

# The Power of Know™



## **Columbia Public Schools 2011 Patron Telephone Survey**

### **Final Report**

**October 22, 2011**



**Columbia Public Schools  
2011 Patron Telephone Survey  
Executive Summary  
October 22, 2011**

In September and October 2011, a 15-minute telephone study was conducted with 400 randomly selected head-of-household, registered voter patrons residing within the boundaries of the Columbia Public Schools.

The completed calls were divided into four equal quadrants, using the cross-streets of Providence and Broadway. Other demographics were collected, but were not subject to quota. The result is data that has a Margin of Error of 5% (+/-). This means that we can be 95% confident that the results contained in this report for the entire survey group are within 5% of what they would be if all head-of-household, registered voters had participated, rather than just 400.

Generally speaking, the survey group shows a patron population that finds favor with the work of its school district and that has an active interest in district news. Specifically:

- Twenty of 27 different people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors – plus the district’s overall performance – received a grade of “B” or better (or the statistical equivalent of “B”) – on the traditional A-F grading scale.
- Five areas had scores that were lower at a statistically significant level than they were in 2010. Specifically, “quality of technology available to students,” “upkeep and maintenance of school facilities,” “quality of school facilities,” “the quality of the district’s transportation program,” and “the district’s effort to ensure equivalent school buildings.” One area, “the district’s efforts to involve citizens in decision-making,” had a score that increased at a statistically significant level.
- Fourteen of the 27 areas qualified as Patron Hot Buttons, meaning that they received a grade (rather than a response of “don’t know”) from at least 81% of the survey participants. Such a high number of Hot Buttons suggests a very interested and engaged patron population.
- Teachers, the involvement of parents and the community, the district’s curriculum and programming, and its graduation rate topped the list of strengths mentioned by patrons. When asked to identify an area needing improvement, 167 said “don’t know,” while the actual ideas were led by suggestions to manage (or spend) money more wisely, reduce class sizes, and upgrade the buildings – with special mention of a need to have air conditioning throughout all district buildings.



- While the gap has narrowed over the past year, patrons still prefer print (52%) over electronic (41%) sources for district news. When they are seeking school updates, their first choice is district-sponsored sources (58%), followed distantly by the news media (27%).
- A total of 69% say they read at least every other issue of *Quarterly Report*. Those that read it at least once a year give its content and visual appeal high marks.
- Utilization of the district's website and individual school websites remains substantially unchanged from 2010 to 2011. A total of 23% said they visited the district's website at least once every two weeks, while 26% said the same thing about individual school websites. Both types of websites received high praise for their ease of navigation.
- There continues to be a very small audience for the programming that appears on Columbia Public Schools television, as only a little more than 7% said they watched the network at least once every two weeks, and 61% said they had never watched it. There were no overwhelming suggestions among the total survey group for programming that was lacking on the service.
- There appears to be some modest interest in the district starting a Facebook page, as 19% said they would be at least "somewhat likely" to "friend" (or "like") the page, meaning they would receive regular updates through this portal as they are posted by the district.
- There continues, however, to be very limited interest in a district-sponsored blog (only a little more than 10% said they would check it at least once every two weeks), or a Twitter presence (only 4% said they were at least "somewhat likely" to follow such a feed).
- Student and teacher success stories, information on the district's finances and budget, updates on construction and renovation projects, information on curriculum and curriculum changes, and news about programs that maintain and enforce discipline in schools are the most frequently mentioned topics that patrons said they would like to hear more about from the district. While there were some changes in the rank order of these items from 2010 to 2011, these were the top five topics on last year's survey as well, suggesting that patron interest continues to be very focused on key topics.
- The sources that patrons consult for district news remained essentially static as well, although there were some changes of position also. "Friends and neighbors" remained first, with 86% saying they consulted this source frequently for district news. This was followed by the print edition of *The Columbia Tribune*, *The Yearbook*, local television stations, and individual school newsletter. In total, seven sources were consulted frequently by at least 25% of the patrons.



- When asked what source they would consult first for district news, teachers was the most frequent response, followed by the print edition of *The Columbia Tribune*, friends and neighbors, and individual school newsletters. All other sources had “first to consult” scores below 10%.

The full report which follows contains a series of findings, discussion of each of those findings, and all the questions, answers and pertinent cross-tabulations. A brief summary closes the report.



**Columbia Public Schools  
2011 Patron Telephone Survey  
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**Finding 1: Patrons gave 20 of 27 people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors – plus the district’s overall performance – a grade of “B” or better (or the statistical equivalent of “B”) – on the traditional A-F grading scale. Fourteen of the 27 areas qualified as Patron Hot Buttons, meaning that at least 81% of survey participants were willing to offer a grade on the particular area, rather than saying “don’t know.” All but one of the Hot Buttons achieved a score of “B” or higher from patrons.**

In September and October 2011, a 15-minute telephone study was conducted with 400 head-of-household, registered voter patrons in the Columbia Public Schools to determine their views on the district’s performance, and to evaluate the efforts by the district to communicate with residents.

Completed calls were divided into equal numbers using the cross-streets of Providence and Broadway to create four quadrants, and cell phones and landlines were both included. Callers were contacted using Random Digit Dialing, to ensure a true random sample. The result is data that has a Margin of Error of 5% (+/-), meaning that we can be 95% confident that the results contained in this report for the entire survey group are within 5% of what they would be if every head-of-household, registered voter had been contacted in September and October 2011, rather than just 400.

After confirming that the individual was eligible to participate, the survey began by asking the respondents to “grade” the district – A, B, C, D or F – on 27 different people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors, plus the district’s overall performance.

All the grades on all the areas are displayed below. However, to simplify the analysis, a weighted scale is also applied. In this scale, each grade of “A” is worth five points, down to each grade of “F” being worth one point. The points are totaled and divided by the number of respondents willing to offer a grade (rather than saying “don’t know”) to arrive at a number between 1.00 and 5.00 that describes the views of those with an opinion on the topic.



Recognizing that achieving a score of 5.00 is an impossibility, because it would require all those with an opinion to say “A,” the typical dividing line between areas of strength and those which may need attention is 4.00, or a “B.” And, taking into account the Margin of Error for this survey, a score as low as 3.80 is still, statistically speaking, a “B.”

In this survey, 20 of the 27 areas that were graded – plus the district’s overall performance – were rated at a “B” or higher by those who participated in the survey. Some of the highest grades were:

- The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event – 4.45
- Performance of district teachers – 4.29
- Performance of school principals – 4.28
- Safety of students – 4.20
- Quality of education provided to students – 4.15
- Preparation of students for college, vocational training, or employment – 4.11

The list that was presented in this year’s study was identical to the list from the 2010 research. While most of the areas saw a little movement up or down, six areas had a change in their score that was statistically significant (meaning greater than 5%). Five of those areas saw a decrease:

- Quality of technology available to students – 4.08, down from 4.33
- Upkeep and maintenance of school facilities – 4.01, down from 4.25
- Quality of school facilities – 3.94, down from 4.17
- The quality of the district’s transportation program – 3.71, down from 3.96
- The district’s effort to ensure equivalent school buildings – 3.53, down from 3.85

While it is always disappointing to see a drop that is meaningful (statistically speaking), the first three listed here still scored above a “B,” and are, therefore, still considered strengths by patrons. The transportation program’s drop was 6%, so while it was statistically significant, the score did not tumble dramatically.

The one which is of most note is the area dealing with equivalent school buildings. When given a chance to comment on strengths and weaknesses later in the survey, a notable number of respondents commented on the lack of air conditioning in some district buildings, and their perception that the district has not fulfilled a commitment to address this issue. This may be part of the reason this score dropped a bit more than 8%.

The good news is that the score for “the district’s efforts to involve citizens in decision-making” grew from 3.69 to 3.89, moving into the range of “B.” This suggests that the district’s effort to engage with patrons is getting noticed.



In reviewing the lower grades by demographic and geographic subgroup, it is important to remember that the Margin of Error for these smaller populations is much more than 5%. As such, it is best to look for trends, rather than to look for individual numbers to stand out.

In doing so, those who were most critical on these lower-rated areas were those 55 and older, those who had a district student in the past (but they had all graduated), and those living east of Providence and north of Broadway.

Those were more positive on these areas were those who had lived in the district up to five years and those with current district students. (The small subgroups for Asian and Hispanic/Latino respondents also varied significantly from the overall group scores. However, the number of individuals in each of these groups is so small, that it would be inappropriate to view these results as anything more than anecdotal, rather than statistical in nature. As such, variations in their scores are not reported from this point forward in the report.)

