

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Attachment: Information

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PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Date:

06.03.14

TO: Kevin Skelly, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Charles Young, Associate Superintendent - Educational Services

PREPARED BY: Diana Wilmot, Director – Assessment and Evaluation

SUBJECT: Analysis of Strategic Plan Survey Results Administered March 2014

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE

Academic Excellence and Learning

Personal Development & Support

Staff Development & Recruitment

Budget & Infrastructure

Governance & Communication

RECOMMENDATION

This item is presented for information and discussion, and no action is required.

BACKGROUND

This presentation includes an analysis of the 2013-14 Annual Focused Goals from the Strategic Plan. The results included from the March 2014 Strategic Plan Survey administration show progress from the March 2013 Strategic Plan Survey administration and document how each area of the Strategic Plan is being monitored through the use of this data.

A draft PowerPoint presentation is included with this agenda item.

Strategic Planning Survey Analysis - Annual Focused Goals

Prepared for Palo Alto Unified School District

June 3, 2014



Introduction and Methodology

The following slides present findings from the 2014 PAUSD Strategic Planning Survey. The survey was administered online in March 2014 to over 4,000 district stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, administrators, and classified staff.

Where possible, these slides compare responses to the 2014 survey administration with responses to the 2013 PAUSD Strategic Planning survey. Please note that slight differences exist between the 2013 and 2014 surveys; meaningful differences between survey administrations are noted on the relevant slide.



2013-2014 Annual Focused Goals (Selected)

Actions	2013-2014 Annual Focused Goals (Selected)
A1.1	Increase small group instruction and other differentiation strategies effectively to appropriately challenge all students to ensure core content mastery
A2.1	Integrate Common Core State Standards with an emphasis on content mastery, critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and technological literacy
A3.4	Increase and improve job-embedded professional development and co-teaching to ensure access to general education curriculum for struggling students.
B2.1	Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support
C1.2	Expand delivery of professional development programs to include peer-collaboration, best practice sharing, mentoring, and online learning; and extend to all staff where appropriate.
C2.1	Identify teacher development needs using student data and teacher performance feedback, and align professional development with those needs and with strategic initiatives.
D3.3	Deliver communications and training required to promote consistent adoption of key technology platforms by staff, students and parents
E2.2	Improve vertical and horizontal alignment on academic rigor, grading, and curricular elements



Survey Responses

The 2014 survey represents responses from all stakeholder groups, attracting a notably greater proportion of student respondents than in previous administrations.

Survey Respondents

Survey Respondents	2008		2010		2013		2014	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Administrators	27	1%	24	1%	39	1%	21	0.5%
Classified Staff	96	2%	104	4%	164	4%	131	3%
Parents	3,252	75%	1,843	72%	2,388	62%	1,444	33%
Students	541	13%	373	15%	803	21%	2,395	55%
Teachers	407	9%	219	9%	488	13%	381	9%
Total	4,323		2,563		3,882		4,372	



Key Findings – ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND LEARNING (A1.1, A2.2) GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATION (E2.2)

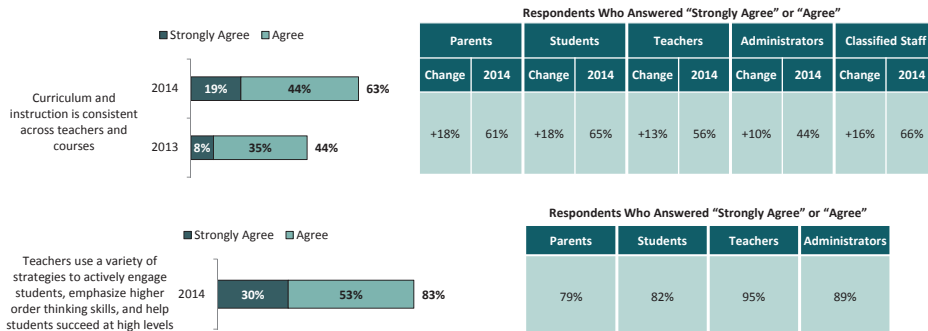
- PAUSD stakeholders agree that students are challenged and supported.** Over 80 percent of the students who responded to the 2014 survey agreed that teachers challenge students to excel academically and 76 percent agreed that effective help is provided to students struggling with a subject or course. Over 80 percent of the survey respondents agreed that instruction is appropriate to students’ abilities and interests and that teachers use a variety of strategies to engage students in learning.
- Although generally satisfied, stakeholders see room for improvement in instruction, curriculum, and student support.** As compared with other measures of academic quality, a smaller proportion of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the support available to under-performing students (68 percent), the extent to which instruction is differentiated (72 percent), and the consistency of the curriculum and instructional practices across teachers and courses (63 percent).



