

# Parent/Guardian and Community Survey

Douglas County School District



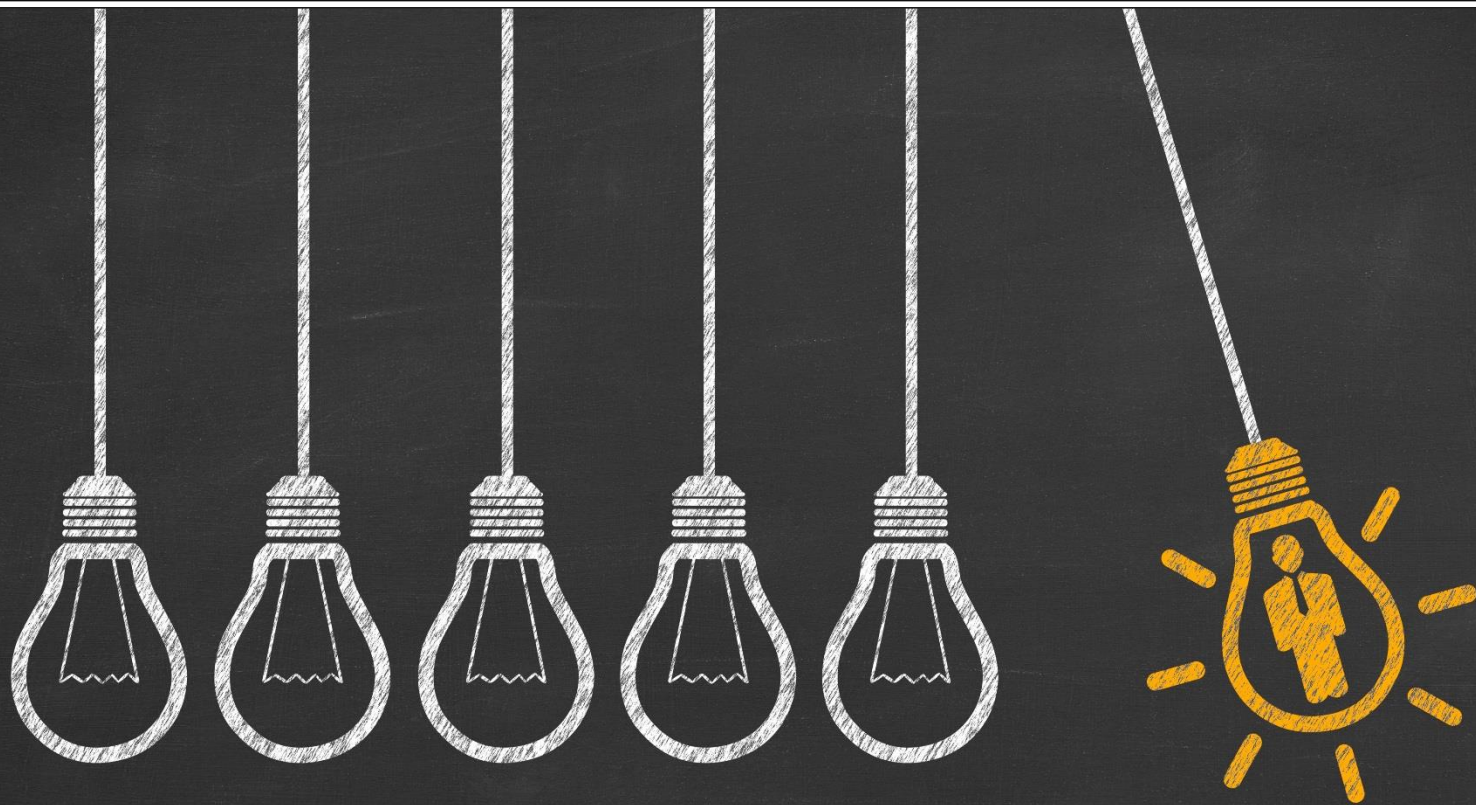
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# Overview and Context

This report summarizes a survey of 10,648 DCSD parents and guardians and 165 community members that was conducted in late 2016 and early 2017. It is part of a larger community research project that includes the following reports:

- ➔ High School Student Survey Report
- ➔ High School Student Interview Report
- ➔ High School Student Data Breakouts and Open-End Summary
- ➔ Employee Survey Report
- ➔ Employee Interview Report
- ➔ Employee Data Breakouts and Open-End Summary
- ➔ **Parent and Community Survey Report**
- ➔ Parent Interview Report
- ➔ Parent Data Breakouts and Open-End Summary
- ➔ Community Data Summary and Open-End Summary
- ➔ Higher education and Employer Interview Report
- ➔ Summary of Top-Level Findings



## Executive Summary

Top-level summary of the research and findings:

# DCSD remains a “destination district”

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- ➔ School quality was rated an attractive factor when households were considering moving to the county, particularly for households with children.
  - > School choice was generally not a factor when deciding to move to the county for the majority of households. When it was an important factor, school choice in the county was more often thought of as a positive factor than a negative one.
  - > Additionally, parents and guardians tended to support most alternative education options once they were here.

# Overall, parents and guardians are satisfied with their children's schools

- Parents and guardians were most satisfied with their child's safety and overall experience at school
  - > When parents and guardians were answering for a child in special education, the ratings tended to drop slightly.
- Quality of educational programming, quality of teachers, and the location of a school were the top factors when choosing a school.
  - > Quality of teachers, ability to meet special needs, and available resources were more important when choosing a school for a child in special education.
- Roughly three quarters of parents and guardians felt like they had a choice in schools for their children.
- Three-quarters of parents and guardians were satisfied with how the District was serving their child.

# People recognize the value of having good schools

- ➔ Whether they have kids or not, people in Douglas County saw great value in having a good school system. They believed that it positively impacts property values, quality of life, workforce quality, and business growth.
  - > While households with children believed the school system had a greater positive impact on property values and quality of life, the general sentiment was positive throughout the community.
- ➔ A potential risk is that the community also thinks that schools promote population growth (families moving in). In a fast-growing place like Douglas County, this may actually be perceived as a downside to having quality schools.



# People are happier with schooling outcomes, compared to the processes leading to the outcomes

- ➔ Among those who had an opinion, a strong majority of people countywide believed that students receive a good or very good quality of education at DCSD
  - > Sixty-seven percent of parents and guardians rated quality of education as good or very good, while only 10 percent rated it bad or very bad.
  - > Forty-eight percent of community members rated quality of education as good or very good, while only 13 percent rated this bad or very bad.
- ➔ On the process side (i.e., those factors that are part of the producing the educational experience), only two of nine features tested were rated positively by parents, guardians, and community members: safety and providing a supportive learning environment.



# Teacher retention and judicious use of money are particularly seen as weaknesses in the district

- ➔ Among the District processes that were tested, the two that received the lowest ratings were teacher retention and judicious use of taxpayer money.
  - > Retaining quality teachers was viewed as a problem especially by community members.
    - Thirty percent of parents and guardians rated the District positively, but 41 percent rated it negatively for teacher retention.
    - Eleven percent of community members rated it positively, and 45 percent rated it negatively for teacher retention.
  - > Spending taxpayer money appropriately was also seen as a notable weakness of the District.
    - Thirty percent of parents and guardians rated the District positively, but 30 percent rated it negatively for spending taxpayer money appropriately.
    - Nineteen percent of community members rated it positively, and 40 percent rated it negatively for spending taxpayer money appropriately.

# Significant portions of the population feel that their opinions are not valued by the District

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- ➞ Half of parents and guardians believed that the District values their opinion (50 percent), but 39 percent believed that this is not the case.
  - > Community members had a more negative opinion than parents (26 percent agreeing versus 50 disagreeing).
- ➞ The majority of parents and guardians, however, believed that they are treated with respect by District staff and by other parents in the District.

# The population generally likes having different school options

- ➔ Eight different school options were tested, all of which have been either implemented or attempted in the district in the past or present.
  - > Specialized options in public schools were generally supported with low opposition. Alternative schools for working or at-risk students, magnet schools, special placement schools for disabled students, and open enrollment were widely supported. Online education programs were also widely supported, though it was noted that significant opposition exists among community members.
  - > Charter schools had notable opposition, but stronger support. Parents and guardians supported them by a 54 to 16 margin, and community members supported them by a 47 to 24 margin.
  - > Voucher programs were not supported by either parents and guardians or community members. Parents and guardians were roughly evenly split (31 percent support, 33 percent oppose), but the community was strongly against this concept (26 percent support, 48 percent oppose).

# The population recognizes that the District has needs but is generally skeptical about funding them

- ➔ A very strong majority of parents and guardians, and a solid majority of community members saw the need for higher teacher pay.
  - > A solid majority of parents and guardians and a slight majority of community members said they would also support a tax increase to address the need.
- ➔ A very strong majority of parents and guardians saw the need for reducing student-teacher ratios, modernizing and updating older buildings, and increasing resources for special education. Slight majorities of community members also saw these needs.
  - > However, support for a tax measure would fall below 50 percent.
- ➔ These figures assume, of course, that all people are registered voters and would vote, which is not the case. These figures are therefore initial reconnaissance figures.

# Support for District initiatives varies greatly

- ➔ When considering District initiatives such as 4C's, World Class Outcomes, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum, parents and guardians generally either supported the concepts or were unfamiliar with them.
- ➔ However, roughly one-third of those who supported the concepts did not support the District's implementation of them. As a result, the ratio of overall support to opposition shifted radically in some cases.
  - > There remained more support than opposition for the 4C's and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.
  - > For World Class Outcomes and Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum, concerns about implementation negatively impacted the overall support and made it more likely that support of and opposition toward the concepts became roughly equal.

# People support a variety of compensations factors for teachers

- Across the 13 tested factors upon which teacher compensation could be based, a majority of parents, guardians, and community members felt that each factor should be at least a “minor factor” in determining teacher compensation.
  - > Factors that were widely accepted and seldom opposed include special training, supervisor’s assessments, education and degrees, student progress, and use of innovation. For all of these factors, 30 percent or more thought it should be a major factor and 6 percent or less thought that it should not be a factor.
  - > The least accepted factors varied for parents and guardians vs. community members, but both were least likely to support using the difficulty of hiring a new person into their position.





## Detailed Findings



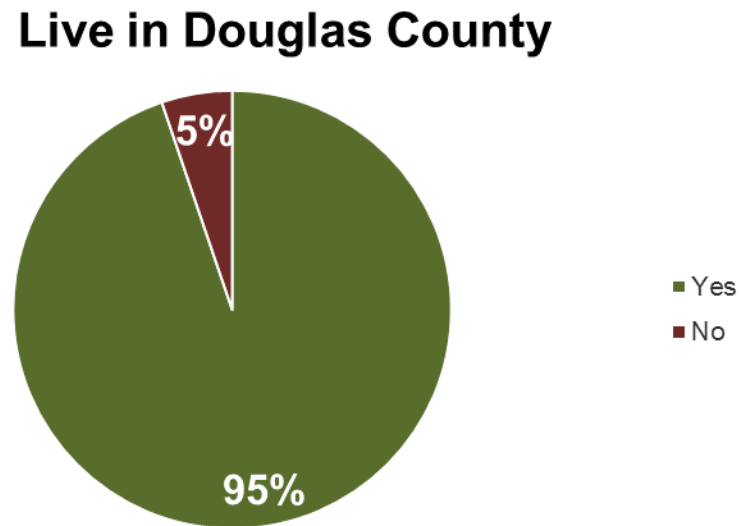
# Reporting notes

- ➔ The following pages present a detailed analysis of the survey questions.
- ➔ Community members are Douglas County residents who do not currently have a child attending a District school.
- ➔ Graphs may not add up to 100% due to a small number of no replies on each question. The no replies are a larger percent of later survey questions, and thus are presented on the later graphs.
- ➔ Statistically significant differences are noted for each question.
- ➔ Graphs typically show overall findings. Additional segment findings are referenced but not always shown (please see accompanying Excel file for all segmentation results).
- ➔ The overall margin of error for the parent/guardian survey is  $\pm 1.0\%$ .
  - > The overall margin of error for parents/guardians of a randomly selected child who attends charter school is  $\pm 2.4\%$ .
  - > The overall margin of error for parents/guardians of a randomly selected child who attends traditional public school is  $\pm 1.0\%$ .
- ➔ The overall margin of error for the community survey is  $\pm 9.4\%$ .
- ➔ All margins of error are with a 95% confidence interval and adjusted for weighting.