The final analysis of the grades involves the identification of Patron Hot Buttons. These are the factors which were graded by at least 81% of the respondents, or more than four out of five survey participants. As such, these are the factors that come to mind first, when a typical resident thinks about the school district.

For the Columbia Public Schools, a stunning 14 factors qualified for Patron Hot Button status, suggesting that the district is a significant enough part of the community's life that patrons are not afraid to weigh in (in the form of a grade) on a host of different issues. Specifically:

- The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event
- Performance of district teachers
- Performance of school principals
- Safety of students
- Quality of education provided to students
- The district's graduation rate
- Preparation of students for college, vocational training or employment
- Upkeep and maintenance of school facilities
- The district's efforts to report its plans and progress to patrons
- Quality of school facilities
- Performance of the Columbia Board of Education
- Value received for the tax dollars spent
- The effectiveness of communications with the public by the Columbia Public Schools
- The district's responsiveness to patron concerns



In 2010, there were 11 Patron Hot Buttons. New this year are “performance of school principals,” “the district’s responsiveness to patron concerns,” and “performance of the Columbia Board of Education,” while no factors which were Hot Buttons in 2010 dropped off the list.

All of this data suggests the presence of a vibrant, interested patron population that focuses on the performance of its school district, the work of the district’s professionals, and the success of its students.

*Note: Questions 1 through 3 asked respondents whether they were the male or female head of the household, a registered voter, and aware that they lived within the boundaries of the Columbia Public Schools. A “yes” answer was required to continue. As such, those questions and answers are not displayed. Percentages may add to more or less than 100%, due to rounding. In cases where there are long lists of options (such as the news source questions), multiple sources were between .5 and .9, meaning they were rounded up to 1%. This creates a situation where the total for the question is quite a bit more than 100%.*

*In reviewing the individual verbatim comments, it is important to keep in mind that each is one comment by one patron, and not indicative of a trend. Had it been more of a trend, it would have appeared in sufficient quantity to be placed in the chart associated with the question.*

- 4. To make certain that we have people from all parts of the district participating in this survey, which of the following best describes where you live?** *Choices were read to respondents. Numbers of participants in each region were determined by school district leadership in an effort to match the general population patterns in the district. Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed below.*

Response	Number
West of Providence and North of Broadway	100
East of Providence and North of Broadway	100
West of Providence and South of Broadway	100
East of Providence and South of Broadway	100



As you know, students in school are usually given a grade to reflect the quality of their work. Those grades are usually A, B, C, D or F. Based on your experience, the experience of your children, or things you have heard about the Columbia Public Schools from others, please tell me what grade you would give the school district on each of the following items. Let's start with... *Questions 5 through 31 were rotated to eliminate order bias.*

**5. Performance of district teachers**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	37%
B	51%
C	6%
D	2%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	5%

**6. Performance of school principals**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	31%
B	44%
C	7%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	18%

**7. Performance of the Central Office administration**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	18%
B	40%
C	9%
D	3%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	29%



**8. Performance of the Columbia Board of Education**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	19%
B	47%
C	14%
D	1%
F	3%
Don't know (not read)	15%

**9. Quality of education provided to students**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	32%
B	54%
C	10%
D	4%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	1%

**10. Preparation of students for college, vocational training, or employment**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	28%
B	43%
C	15%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	12%

**11. Quality of technology available to students**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	20%
B	34%
C	6%
D	4%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	36%

## 12. Safety of students

Response	Percentage
A	28%
B	43%
C	11%
D	<1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	17%

## 13. Quality of school facilities

Response	Percentage
A	24%
B	46%
C	27%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	2%

## 14. Upkeep and maintenance of school facilities

Response	Percentage
A	23%
B	50%
C	19%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	8%

## 15. Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom

Response	Percentage
A	11%
B	24%
C	32%
D	4%
F	3%
Don't know (not read)	26%



**16. The quality of the district's Early Childhood programs**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	12%
B	24%
C	3%
D	0%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	61%

**17. Value received by patrons for the tax dollars spent**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	17%
B	49%
C	21%
D	3%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	9%

**18. The district's efforts to involve citizens in decision-making**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	20%
B	36%
C	19%
D	4%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	21%

**19. The district's responsiveness to patron concerns**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	13%
B	37%
C	28%
D	4%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	19%



**20. The district's efforts to report its plans and progress to patrons**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	18%
B	51%
C	16%
D	2%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	13%

**21. The district's record on making and fulfilling promises**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	7%
B	33%
C	24%
D	3%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	33%

**22. The effectiveness of communications with the public by the Columbia Public Schools**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	12%
B	56%
C	20%
D	4%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	8%



**23. The district's performance in closing the achievement gap among its students**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	6%
B	25%
C	23%
D	2%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	45%

**24. The quality of vocational or technical programming for students**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	18%
B	34%
C	4%
D	3%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	42%

**25. The balance of spending on academics and extracurricular activities**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	10%
B	40%
C	17%
D	5%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	27%

**26. The district's graduation rate**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	23%
B	54%
C	9%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	12%



**27. The district's efforts to ensure equivalent school buildings**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	6%
B	41%
C	22%
D	7%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	23%

**28. The district's efforts to ensure equivalent educational programming from school to school**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	8%
B	45%
C	19%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	26%

**29. The quality of the district's transportation program**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	10%
B	31%
C	12%
D	6%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	41%



**30. The district's efforts to get parents involved**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	19%
B	53%
C	11%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	16%

**31. The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	42%
B	37%
C	5%
D	0%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	17%

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

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	23%
B	58%
C	17%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	1%



**Cross-tabulation: 5-point scale rating for each factor. Items with a “\*” are Patron Hot Buttons, meaning that at least 81% of the respondents offered a grade, rather than saying “don’t know.” These are the areas that typical patrons consider first when evaluating the performance of the school district. The items in bold changed at a statistically significant level from 2010 to 2011.**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>5-point scale rating/2011</b>	<b>5/point scale rating 2010</b>
The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event*	4.45	4.49
Performance of district teachers*	4.29	4.38
Performance of school principals*	4.28	4.28
The quality of the district’s Early Childhood programs	4.23	4.12
Safety of students*	4.20	4.29
The quality of vocational or technical programming for students	4.16	4.12
Quality of education provided to students*	4.15	4.23
The district’s graduation rate*	4.13	3.99
Preparation of students for college, vocational training or employment*	4.11	4.16
<b>Quality of technology available to students</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>4.33</b>
The district’s efforts to get parents involved*	4.07	4.20
Overall grade	4.03	4.10
<b>Upkeep and maintenance of school facilities*</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>4.25</b>
Performance of the Central Office Administration	3.99	3.97
The district’s efforts to report its plans and progress to patrons*	3.97	3.98
<b>Quality of school facilities*</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>4.17</b>
Performance of the Columbia Board of Education*	3.91	3.87
<b>The district’s efforts to involve citizens in decision-making</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>3.69</b>
Value received for the tax dollars spent*	3.84	3.94
The effectiveness of communications with the public by the Columbia Public Schools*	3.83	3.82
The district’s efforts to ensure equivalent educational programming from school to school	3.81	3.89
The balance of spending on academics and extracurricular activities	3.75	3.78
<b>The quality of the district’s transportation program</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>3.95</b>
The district’s responsiveness to patron concerns*	3.70	3.56
The district’s performance in closing the achievement gap among its students	3.64	3.47
The district’s record on making and fulfilling promises	3.63	3.73
<b>The district’s effort to ensure equivalent school buildings</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>3.85</b>
Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom	3.49	3.52

**Cross-tabulation: 5-point scale ratings for factors rated below 3.80 by the total survey group by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)	Up to 5 years (n=57)	5 to 15 years (n=112)	More than 15 years (n=231)	Student, yes (n=145)	Student, past (n=153)	Student, never (n=102)
Balance of spending on academics and extracurricular activities	<b>3.75</b>	3.92	3.76	3.63	4.14	3.65	3.70	3.85	3.58	3.70
The quality of the district’s transportation program	<b>3.71</b>	3.76	3.80	3.56	4.07	3.62	3.64	3.81	3.47	3.91
District’s responsiveness to patron concerns	<b>3.70</b>	3.78	3.73	3.61	4.02	3.73	3.60	3.77	3.61	3.74
District’s performance in closing the achievement gap among its students	<b>3.64</b>	3.69	3.66	3.56	3.91	3.63	3.57	3.70	3.49	3.75
The district’s record on making and fulfilling promises	<b>3.63</b>	3.85	3.62	3.51	4.00	3.62	3.52	3.67	3.47	3.81
The district’s effort to ensure equivalent school buildings	<b>3.53</b>	3.48	3.59	3.47	3.70	3.55	3.48	3.52	3.50	3.59
Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom	<b>3.49</b>	3.49	3.54	3.44	3.90	3.48	3.40	3.63	3.38	3.42