Strategic Plan Goal E2.2: Improve vertical and horizontal alignment on academic rigor, grading, and curricular elements

Curricular consistency and student engagement

Over 80 percent of the respondents agreed that teachers use a variety of strategies to promote student engagement, critical thinking, and success. In 2014, over 60 percent of the respondents agreed that the curriculum and instruction is consistent across teachers and courses, representing an increase of 19 percentage points over 2013.



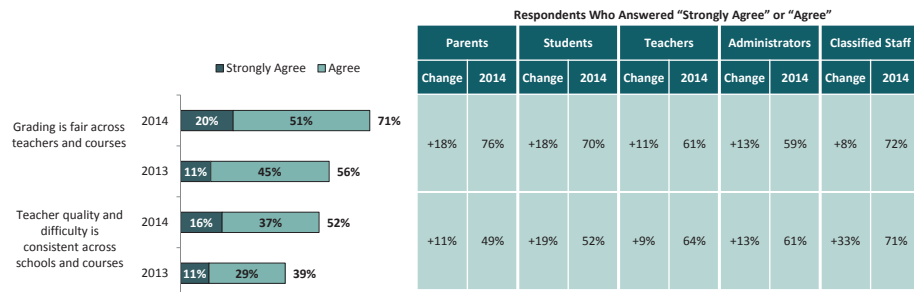
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal E2.2: Improve vertical and horizontal alignment on academic rigor, grading, and curricular elements

Consistency and fairness

Between 2013 and 2014, respondent perceptions of fairness in grading and the consistency of teacher quality and difficulty improved substantially. In 2014, the proportion of respondents who agreed that grading is fair across teachers and courses grew by 15 percentage points; the proportion of respondents who agreed that teacher quality and difficulty is consistent across schools and courses grew by 13 percentage points.



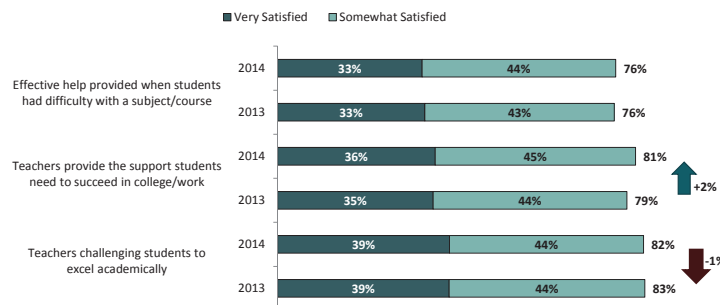
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal A1.1: Increase small group instruction and other differentiation strategies effectively to appropriately challenge all students to ensure core content mastery

Efforts to challenge and support students

Student respondents to the 2013 and 2014 surveys largely agreed that teachers challenge students to excel academically and provide students with the support needed to succeed in the future. Students also agreed that effective help is provided to students having difficulty with a subject or course.



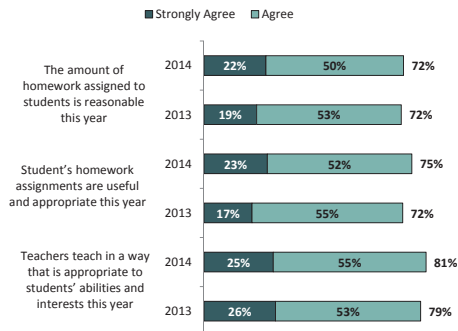
Responses presented are from the student survey only. "N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal A1.1: Increase small group instruction and other differentiation strategies effectively to appropriately challenge all students to ensure core content mastery

Instruction and homework

Most survey respondents agreed that instruction is appropriate to students' abilities and interests and that homework assignments are useful and appropriate. The proportion of respondents expressing satisfaction with the homework assignments grew 3 percentage points between 2013 and 2014.



