



PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



PUSD Equity-Centered Facility Plan Update

SAN RAFAEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SURVEY INSIGHTS

A Companion Analysis to the Interim Community Priorities Report

Prepared for Pasadena Unified School District by RSS Consulting Services | July 28, 2026

Survey Overview

The San Rafael Elementary Community Survey was developed as part of Pasadena Unified School District's Facilities Master Plan Update to complement the School Site Committee Session held at San Rafael Elementary on May 27, 2026. Building on the themes and priorities identified during the community meeting, the survey provided an additional opportunity for parents and guardians to share their experiences at the school, identify facility priorities, and provide feedback that may not have been captured during the in-person engagement. Together, the listening session and survey provide a more comprehensive understanding of the community's perspectives to inform future facilities planning.

Methodology

The survey included a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions asked participants to identify facility priorities and provide demographic information, while open-ended questions invited families to describe the school's strengths, areas for improvement, and their vision for the future. This mixed-methods approach provided both quantitative data describing patterns across respondents and qualitative insights that help explain the experiences and perspectives behind those patterns. The survey was available in both English and Spanish to support equitable participation across the school community.

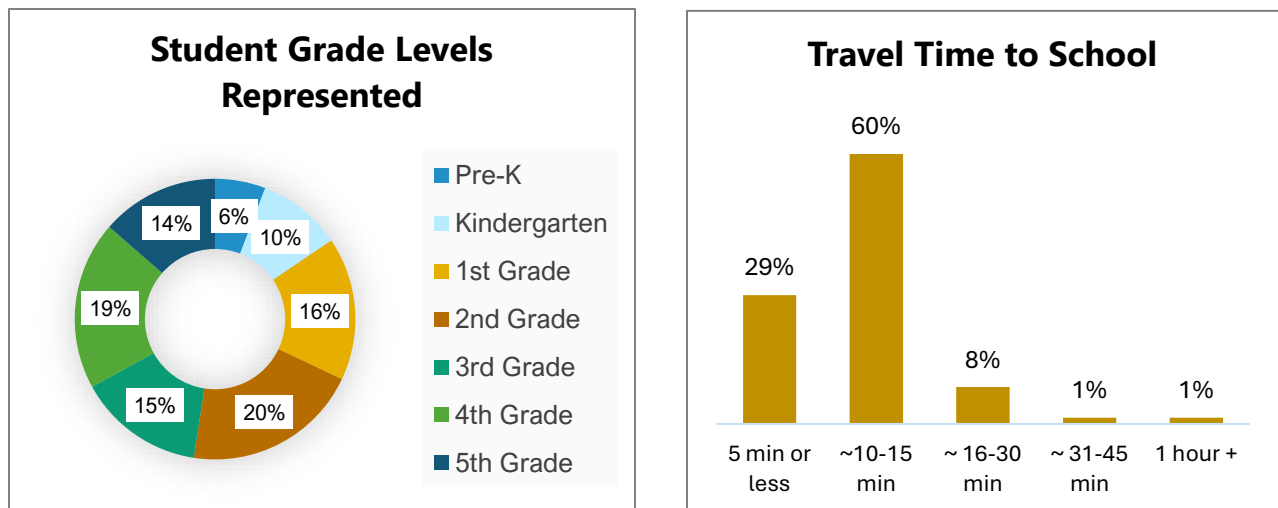
Consistent with RSSC's community engagement approach, all survey questions were optional. This design recognizes that participants have varying experiences, perspectives, and comfort levels when sharing information. Rather than requiring respondents to answer every question before submitting the survey, participants were invited to respond only to the questions they wished to complete. This approach prioritizes authentic and voluntary participation while respecting participants' choice about what information they feel comfortable sharing.

As a result, response counts vary across individual survey questions. Unless otherwise noted, percentages presented throughout this report are based on the number of respondents who answered each question rather than the total number of survey participants. Demographic questions were included to provide context about the participants represented in the survey and to better understand the diversity of perspectives reflected in the findings.

Participant Profile

A total of 75 participants completed the San Rafael Elementary Community Survey. While nearly all respondents (97%) were parents or caregivers of current students, a small number of responses were also received from family members, school staff, administrators, community members, parents of former students, and alumni.

Respondents represented families with children enrolled across all grade levels at San Rafael Elementary, reflecting perspectives from throughout the school community. Most families reported traveling relatively short distances to campus, with 60% indicating a commute of approximately 10 to 15 minutes and an additional 29% reporting a commute of five minutes or less. The racial and ethnic profile of respondents was predominantly Hispanic/Latino/a/e/x (44%) and White (34%), followed by Asian/Asian American (9%), Multiracial (7%), African American/Black (5%), and Middle Eastern or North African (1%).