**Cross-tabulation: 5-point scale ratings for factors rated below 3.80 by the total survey group by location of the respondent's residence and ethnicity of respondent. Note: "n" equals the number of respondents in each group, and ethnicity will not square with "overall," because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B'way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B'way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B'way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B'way (n=100)	African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
Balance of spending on academics and extracurricular activities	<b>3.75</b>	3.78	3.57	3.81	3.81	3.62	3.82	3.77	3.80
The quality of the district's transportation program	<b>3.71</b>	3.72	3.53	3.74	3.84	3.74	3.86	3.69	3.89
District's responsiveness to patron concerns	<b>3.70</b>	3.73	3.56	3.77	3.56	3.74	4.00	3.69	3.64
District's performance in closing the achievement gap among its students	<b>3.64</b>	3.72	3.54	3.65	3.67	3.88	4.11	3.57	3.88
District's record on making and fulfilling promises	<b>3.63</b>	3.65	3.50	3.67	3.69	3.55	3.78	3.63	3.57
The district's effort to ensure equivalent school buildings	<b>3.53</b>	3.58	3.47	3.54	3.55	3.53	3.90	3.52	3.36
Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom	<b>3.49</b>	3.58	3.35	3.51	3.52	3.59	3.73	3.48	3.25

**Cross-tabulation: 5-point scale ratings for factors rated below 3.80 by access to high-speed internet (at either home or work), and level of involvement with the school district. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access.**

Response	Overall I score	Yes, high- speed access (n=365)	No, high- speed access (n=34)	Very/ Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Balance of spending on academics and extracurricular activities	<b>3.75</b>	3.74	3.95	3.93	3.72	3.55
The quality of the district's transportation program	<b>3.71</b>	3.68	4.12	3.94	3.73	3.35
District's responsiveness to patron concerns	<b>3.70</b>	3.69	3.77	3.79	3.74	3.52
District's performance in closing the achievement gap among its students	<b>3.64</b>	3.62	3.89	3.74	3.67	3.44
District's record on making and fulfilling promises	<b>3.63</b>	3.61	3.86	3.72	3.65	3.45
The district's effort to ensure equivalent school buildings	<b>3.53</b>	3.52	3.64	3.67	3.53	3.34
Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom	<b>3.49</b>	3.48	3.58	3.63	3.44	3.41



**Finding 2: Teachers topped the list of district strengths, followed by the district’s strong involvement by parents and the community, the curriculum, and its good graduation rate. A total of 167 respondents were unable to identify an area where the district could improve. Those who had a suggestion focused on money management, class sizes, and building upgrades – with the lack of air conditioning being mentioned specifically.**

Having now had the chance to offer the district a letter grade on key areas of its performance, respondents were given an open-ended opportunity to share their thoughts on strengths and on areas needing improvement.

The district’s teachers were the most frequently mentioned (143 respondents) area of strength. Also mentioned in quantity were “strong community/parent support/involvement” (71 mentions), “curriculum/programs offered” (48 mentions), and “good graduation rate” (40 mentions).

The areas needing improvement were a bit more difficult to identify, as 167 respondents said “don’t know.” The most frequent actual suggestions were “manage/spend money more wisely” (61 mentions), “reduce class sizes” (43 mentions), “upgrade the buildings/all facilities should have AC” (30 mentions), and “provide all with the same resources/consistency between schools” (28 mentions).

This pattern of responses would seem to fit with the generally positive grades seen earlier. Patrons have a lot of areas with which they are satisfied that come easily to mind, while they have to think somewhat to identify areas that need attention. This isn’t to say that there aren’t concerns, only that the balance is tilted very much to the positive.

**33. What do you think are the greatest strengths of the Columbia Public Schools?**

*Responses were coded from open-ended comments based on common words, phrases or ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages displayed below.*

Response	Number
Teachers	143
Strong community/parent support/involvement	71
Curriculum/programs offered	48
Good graduation rate	40
Other (see below)	35
Don’t know	26
Good communication	21
Extracurricular activities	16



**Verbatim “other” comments**

The quality of the education is due to the faculty. The community has high standards.

The diversity of the district.

A friend of mine has a son in high school. For the most part, I hear positive remarks. But, I have no real experience.

The district has a positive attitude towards education that supports its students, teachers and community.

The overall experience of the teachers, the diversity of students, preparing students for the real world.

Ability to fine-tune education to individual child, such as with gifted students. The commitment and dedication of the teachers to student achievement.

The facilities themselves. From the pool at Hickman to the ball fields, to the buildings themselves. All are strengths.

They make a strong effort to make sure every student succeeds.

They have good leadership with the School Board and superintendent.

Education-oriented, motivated community that is liberal on its tax fund base. They typically approve what’s needed. I feel the district bends over backwards to get everyone involved.

Most teachers are really interested in helping students. Overall, the schools are safe. But, at the high school, there are fights.

Good organization. It's a structured place. The children are safe and monitored at all times. Willingness of teachers to help students who require additional help.

I know very little, and do not care to be sent any more information.

They have exceptional college prep, Advanced Placement and honors classes. The Career Center is a plus. The CASA program and the music theater are both top-notch.

Resources, teachers, special education program and curriculum in general.



The district offers specialized teachers in many ways. My daughter is a speech therapist for the district.

I have friends that have worked for the school district. All my impressions are of a pretty high-quality school system.

It's an overall good school system.

In most areas they're above average with quality teachers, lots of sports and activities to choose from. Academics, however, are average.

Having a great School Board that has a lot of interest in the students.

From what I hear, the district was excellent at one time. Now, it seems like they keep changing the curriculum all the time.

I think, under the current economic conditions, the students are receiving the appropriate education. They are prepared for the transition to college. Bus service is good at not letting kids get off at the wrong stop.

Innovation in teaching methods and in curriculum.

They have a large number of experienced teachers. Also, maintaining their music program.

The high quality and diversity of the faculty brings a broad range of methods to the classroom. They have high expectations of students.

Teachers and administration seem to work together well. In late 1978 to 1980, I taught English there.

A good tax base.

I have always felt welcome in the schools. The principals have always been excellent leaders working with students and teachers.

A strong School Board and a good football team.

Segregation of gifted students to enhance their growth. Administration that looks forward, planning for the future, despite political realities.

Twenty years ago the schools were fairly good, but even then they could have improved. I no longer have enthusiasm about schools.



They have extracurricular activities for both girls and boys. A great, award-winning band program. Also, dedicated teachers.

Teachers are dedicated caring and experienced. They are greatly underpaid. They do a good job on maintaining classroom sizes.

Patrons are willing to tax themselves for the schools.

Never had kids in the district, but have friends that have. They seem to like it, but it has its problems, like most.

**34. Where could the district improve?** *Responses were coded from open-ended comments based on common words, phrases or ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed below.*

Response	Number
Don't know	167
Manage/spend money more wisely	61
Other (see below)	45
Reduce class sizes	43
Upgrade the buildings/all facilities should have AC	30
Provide all with the same resources/consistency between schools	28
Communicate better	26

**Verbatim “other” comments**

Resources for teachers, like textbooks and the newest technology.

Need more public communication. Parents and community should be invited to volunteer. Even financial help might come from community. Let them know what schools need. For example, I heard they need school supplies.

I think they really need to hire more teachers. Smaller classrooms are a must, which allows teachers to connect with all their students. Too much emphasis on extracurricular activities.

Take a hard look at Administration and middle management.



Stop some of the budget cuts, like letting go librarians.

Security should be better. Some buildings you can just walk in. In 1994, my daughter, age 13, was truant. The school didn't let me know for three days that she had been truant. She has been missing since that day in 1994.

Enforce rules when disciplining.

Too much emphasis on the less fortunate. I think there is a discrimination in favor of black and Hispanic students. I think the standard of education is set lower for them to achieve.

Practicality in education needs to improve, with fewer electives and more basic education.

Seems fine as is.

Seven buildings are without air conditioning. We keep hearing that "it's being worked on."