"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



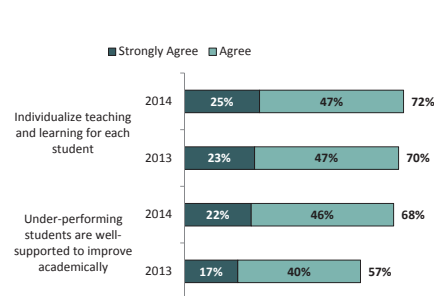
Respondents Who Answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"

Change	Parents		Students		Teachers		Administrators		Classified Staff	
	2014	Change	2014	Change	2014	Change	2014	Change	2014	
+4%	78%	+4%	70%	+2%	68%	+1%	73%	-2%	75%	
+7%	80%	+3%	73%	+4%	76%	+27%	87%	+6%	74%	
+1%	78%	+4%	80%	+4%	90%	+11%	89%	-3%	85%	

Strategic Plan Goal A1.1: "Increase small group instruction and other differentiation strategies effectively to appropriately challenge all students to ensure core content mastery"

Differentiated instruction and support for under-performing students

Most respondents agreed that teachers differentiate instruction to meet student needs and that under-performing students are well-supported. Between 2013 and 2014, the proportion of respondents who agreed that under-performing students receive the support necessary to succeed academically grew by 11 percentage points.



"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



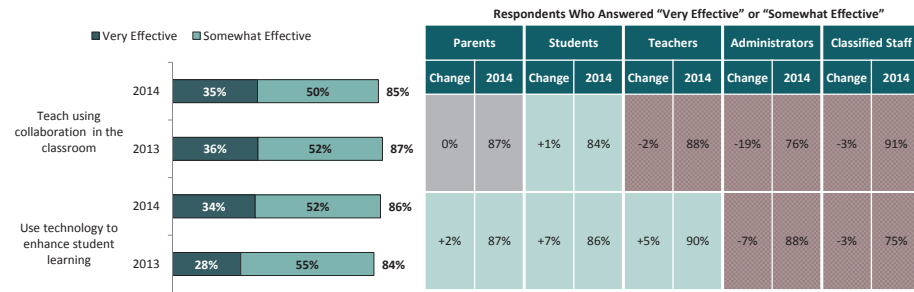
Respondents Who Answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"

Change	Parents		Students		Teachers		Administrators		Classified Staff	
	2014	Change	2014	Change	2014	Change	2014	Change	2014	
0%	65%	+8%	71%	0%	93%	-12%	88%	+5%	96%	
+9%	66%	+12%	68%	+15%	73%	-2%	65%	+7%	72%	

Strategic Plan Goal A2.1: Integrate Common Core State Standards with an emphasis on content mastery, critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and technological literacy

Use of collaboration and technology in the classroom

Most respondents indicated that their school makes at least somewhat effective use of collaboration and technology in the classroom. Between 2013 and 2014, the proportion of respondents who indicated that their school makes very effective use of technology to enhance student learning increased by 6 percentage points.



"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Key Findings – PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT (B2.1)

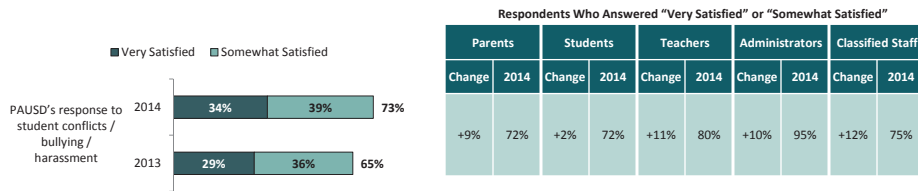
- **PAUSD has shown improvement in counseling, although room for growth still exists in this area.** While respondents generally expressed satisfaction with academic counseling (73 percent), a smaller proportion of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the college and career counseling offered to high school students (69 percent and 62 percent, respectively).
- **Survey respondents indicated satisfaction with the school culture.** Nearly 90 percent of the respondents agreed that their school has a culture of professionalism, and 81 percent agreed that their school has a culture of trust. About 80 percent of the stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the social and emotional experience students have at PAUSD.



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support

Response to student conflicts, bullying, and harassment

Between 2013 and 2014, the proportion of respondents satisfied with PAUSD's response to student conflicts, bullying, and harassment grew by 8 percentage points. Overall, however, students and parents were less likely than teacher and administrators to express satisfaction with the handling of student conflicts.