Participants were also asked whether their child receives specialized educational programs or support services. While most respondents (57%) indicated that none of the listed categories applied to their child, 43% reported participation in at least one specialized program or support service. The most reported supports included individualized education services (IEPs, special education, or 504 Plans) at 22%, followed by participation in the Free or Reduced-Price Meal Program at 15%, and English learner (EL) or multilingual learner support services at 7%.

What the Survey Shows

Across 202 open-ended comments, the survey reinforced the insights that emerged during the School Site Committee Session on May 27, 2026. In 51 comments (25%), teachers and staff were identified as the **core asset**, echoing the listening session's finding that **"remodeling doesn't matter if you don't have the community"**.

Our principal and staff do an amazing job of making San Rafael magical. The teachers desperately want upgrades to allow them better working conditions. I support that. — Survey respondent, parent

Participants also emphasized the importance of the school's **Dual Language Immersion Program** and expressed concern about potential reductions to **Art, Music, and PE** programs due to budget constraints. In more than 40 comments (20%), respondents described these programs as critical to fostering students' cultural identity, academic growth, and sense of belonging.

More broadly, participants described school facilities as supporting far more than operational needs. Participants consistently connected spacious classrooms, clean and accessible restrooms, safe outdoor environments, and well-maintained facilities with students' **SAFETY, DIGNITY, COMFORT**, and ability to learn. These perspectives closely align with themes that emerged during the School Site Committee Listening Session, including age-appropriate facilities, secure campus design, shaded outdoor spaces, and environments that promote dignity, safety, and belonging. As one parent explained, **"Secure points of entry and perimeter are essential to protect students."**

While the survey reinforced many of the themes identified during the School Site Committee Listening Session, it also expanded the conversation by surfacing additional insights from a broader group of participants.

Preserving and enhancing **OUTDOOR SPACES** emerged as the most prominent theme in participant feedback. Of the 45 participants who provided open-text comments, 40 (89%) expressed concern or recommendation related to outdoor spaces. Respondents consistently raised concerns about tree removal, soil contamination, remediation efforts, the lack of shade, and the need for outdoor spaces that keep students safe while supporting movement, play, and learning. Lack of shade emerged as one of the most consistent themes, with many participants describing the emotional, health, and educational impacts of losing mature trees. Participants also raised concerns about rising temperatures, both outdoors due to reduced shade and indoors because of inadequate ventilation and heating systems. Several respondents connected these concerns to the aftermath of the Eaton Fire, questioning whether the scale of tree removal exceeded what they believed was necessary to meet soil remediation and safety requirements.

Several additional themes emerged less frequently but provide important context for understanding community perspectives. Some participants expressed concern about the District's fiscal instability, including the potential impact of budget reductions on student programs and staffing. Others referenced the PUSD recall efforts, describing diminished confidence in district leadership and the decision-making process.

Participants also expressed concern about San Rafael's planned relocation to the former Allendale Elementary swing site during construction. Comments focused on the idea of students spending approximately two years in portable classrooms and the potential disruption to learning, school routines, and community connections.

Less frequently mentioned themes, each raised by only a small number of participants, included concerns about food quality and nutrition, calls for greater attention to equity for English-speaking and African American students within the Dual Language Immersion Program, and questions about screen time and the use of artificial intelligence in instruction. Some families advocated for less device dependence and greater emphasis on hands-on, book-based learning.