Those who are "average" get overlooked. Gifted and special needs kids get all the attention.

A partnership with parents to prepare students for college and the outside world.

I don't believe our children are prepared as well as they need to be for college and the outside world.

Some of the time, teachers' hands are tied with paperwork. At high school, a group thinks it "owns" the hallways, which takes away from teachers teaching. Also, too much time is spent on kids with no family support.

Get back to the basics: reading, writing and math.

Especially at the high school level, they need to keep the students interested and involved.

Better use of teachers' time. They should not have to spend time disciplining troublemakers.

Discipline is very much a problem today. Non-involvement by parents contributes to problems inside and outside the school.



Better effort to see signs of bullying and stepping in with appropriate action.

Older schools on the north side need improvements. Not all locations have AC. Academics is average across the board.

Hire more teachers. Promises of air conditioning throughout the district have not materialized.

All students should be given access to the same opportunities, such as in the areas of technology and extracurricular activities. Need to update/renovate some of the older schools, like Benton.

I hear that there is a general lack of discipline in the classroom, and that there are many fights in the halls and on campus.

Maybe more parental participation.

Some teachers have attitudes towards an entire class. They punish all, instead of the particular student(s). They keep doing away with after-school programs and activities.

Overcrowding, air conditioning throughout the district. Improper managing of money, as Administration and executives are fat, while the teachers and schools are lean.

Go back to basics. They should not depend on computers. Students have to learn how to write a letter by hand and how to spell correctly. Depending on computers is hurting English usage.

Continuation of efforts to close the achievement gap. Upgrade or renovate facilities, such as with air conditioning. Monitor class sizes.

They have an inadequate science program that does not prepare the students for college. All three of my children were not prepared. The busing is wasteful and is not cost-effective. Most times, I see lots of empty seats.

Put less emphasis on test preparation and more emphasis on teaching basics.

There is also not much content on the school website.

More funding for teachers. They need a pay raise.

Overcrowded schools. Hire more experienced teachers.



Transfer policy should be observed. Actually, transfers should not be allowed.

Listen to the teachers that understand the development of children.

Huge disparity between schools. In less-affluent areas, there are fewer educational resources. I didn't realize schools relied so heavily on outside resources. The political School Board races are disgusting. This is not a launching pad for politics.

They don't keep current. Too much emphasis on clothes with kids and not education. Not much encouragement from teachers and administrators to foster a respect for academic excellence.

Overcrowded schools. Need updates to some of the older facilities, like Ridgeway.

Bus transportation is horrid. There are always breakdowns and parents have to pick up their children. It's impossible to rely on the bus to get your child to school on time. Bus service is contracted out.

Student-to-teacher ratio is high. Need to update facilities. Some have no AC. Build bigger or more schools. Get rid of the trailers. I think it sets a bad example. It's a trailer, not a school.

How to get through to children that are from a divorced family.

Teacher resources like textbooks. Smaller class sizes. A vested interest from the community to get involved, whether they have students in the district or not.

Some principals don't take bullying seriously enough. More academics and fewer extracurriculars. Equality across the board on educational resources. One pot to be pulled from equally.

Central administrators need to support the faculty at all schools, not just a few. Teachers also need fair compensation for their hard work.



**Finding 3: The preference for printed news sources (versus electronic) remains, but the margin between the two decreased at a statistically significant level from 2010 to 2011. However, there was no meaningful change in where patrons would go to first for school news, as the district remains clearly the preferred source.**

The topic of communications between the district and the patrons opened with two questions designed to pinpoint patron habits and preferences in this area.

When asked whether they prefer news in a printed or electronic form, print continued to lead (52% to 41%), with 8% saying “it depends on what I’m looking for/it’s not always the same (or words to that effect).

In 2010, the results still favored print, but the margin was 21%. Here, it is just 11%, and those choosing print dropped 6% (which is more than the Margin of Error). This would suggest that the trend is toward more electronic communication (although there is still much affection for *Quarterly Report*, as the next set of questions and answers will show).

Within the subgroups on this year’s study, current parents and those who had lived in the district up to five years gave electronic communication a slight nod over print (and those living west of Providence and north of Broadway had the two options tied). But, all the other groups followed suit with the overall results.

There was, however, no meaningful change in where people would turn first for district news. The school district was the choice of 58%, while the news media was selected by 27%. Another 14% said “it depends on what I’m looking for/not always the same” (or words to that effect). No subgroups showed any strong inclination to prefer the news media to the district for school news.

While it is clear that printed pieces remain the primary place typical patrons turn for district news, the gradual move toward preferring electronic communication bears watching.



**35. Generally speaking, do you prefer receiving information about what's going on in the school district in a printed form, such as in newsletters or stories in the newspaper, or in an electronic form, such as e-mails, e-mail newsletters and Web sites?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/2011</b>	<b>Percentage/2010</b>
Printed	52%	58%
Electronic	41%	37%
It depends on what I'm looking for/not always the same (not read)	8%	4%
Don't know (not read)	0%	1%

**36. In terms of information about what's going on in the school district, are you more likely to consult information that is provided by the district itself, or are you more likely to look to the news media to get your information?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/2011</b>	<b>Percentage/2010</b>
School district	58%	61%
News media	27%	22%
It depends on what I'm looking for/not always the same (not read)	14%	17%
Don't know (not read)	1%	1%

**Cross-tabulation: Preference for printed versus electronic news, and for school district-provided news versus the news media by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)	Up to 5 years (n=57)	5 to 15 years (n=112)	More than 15 years (n=231)	Student, yes (n=145)	Student, past (n=153)	Student, never (n=102)
		52%	49%	53%	46%	52%	53%	43%	54%	59%
		39%	42%	39%	49%	42%	38%	45%	40%	36%
School district News media	Overall score	58%	57%	57%	63%	60%	56%	60%	58%	56%
		27%	27%	29%	28%	23%	29%	23%	27%	33%

**Cross-tabulation: Preference for printed versus electronic news, and for school district-provided news versus the news media by location of the respondent’s residence and ethnicity of respondent. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and ethnicity will not square with “overall,” because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
		44%	54%	50%	58%	59%	46%	51%	50%
		44%	40%	42%	37%	35%	54%	40%	50%
School district News media	Overall score	60%	54%	60%	58%	61%	69%	57%	58%
		22%	29%	29%	29%	26%	15%	28%	33%

**Cross-tabulation: Preference for printed versus electronic news, and for school district-provided news versus the news media by access to high-speed internet (at either home or work), and level of involvement with the school district. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access.**

Response	Overall score	Yes, high-speed access (n=365)	No, high-speed access (n=34)	Very/Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Printed	52%	51%	59%	48%	52%	55%
Electronic	41%	42%	32%	45%	39%	39%
School district	58%	58%	62%	63%	55%	56%
News media	27%	28%	21%	23%	30%	29%



**Finding 4: Readership of *Quarterly Report* remains strong, as 69% said they read every issue or every other issue. Perceptions of the quality of the news contained in the piece, and its visual appeal, also remained positive on this year’s study.**

The preference for printed publications is evident when respondents were asked about their habits regarding the district’s *Quarterly Report*. More than half (54%) said they read every issue, while 69% said it was either “every issue” or “every other issue.” This is statistically identical to the scores from 2010 in these categories, suggesting that the publication’s appeal remains strong.

The news content was rated either “excellent” or “good” by 80% of the respondents who read the publication at least once a year, which is, again, statistically identical to 2010. There was a slight drop off among this group in terms of their views on the visual appeal, with 87% calling it “excellent” or “good” versus 93% in 2010. But, the score remains strong enough to not be a concern.

Within the main subgroups (those with sufficient members to be noteworthy), those who read either “every issue” or “every other issue” ranged from 57% to 79%, suggesting the ongoing broad appeal of the publication.