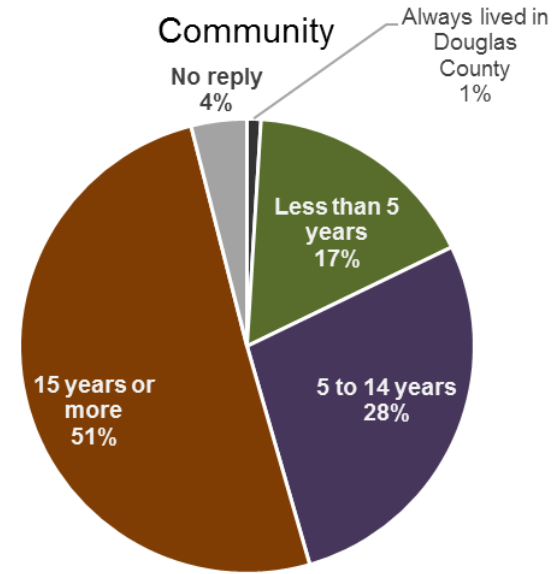
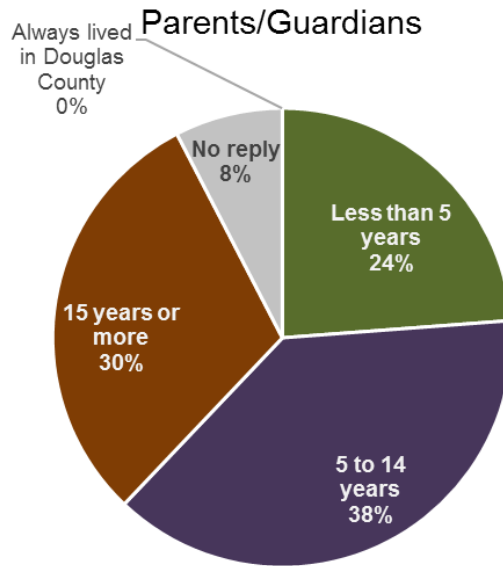
# School District Impacts

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# The vast majority of parents and guardians live in Douglas County

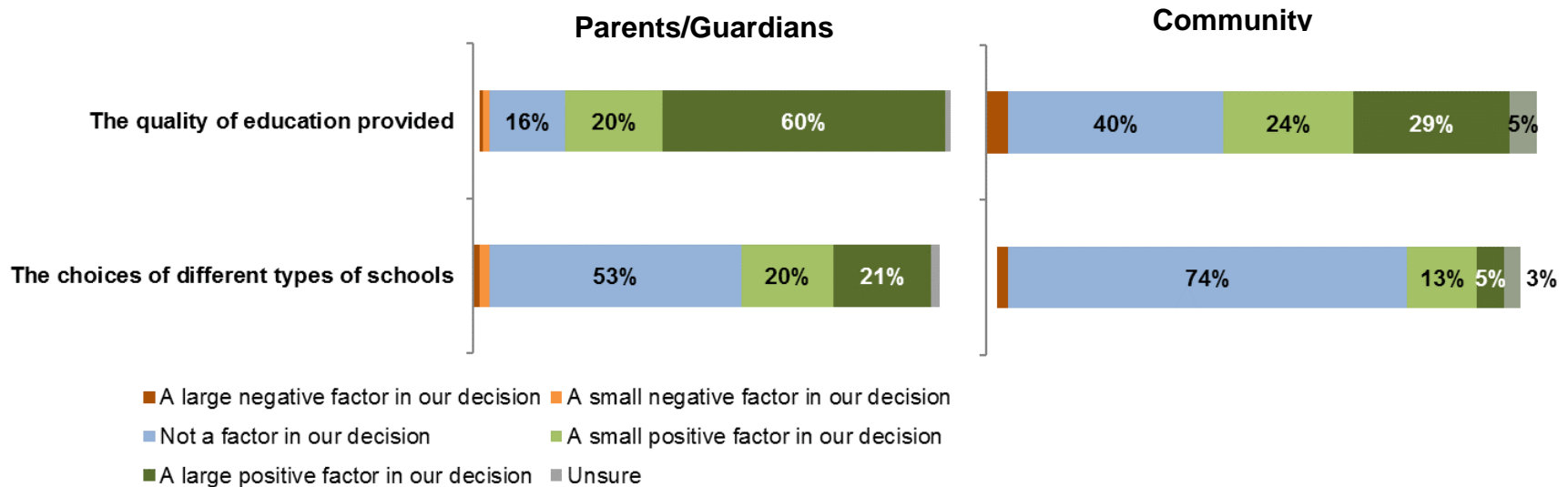


# Community members are more likely to have lived in the county for longer



# The quality of education plays a big role in parents'/guardians' decision to move to the county

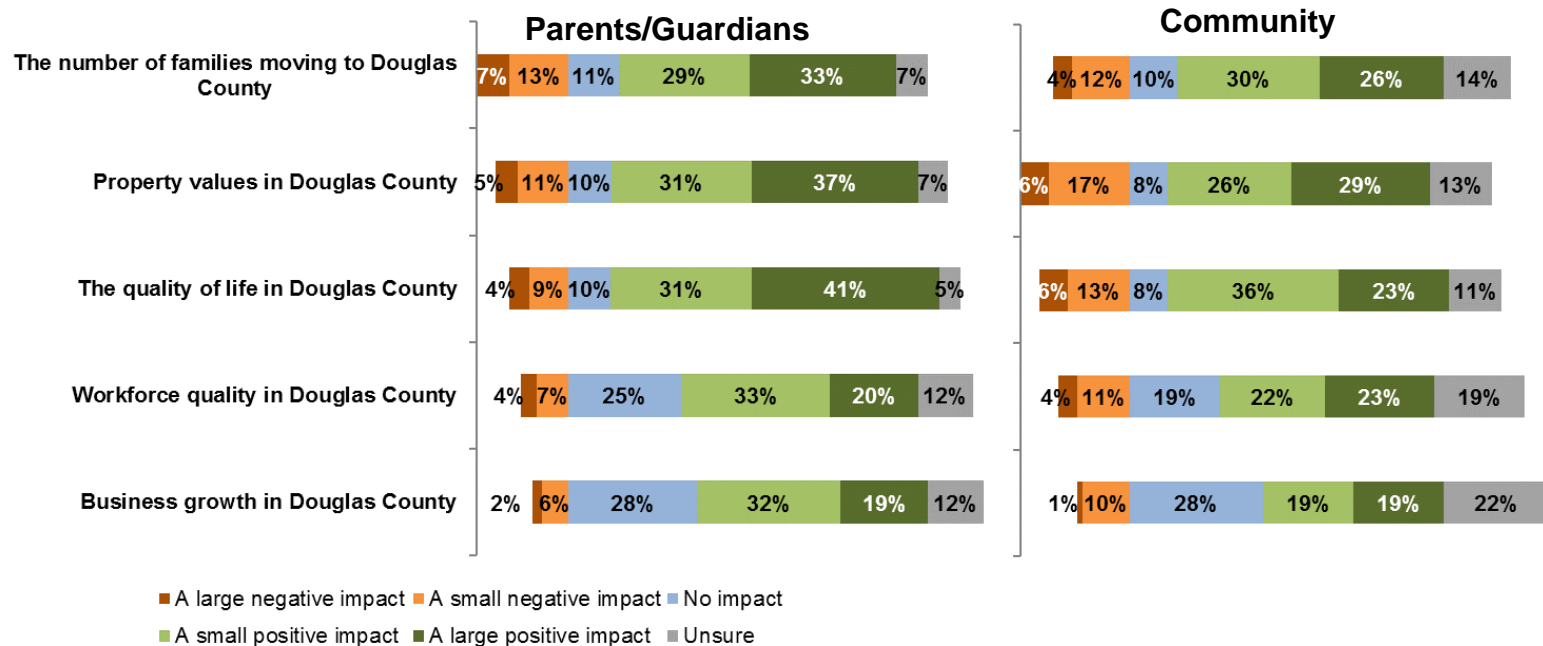
## Impacts on Decision to Move to Douglas County



- ➔ The quality of education and the choices of different types of schools are more important for parents and guardians who had moved to county in the past 10 years.

# Parents and guardians believe that the school district has many positive impacts on the county

## Impact of Douglas County School District on County



# Parents/guardians are most likely to believe that the District positively impacts the quality of life

- More than seventy percent of parents and guardians said that the school district had a positive impact on the quality of life in the county. Thirteen percent said it had a negative impact.
- Two thirds of parents and guardians said that the school district has a positive impact on property values. Sixteen percent said it had a negative impact.
- More than 60 percent of parents and guardians said that the school district had a positive impact on the number of families moving to the county. A fifth said it had a negative impact.
- More than half of parents and guardians said that the school district has a positive impact on business growth in the county. Eight percent said it had a negative impact.
- More than half of parents and guardians said that the school district has a positive impact on the workforce quality in the county. Ten percent said it had a negative impact.
- Overall, people with smaller household incomes are more likely to be unsure of the impact of the school district on the county.
- Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting said that the school district had less of a positive impact on the county.
- Parents and guardians who had lived in the county for the shortest amount of time are less sure of what the school district impacts are, and those who did know tended to say that the school district has more positive impacts on the county.
- Community members are slightly less positive, but they are also more unsure of the impacts of the District on the county.

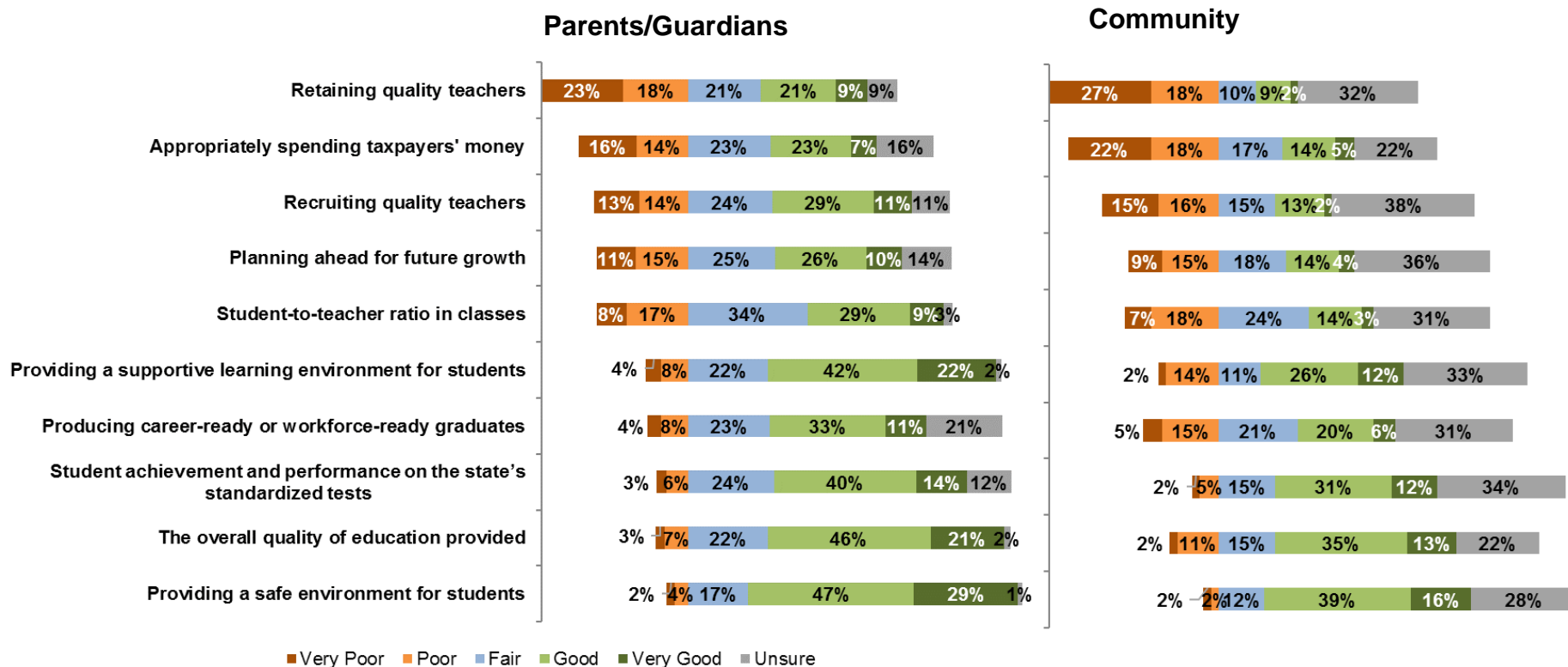


# Satisfaction with District and Schools

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# Parents and guardians generally feel like the District is serving students well

## Ratings of Douglas County School District



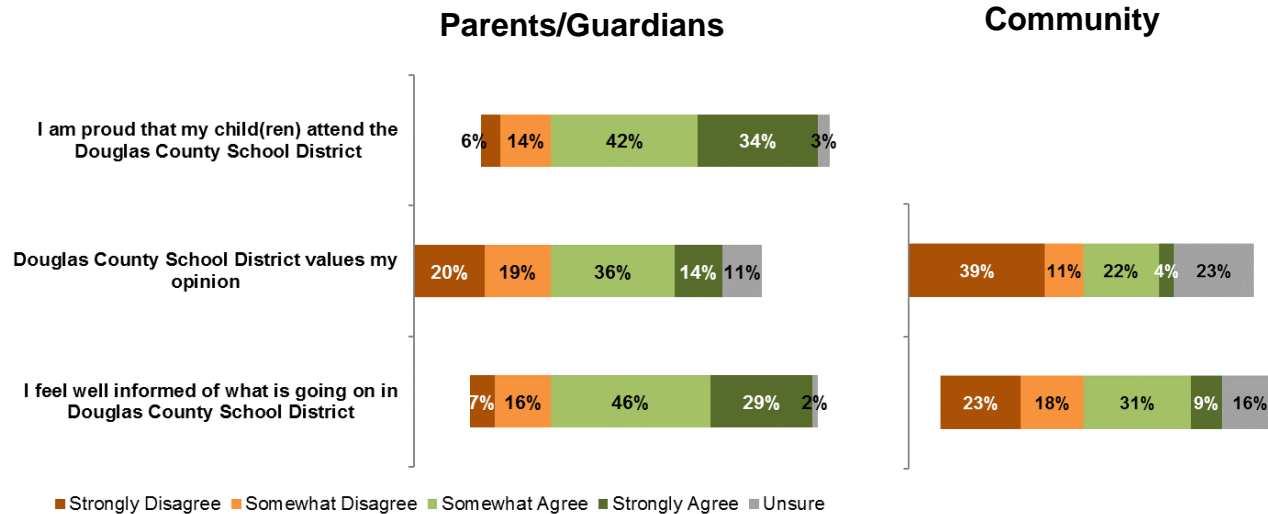
# The District received the highest ratings for overall education and providing a safe environment

- Two thirds of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of the overall quality of education provided. Less than 10 percent rated it as poor or very poor. Parents and guardians who only have children in charter schools gave a higher rating.
- More than 70 percent of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of providing a safe environment for students. Six percent rated it as poor or very poor.
- More than half of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of student achievement and performance on the state's standardized tests. Less than 10 percent rated it as poor or very poor.
- A little over a third of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of student-to-teacher ratio in classes. Roughly a quarter rated it as poor or very poor.
- More than a third of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of planning ahead for future growth. A quarter rated it as poor or very poor.
- More than 40 percent of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of producing career-ready or workforce-ready graduates. Eleven percent rated it as poor or very poor.
- Almost two thirds of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of providing a supportive learning environment for students. Twelve percent rated it as poor or very poor.
- The District received lower ratings for spending tax money appropriately and for teacher attraction and retention.
  - > Almost a third of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of appropriately spending taxpayers' money. Almost a third rated it as poor or very poor.
  - > Almost 40 percent of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of recruiting quality teachers. A little over a quarter rated it as poor or very poor.
  - > Thirty percent of parents and guardians rated the District as good or very good in terms of retaining quality teachers. More than 40 percent rated it as poor or very poor.