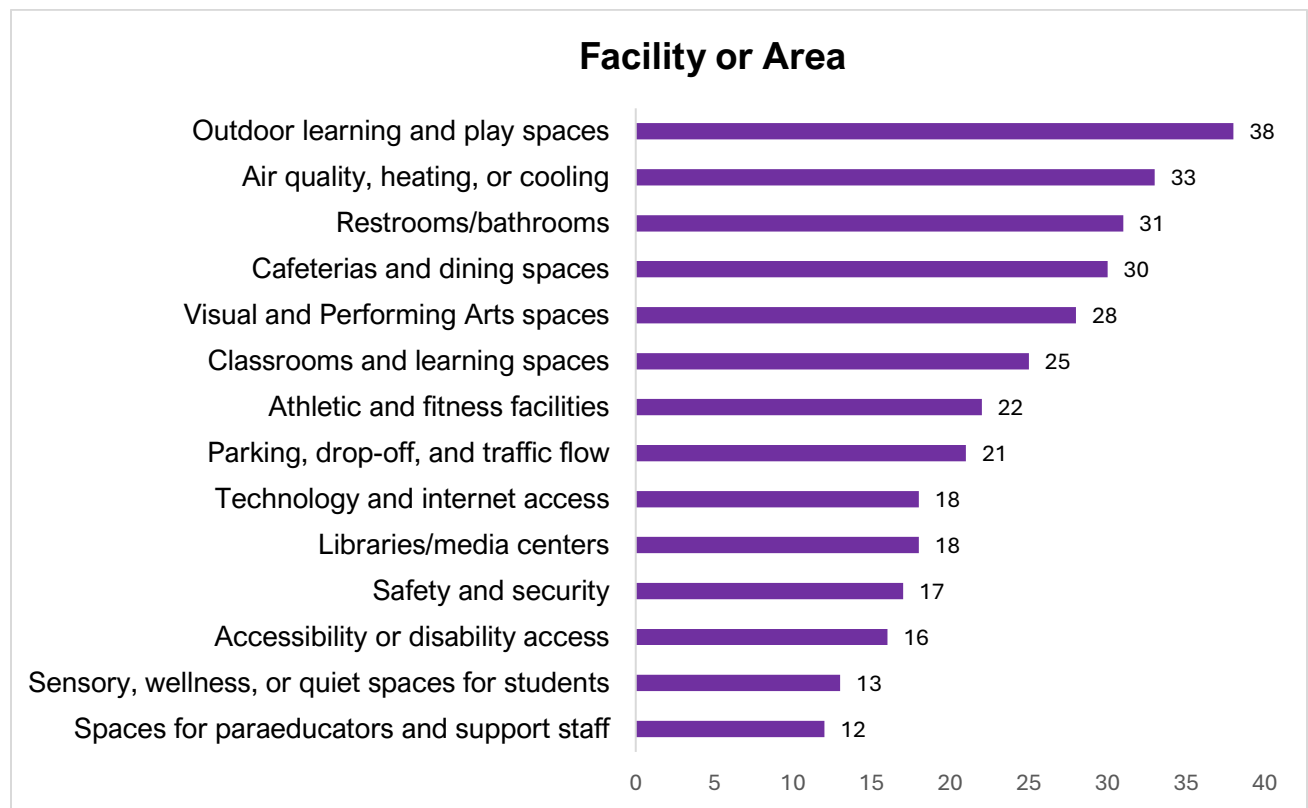


Photo credit: [Walk To School Day 2015 at San Rafael Elementary in Pasadena, CA](#)
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Where Families See a Need for Improvement

Participants were asked to identify the school facilities they believed needed the most improvement or attention. Respondents could select multiple areas, so the findings reflect the proportion of respondents who identified each area rather than a ranking of mutually exclusive choices.

Among respondents who answered the question, outdoor learning and play spaces were identified most frequently. Air quality, heating and cooling systems, restrooms, cafeteria and dining spaces, and visual and performing arts spaces were also identified by more than half of respondents.



These findings reinforce themes heard throughout the open-ended responses and point to broad community interest in facility improvements that support student comfort, health, wellbeing, and learning.

To better understand what is driving these findings, participants' open-ended comments provide additional context about the conditions, concerns, and improvements associated with each area.

Facility/Area	What Participants Said
Outdoor learning & play	Participants frequently described the need for improved outdoor learning environments, additional shade, play areas, and spaces that support both recreation and instruction. <i>"The school grounds will not have any shade this year."</i>
Classrooms	Comments emphasized modern, comfortable classrooms that better support teaching and learning. <i>"More natural light in the classrooms. Some of the SRE rooms have terrible fluorescent lighting. And no trailers if possible."</i>
Air Quality & HVAC	Participants repeatedly referenced air conditioning and excessive classroom heat, highlighting the importance of comfortable learning environments. <i>"My child has come home with headaches on hot days due to the heat and dehydration"</i>
Restrooms	Families called for cleaner, updated, and more accessible restroom facilities. <i>"We are living in one of the wealthiest cities. At least provide students with the baseline of having dignity to use a bathroom that is clean, modern, and safe."</i>
Cafeteria	Families noted opportunities to improve dining spaces and overall student experience. <i>"One challenge has been the lunch area, which can be too noisy."</i>
Visual & Performing Arts / Auditorium	Respondents expressed interest in improved arts spaces and a larger auditorium for performances and school events. <i>"Music, art, and PE are so important to keep. They are vital for their growth and brain development."</i>
Accessibility (ADA)	Several comments highlighted the importance of ensuring facilities are accessible for all students and visitors. <i>"We could use ADA-accessible walk-ways and access to 2nd floors."</i>