**37. Thinking now just about the school district’s printed newsletter, called *Quarterly Report*, how often would you say you read it? Would you say...***Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Every issue	54%	49%
Every other issue	15%	18%
At least once a year	11%	14%
Less than once a year	6%	7%
Never	13%	12%
Don’t know (not read)	2%	1%



- 38. How would you rate the quality and completeness of the news that you see in the *Quarterly Report* newsletter, would you say it is...***Asked of the 315 respondents who answered question 37 either “every issue,” “every other issue,” or “at least once a year.” Percentages are of these respondents, not the total respondent group of 400. Percentages on 2010 results were of 322.*

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Excellent	19%	28%
Good	61%	57%
Fair	15%	13%
Poor	2%	2%
Don’t know (not read)	3%	1%

- 39. How about the way that *Quarterly Report* looks? Would you rate it...***Percentages are, again, of the 322 respondents who read *Quarterly Report* at least once a year. Percentages on 2010 results were of 322.*

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Excellent	23%	21%
Good	64%	72%
Fair	10%	5%
Poor	<1%	0%
Don’t know (not read)	3%	3%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular readers” (every issue or every other issue), “Infrequent readers” (at least once a year or less than once a year), and “Never readers” of *Quarterly Report* by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score
Regular readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>69%</b>
Infrequent readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>17%</b>
Never readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>13%</b>

18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)
62%	71%	67%
25%	14%	16%
11%	14%	14%

Up to 5 years (n=57)	5 to 15 years (n=112)	More than 15 years (n=231)
79%	64%	67%
7%	22%	17%
12%	10%	15%

Student, yes (n=145)	Student, past (n=153)	Student, never (n=102)
71%	66%	67%
12%	20%	20%
14%	14%	11%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular readers” (every issue or every other issue), “Infrequent readers” (at least once a year or less than once a year), and “Never readers” of *Quarterly Report* by location of the respondent’s residence and ethnicity of respondent. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and ethnicity will not square with “overall,” because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score
Regular readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>69%</b>
Infrequent readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>17%</b>
Never readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>13%</b>

W of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)
62%	69%	75%	66%
20%	15%	12%	21%
17%	14%	11%	11%

African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
57%	69%	70%	67%
26%	31%	15%	8%
13%	0%	14%	17%

Cross-tabulation: “Regular readers” (every issue or every other issue), “Infrequent readers” (at least once a year or less than once a year), and “Never readers” of *Quarterly Report* by access to high-speed internet (at either home or work), and level of involvement with the school district. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access.

Response	Overall score	Yes, high-speed access (n=365)	No, high-speed access (n=34)	Very/Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Regular readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>69%</b>	69%	68%	68%	69%	66%
Infrequent readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>17%</b>	18%	12%	15%	18%	18%
Never readers of <i>Quarterly Report</i>	<b>13%</b>	13%	21%	15%	12%	14%



**Finding 5: The regular (at least once every two weeks) visitors to the Columbia Public Schools district website and to individual school websites remained statistically unchanged from 2010. Those who visited each type of site at least once a month continued to describe them as easy to navigate.**

About one in four survey respondents said they visited the school district's website (23%), or an individual school website (26%) at least once every two weeks, a number that is statistically unchanged from 2010.

What is also unchanged in the perception among those who visit these sites at least once a month that they are easy to navigate. In terms of the district's website, 97% said navigation was either "very easy" or "easy," while 91% said the same thing about individual school websites.

Not surprisingly, current student families and respondents who described themselves as either "very involved" or "somewhat involved" with the district were much more regular visitors to both the district and individual school websites, while those with past students, those who had never had district students, and those who were less involved (or not involved at all) were much less likely to visit.

This data seems to suggest that the district has created appealing, easy-to-navigate platforms, and that any growth in traffic will simply be a function of the slow shift within the patron population toward electronic communication, rather than any specific step that the district can do to drive traffic.

**40. What about the Columbia Public Schools District's website? Which of the following best describes how often you visit it? Choices were read to respondents.**

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
At least once a week	11%	12%
At least once every two weeks	12%	9%
At least once a month	6%	11%
Less than once a month	20%	23%
I've never visited the website	52%	47%



- 41. Thinking about the last time you visited the Columbia Public School District's website, how would you rate how easy it was to navigate and find what you were looking for?** *Asked only of the 114 respondents who answered question 40 either "at least once a week," "at least once every two weeks," or "at least once a month."*  
*Percentages are of these respondents, not the total respondent group of 400.*  
*Percentages for 2010 are of 123.*

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Very easy	38%	41%
Easy	59%	52%
Difficult	4%	6%
Very difficult	0%	0%
Don't know (not read)	0%	2%

- 42. What about the websites for individual schools in the Columbia Public Schools? Which of the following best describes how often you visit one or more of them?** *Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
At least once a week	16%	13%
At least once every two weeks	10%	9%
At least once a month	8%	10%
Less than once a month	11%	22%
I've never visited the website	55%	47%

- 43. Thinking about the last time you visited an individual school website, how would you rate how easy it was to navigate and find what you were looking for? If you've visited more than one recently, please tell me, generally, how easy they all are to navigate.** *Asked only of the 136 respondents who answered question 42 either "at least once a week," "at least once every two weeks," or "at least once a month."*  
*Percentages are of these respondents, not the total respondent group of 400.*  
*Percentages for 2010 are of 127.*

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Very easy	39%	24%
Easy	52%	74%
Difficult	9%	2%
Very difficult	0%	0%
Don't know (not read)	0%	1%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular visitors” (at least once a week or at least once every two weeks), “Infrequent visitors” (at least once a month or less than once a month), and “Never visitors” of the Columbia Public Schools website and individual schools’ websites by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)	Up to 5 years (n=57)	5 to 15 years (n=112)	More than 15 years (N=231)	Student, yes (n=145)	Student, past (n=153)	Student, never (n=102)
Regular visitors/CPS website	<b>23%</b>	20%	24%	21%	25%	24%	22%	31%	21%	14%
Infrequent visitor/CPS website	<b>26%</b>	26%	31%	18%	26%	29%	23%	27%	25%	24%
Never visitors/CPS website	<b>52%</b>	54%	45%	61%	49%	46%	55%	42%	54%	63%
Regular visitors/individual school websites	<b>26%</b>	23%	33%	21%	19%	29%	26%	50%	17%	6%
Infrequent visitors/individual school websites	<b>19%</b>	19%	21%	16%	21%	20%	18%	19%	20%	18%
Never visitors/individual school websites	<b>55%</b>	58%	46%	63%	60%	51%	55%	31%	63%	76%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular visitors” (at least once a week or at least once every two weeks), “Infrequent visitors” (at least once a month or less than once a month), and “Never visitors” of the Columbia Public Schools website and individual schools’ websites by location of the respondent’s residence and ethnicity of respondent. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and ethnicity will not square with “overall,” because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
Regular visitors/CPS website	<b>23%</b>	27%	22%	17%	25%	17%	31%	23%	33%
Infrequent visitors/CPS website	<b>26%</b>	26%	23%	29%	23%	22%	15%	27%	8%
Never visitors/CPS website	<b>52%</b>	47%	55%	54%	52%	61%	54%	50%	58%
Regular visitors/individual school websites	<b>26%</b>	23%	22%	27%	33%	17%	31%	28%	25%
Infrequent visitors/individual school websites	<b>19%</b>	22%	18%	20%	16%	20%	31%	18%	17%
Never visitors/individual school websites	<b>55%</b>	55%	60%	53%	51%	63%	38%	35%	58%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular visitors”** (at least once a week or at least once every two weeks), **“Infrequent visitors”** (at least once a month or less than once a month), and **“Never visitors”** of the Columbia Public Schools website and individual schools’ websites by access to high-speed internet (at either home or work), and level of involvement with the school district. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access.

Response	Overall score	Yes, high-speed access (n=365)	No, high-speed access (n=34)	Very/Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Regular visitors/CPS website	<b>23%</b>	23%	15%	39%	15%	16%
Infrequent visitors/CPS website	<b>26%</b>	26%	18%	22%	30%	22%
Never visitors/CPS website	<b>52%</b>	50%	71%	40%	55%	62%
Regular visitors/individual school websites	<b>26%</b>	28%	12%	35%	23%	20%
Infrequent visitors/individual school websites	<b>19%</b>	19%	15%	20%	18%	19%
Never visitors/individual school websites	<b>55%</b>	53%	76%	44%	58%	61%



**Finding 6: Interest in Columbia Public Schools television remains low, as only a little more than 7% of the surveyed patrons said they watch the station at least once every two weeks, which is unchanged from 2010. A total of 61% said they had never watched the station.**

School district television stations continue to struggle to find viewers, and the Columbia Public Schools station is no exception.

Only a bit more than 7% of those surveyed said they watch the station at least once every two weeks, while 29% said they watched it less than once a month, and 61% said they had never watched it. Even the parent subgroup showed little interest, as only 8% of them said that they watched the network at least once every two weeks.

The scant few from the entire survey group who do watch the network somewhat regularly give it relatively high marks. The total survey group had few suggestions, however, regarding any additional programming they might want to see.