# People who have less interaction with the District are less sure of its impact on the county

- ➔ Parents and guardians who had lived in the county for the shortest amount of time and those with only one child in a District school were more unsure of how to rate the District, and were more likely to give the District higher ratings.
- ➔ Community members were less sure of how to rate the District.
- ➔ Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting gave the District lower ratings.
- ➔ Parents and guardians with children only in charter school gave the District higher ratings. Their ratings of providing a safe environment and providing a supportive learning environment for students were not significantly higher.

# Most parents and guardians are proud that their children attend District schools



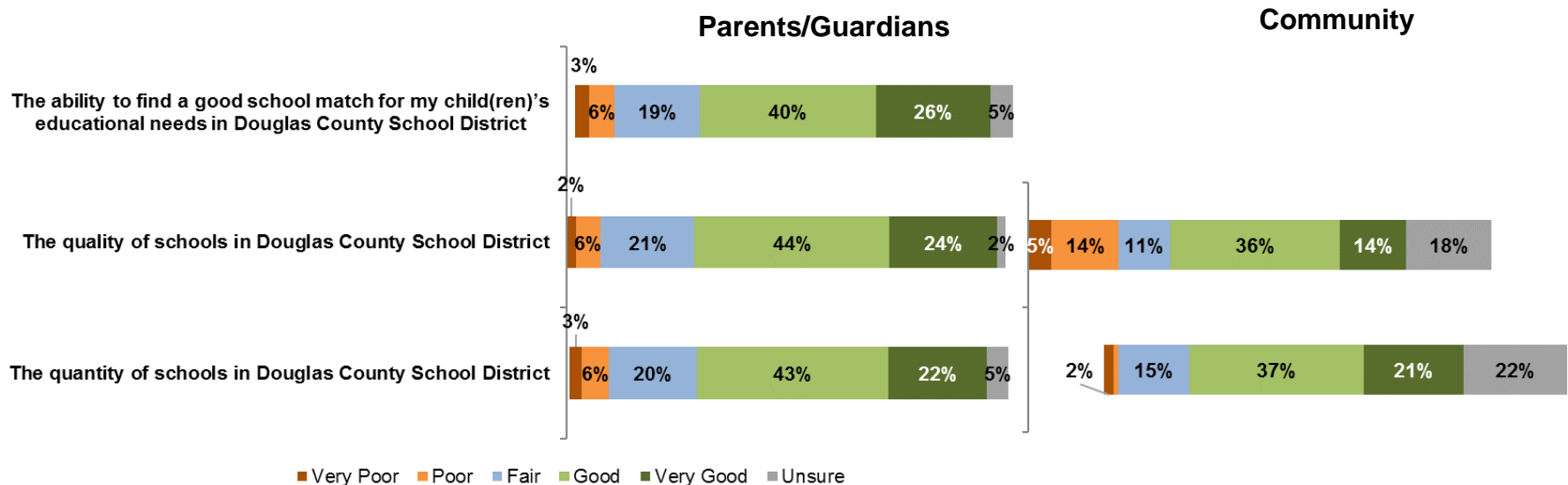
- Three quarters of parents and guardians are proud that their children attend District schools. Those with smaller household incomes and those with less education are prouder.
- Almost 40 percent of parents and guardians do not think that the District values their opinion. Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with larger household incomes, and those with more education are more likely to feel like the District does not value their opinion.
- Three quarters of parents and guardians feel well informed of what is going on in the District. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting and those with more education are less likely to feel well informed.
- Community members feel less well informed and are less likely to believe that the District values their opinion.

# School Choice

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# Two thirds of parents and guardians view the District highly in terms of quantity and quality of schools

## Ratings of Schools in Douglas County School District

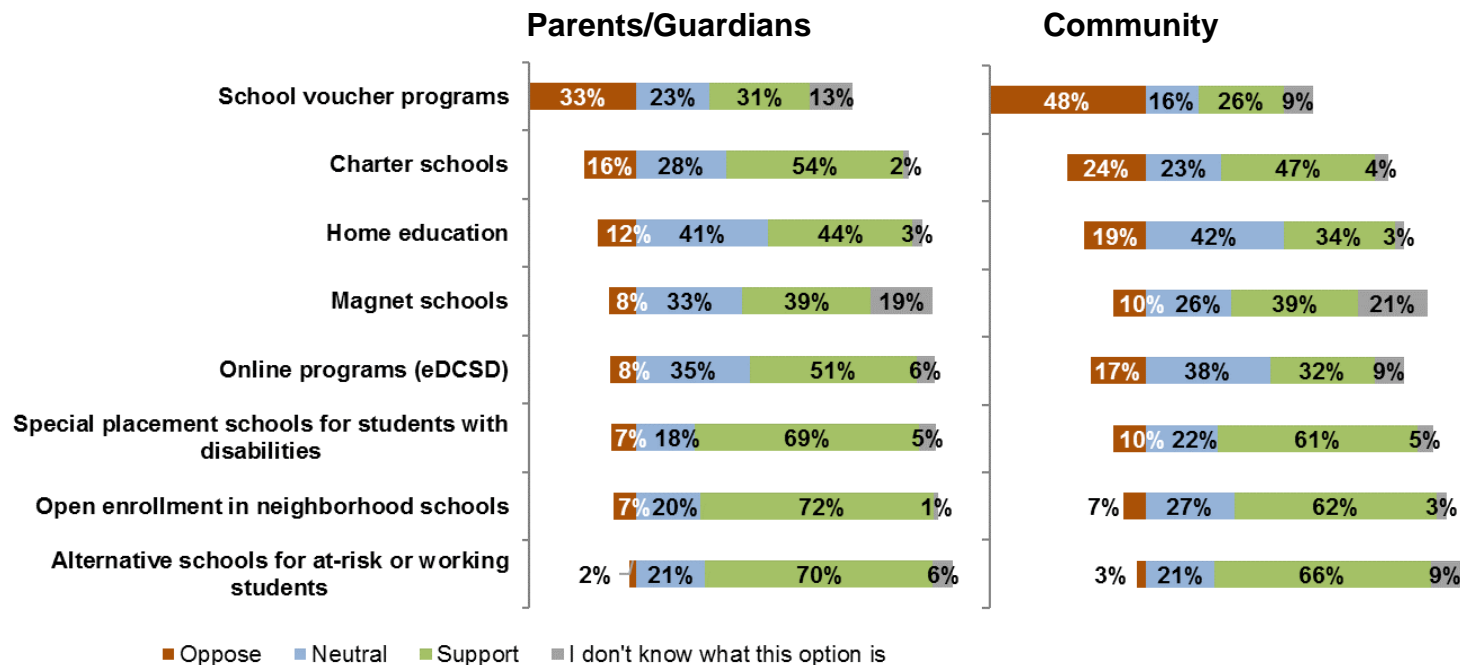


- ➔ Less than 10 percent of parents and guardians rated the quantity and quality of schools as poor. Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with larger household incomes, and those with more education gave lower ratings.
- ➔ Parents and guardians of children in special education gave lower ratings on their ability to find a good school match for their children's education needs in the District.
- ➔ Community members are more unsure about the quantity and quality of schools in the District.



# Parents, guardians, and the community support most types of schools

## Support for Different School Models

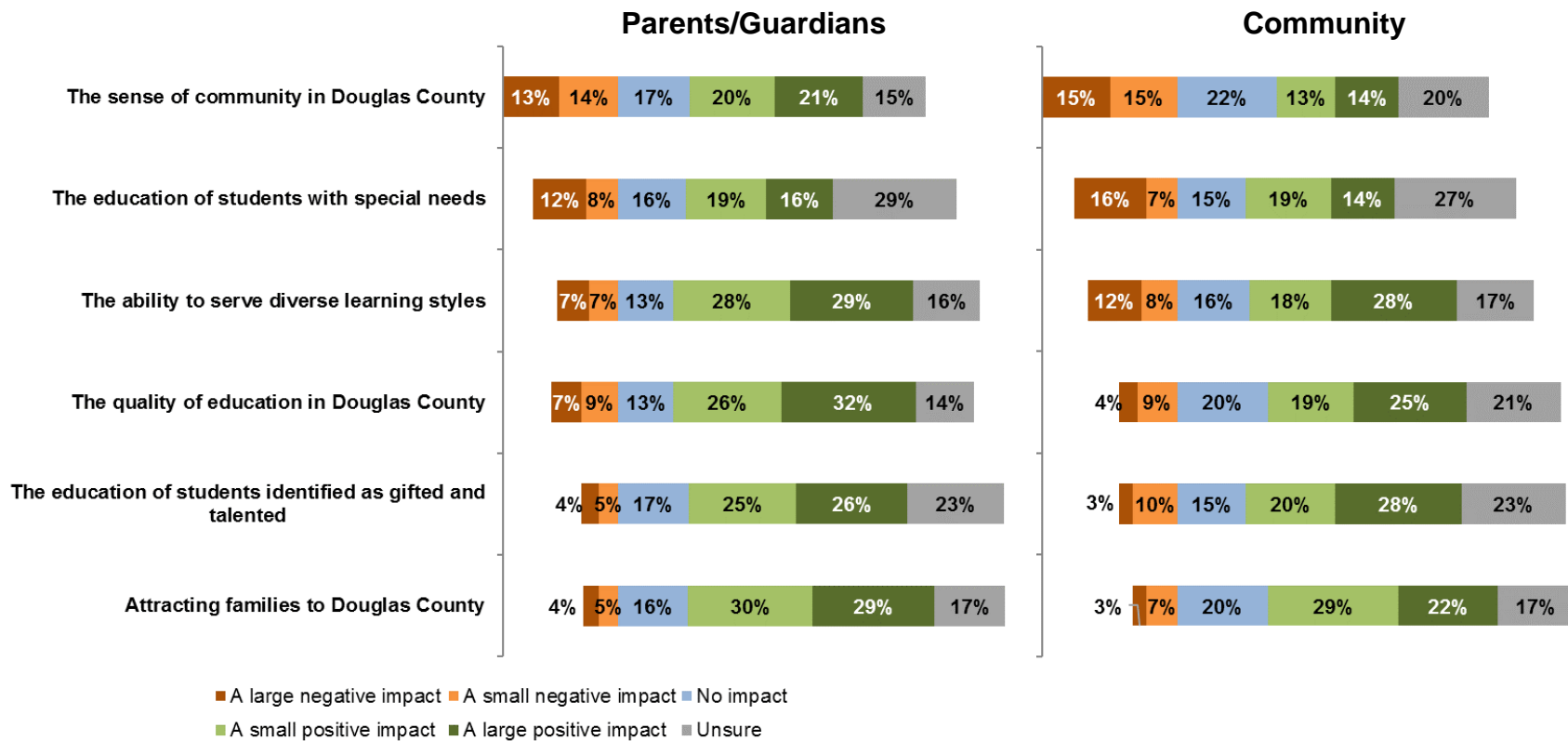


# School voucher programs is the only tested item that received strong opposition

- School voucher programs received the most opposition from parents, guardians, and the community. Parents and guardians whose children only go to charter school are more supportive of school voucher programs. Those who have viewed or attended a school board are more opposed.
- 70 percent of parents and guardians support alternative schools. Those with more education and women are more supportive.
- More than half of parents and guardians support charter schools. Those with children at a charter school were more supportive. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with children in special education, and those with more education are less supportive.
- More than 40 percent of parents and guardians support home education. Those with larger household incomes, with more education, and women are more supportive.
- Almost 40 percent of parents and guardians support magnet schools. Many are unsure what these are, especially those with smaller household incomes and lower education levels.
- More than half of parents and guardians support online programs. Those with children at charter schools, those with children in special education, those with smaller household incomes and women are more supportive.
- More than 70 percent of parents and guardians support open enrollment. Those with children at charter schools and women are more supportive.
- Almost 70 percent of parents and guardians support special placement schools. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting are less supportive. Those with children in special education are more likely to have an opinion.
- Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting are more informed about different school models and more likely to have an opinion of them.