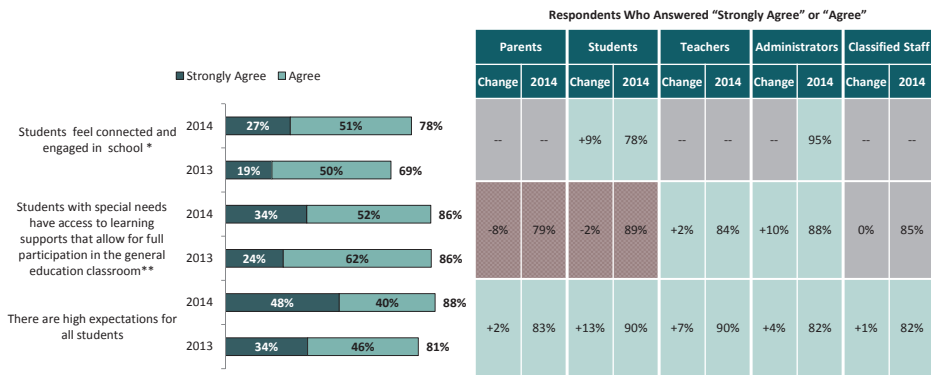
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: "Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support"

Student engagement, expectations, and access for special education students

Most respondents indicated that students feel engaged and connected, that students with special needs have access to the supports necessary to be full classroom participants, and that there are generally high expectations for all students.



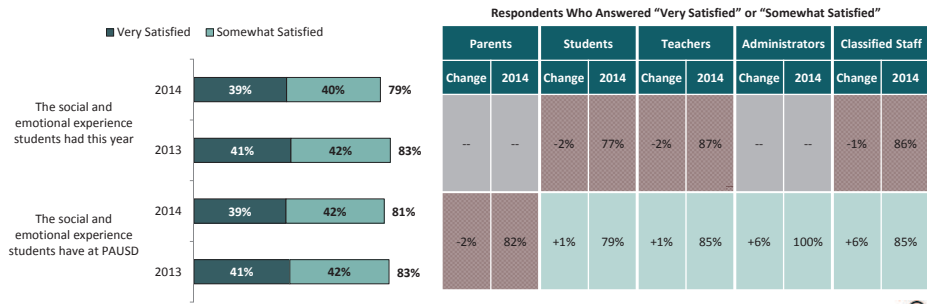
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded. *This exact statement was not included in the 2013 survey; this slide compares the statement to the following from the 2013 survey: "I am excited about coming to school to learn." **This exact statement was not included in the 2013 survey; this slide compares the statement to the following from the 2013 survey: "Students have access to learning supports that allow for full participation in the general education classroom."



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support

Social and emotional experience

Around 80 percent of the respondents were at least somewhat satisfied with the social and emotional experience students had this year as well as the social and emotional experience students generally have in the district. However, students were less likely to express satisfaction with the social and emotional experience than any other respondent group.



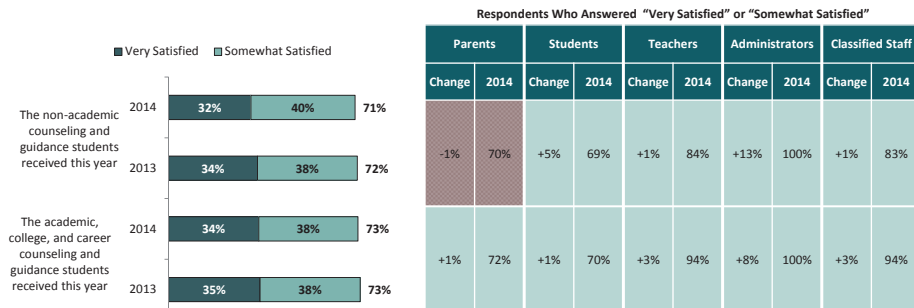
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support

Counseling and guidance

Over 70 percent of the respondents indicated satisfaction with the academic and non-academic counseling provided over the last two school years. Overall, however, students and parents were somewhat less likely than the school staff to express satisfaction with the counseling offered at their school.



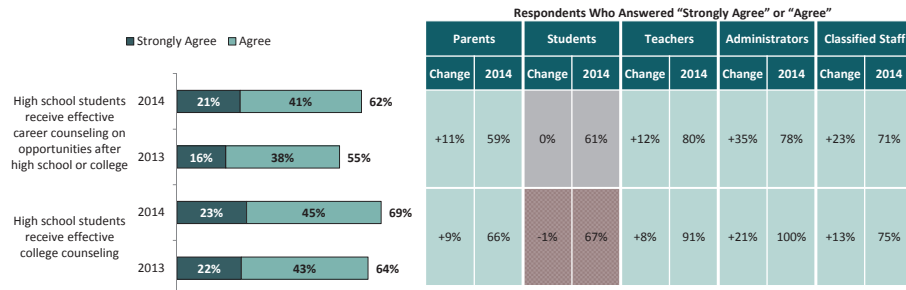
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support

College and career counseling

Most respondents agreed that high school students have access to effective college and career counseling. Between 2013 and 2014, the proportion of respondents satisfied with their school’s college counseling grew by 5 percentage points, and the proportion of respondents satisfied with their school’s career counseling grew by 7 percentage points. However, there was no improvement in students’ perceptions in these areas.