While it wouldn't be advisable to consider removing this service (because it still reaches some patrons), it seems clear after two years' worth of surveys that the expectations for interest should be minimal at best. (This, by the way, follows a national trend for school district television stations. There simply aren't very many regular viewers.)

**44. How often do you watch Columbia Public Schools television, either on cable or on the district's website? Choices were read to respondents.**

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Every day	<1%	1%
A few times a week	1%	1%
At least once a week	2%	3%
At least once every two weeks	4%	2%
At least once a month	2%	10%
Less than once a month	29%	28%
I've never watched	61%	53%
Don't know (not read)	2%	4%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular viewers” (every day, up to at least once every two weeks), “Infrequent viewers” (at least once a month or less than once a month), and “Never viewers” of the Columbia Public Schools television by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)	Up to 5 years (n=57)	5 to 15 years (n=112)	More than 15 years (n=231)	Student, yes (n=145)	Student, past (n=153)	Student, never (n=102)
Regular viewers/CPS television	<b>7%</b>	8%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	8%	6%	6%
Infrequent viewers/CPS television	<b>31%</b>	31%	32%	30%	33%	33%	29%	32%	31%	29%
Never viewers/CPS television	<b>61%</b>	58%	61%	62%	61%	56%	62%	56%	63%	63%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular viewers” (every day, up to at least once every two weeks), “Infrequent viewers” (at least once a month or less than once a month), and “Never viewers” of the Columbia Public Schools television by location of the respondent’s residence and ethnicity of respondent. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and ethnicity will not square with “overall,” because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.**

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
Regular viewers/CPS television	<b>7%</b>	10%	7%	3%	6%	0%	8%	7%	8%
Infrequent viewers/CPS television	<b>31%</b>	34%	34%	36%	20%	35%	54%	29%	33%
Never viewers/CPS television	<b>61%</b>	55%	57%	60%	70%	61%	38%	62%	58%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular viewers” (every day, up to at least once every two weeks), “Infrequent viewers” (at least once a month or less than once a month), and “Never viewers” of the Columbia Public Schools television by access to high-speed internet (at either home or work), and level of involvement with the school district. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access.**

Response	Overall score	Yes, high-speed access (n=365)	No, high-speed access (n=34)	Very/Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Regular viewers/CPS television	<b>7%</b>	7%	6%	8%	6%	5%
Infrequent viewers/CPS television	<b>31%</b>	31%	29%	31%	36%	22%
Never viewers/CPS television	<b>61%</b>	60%	68%	57%	57%	71%



**45. When do you most often watch? Is it in the morning, afternoon, or evening?** *Asked only of the 35 respondents who answered question 44 either “every day,” “a few times a week,” “at least once a week,” at least once every two weeks,” or “at least once a month.” Percentages are of these respondents, not the total respondent group of 400.*

Response	Percentage
Morning	11%
Afternoon	37%
Evening	29%
It varies (not read)	23%

**46. In terms of providing you information about the activities of the school district, how would you rate the quality of Columbia Public Schools television?** *Percentages are, again, of the 35 respondents who watch Columbia Public Schools television at least once a month.*

Response	Percentage
Excellent	3%
Good	80%
Fair	17%
Poor	0%

**47. What additional types of programming about the school district would you like to see on Columbia Public Schools television?** *Of the 35 respondents eligible to answer this question, 18 had no recommendations. The verbatim comments from the other 17 respondents are listed below.*

Class courses offered, with description.

Any activities.

Maybe band concerts.

Busing information.

Football games.

Teacher profiles.

Performing arts programs.



Construction updates.

Most extracurricular activities.

What about science projects?

Perhaps math lessons.

Math or science contests.

Band performances and concerts.

Performing arts.

Anything arts.

Specific budget figures.

Board meetings.



**Finding 7: Close to one in five respondents said that if the district started a Facebook page, that they would be at least “somewhat likely” to “friend” (or “like”) the page so that they would receive regular updates from the district via this method. However, interest in a district blog or a Twitter account remains minimal.**

Given the modest, but noticeable, narrowing of the difference in the percentage for those who prefer printed communications versus those who prefer electronic, the questions regarding Facebook, a blog and Twitter were of particular note on this survey.

The biggest opportunity appears to be via Facebook. A total of 19% of the respondents said they would be “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to “friend” (or “like”) the district’s Facebook page, thereby directing Facebook to send district updates to them whenever one is posted. (The question last year was phrased differently, so a direct comparison is impossible. However, it is clear that the interest in Facebook has increased since the 2010 study.)

The other two ideas – starting a district blog, and signing the district up for Twitter – drew the same minimal support they did last year.

Specifically, only a little more than 10% said they would check a blog “at least once a month” to see if anything new was posted, while last year the number was a little more than 8%. In terms of a Twitter feed, only 4% said they would be at least “somewhat likely” to follow a Columbia Public Schools Twitter feed, while the number last year was 7%.

This data would seem to suggest that it might be worthwhile for the district to consider starting a Facebook page, but that it seems unlikely that there would be much attention paid to a blog or to a Twitter feed, at least at this time.



- 48. If the district had a Facebook page, how likely do you think you would be to “friend” or “like” the Columbia School District Facebook page, meaning you wanted to get updates sent directly to you anytime something new appeared on the page? Choices were read to respondents.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very likely	12%
Somewhat likely	7%
Not very likely	18%
Not at all likely	21%
I’m not on Facebook (not read)	42%
Don’t know (not read)	1%

- 49. If the district had a blog, how often do you think you would check to see if anything new had been posted? Choices were read to respondents.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/2011</b>	<b>Percentage/2010</b>
At least once a week	<1%	<1%
At least once every two weeks	5%	2%
At least once a month	5%	6%
Less than once a month	7%	12%
Never	82%	75%
Don’t know (not read)	2%	5%

- 50. If the district signed up with Twitter, how likely would you be to add the district’s Twitter feed to those you already follow? Choices were read to respondents.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/2011</b>	<b>Percentage/2010</b>
Very likely	1%	3%
Somewhat likely	3%	4%
Not very likely	9%	6%
Not at all likely	46%	52%
I don’t use Twitter (not read)	41%	36%

**Cross-tabulation:** Combined “Very likely/Somewhat likely” and “Not very likely/Not at all likely” percentage on likelihood of “friending” or “liking” the district, along with the percentage of those who said “I don’t use Facebook” percentages by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)	Up to 5 years (n=76)	5 to 15 years (n=130)	More than 15 years (n=194)	Student, yes (n=136)	Student, past (n=138)	Student, never (n=126)
Very likely/Somewhat likely to “friend/like”	19%	31%	26%	3%	23%	17%	19%	23%	11%	25%
Not very likely/Not at all likely to “friend/like”	39%	40%	38%	37%	47%	44%	33%	42%	36%	36%
I don’t use Facebook	42%	27%	35%	59%	30%	38%	46%	34%	53%	36%

**By location of residence, and by racial/ethnic group; 4 respondents refused to answer the racial/ethnic question**

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
Very likely/Somewhat likely to “friend/like”	19%	19%	16%	22%	19%	22%	8%	19%	25%
Not very likely/Not at all likely to “friend/like”	39%	42%	39%	39%	33%	39%	23%	38%	42%
I don’t use Facebook	42%	38%	44%	39%	46%	39%	69%	42%	25%

**By access to high-speed Internet, and by level of involvement with the school district; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access**

Response	Overall score	Yes, high-speed access (n=365)	No, high-speed access (n=34)	Very/Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Very likely/Somewhat likely to “friend/like”	19%	18%	26%	27%	19%	9%
Not very likely/Not at all likely to “friend/like”	39%	41%	12%	44%	35%	37%
I don’t use Facebook	42%	40%	65%	28%	45%	53%

**Cross-tabulation: “Regular readers”** (up to at least once every two weeks), “Infrequent readers” (at least once a month or less than once a month), and “Never readers” of a prospective Columbia Public Schools blog, and “Very likely/Somewhat likely,” “Not very likely/Not at all likely,” and “I don’t use Twitter” on a possible Twitter feed by age, length of time living in the district and 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 “overall” score, because 4 respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=84)	35-54 (n=165)	55 and older (n=147)	Up to 5 years (n=57)	5 to 15 years (n=112)	More than 15 years (n=231)	Student, yes (n=145)	Student, past (n=153)	Student, never (n=102)
Regular readers/blog	5%	8%	7%	0%	7%	3%	6%	6%	3%	7%
Infrequent readers/blog	12%	14%	12%	11%	9%	15%	11%	12%	10%	14%
Never readers/blog	82%	71%	81%	89%	81%	79%	83%	81%	86%	76%
Very likely/Somewhat likely/Twitter	4%	10%	3%	1%	5%	3%	4%	5%	2%	5%
Not very likely/Not at all likely/Twitter	55%	63%	52%	54%	53%	58%	55%	56%	56%	54%
I don’t use Twitter	41%	27%	45%	46%	42%	39%	42%	39%	42%	42%