# Parents, guardians, and the community generally feel like charter schools have a positive impact

## Impact of Charter Schools



# Charter schools' impacts on special education and the sense of community are viewed less positively

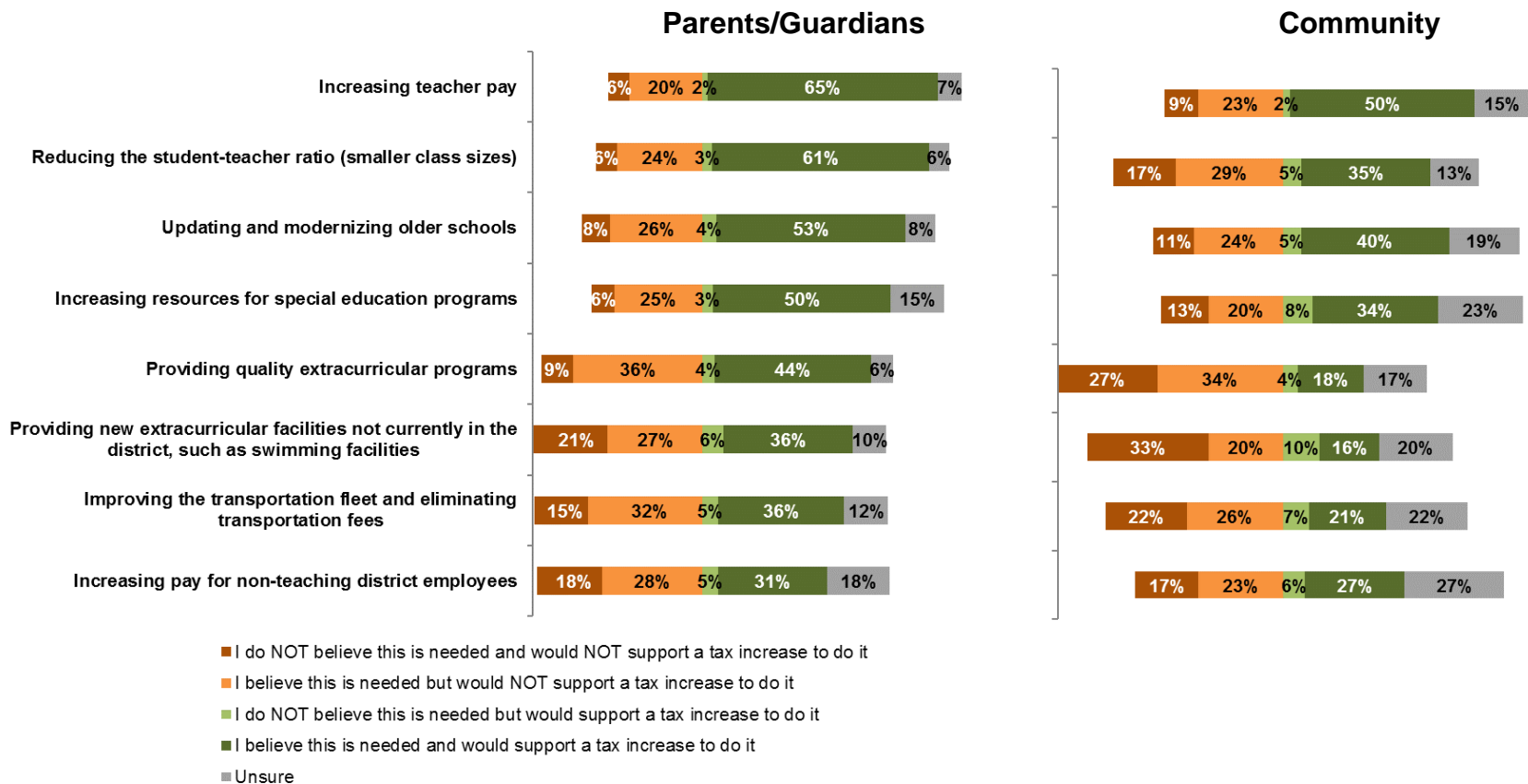
- ➔ A third of parents and guardians who have heard of charter schools believe they have a positive impact on the education of students with special needs. Almost a third are unsure and almost a fifth believe they have a negative impact. Parents and guardians with children in special education are more likely to have an opinion, although they tend to be split on whether the impact is positive or negative. Men are more likely to believe they have a positive impact.
- ➔ More than 40 percent of parents and guardians who have heard of charter schools believe they have positive impact on the sense of community in the county. More than a quarter believe they have a negative impact. Those with smaller household incomes believe they have a more positive impact.
- ➔ More than half of parents and guardians who have heard of charter schools believe they have a positive impact on the quality of education in the District.
- ➔ Almost 60 percent of parents and guardians who have heard of charter schools believe they have a positive impact on attracting families to the county.
- ➔ More than half of parents and guardians who have heard of charter schools believe they have a positive impact on the education of students identified as gifted and talented. Almost a quarter are unsure of the impact.
- ➔ More than half of parents and guardians who have heard of charter schools believe they have a positive impact on the ability to serve diverse learning styles. Parents and guardians with children in special education are more likely than those without children in special education to think the impact is negative.
- ➔ Parents and guardians with children in charter schools believe that charter schools have more positive impacts. Those who have viewed or attended a board meetings believe that charter schools have more negative impacts. Parents and guardians with less education and women are less sure of the impact that charter schools are having.

# Funding and Services

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# There is support for a tax increase to fund an increase in teacher pay

## Support and Need for Funding



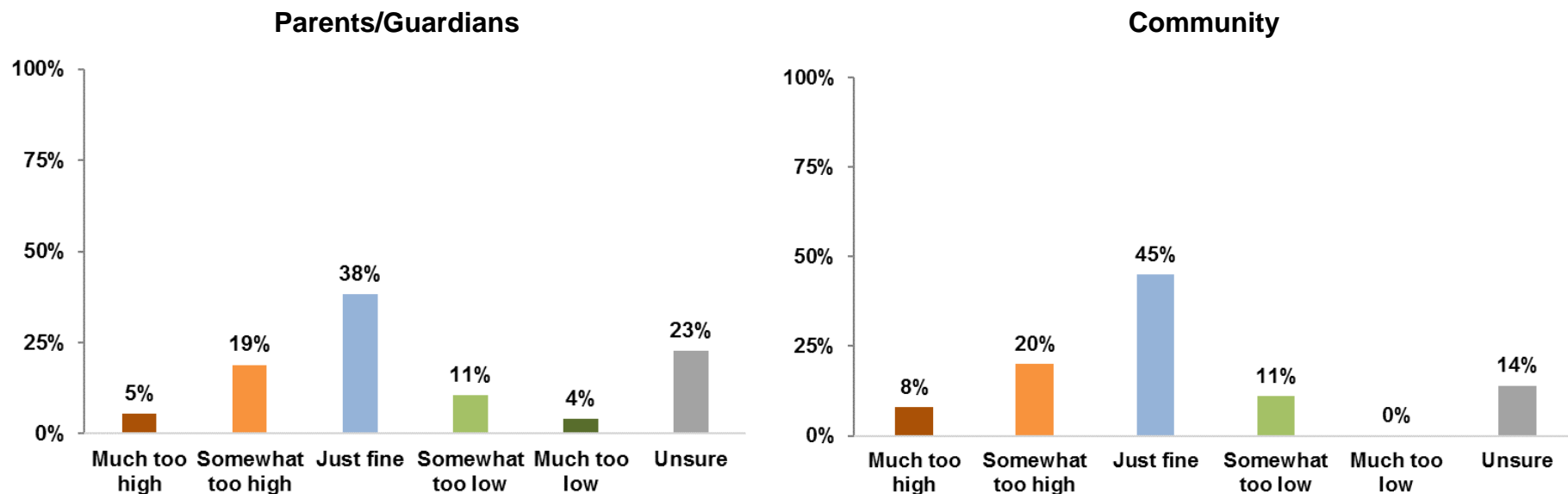
# There is not as much support for extracurriculars, transportation, and pay for non teaching staff

- More than 60 percent of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to make class sizes smaller. Parents and guardians with children in special education, those with larger household incomes, those with more education, and women are more likely to support this.
- About 40 percent of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to improve the transportation fleet and eliminate transportation fees. Those with children in special education are more likely to support this.
- Two thirds of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to fund an increase in teacher pay. Those with larger household incomes and those with more education are more likely to support this.
- More than a third of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to fund an increase in pay for non-teaching district employees.
- Almost 60 percent of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to update and modernize older schools. Those with children at traditional public schools, those with larger household incomes, and those with more education are more likely to support this.
- More than 40 percent of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to provide new extracurricular facilities. Those with larger household incomes are more likely to support this.
- More than half of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to increase resources for special education programs. Those with children in special education are more likely to support this.
- Almost half of parents and guardians would support a tax increase to provide quality extracurricular programs. Those with larger household incomes and more education are more likely to support this.
- Parents who have viewed or attended a board meeting are more likely to support the tax increases and less likely to be unsure of their opinion.



# Most people either think property taxes are just fine or are unsure

## Opinion of School Property Taxes

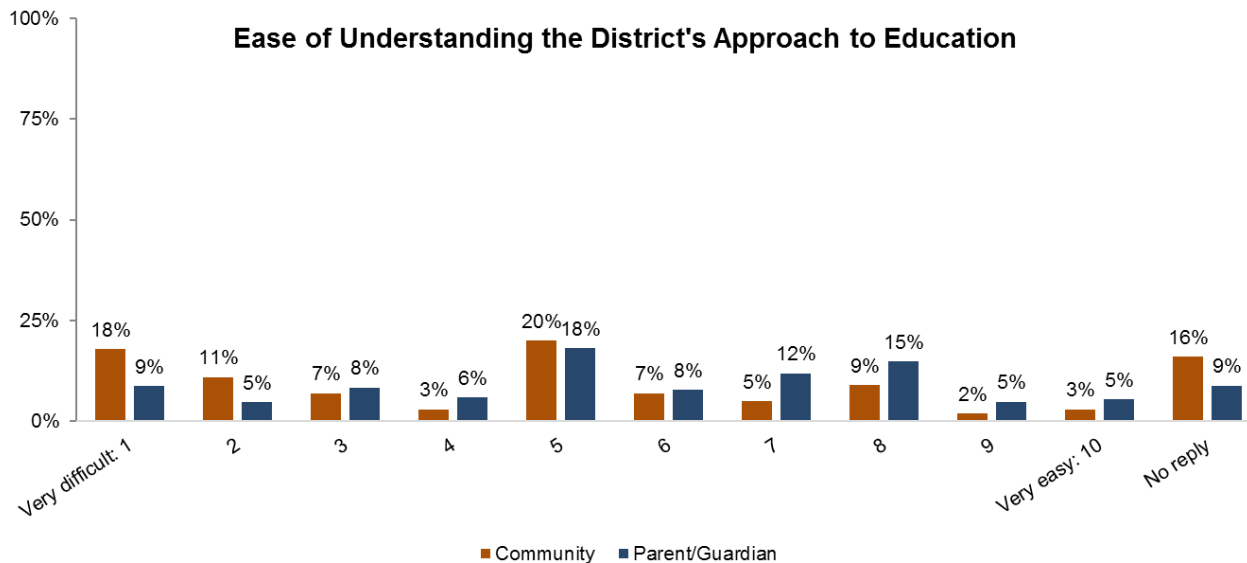


- Almost a quarter of parents and guardians think property taxes are too high, while 15 percent think they are too low. This is similar to the community members.

# Curricula

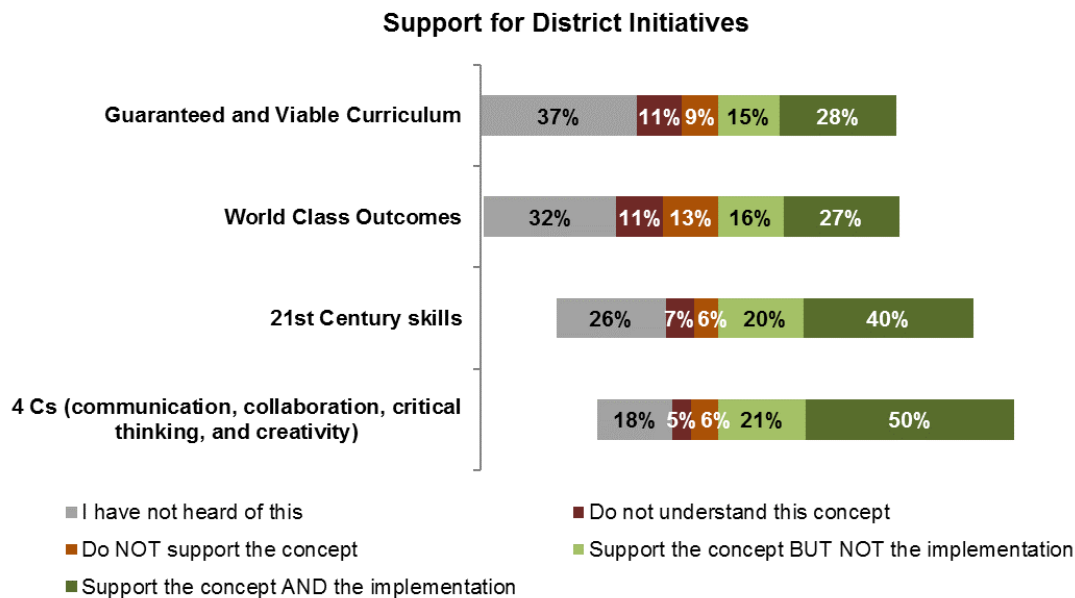
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# Most people find the District's approach to education to be somewhat difficult to understand



- Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting rated the approach as more difficult to understand. Those with larger household incomes and more education also rated the approach as more difficult.

