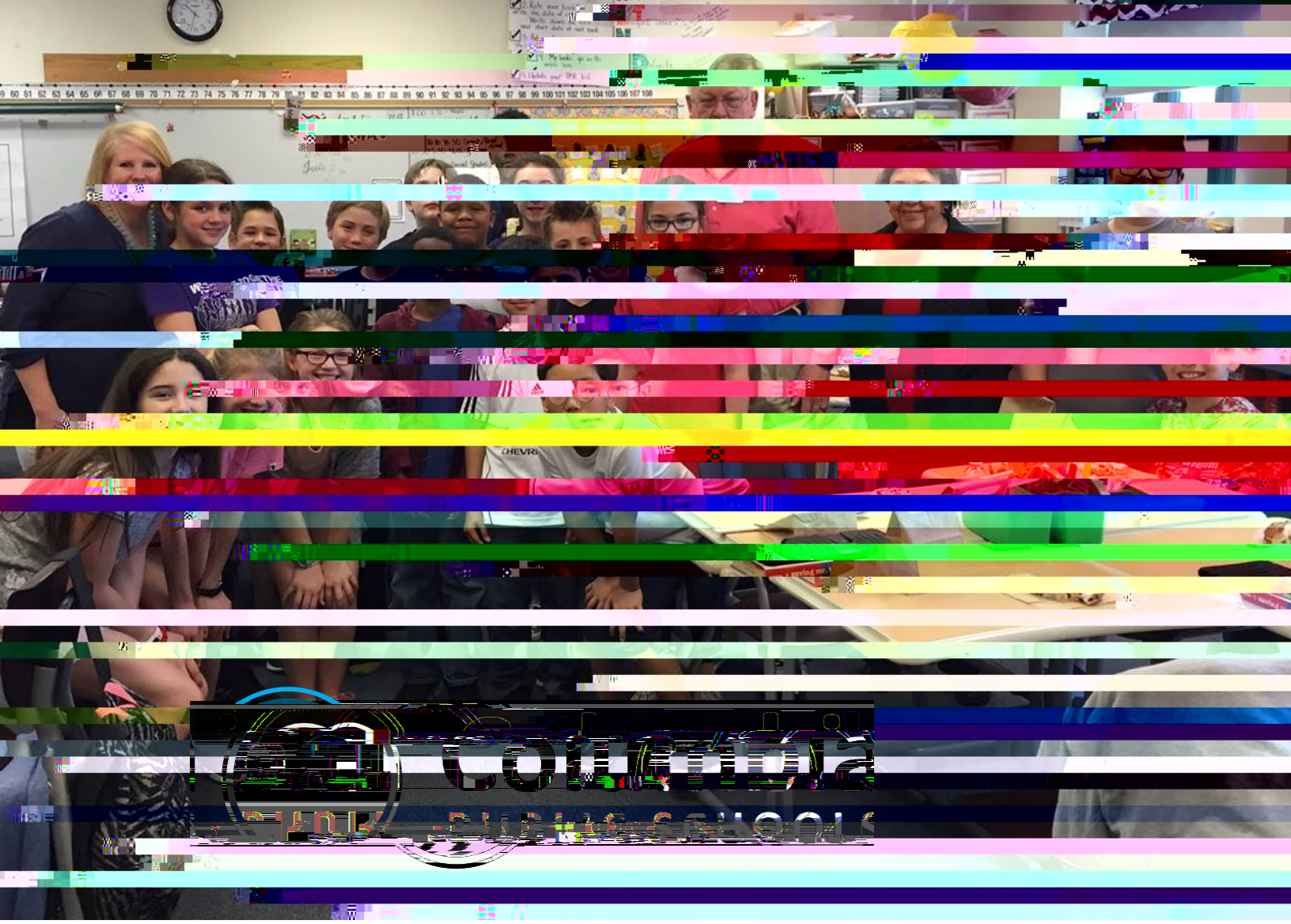

2019 Patron Telephone Survey REPORT

February 10, 2020

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Columbia Public Schools
2019 Patron Telephone Survey
Final Report
February 10, 2020

Introduction

A high-quality school district is built on outstanding teaching, learning and relationships. And the Columbia Public Schools (CPS) has always and continues to do a stellar job in all these areas. As in year's past, the district continues to be seen by its patrons as a shining light of education in its community.

To ensure it continues to provide this high standard of education, Columbia Public Schools leaders engaged ExcellenceK12 in late 2019 to conduct a random-digit-dial survey with 400 head-of-household, registered voters living within the boundaries of the school district.

This is the seventh time the district has conducted this survey since 2010. While many of the questions from previous years remained, some were eliminated to ensure survey fatigue would not be an issue.

This year's findings continue to show strong public support. The district received the highest scores we have seen on this type of survey among other schools in the state of Missouri. Based on a 5-point weighted scale – where 5.00=A, 4.00=B, 3.00=C and 2.00=D – all 18 district factors – as well as the district's overall performance – received a score of 3.78 or higher. An overall score of 5 is only possible if all 400 respondents answered each statement with an A.