"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Key Findings – BUDGET & INFRASTRUCTURE (D3.3)

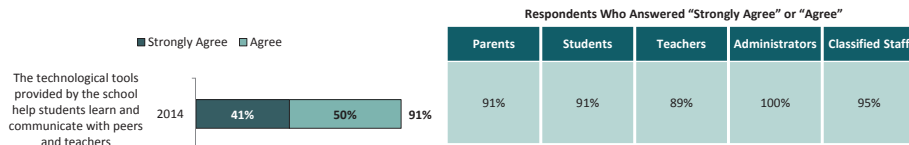
- Stakeholders expressed a high level of satisfaction with the use of technology. Over 85 percent of the respondents agreed that their school makes effective use of technology to enhance student learning, while 91 percent of the respondents agreed that the technological tools provided by their school support student learning and communication with peers and teachers.



Strategic Plan Goal D3.3: "Deliver communications and training required to promote consistent adoption of key technology platforms by staff, students and parents"

Use of technological tools for learning and communication

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the technological tools provided by the school support learning as well as communication with teachers and peers.



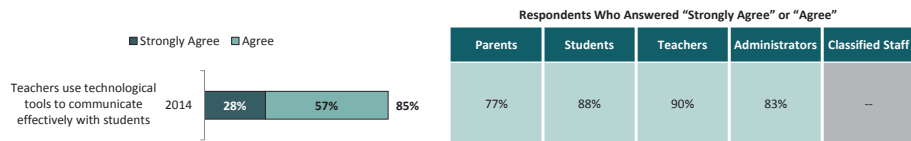
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal D3.3: "Deliver communications and training required to promote consistent adoption of key technology platforms by staff, students and parents"

Use of technology to communicate

85 percent of the respondents agreed that teachers use technological tools to communicate effectively with students. Parents were somewhat less likely than most other respondent groups to agree that technological tools are effectively used for teacher-student communications.



This question was not included in the classified staff survey. "N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



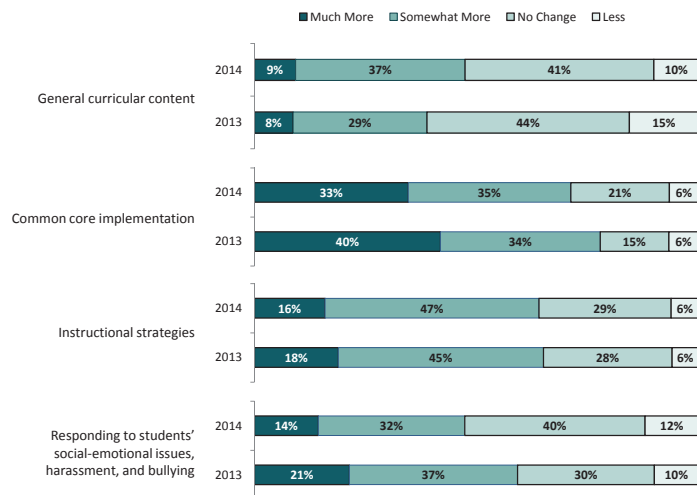
Key Findings
Staff Development and Recruitment (C2.1)
Academic Excellence and Learning (A3.4)

- Teachers are looking for more professional development in all areas, but the strongest ask is for: Common core implementation (68%), Instructional strategies (63%), Using technology effectively to enhance learning (62%), and Teaching and supporting students with special education needs to fully access the general education curriculum (58%).
- A little more than half of the teachers are satisfied with the amount of time/opportunity to collaborate on curricular, instruction, assessment, and grading.
- In 2014, more teachers (53 to 55 percent) expressed satisfaction regarding the time/opportunity available to pursue collaborative job-embedded professional development, compared to 2013 responses (47 to 51 percent).