# Parents and guardians have varying levels of support and knowledge of different District initiatives



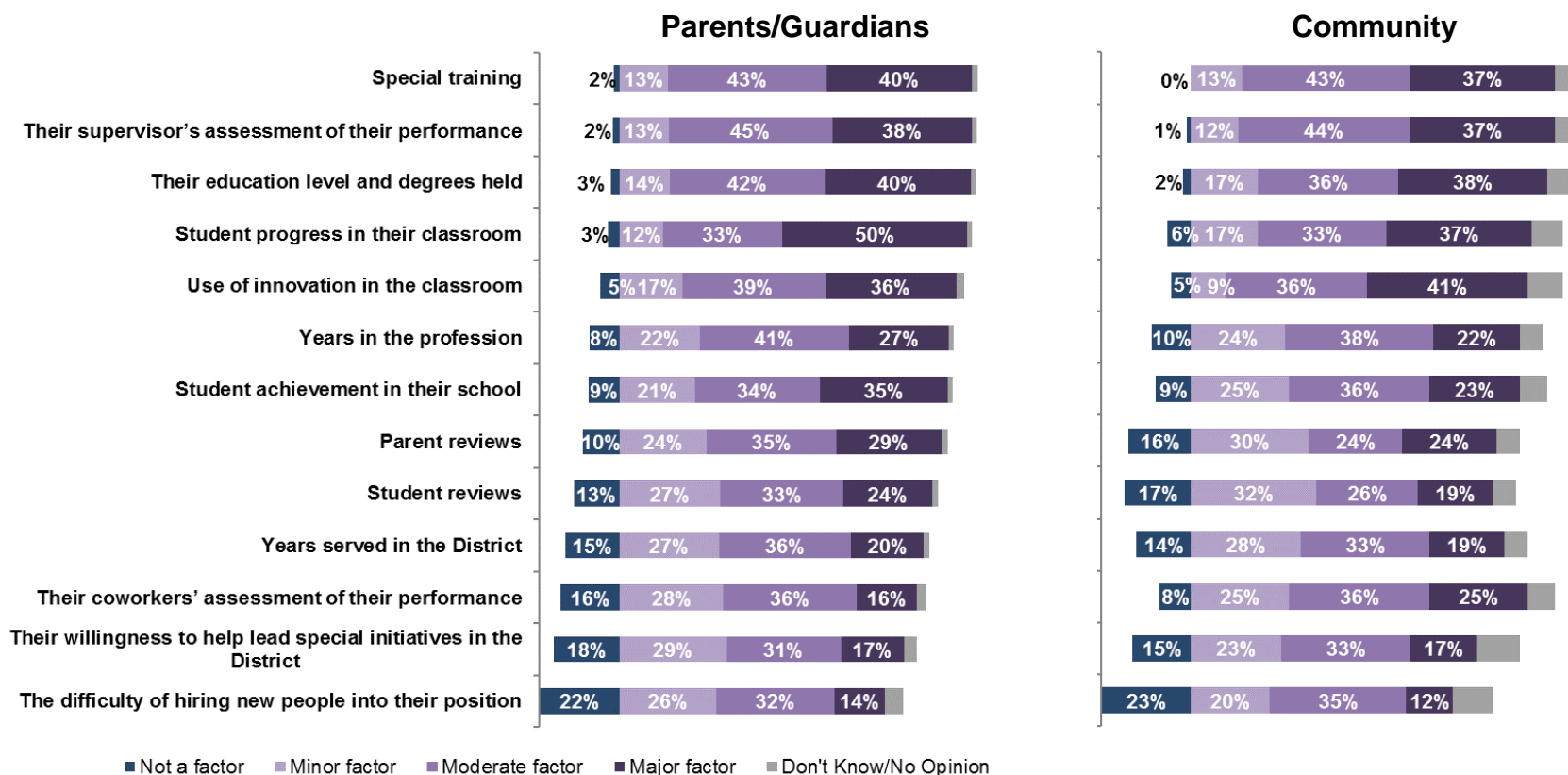
- ➔ Half of parents and guardians support both the concept and implementation of the 4 Cs. An additional fifth support the concept but not the implementation.
- ➔ Forty percent of parents and guardians support both the concept and implementation of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. An additional fifth support the concept but not the implementation.
- ➔ A little over a quarter of parents and guardians support both the concept and implementation of Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum and World Class Outcomes, but a third had not heard of either concept.
- ➔ Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting are less supportive of all the initiatives. Those with smaller household incomes are more supportive of the initiatives.

# Teacher Pay Policy

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# Parents and guardians think student progress should be a key factor when determining teacher pay

## Factors to Determine Teacher Pay



# Parents think that student progress is a very important factor on which to base teacher pay

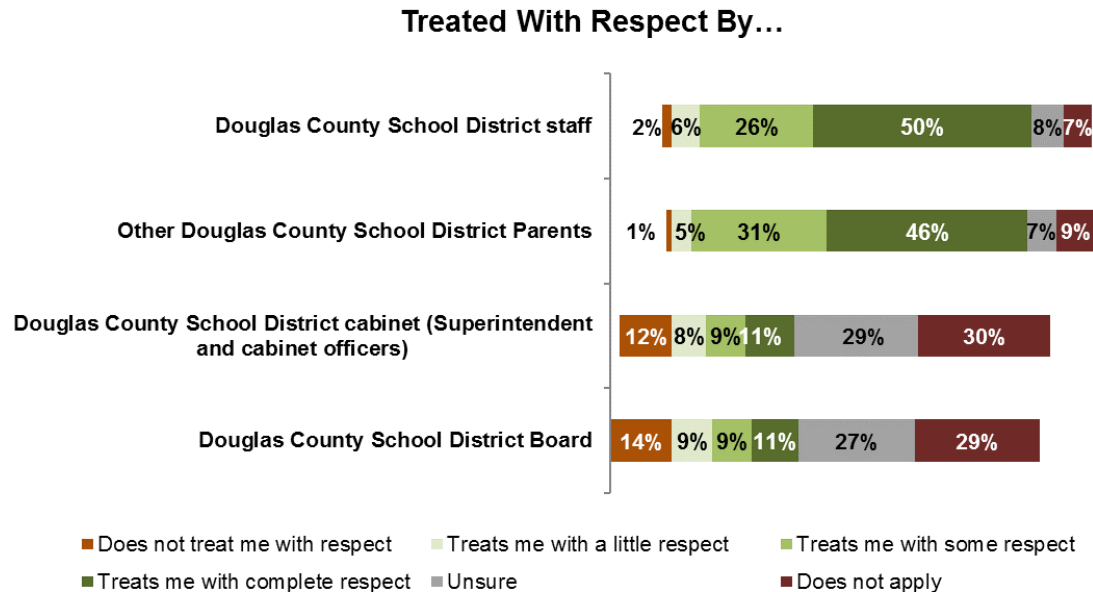
- Half of parents and guardians believe that student progress in their classroom should be a major factor for determining teacher pay. Three percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with more education, and women are less likely to believe that this should be a factor. Those with a larger household income are more likely to think that this should be a factor.
- Special training, education, degrees, and use of innovation are generally considered to be important factors for teacher compensation.
  - > Forty percent of parents and guardians believe that special training should be a major factor. Two percent said it should not be a factor. Those with children in special education and women are more likely to believe that this should be an important factor.
  - > Almost 40 percent of parents and guardians believe that their supervisor's assessment of their performance should be a major factor. Two percent said it should not be a factor.
  - > Forty percent of parents and guardians believe that their education level and degrees held should be a major factor. Three percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with more education, and women are more likely to believe that this should be a factor.
  - > More than 35 percent of parents and guardians believe that use of innovation in the classroom should be a major factor. Five percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting are less likely to think that this should be a factor.
- More than a third of parents and guardians believe that student achievement in their school should be a major factor. Nine percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with children in special education, those with more education, and women are less likely to believe that this should be a factor.
- A fifth of parents and guardians believe that years served in the District should be a major factor. Fifteen percent said it should not be a factor. Those with children at charter schools are less likely to believe that this should be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting and women are more likely to believe that this should be a factor.

# Difficulty of hiring is a more contentious factor on which to base teacher pay, relative to others

- Fourteen percent of parents and guardians believe that the difficulty of hiring new people into their position should be a major factor. Almost a quarter said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with more education, and women are less likely to believe that this should be a factor.
- Reviews from parents, student, and coworkers were not considered to be as important as other factors.
  - > More than a quarter of parents and guardians believe that parent reviews should be a major factor. Ten percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting and those with more education are less likely to believe that this should be a factor. Those with children in special education are more likely to believe that this should be a factor.
  - > Almost a quarter of parents and guardians believe that student reviews should be a major factor. Thirteen percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with more education, and men are less likely to believe that this should be a factor.
  - > Sixteen percent of parents and guardians believe that their coworkers' assessment of their performance should be a major factor. Sixteen percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting and those with more education are less likely to believe that this should be a factor.
- More than a quarter of parents and guardians believe that years served in the profession should be a major factor. Eight percent said it should not be a factor. Those with children at charter schools are less likely to believe that this should be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting, those with smaller household incomes, and women are more likely to believe that this should be a factor.
- Less than a fifth of parents and guardians believe that willingness to help lead special initiatives in the District should be a major factor. Eighteen percent said it should not be a factor. Those who have viewed or attended a school board meeting and those with more education are less likely to think that this should be a factor. Those with children in special education are more likely to believe that this should be an important factor.



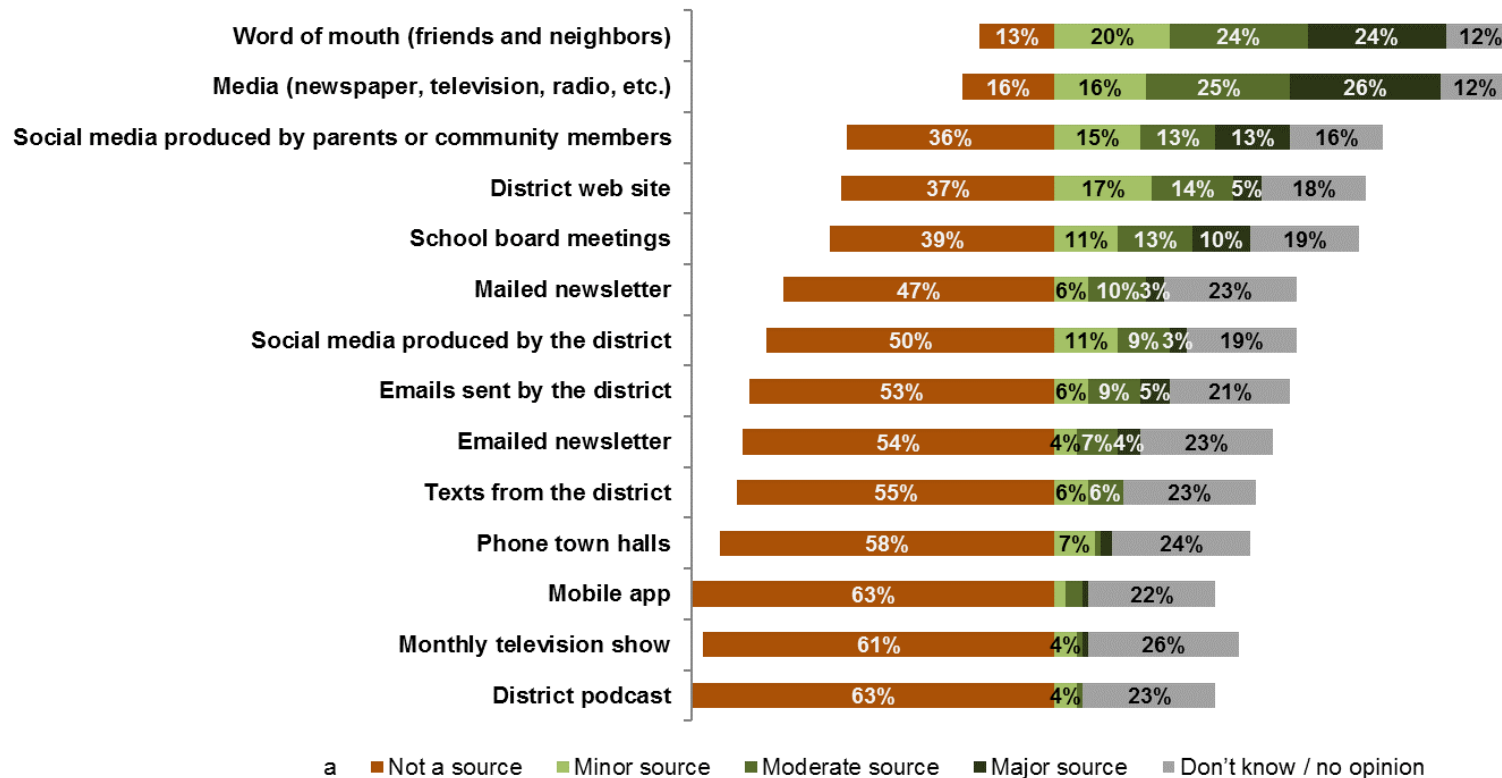
# Parents and guardians feel respected by District staff and other District parents



- More than half of parents and guardians are either unsure of whether the school board or the District cabinet respect them or feel like it is not applicable.
- Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended a school board meeting are less likely to be unsure about whether any of these groups respect them or think that it is not applicable
- Parents and guardians with children in special education and those with smaller household incomes feel less respected by other parents. Those with more education and those who viewed or attended a school board meeting feel less respected by the school board. Those with more education and those who viewed or attended a school board meeting feel less respected by the District cabinet.