"Safety of students" received the top score of 4.51, followed by "Quality of school facilities" (4.45), and "The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event" (4.42).

Patrons were very complimentary about the district's curriculum and academics, as well as the teachers, but the data showed they struggled to find an area where the district needed to make any improvements. Patrons who indicated areas of concerns focused on finances and communication, which is common for surveys of this type.

The full report follows and includes all the findings and all the questions, applicable data and cross-tabulations (where applicable). An overall results summary closes the report.

It is important to note the data collected has a Margin of Error of plus or minus 4.9%, at the 95% confidence level. (The Margin of Error within the demographic and subgroups is higher because of the smaller number of respondents.)

It is a pleasure to share these findings with district leadership and your School Board.

FULL REPORT

Finding #1	**Survey participants continued to show strong support for the district, giving all 18 factors – plus the district's overall performance – high marks. And more than half of the top-rated factors received a score of 4.00 or higher.**

To begin the survey, patrons were asked to rate 18 different people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors, plus the district's overall performance.

Although there were fewer factors to grade than in 2017 (18 versus 26), respondents gave all 18 factors – plus the district's overall performance (4.12) – a score of 3.78 or higher.

Twelve

7. Performance of the district administration and the Board of Education

Response	Percentage
A	12%
B	54%
C	26%
D	3%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	5%

8. How the Columbia Public Schools is handling the growth in the district

Response	Percentage

11. Quality of school facilities

Response	Percentage
A	57%
B	28%
C	7%
D	2%
F	1%
Don’t know (not read)	4%

12. Safety of students

Response	Percentage
A	60%
B	31%
C	6%
D	2%
F	0%
Don’t know (not read)	1%

13. Value received by patrons for the tax dollars spent

Response	Percentage
A	38%
B	25%
C	17%
D	8%
F	3%
Don’t know (not read)	10%

14. The district’s efforts to report its plans and progress to patrons

Response	Percentage
A	39%
B	24%
C	27%
D	5%
F	1%
Don’t know (not read)	4%

15. The district's history of fulfilling promises

Response	Percentage
A	16%
B	

19.

23. Overall, what grade would you give Columbia Public Schools?

Response	Percentage
A	26%
B	62%
C	11%
D	1%
F	0%
Don’t know (not read)	0%

Cross-tabulation: Below is the 5-point scale rating for each factor. The factors showing "n/a" from 2015 or earlier were new in 2017. Any factors that had minor wording changes for 2019 are shown, using the current year's language.

Grade values: "A" grade is 5.0, "B" grade is 4.0, "C" grade is 3.0 and "D" grade is 2.0.

Factor	5-point scale rating/2019	Rating/ 2017	Rating/ 2015	Rating/ 2013	Rating/ 2012	Rating/ 2011
Safety of students	4.51	4.28	4.20	4.41	4.27	4.20
Quality of school facilities	4.45	4.33	4.18	4.36	4.05	3.94
The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event	4.42	4.31	4.40	4.38	4.45	4.45
Performance of district teachers	4.24	4.26	4.23	4.38	4.35	4.29
Offering innovative curriculum and programming for students	4.12	4.12	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Overall grade	4.12	4.07	4.13	4.17	4.18	4.03
The district's efforts to ensure equivalent academic programming from school to school	4.11	3.95	3.84	4.07	4.03	3.81
The district's effort to ensure equivalent school buildings, including accessibility	4.10	4.01	3.94	3.87		

Finding #2	**As in past surveys, “Strong curriculum/academics,” “Teachers” and “Community support” topped the list of**

Curriculum is excellent. Most teachers are dedicated to teaching their best.

Everyone cares.

Todays' students are a challenge with their short attention span, but I think they provide many activities to help them learn.

25. Where could the district improve? *Responses were coded, based on common words, phrase and ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Don't know	93

Finding #3	**The** Quarterly Connection **continues to be an important communication vehicle for the district and satisfaction with the newsletter's look and quality continues to grow.**

The next set of questions was intended to determine whether patrons still deem the *Quarterly Connection*, the district's printed newsletter, an important resource for district information.

While slightly fewer than in 2017, more than half of the respondents (52%) still considered

Finding #4

Finding #5	**While visits to the Columbia Public Schools' website continue to be modest, nearly all the respondents felt it was "Very easy" or "Easy" to navigate.**

As in year's past, the highest number of respondents (42%) still has never visited the district's website.

And while the number who visited at least once a month (25%) was down from 2017, those who visited less than once a month (33%) went slightly up.

Those who visited at least once a month were then asked how easy it was to find their way around, and 97% said it was either "Very easy" or "Easy" to do so. This is a big jump from 2017 (13%), where only 84% were able to easily navigate it.