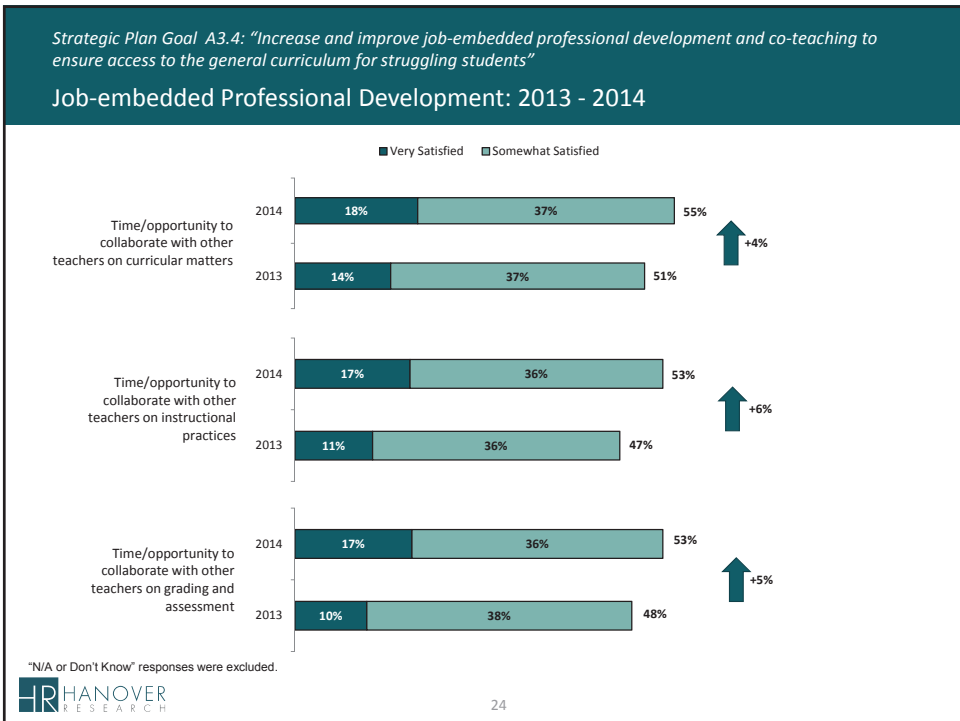
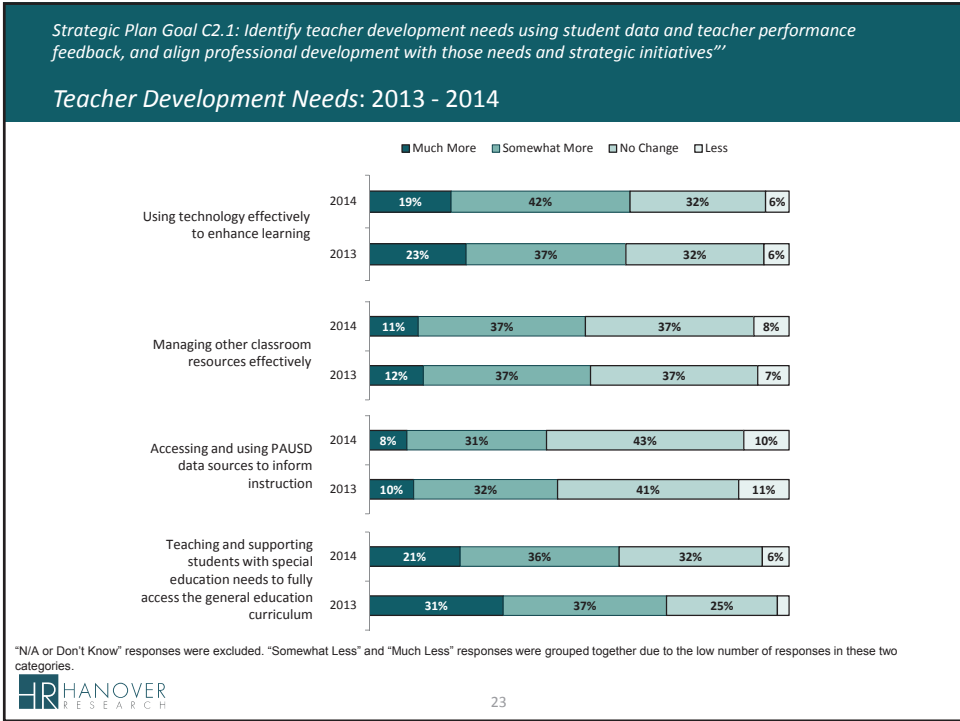
Strategic Plan Goal C2.1: Identify teacher development needs using student data and teacher performance feedback, and align professional development with those needs and strategic initiatives”

Teacher Development Needs: 2013 - 2014





"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded. "Somewhat Less" and "Much Less" responses were grouped together due to the low number of responses in these two categories.







APPENDIX
INITIAL ANALYSIS OF OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS
AND
BASELINE DATA FOR NEW SURVEY QUESTIONS IN
2014



Strategic Planning
Survey Analysis -
Initial Review of Open-
Ended Comments
Prepared for Palo Alto Unified School District
May 15, 2014



Introduction and Methodology

The following slides present our preliminary analysis of the open-ended responses from the 2014 PAUSD Strategic Planning Survey. The survey was administered online in March 2014 to over 4,000 district stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, administrators, and classified staff.