# The community mostly gets information about the District from word of mouth and traditional media

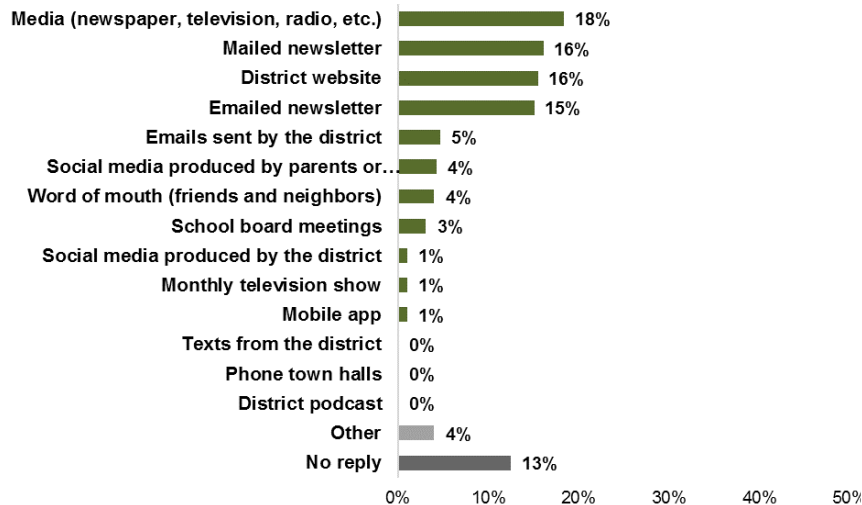
**Community Sources of Information about the District**



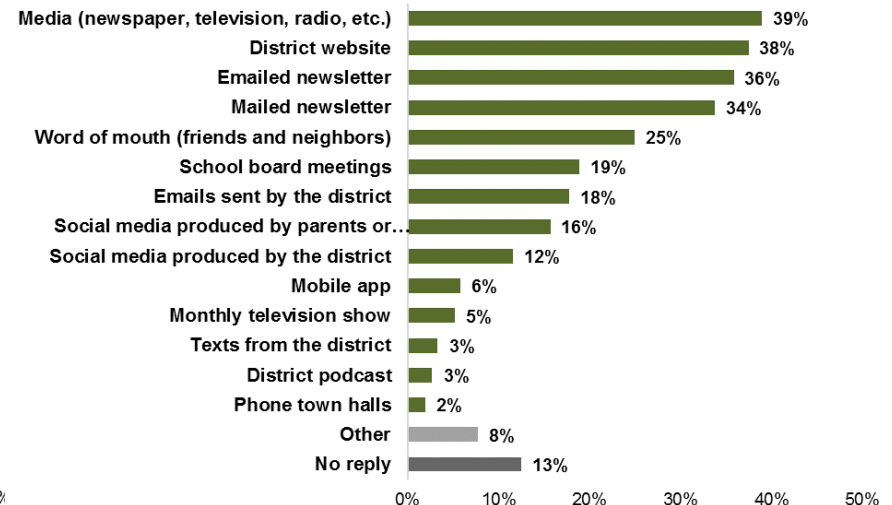
Q. How much do you use the following sources of information about the Douglas County School District?

# Community members prefer to learn about the District from traditional media

Community Preferred Source of District Information  
(rated #1)



Community Preferred Source of District Information  
(rated in the top 3)

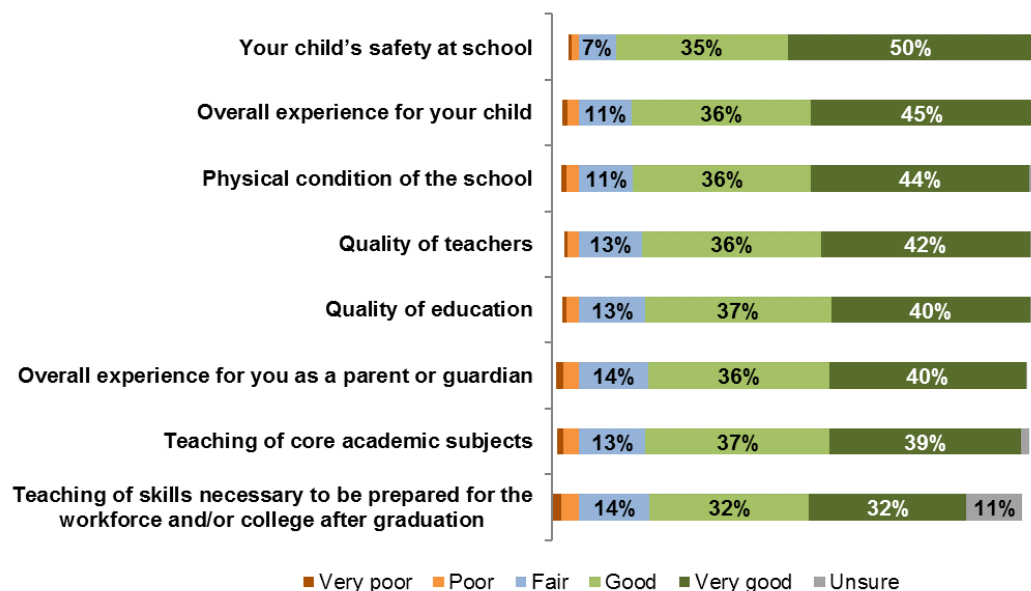


# Satisfaction with Child's School and Education

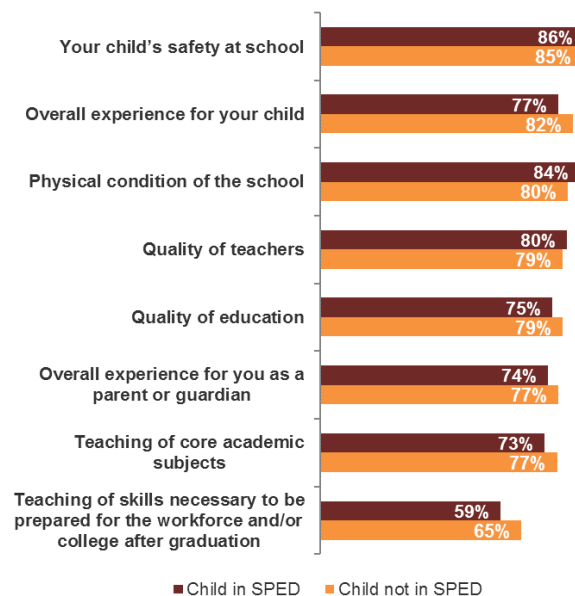
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# Most parents and guardians are satisfied with their children's school

Ratings of Randomly Selected Child's School



Ratings of Good/Very Good

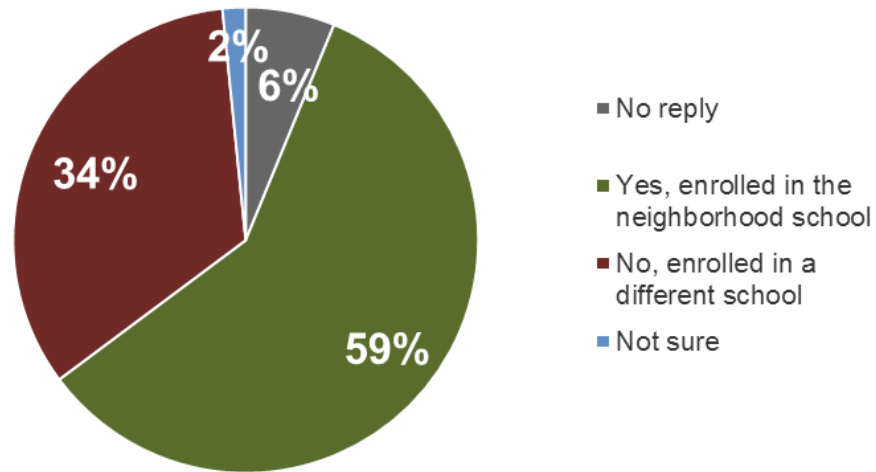


# Parents and guardians are most satisfied with their child's safety and overall experience at school

- More than 80 percent of parents and guardians rated their overall experience for their child as good or very good. When the student was in special education, parents and guardians gave lower ratings.
- More than three quarters of parents and guardians rated their overall experience as a parent or guardian as good or very good. When the student was in special education, parents and guardians gave lower ratings.
- More than three quarters of parents and guardians rated the overall quality of education as good or very good. When the student was in special education, parents and guardians gave lower ratings.
- More than three quarters of parents and guardians rated the teaching of core academic subjects as good or very good. When the student was in special education, parents and guardians gave lower ratings.
- Almost 80 percent of parents and guardians rated the quality of teachers as good or very good. When the student was in special education, parents and guardians gave higher ratings.
- Almost 80 percent of parents and guardians rated the physical condition of the school as good or very good.
- More than 80 percent of parents and guardians rated their child's safety at school as good or very good.
- More than 60 percent of parents and guardians rated the teaching of skills necessary to be prepared for the workforce and/or college after graduation as good or very good. When the student was in special education, parents and guardians gave lower ratings.
- Parents and guardians who have viewed or attended school board meetings are more negative overall about their children's schools. Similarly, parents and guardians of older students are overall more negative than those of younger students. Men gave lower ratings as well.
- For children at charter or alternative schools, parents and guardians gave better ratings of their school overall.

# More students attend their neighborhood school

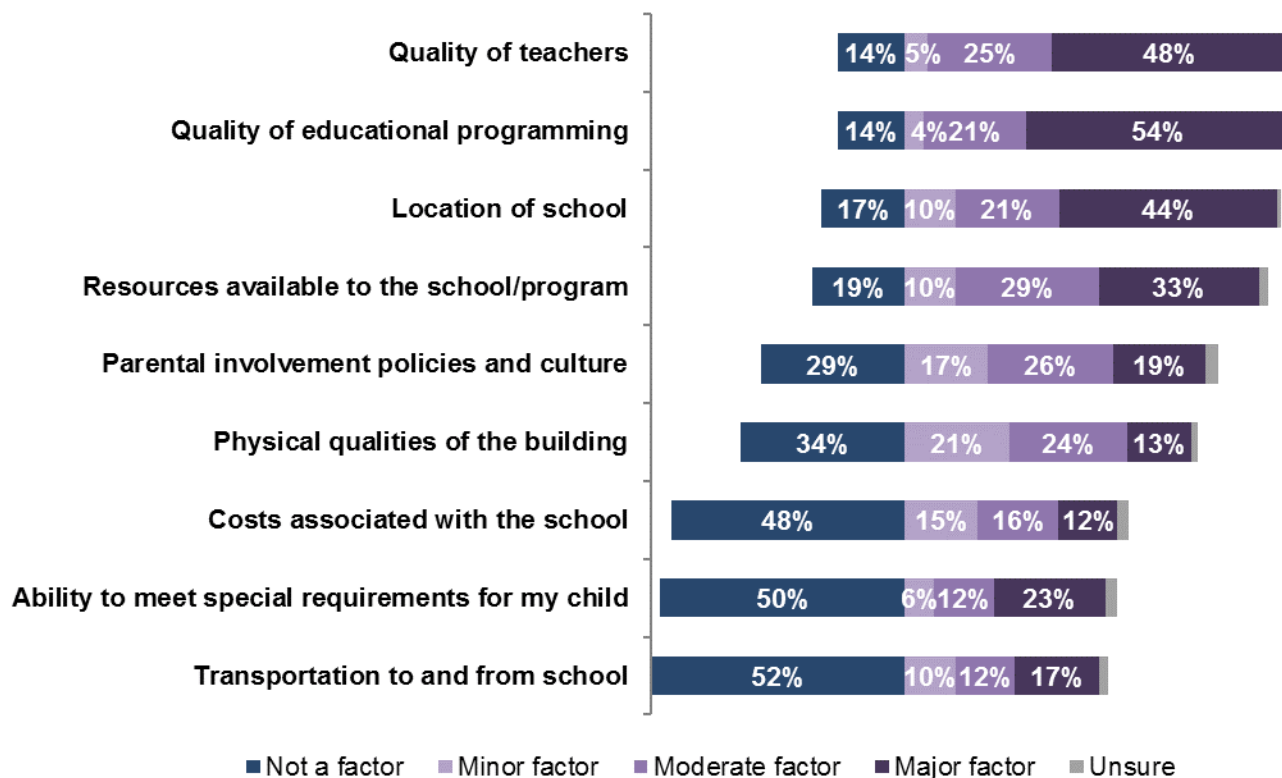
**Child Enrolled in Neighborhood School**



- Parents and guardians with more education are more likely to report that their child is enrolled in a different school.

# Educational programming and quality of teachers are most important when choosing a school

Factors When Choosing a School for Randomly Selected Child





# Some factors are bigger when choosing schools for children in special education

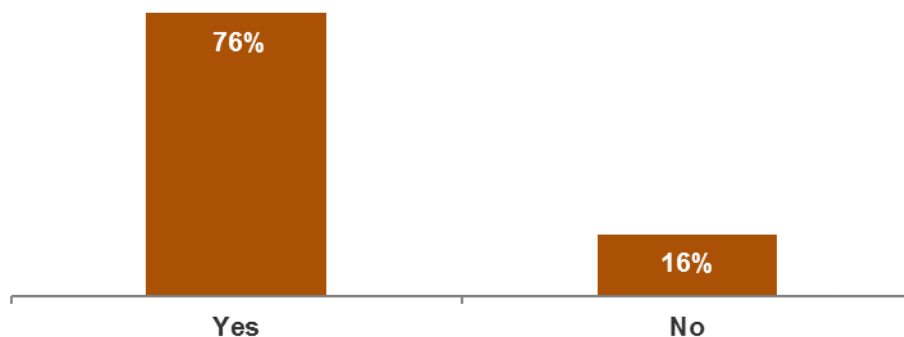
- More than half of parents and guardians rated quality of educational programming as a major factor when choosing a school. Fourteen percent said it was not a factor. This was a bigger factor for children attending a charter school and for children not in special education. This was a bigger factor for parents and guardians with larger household incomes and with more education.
- Almost half of parents and guardians said that the quality of teachers was a major factor when choosing a school. Fourteen percent said it was not a factor. This was a bigger factor for children in special education and for parents with larger household incomes and with more education. This was a bigger factor for children attending a charter school.
- Half of parents and guardians said that the ability to meet special requirements for their child was not a factor when choosing a school. Twenty-three percent said it was a major factor. This was a bigger factor for children attending an alternative school and for children in special education. This was also a bigger factor for parents with smaller household incomes and with less education.
- A third of parents and guardians said that the physical qualities of the building were not a factor when choosing a school. Thirteen percent said it was a major factor. This was a bigger factor for children attending a charter school.
- A third of parents and guardians said that resources available to the school/program were a major factor when choosing a school. Almost a fifth said it was not a factor. This was a bigger factor for children in special education and for children attending a charter or alternative school.

