alaskan Native | 2% | 8 |
| Asian | 12% | 51 |
| Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian | 1% | 6 |
| Black/African-American | 5% | 21 |
| Hispanic/Latinx of any race | 9% | 38 |
| White | 71% | 313 |
| Two or more races | 11% | 49 |
| Other | 6% | 25 |



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Program that Serve Respondents' Children

| Program | % | Number |
|-------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Special Education | 29% | 65 |
| Section 504 | 27% | 61 |
| Highly Capable | 50% | 113 |
| Multilingual Learner | 7% | 15 |
| Free and Reduced Price Meal Program | 22% | 51 |

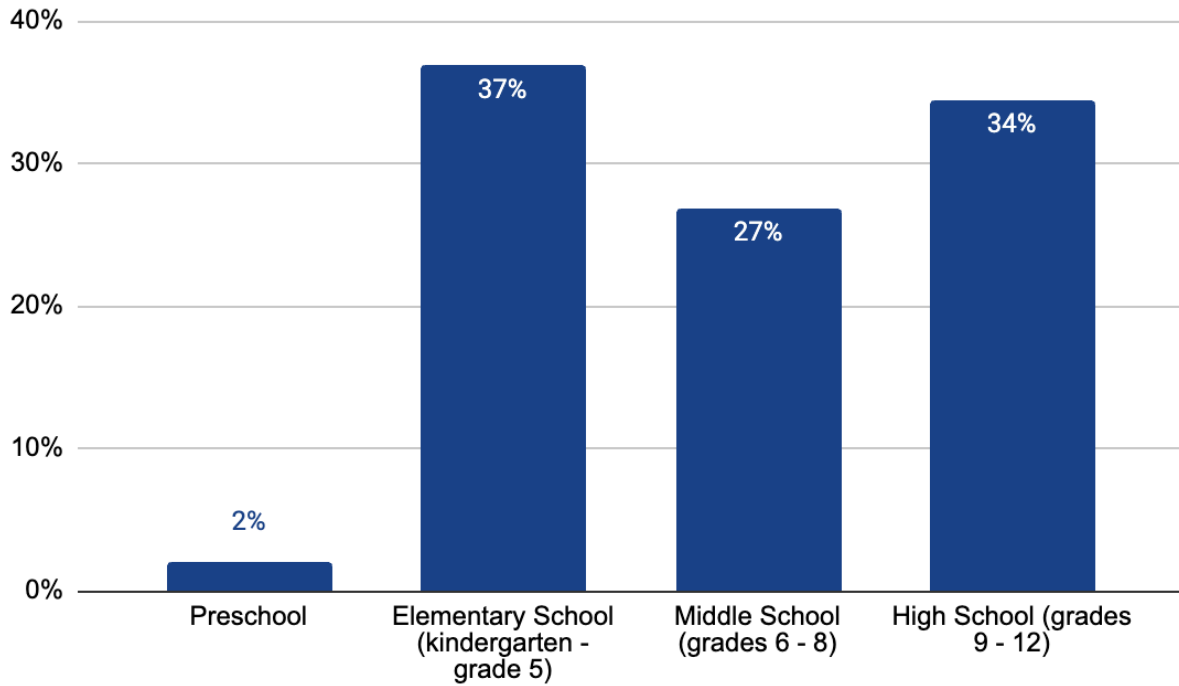


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Grade Level (Students and Family Members)

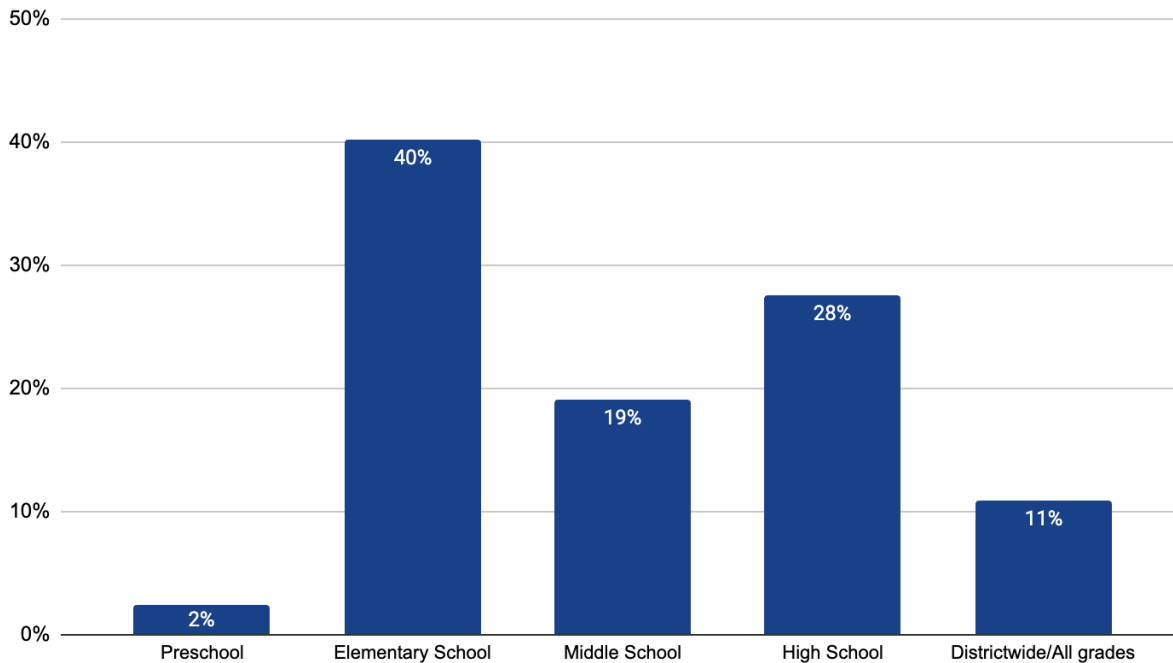
| Grade Level | % | Number |
|--|-----|--------|
| Preschool | 2% | 9 |
| Elementary School (kindergarten - grade 5) | 37% | 165 |
| Middle School (grades 6 - 8) | 27% | 120 |
| High School (grades 9 - 12) | 34% | 154 |



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Grade Levels Served (Staff):

| Grade Level | % | Number |
|-------------------------|-----|--------|
| Preschool | 2% | 7 |
| Elementary School | 40% | 118 |
| Middle School | 19% | 56 |
| High School | 28% | 81 |
| Districtwide/All grades | 11% | 32 |



Comparison to 2023 Respondents

Although total participation so far is less in 2025 than in 2023, the distribution of respondent roles and grade levels remains similar to 2023. As in the previous survey, most respondents identify as family members, followed by staff and students. Notably, a slightly higher percentage of respondents are employees, while student participation is lower.