**By location of residence, and by racial/ethnic group; 4 respondents refused to answer the racial/ethnic question**

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B’way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B’way (n=100)	African-American (n=46)	Asian (n=13)	Caucasian (n=325)	Hispanic /Latino (n=12)
Regular readers/blog	5%	5%	4%	6%	5%	11%	0%	5%	0%
Infrequent readers/blog	12%	14%	14%	10%	9%	9%	38%	11%	8%
Never readers/blog	82%	81%	80%	81%	85%	80%	62%	82%	92%
Very likely/Somewhat likely/Twitter	4%	7%	3%	4%	2%	7%	0%	4%	0%
Not very likely/Not at all likely/Twitter	55%	56%	61%	52%	52%	52%	77%	55%	58%
I don’t use Twitter	41%	37%	36%	44%	47%	41%	23%	42%	42%

By access to high-speed Internet, and by level of involvement with the school district; 1 respondent did not know about his or her high-speed Internet access

Response	Overall score	Yes, high-speed access (n=365)	No, high-speed access (n=34)	Very/Somewhat involved (n=124)	Not very/Not at all involved (n=175)	Involved in the past, not now (n=101)
Regular readers/blog	5%	5%	6%	9%	4%	2%
Infrequent readers/blog	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%	9%
Never readers/blog	82%	82%	85%	77%	89%	89%
Very likely/Somewhat likely/Twitter	4%	3%	9%	6%	3%	1%
Not very likely/Not at all likely/Twitter	55%	57%	38%	55%	59%	50%
I don't use Twitter	41%	40%	56%	39%	38%	50%



**Finding 8: Research participants were slightly more focused this year on the topics they would like to hear more about from the school district.**

When presented with a list of 10 potential topics upon which the school district could focus more of its communications resources, survey participants were most interested in six.

Those six were as follows:

- Student and teacher success stories – requested by 85% of the respondents
- Information on the district’s finances and budget – 81%
- Updates on construction and renovation projects – 53%
- Information on curriculum and curriculum changes – 52%
- News about programs that maintain and enforce discipline – 50%
- School Board News – 47%

These topics were the top six in 2010 as well, although there was some modest shifting of positions below the top two. Also generating some modest interest last year were “news about efforts to closer the achievement gap” (41%) and “news about extracurricular activities” (40%).

What this data seems to affirm is the value of repetition. While the district may have enhanced its focus on these topics following last year’s survey, patrons continue to desire more news on these areas.



- 51. The school district provides a lot of information on a variety of topics. But, we want to make certain we are covering what local citizens want to know about. As such, can you tell me which of the following topics you, personally, are interested in hearing more about from the school district on a regular basis? If you'd really be interested in knowing more on this topic, please say "yes." If you'd only be a little interested – or you wouldn't be interested at all – please say "no." List was read to respondents. Percentages will add to more than 100%, because respondents were free to select more than one choice.**

Response	Percentage/2011	Percentage/2010
Student and teacher success stories	85%	88%
Information on the district's finances and budget	81%	74%
Updates on construction and renovation projects	53%	53%
Information on curriculum and curriculum changes	52%	58%
News about programs that maintain and enforce discipline in schools	50%	61%
School Board news	47%	46%
News about extracurricular activities	35%	40%
News about efforts to close the achievement gap	34%	41%
School lunch and nutrition news	21%	32%
Transportation news	18%	29%
None of these (not read)	1%	2%
Don't know (not read)	0%	<1%

- 52. Are there other topics that you would be interested in hearing more about from the district that I did not mention? Of the 400 respondents, 381 said either "don't know" or "nothing." The other 19 verbatim comments are displayed below.**

List of school needs, like supplies and volunteer opportunities.

Education on how to handle bullies.

Graduation rate numbers.



Drug prevention education.

How we compare to other districts in curriculum, etc.

How the school is working on educating our kids on drugs and alcohol.

How we score academically with other schools, both outside the district and within the district.

Scores from state tests, and how they compare to previous years and other districts.

An article explaining why the district is top-heavy in management.

What the district needs from the community to assist in making it a better district.

Details on specific teaching methods used.

Volunteer opportunities for parents.

What is the district doing to reduce drug use?

How is the district educating the students on drug and alcohol use?

What charities the students are working with, and what they are doing.

What goes into decision-making process? Be open and honest about problems and concerns. Have more trust and confidence in the community.

Statistics like graduation rate, student-to-teacher ratio, and math and science state scores.

Provide volunteer needs.

Scores for all the sports, including non-varsity sports.



**Finding 9: There was no change in the most frequently consulted sources for district news, as “friends and neighbors,” the print edition of *The Columbia Tribune*, *The Yearbook*, and local television stations topped the list.**

When respondents were asked to identify, from a provided list, the sources they consulted “frequently” for school district news, the top four sources did not change from 2010.

Specifically:

- Friends and neighbors – consulted frequently by 86%
- The print edition of *The Columbia Tribune* newspaper – 54%
- The school district’s annual report, called *The Yearbook* – 44%
- Local television stations – 38%

A total of seven sources were identified as being frequently consulted by at least 25% of the research participants, making these the sources that should be the primary focus for the district’s ongoing communications efforts.

Two that reached that level last year dropped this year:

- *Inside Columbia* magazine – 18% this year, 25% last year
- Local radio stations – 17% this year, 32% last year

While these sources may have faded into a second tier on this year’s survey, having seven sources top the 25% mark suggests just how strong the interest in school district news remains.



**53. In addition to the ones that we’ve already discussed, people get their news about the school district from a variety of other sources. I’m going to read a short list of some of those sources. As I read this list, please say “yes” if you also consult this source frequently for school district news – aside from news about weather-related school closings. If you consult the source only every so often – or you don’t consult it at all for school news – just say “no.” Choices were read to the respondents and rotated. Percentages will total to more than 100% because respondents were free to select more than one information source.**

Response	Percentage/ 2011	Percentage/ 2010
Friends and neighbors	86%	89%
The print edition of <i>The Columbia Tribune</i> newspaper	54%	61%
The school district’s annual report, called <i>The Yearbook</i>	44%	43%
Local television stations	38%	41%
Individual school newsletters	35%	31%
Teachers and other staff members in the district, either in person or via e-mail	33%	32%
Students who attend school in the district	32%	33%
The School Board, either in person or in the media	20%	20%
<i>Inside Columbia</i> magazine	18%	25%
Principals at district schools	18%	24%
The district’s Central Office Administration, either in person in person or via e-mail	18%	19%
Local radio stations	17%	32%
The school district’s electronic newsletter, called <i>Key News</i>	16%	9%
Various parent organizations at the schools	15%	17%
The online edition of <i>The Columbia Tribune</i>	12%	18%
The district’s text message alert system, called CPS Alert	12%	4%
<i>The Columbia Business Times</i>	11%	16%
<i>Columbia Home</i> magazine (was <i>Columbia Home and Lifestyle Magazine</i> in 2010)	10%	7%
The print edition of <i>The Columbia Missourian</i> newspaper	9%	14%
Phone calls from the district’s automated message system	8%	18%
The online edition of <i>The Columbia Missourian</i>	6%	8%
The Partners in Education program	4%	3%
Social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter, or blog sites	4%	2%
After school clubs, such as Boys and Girls Club, and Adventure Club	2%	4%



**Finding 10: When asked to identify the source they would consult “first” for district news, there were no statistically significant changes on the entire list between last year and this year. However, there were some changes of position, including “teachers and other staff member in the district, either in person or via e-mail” being listed first this year, followed by “the print edition of *The Columbia Tribune*” and “friends and neighbors.” In 2010, “friends and neighbors” was listed first.**

The final question of the main portion of the survey addressed a very critical topic, in terms of how and where patrons get information: “Of all the sources we’ve discussed, which one do you consult first?”