# Location of the school rounds out the top three factors being considered when choosing a school

- More than half of parents and guardians said that transportation to and from school was not a factor. Seventeen percent said it was a major factor. This was less of a factor for children attending a charter school. This was a bigger factor for children in special education and when the parents and guardians had a smaller household income.
- More than a quarter of parents and guardians said that parental involvement policies and culture were not a factor. Almost a fifth said they were a major factor. This was a bigger factor for children attending a charter or alternative school.
- Almost half of parents and guardians said that costs associated with the school were not a factor. Twelve percent said that were a major factor. This was a bigger factor for children attending an alternative school and for children in special education. This was a bigger factor for parents and guardians with lower household incomes and with less education.
- More than 40 percent of parents and guardians said that the location of the school was a major factor. Seventeen percent said it was not a factor. This was a bigger factor for children attending a traditional public school. This was less of a factor for children in special education.
- For younger children, almost all of the factors were rated as more important in the decision.

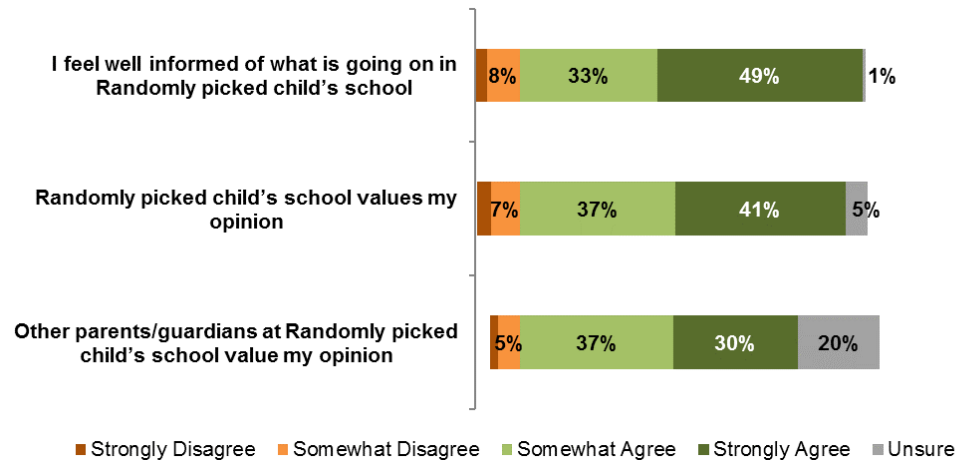
# Most parents and guardians feel like they have a choice in schools for their children

**Had a Choice in Schools for Randomly Selected Child**



- ➔ Parents and guardians are more likely to feel like they have a choice when the child is attending a charter school and when the child is attending ECE/Kindergarten or elementary school.
- ➔ Parents and guardians feel like they have less of a choice when the child is in special education.
- ➔ Parents with smaller household incomes and with less education feel like they have less of a choice.

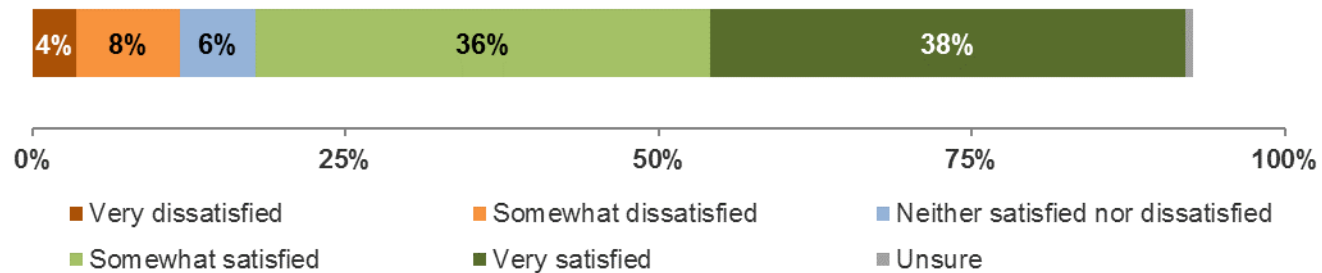
# Most parents feel informed about their child's school and feel like their opinions are valued



- Parents and guardians are more likely to feel like the school values their opinion when it is a charter or alternative school and when their child is in a younger grade.
- Parents and guardians are more likely to feel like other parents at the school value their opinion when it is a charter school and when their child is in a younger grade. Those with larger household incomes and with more education also feel like their opinion is valued more.
- Parents and guardians are more likely to feel well informed of what is going on at the school when it is a charter or alternative school and when their child is in a younger grade. When the child is in special education, parents and guardians feel less well informed.

# Three quarters of parents and guardians are satisfied with how the District is serving their child

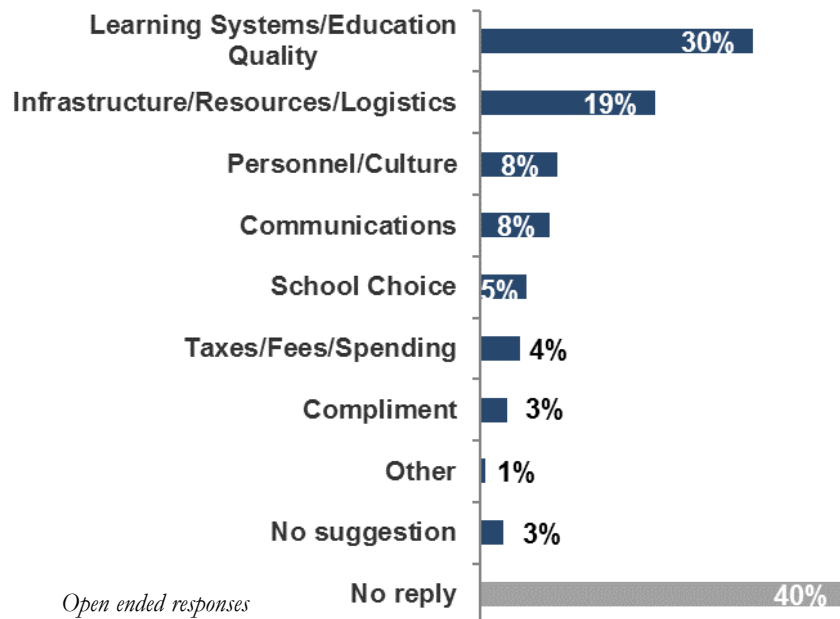
**Satisfaction with How District is Serving Randomly Selected Child**



- ➔ When the child is attending a charter or alternative school, parents and guardians are more satisfied. They are also more satisfied with the child is in a younger grade.
- ➔ When the child is in special education, parents and guardians are less satisfied. Almost 20 percent of parents and guardians of a child in special education reported that they are somewhat or very dissatisfied with how the District is serving that child, compared to 11 percent of parents and guardians of a child not in special education.

# Parents and guardians suggest changes to learning systems or infrastructure to better serve their child

## Ways District Could Better Serve Child



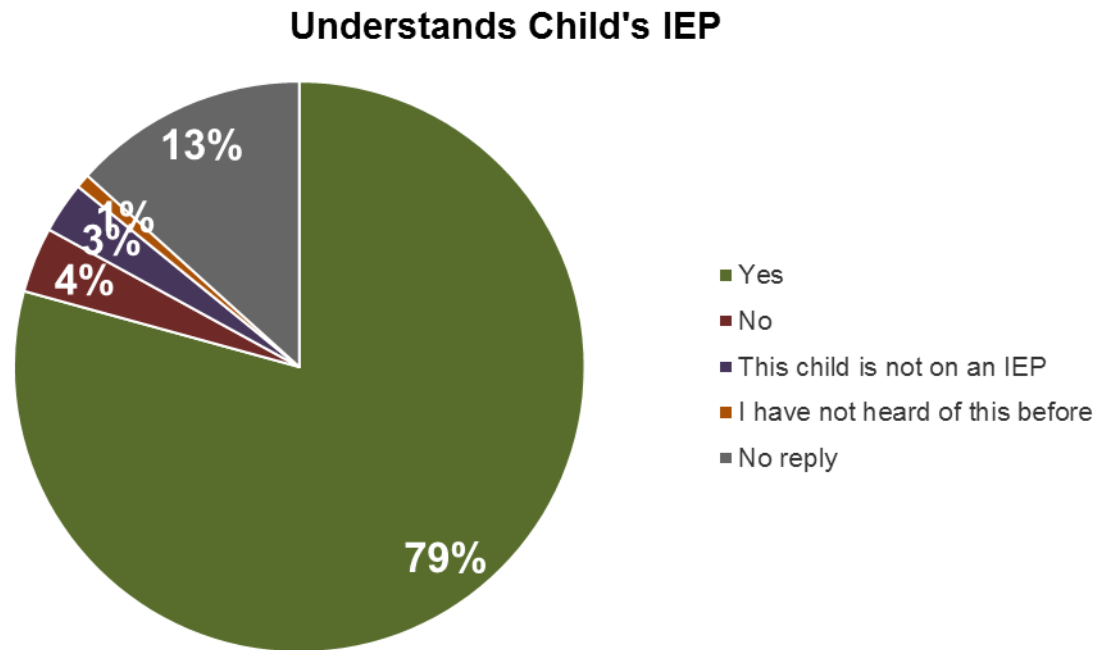
*Open ended responses  
were coded and then  
analyzed.*

- When asked how the District could serve their child better, most parents and guardians stated changes to the learning systems or infrastructure.
  - > Learning system suggestions include treatment of teachers, changes to the curriculum, individualized attention, improving teacher quality, and challenging students academically.
  - > Infrastructure suggestions include smaller class sizes, new schools and other building upgrades, safety/bullying issues, changes to the school calendar, transportation changes, and teacher pay.
- Suggestions about personnel or culture generally focused on politics on the school board.
- Suggestions about communications focused mostly on communications between parents and teachers.

# Special Education

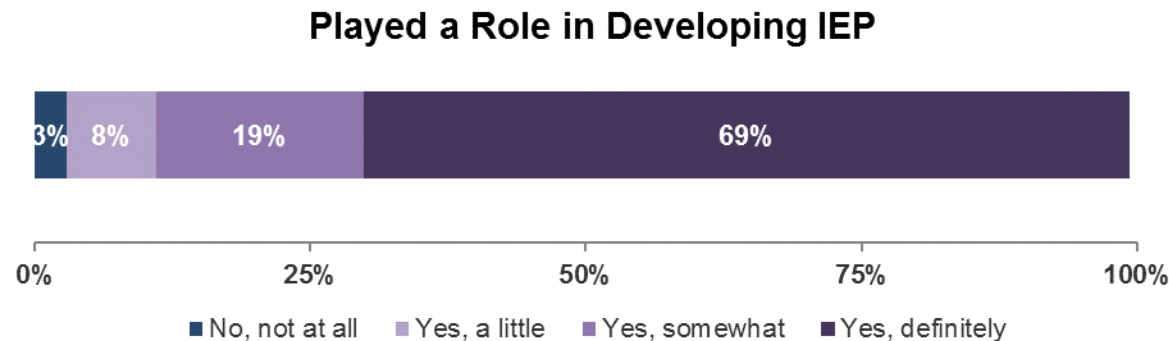
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# Most parents and guardians understand the IEP for their child in special education

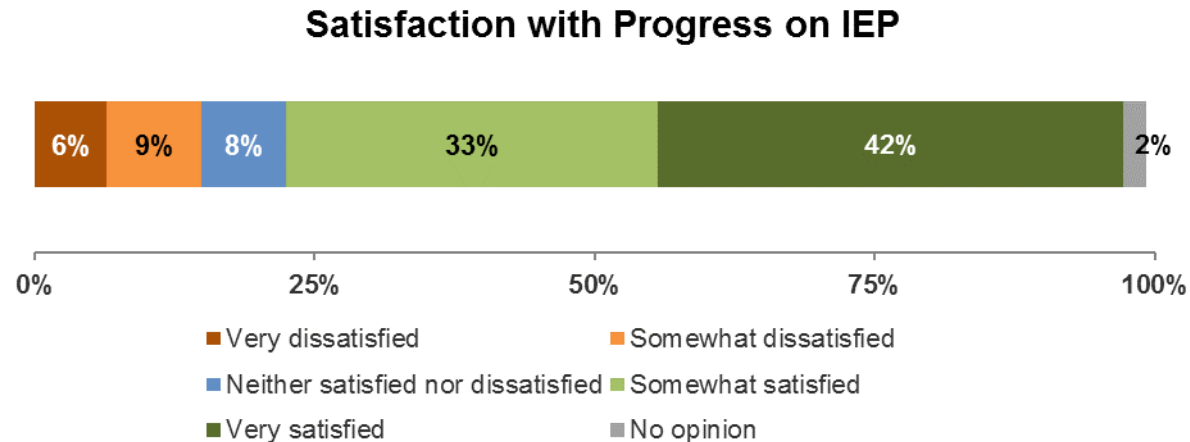




# Most parents and guardians play at least a small role in developing their child's IEP



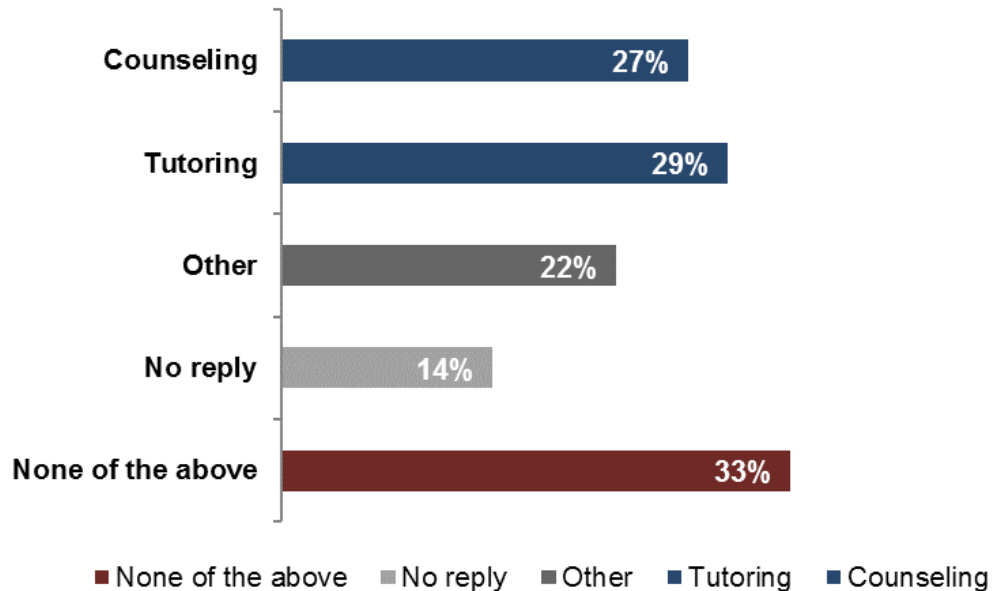
# Three quarters of parents and guardians are satisfied with their child's IEP



- Parents and guardians are more satisfied with the IEP when the child is in a younger grade.