For our preliminary analysis, Hanover conducted a qualitative review of all open-ended comments and analyzed key themes segmented by each respondent group. Where possible, we have tabulated initial counts of comments that mention these key themes. In addition, these slides highlight representative comments of key themes where appropriate. For our comprehensive analysis, we will perform systematic coding for all open-ended comments.



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Survey Responses

The 2014 survey represents responses from all stakeholder groups, attracting a notably greater proportion of student respondents than in previous administrations. Of all respondent groups, parents were most likely to provide open-ended comments, followed by teachers.

Survey Respondents

Survey Respondents	Administrators	Classified Staff	Parents	Students	Teachers	Total
Total Survey Responses	21	131	1,444	2,395	381	4,372
% of Total Survey Responses	0.5%	3%	33%	55%	9%	100%
Total Open-ended Responses	2	24	546	395	81	1,048
% of Total Survey Responses in Respondent Group	10%	18%	38%	16%	21%	--
% of Total Open-ended Responses	0.2%	2%	52%	38%	8%	100%



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Administrators and Classified Staff (n=26)

- In their open-ended comments, administrators and classified staff most frequently expressed that **supports could be improved for struggling students**. These respondents felt that students would benefit from additional one-on-one time with teachers and improved counseling services, beginning early in their academic careers.
- Additionally, a few respondents indicated that special education students could benefit from increased support in the classroom. These respondents expressed difficulty in meeting the needs of special education students in a classroom setting since inclusion has become a priority.
- **A number of staff members offered positive comments** and expressed pride in working at PAUSD. In particular, staff members highlighted the feeling of teamwork between staff and teachers and a culture of trust at the district.



Parents (n=546)

- Parents frequently expressed **concerns with the consistency of teacher quality**. Many teachers are described as excellent, while parents are highly dissatisfied with others. However, several parents noted that the school had taken action to remove underperforming teachers.
- In general, parents wish **more one-on-one supports** existed for struggling students. A significant portion indicated that students are unable to receive additional help outside the classroom, for both academic and emotional needs.
- In addition, the **high-stress culture** at PAUSD was a consistent theme throughout responses. Parents indicated concern with the levels of academic stress and pressure placed on their students. Issues regarding the **amount of homework** appeared to vary greatly by school site; many parents feel their children are overwhelmed by homework, while others are concerned by a lack of homework.



Parents (n=546)

- Many parents indicated that **differentiated instruction could be improved** to address the needs of all learners. A number of parents noted that their school fails to meet their child's unique learning needs, for both high-achievers and struggling students.
- According to our initial review, **relatively few parents specifically mentioned bullying in their responses**. Slightly over 3 percent indicated that their child had been bullied.
- Some parents indicated that **Schoology is currently underutilized**, and that many teachers fail to upload assignments online.

Initial Counts for Select Themes

Theme	Number of mentions (n=526)
Bullying	18
Issues with Schoology	15

Please note that these initial counts are likely to underrepresent the total number of comments that touched upon the relevant theme.



Students (n=395)

- Student open-ended responses revealed two dominant themes, namely:
 - **Inconsistencies and unfair grading policies** across classes and teachers.
 - **A high-stress culture**, including intense pressure to succeed and competition among students.
- Additionally, many students indicated that the **amount of homework** is overwhelming, particularly in the upper-lane classes, which may discourage students from pursuing more advanced classes.
- Similar to parents' responses, students' open-ended comments indicated that perceptions concerning the quality of teachers vary greatly across school sites.



Student Sample Comments

- **Inconsistencies across classes**
 - “Different teachers of the same subject sometimes teach different curricula and one of the teachers is known to be a much easier grader than the other.”
 - “I think that some classes are way too easy and some way too hard even if they are the same level.”
- **Stressful atmosphere**
 - “There is too much homework in upper lane classes which has a negative impact on students and discourages possible students from taking advanced classes.”
 - “I strongly disapprove of the culture of the school, and believe they cultivate dangerously high stress and anxiety levels in their student.”
 - “I find the college spirit degrading. The pressure is intense.”