In the cross-tabulation data, the trend was slightly different than earlier in the survey. The oldest residents and those with the most time in the district were not as frequent visitors to the website as their younger counterparts and those who had been in the district for a lot less time.

However, current parents and female participants were still the most frequent visitors among their subgroups. Within the geographic subgroups, those respondents living east of Providence and south of Broadway visited the website *most* often and those living west of Providence and north of Broadway visited it the *least*.

The next few questions are about the district website.

31. **Which of the following best describes how often you visit the Columbia Public School District's website?** *The choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011

Cross-tabulation: “Regular visitors” (at least once a month), “Infrequent visitors” (less than once a month), and “Never visitors” to the Columbia Public Schools website by age, length of time living in the district, and the presence of a current district student, past district student or no district student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and “age” will not square with the “overall” total, because nine respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=77)	35-54 (n=175)	55 or older (n=139)		Up to 5 years (n=18)	5 to 15 years (n=104)	More than 15

Finding #6	**Columbia Public Schools Television continued to have limited viewers. And those who watched "Frequently" or "Sometimes" had very few suggestions for other programming.**

The number of respondents who watched CPS Television at least "Sometimes" was down slightly from 2017 (19% vs. 25%). The number one response in 2019, again, was "Never" at 58%.

Like in 2017, most viewers were watching "Scheduled activities" (51 mentions) or "Programs" (32 mentions).

As in the past, respondents struggled to come up with additional ideas for CPS Television programming, with 97% saying, "Don't know/Not sure/None."

33. How often do you watch Columbia Public Schools Television, either on cable or streamed on the district's website? *The choices were read to respondents. The percentages for surveys from 2015, 2013, 2012 and 2011 are available in previous reports.*

Response	Percentage/2019	Percentage/2017
Every day	0%	1%

35. What additional types of programming about the school district would you like to see on Columbia Public Schools Television? *This question was only asked of the 73 respondents who watch Columbia Public Schools Television "Every day," "Frequently" or "Sometimes." Of those 73 respondents, 71 said, "Don't know/Not sure/None." The two other responses are displayed in verbatim form below.*

Perhaps the opportunity to view into a classroom. This might create problems, but it's a thought.

Teacher and administration profiles/history.

Finding #7	**"Student and teacher success stories" are of more interest than ever from year's past, while "Information on the district's finances and budget" continues to be less newsworthy.**

Stories about students' and teachers' successes continued to gain momentum in 2019, with 87% interest from the respondents (up from 76% in 2017).

Other top areas of interest were "Safety and Security" (82%), "Information on curriculum and curriculum changes" (71%), and "Updates on facilities, construction and renovation projects" (57%).

The interest in "Information on the district's finances and budget" declined from 68% in 2017 to 56% in 2019. And the areas with the least interest were "School Board news" (39%), "School lunch and nutrition news" (24%), and "Transportation news" (19%).

Finding #8	**Five of the 27 sources of district news (aside from weather-related school closing information) are consulted "frequently" by the survey respondents for such information.**

To find out the best way to communicate with district patrons, the last question of the survey asked respondents which of the 27 potential sources they consulted "frequently" for school district news.

Five of the sources were said to be consulted "frequently" by more than 40% of the respondents. The number one source – which is typical for surveys of this type – was "Friends and neighbors" (85%). This was followed by "The print edition of *The Columbia Daily Tribune* newspaper" at 52% and "Students who attend school in the district" at 49%.

The other top sources were:

- Teachers and other staff members in the district, either in person or via email – 46%
- The School Board, either in person or in the media – 42%

While the number of sources identified as being consulted "frequently" is about average, only three are district-related ones.

Demographics

The final section of the survey collected key demographic information, including:

- In the length of residence category, 70% of the respondents had lived in the district more than 15 years.
- In the age category, 61% of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 54.
- There were 128 “Current student” families, 160 “Past student” families and 112 “Never student” families.
- In the racial/ethnic groups, 81% of the participants were Caucasian/white, 7% were African-American/black, and 6% were Hispanic or Latino.
- In terms of gender, the survey group was 54% female and 46% male. No respondents answered, “Transgender female,” “Transgender male” or “Gender variant/non-con3 ( )]TJ JoTT2 1 Tf0.45Tw 1.152 0 Td[LaTw %(B)Tj0.004 Tc -0.004 Tw “)-6 on- %Boup

41. Do you have any children or grandchildren who previously were students in the district, but who have graduated? *This question was only asked of the 272 respondents who did not say either, "Yes, children" or "Yes, children and grandchildren" on question 40. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	152
Yes, children and grandchildren	8
Yes, grandchildren	3
No	109

42. Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic group? Is it...? *The choices were read to respondents.*

Response

Overall results summary

The Columbia Public Schools continues to be highly respected in the community – going above and beyond to provide a top-notch education to its students. As mentioned earlier, the scores