# Most parents and guardians have spent additional funds on extra education services for their child

## Paid for Additional Educational Services for Child



- Parents and guardians are more likely to pay for additional educational services when their child is older.
- Parents and guardians with larger household incomes and with more education are more likely to pay for additional educational services.
- The most common other service was therapy, typically occupational or speech. Other therapies included behavioral, ABA, and vision. Other services included testing and educational support.



# Demographics

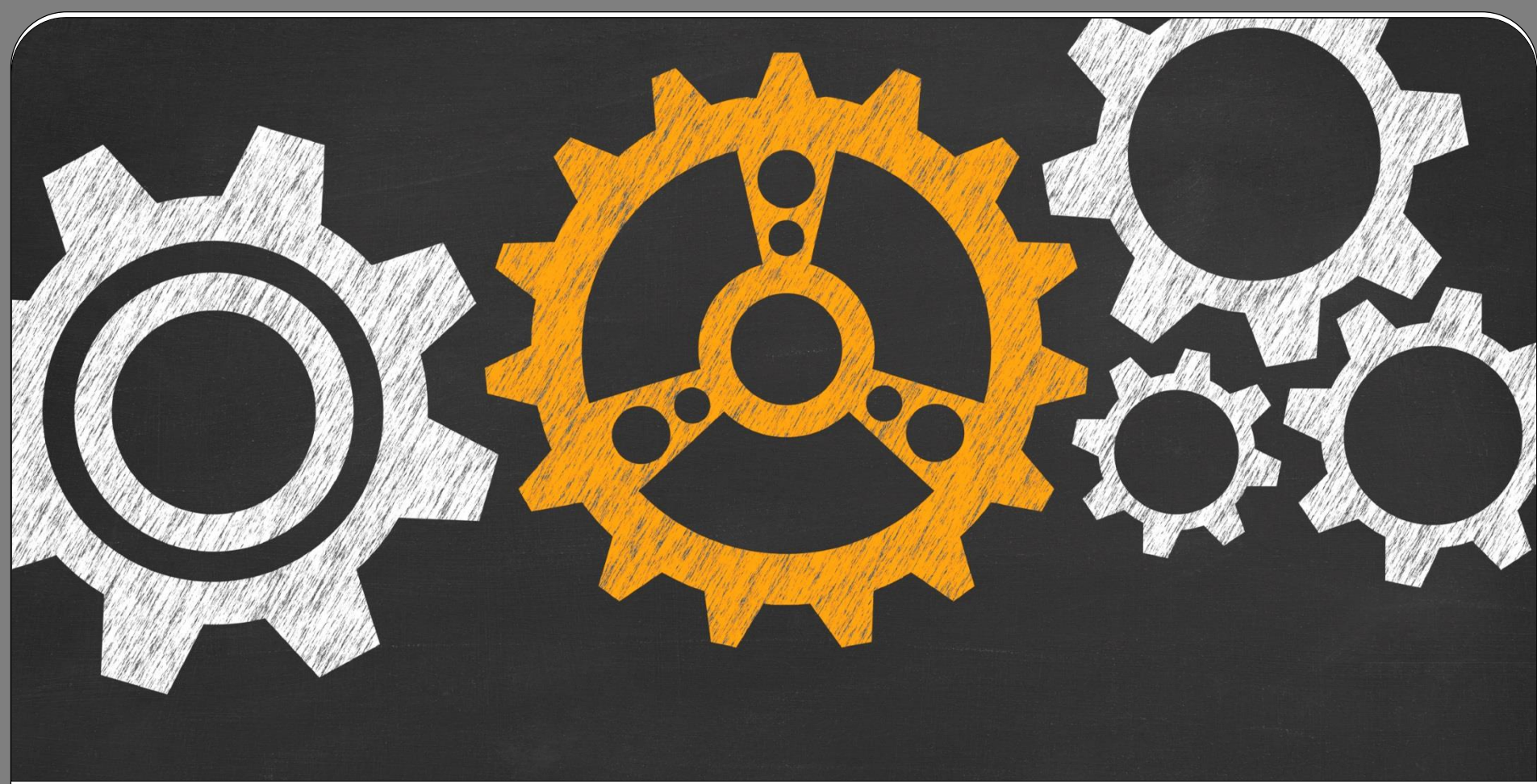
Unweighted Raw Data

# Demographics

|  | <i>Parent/<br/>Guardian</i> | <i>Community</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Base</i>                            | <i>10648</i>                | <i>165</i>       |
| Gender                                 |                             |                  |
| No reply                               | 2%                          | 6%               |
|  |                             |                  |
| Male                                   | 27%                         | 39%              |
| Female                                 | 70%                         | 55%              |
| Household Income                       |                             |                  |
| No reply                               | 5%                          | 19%              |
|  |                             |                  |
| \$0 to \$49,999                        | 5%                          | 8%               |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999                   | 18%                         | 23%              |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999                 | 31%                         | 22%              |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999                 | 21%                         | 16%              |
| \$200,000 or more                      | 20%                         | 12%              |
| Education                              |                             |                  |
| No reply                               | 2%                          | 4%               |
|  |                             |                  |
| 12th grade or less (no diploma)        | 0%                          | 1%               |
| High school diploma or GED equivalency | 2%                          | 2%               |
| Some college, no degree                | 11%                         | 15%              |
| Associate degree                       | 6%                          | 9%               |
| Bachelor's degree                      | 44%                         | 30%              |
| Graduate or professional degree        | 35%                         | 40%              |

|   | <i>Parent/<br/>Guardian</i> | <i>Community</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Base</i>   | <i>10648</i>                | <i>165</i>       |
| Worked in School District   |                             |                  |
| No reply  | 2%                          | 4%               |
|   |                             |                  |
| Yes, at Douglas County School District, and I am a current employee     | 9%                          | 2%               |
| Yes, at Douglas County School District, but I am not a current employee | 5%                          | 7%               |
| Yes, at a different school district and I am a current employee         | 3%                          | 5%               |
| Yes, at a different school district but I am not a current employee     | 8%                          | 15%              |
| No, I have never worked at a K-12 school district                       | 76%                         | 70%              |
| Age   |                             |                  |
| No reply  | 4%                          | 12%              |
|   |                             |                  |
| <35   | 7%                          | 17%              |
| 35 to 44  | 44%                         |                  |
| 45 to 54  | 39%                         |                  |
| 55 to 64  | 5%                          | 71%              |
| 65+   | 1%                          |                  |
| Children Attended Douglas county schools                                |                             |                  |
| No reply  |                             | 4%               |
|   |                             |                  |
| Yes   |                             | 39%              |
| No  |                             | 41%              |
| Not Applicable  |                             | 16%              |





# Appendix

Research Methodology • Additional Reference

# Methodology: Parent/Guardian Survey

- ➔ Research mode & sampling
  - > Online survey via list provided by Douglas County School District.
- ➔ Survey instrument
  - > The survey was designed by Corona Insights.
  - > The survey was approximately 15 minutes in length.
- ➔ Execution
  - > Surveys were completed between November 22<sup>nd</sup> and December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016.
  - > Corona Insights sent an email invitation and two reminder emails (the reminder only went to those who had not yet completed the survey). Access to the survey was controlled via unique login information to prevent more than one survey from a parent or guardian.
  - > 10,648 total surveys are included in this analysis after data cleaning, including 1,096 partial responses that were reviewed and considered sufficient to include in the final dataset. After removing bounced emails, this represents a 16.1% response rate for all parents, and a 23.2% response rate for all households (AAPOR RR3).
  - > Because certain populations may be more likely to respond to a survey, we needed to weight the data in order to make the survey sample representative of the overall population of parents and guardians. Households received an initial weighting based on how many parents/guardians from each household had responded (e.g., if only one parent/guardian responded from a household, he or she received an initial weighting of 1; if two parents/guardians from a single household responded, they each received an initial weighting of 0.5). Those initial weighting were then raked by two variables related to the randomly selected child [School (Charter, Traditional Public, Alternative/Other) and grade (ECE/PreK/Elementary, Middle School, High School)] and household income. Population data came from DCSD records and US Census 2015 data. Weights ranged from 0.70 to 6.47.

# Cognitive Testing: Parent/Guardian Survey

- ➔ After the initial design of the survey, Corona conducted a series of cognitive testing interviews to pre-test the survey with 10 parents. Parents were asked to take a draft of the survey and then discuss the survey with a Corona interviewer. The goals of the interviews were as follows:
  - > Ensure questions were asked in a clear, answerable manner
  - > Ensure questions were asked in a neutral, unbiased manner
  - > Ensure that the survey was not missing expected questions
- ➔ As a result of the cognitive testing interviews, the final survey included edits to wording, response options, question structure, and addition/deletion of questions.
- ➔ All interviews were conducted in-person in October and November 2016.
- ➔ Cognitive testing participants were recruited via a random list of all DCSD parents. General characteristics of the participants from the interviews are summarized in the chart below.

| Gender               | Age of Student   |
|----------------------|--|
| Male: 3<br>Female: 7 | Preschool-6 <sup>th</sup> Grade: 5<br>7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade: 5 |



# Methodology: Community Survey

## ➔ Research mode & sampling

- > Mail survey to a random sample of 1,600 addresses in Douglas County after removing known Douglas County School District parent and guardian addresses.

## ➔ Survey instrument

- > The survey was designed by Corona Insights.
- > The survey was approximately 15 minutes in length.

## ➔ Execution

- > Surveys were completed between January and February, 2017 .
- > Participants were sent an initial survey. Those who did not respond to the initial mailing were sent a reminder postcard, followed by a second copy of the survey
- > 165 total surveys are included in this analysis after data cleaning. This represents a 11.8% response rate (AAPOR RR3).
- > Because certain populations may be more likely to respond to a survey, we needed to weight the data in order to make the survey sample representative of the overall population of non-parents. The survey sample differed somewhat from the population of non-parent residents in terms of age, with older respondents being more likely to return their survey. Thus, data were weighted by age of each non-parent respondent by two age groups (18-54 years old and 55 years or older). Weights ranged from 0.63 to 2.57.

# Cognitive Testing: Community Survey

- ➔ After the initial design of the survey, Corona conducted a series of cognitive testing interviews to pre-test the survey with 5 non-parent community members. Community members were asked to take a draft of the survey and then discuss the survey with a Corona interviewer. The goals of the interviews were as follows:
  - > Ensure questions were asked in a clear, answerable manner
  - > Ensure questions were asked in a neutral, unbiased manner
  - > Ensure that the survey was not missing expected questions
- ➔ As a result of the cognitive testing interviews, the final survey included edits to wording, response options, question structure, and addition/deletion of questions.
- ➔ All interviews were conducted in-person in October and November 2016.
- ➔ Cognitive testing participants were recruited randomly telephone.
- ➔ General characteristics of the participants from the interviews are summarized in the chart below.

| Gender    | Age      |
|-----------|----------|
| Male: 1   | 18-24: 0 |
| Female: 4 | 25-34: 1 |
|           | 35-44: 0 |
|           | 45-54: 1 |
|           | 55+: 3   |

# Segments: Parent and Guardian Survey

- ➔ The data were segmented with the following variables:
  - > Number of children
  - > Years in Douglas County
  - > Work(ed) for a school district
  - > Attended or Viewed a School Board Meeting in the past 12 months
  - > Household Income
  - > Parent/Guardian education level
  - > Has kids in just traditional public, just charter, or both
  - > Has a child in special education
  - > Has a child in gifted and talented
  - > Characteristics of Randomly Chosen Child:
    - School type: Charter, Traditional Public, Alternative
    - Grade Level: ECE/PreK/Elementary, Middle School, High School
    - In Special Education
    - In Gifted and Talented

# About Corona Insights

Our founder named the company Corona because the word means “light.” It’s the knowledge that surrounds and illuminates an issue; exactly what we provide. Our firm’s mission is to provide accurate and unbiased information and counsel to decision makers. We provide market research, evaluation, and strategic consulting for organizations both small and large.

*Learn more at [www.CoronaInsights.com](http://www.CoronaInsights.com)*

1580 Lincoln Street  
Suite 510

Denver, CO 80203

Phone: 303.894.8246

[kevin@coronainsights.com](mailto:kevin@coronainsights.com)

[kate@coronainsights.com](mailto:kate@coronainsights.com)