Teachers (n=81)

- A significant number of teachers report **feeling overwhelmed** in their responsibilities. Elementary teachers, in particular, reported difficulties in lesson planning, since these teachers must differentiate instruction for three different types of learners for each lesson.
- In addition, many expressed concerns that the school’s decisions and overall direction are **dominated by a vocal minority of parents**.
- **Communication with teachers** could also be improved. Respondents reported a number of issues associated with communication, including a lack of transparency and the absence of clear and consistent policies from the district.



Teacher Sample Comments

- **Feeling overworked**
 - “There have been a few ‘crunch’ times this year. I mean that there have been seasons when we have had so many things due that it was almost comical to think that we could complete all the tasks and still teach effectively.”
 - “Elementary teachers need equal prep time as high/middle school teacher. We teach many more subjects and are being asked to teach as much as three differentiated lessons within a subject. Way too much to ask of anyone!”
- **Leadership**
 - “There is a general lack of clear and consistent policies coming from the district. I have been at meetings where I have had to explain to the person representing the district what the policy was in the past as they are not aware of what the policy is currently.”
 - “At times, I am concerned that a small number of parents/community members have too much influence on decisions and priorities of PAUSD.”



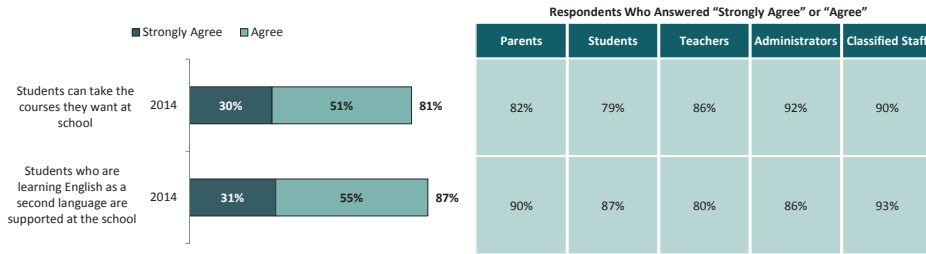
BASELINE DATA ON NEW QUESTIONS (2014 SURVEY RESULTS)



Strategic Plan Goal A1.1: "Increase small group instruction and other differentiation strategies effectively to appropriately challenge all students to ensure core content mastery"

Course selection and support for students learning English

Over 80 percent of the survey respondents expressed satisfaction with their school's course selection, although students were somewhat less likely than other respondent groups to agree that they can take the courses they want. 87 percent of the respondents agreed that students learning English as a second language are supported at their school, though teachers were somewhat less likely than other respondent groups to agree with this assessment.



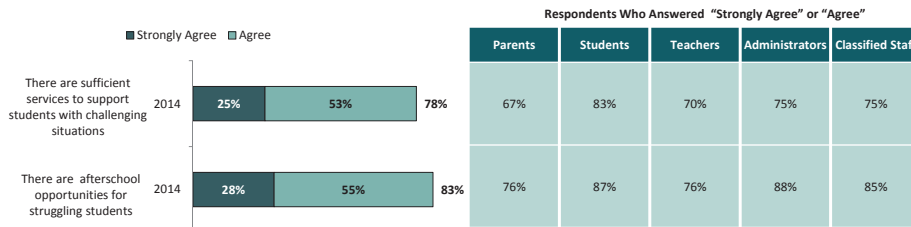
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support

Support for struggling students

Most respondents agreed that their school offers afterschool opportunities for struggling students as well as sufficient support services for students facing challenging situations. Students were more likely to agree that their school offers sufficient support services than any other respondent group, and parents were least likely to agree with this statement.



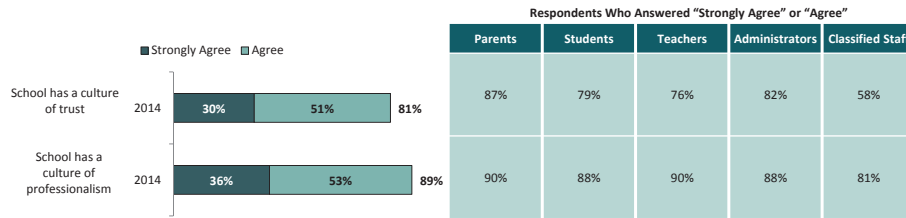
"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.



Strategic Plan Goal B2.1: "Ensure school environments are safe and welcoming for all students, through: student education; mentoring relationships; research-based programs; training for staff, volunteers, and substitutes; and avenues for students to access support"

School culture

Nearly 90 percent of the respondents agreed that their school has a culture of professionalism, and 81 percent agreed that their school has a culture of trust. Parents were more likely than any other respondent group to agree that their school has a culture of trust.



"N/A or Don't Know" responses were excluded.