Statistically speaking, there were no differences from 2010 to 2011, in terms of the frequency that an item was mentioned. However, there were some interesting changes of position, as “teachers and other staff members in the district, either in person or via e-mail” replaced “friends and neighbors” as the number one source (“friends and neighbors” was third).

Again, the changes were within the Margin of Error, but it was nonetheless interesting to see where all the various sources landed on this year’s research.

Also interesting was to see the choices by categories. District-related sources continued to be the preference:

- All district-related sources: 54%
- News media: 27%
- Informal sources (friends and neighbors, students in the district, and parent organizations): 21%

The preference for print versus electronic outlets was seen here as well, although with the informal sources (friends and neighbors, for example) also being a choice preferred by some respondents, print’s “lead” over electronic sources remained somewhat modest – but noticeable.

- All print sources: 37%
- All electronic sources: 23%

While there were some differences in these two analyses from last year to this year, the pattern remained consistent. Sources that were preferred stayed at or near the top of the list. The district is nearly twice as likely to be the first choice consulted for news (versus the news media), and print continued to hold a slight edge over electronic sources – although the narrowing of that gap was further evidence of the slow, but seemingly steady, shift more toward electronic forms of news.

**54. Of all of the news sources we've discussed, which one do you consult first for news and information about the Columbia Public Schools?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/2011</b>	<b>Percentage/2010</b>
Teachers and other staff members in the district, either in person or via e-mail	17%	13%
The print edition of <i>The Columbia Tribune</i> newspaper	16%	13%
Friends and neighbors	14%	18%
Individual school newsletters	11%	11%
The printed newsletter from the district, call <i>Quarterly Report</i>	8%	3%
Students who attend school in the district	6%	8%
The school district's website, or websites from individual schools	6%	5%
The district's electronic newsletter, called <i>Key News</i>	5%	1%
Local television stations	4%	9%
Local radio stations	3%	3%
Principals at district schools	2%	2%
Phone calls from the district's automated messaging system	2%	<1%
The online edition of <i>The Columbia Tribune</i>	2%	4%
The School Board, either in person or in the media	1%	3%
<i>Inside Columbia</i> magazine	1%	1%
Columbia Public Schools television station	1%	1%
Various parent organizations at the schools	1%	1%
The school district's annual report, called <i>The Yearbook</i>	1%	1%
The print edition of <i>The Columbia Missourian</i> newspaper	1%	3%
The district's Central Office Administration, either in person or in the media	<1%	1%
The online edition of <i>The Columbia Missourian</i>	<1%	<1%



**Finding 11: The survey group followed the demographic pattern in the district itself. It was overwhelmingly Caucasian, featured many long-term residents, and had good representation among current student families, past student families (meaning all the district students in the household had graduated) and “never” student families.**

While the participants had to be either the male or female head of the household, a registered voter, aware that they lived within the boundaries of the school district, and living in a quadrant in the district where there was still room under the quota when they were contacted, the rest of the demographic information was collected, rather than subject to quota.

The results show a survey group that mirrors the key demographic characteristics found within the district’s boundaries:

- While 58% have lived in the district more than 15 years, 28% have lived there more than 5 years up to 15 years.
- A total of 59% of the survey respondents were between the ages of 25 and 54.
- 31% say they are either “very involved” or “somewhat involved” with volunteer opportunities in the district, while 25% said they had been in the past, but were not any longer.
- Nearly all the participants had access to high-speed Internet – either at home, at work, or both.
- There were 145 current student families, 153 past student families, and 102 “never” student families.
- A total of 81% identified themselves as Caucasian, 12% identified themselves as African-American, or black, and smaller percentages identified themselves at either Hispanic/Latino or Asian. (2010 Census data for Columbia shows 79% Caucasian, and 11% African-American, or black residents.)

**My last few questions will help us divide our interviews into groups.**

**55. How long have you, yourself, lived within the boundaries of Columbia Public Schools? Is it...***Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Less than 2 years	4%
2 years to 5 years	10%
More than 5 years to 10 years	13%
More than 10 years to 15 years	15%
More than 15 years	51%
I’ve lived here all my life	7%



**56. In what age group are you? Is it...***Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
18 to 24	5%
25 to 34	17%
35 to 44	20%
45 to 54	22%
55 to 64	21%
65 or older	16%
Refused (not read)	1%

**57. How involved would you say you are with volunteer opportunities associated with the Columbia Public Schools? Would you say you are...***Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Very involved	10%
Somewhat involved	21%
Not very involved	15%
Not at all involved	29%
I was involved in the past, but am no longer involved	25%

**58. Do you have high-speed internet access at home, at work, both or neither?**

Response	Percentage
At home and work	49%
At home only	42%
At work only	1%
Neither	9%
Don't know (not read)	<1%



**59. Are you, or is anyone in your immediate household, employed by the Columbia Public Schools?**

Response	Percentage
Yes	3%
No	98%

**60. In what capacity is this person employed? Is it...***Asked only of the 10 respondents who answered “yes” on question 59. General job titles were read, and respondents were free to add others to the list. Only those with at least one mention displayed below. Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed.*

Response	Number
Classroom teacher	8
Secretarial staff	1
Transportation staff	1

**61. Do you have any children or grandchildren who attend school in the Columbia Public Schools right now?** *Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	133
Yes, children and grandchildren	12
Yes, grandchildren	58
No	197

**62. Do you have any children or grandchildren who previously were students in the district, but who have graduated?** *Asked only of the 255 respondents who did not say either “yes, children” or “yes, children and grandchildren” on question 61. Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	139
Yes, children and grandchildren	14
Yes, grandchildren	5
No	97



63. And, finally, which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic group? Is it...*Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Caucasian, or white	81%
African-American, or black	12%
Hispanic or Latino	4%
Asian	3%
Refused (not read)	1%

64. RECORD GENDER

Response	Percentage
Female	56%
Male	44%



## Summary

The September/October 2011 survey of 400 randomly selected, head-of-household, registered voter patrons in the Columbia Public Schools revealed a population that appears to have changed very little in its opinions over the last year about the district's performance, about the quality of its efforts to communicate with patrons, about the news it finds most interesting (and would like to know more about), and about where it's most likely to turn for district news.

The most noticeable changes would be:

- Somewhat less positive notices for the district's efforts in terms of facilities, technology and transportation, but more appreciation for its efforts to involve citizens in decision-making.
- Specific comments regarding facility issues, with the lack of air conditioning in all buildings now showing up more frequently.
- A bit more interest in more areas of the district's performance, as the number of Patron Hot Buttons increased from 2010 to 2011.
- A modest, but evident, narrowing of the gap between those preferring to receive their news via print, and those preferring electronic sources.
- Somewhat more enthusiasm for the district considering a Facebook page.

While the other areas stayed essentially unchanged from 2010 to 2011, which should be taken as positive news:

- Patrons continued to look for, and read, the *Quarterly Report*, and to give the publication high marks for its content and style.
- Those who visited either the district's website, a school website, or both found them easy to navigate.
- School-sponsored sources of district news were far and away the preferred choice, versus news media options, and informal outlets.

Last year's report suggested that patrons would like more engagement with their school district. The results this year – with the statistically significant increase in “the district's efforts to involve citizens in decision-making” shows that the efforts of the Columbia Public Schools in this area are being noticed, and appreciated.



In terms of the other key topics:

- ***Quarterly Report continues to shine, and needs no meaningful changes at this time.***

This is clearly the flagship piece that patrons use to keep up with district news. It's read and appreciated. Aside from making certain that the news that is of most interest to patrons makes regular appearances in the publication, nothing in these results suggests that any changes are necessary.

- **The websites continue to attract the patrons one would expect (parents more than non-parents, for example) and they are well-constructed and easy-to-use.**

The results suggest no changes are necessary to either the district's website or the websites for individual schools. Traffic continues to hold steady, and should climb slowly as more patrons migrate toward electronic news sources.

- **The district's television station continues to struggle, and there's little that can be done to attract more viewers at this time.**

There was no "a ha" moment in the data, in terms of what patrons might want to see on the district television station that they aren't seeing right now.

- **It seems likely that a district Facebook presence would generate some support (which would likely grow over time), while the data suggests that the other options should be tabled at this time.**

While school districts typically are concerned about how to effectively manage a Facebook presence, the results from this survey suggest that there would be interest among a segment of patrons. However, a blog or Twitter presence at this time would seem to be an effort directed at a very small percentage of the patron population.

In essence, the message from patrons is to continue what has been working, strategically introduce new ideas that seem to find favor, and, most of all, keep focusing on the topics that are of most interest to citizens.