

2017 Community Research

Report of Top-Level Findings, 2017



Overview and Context

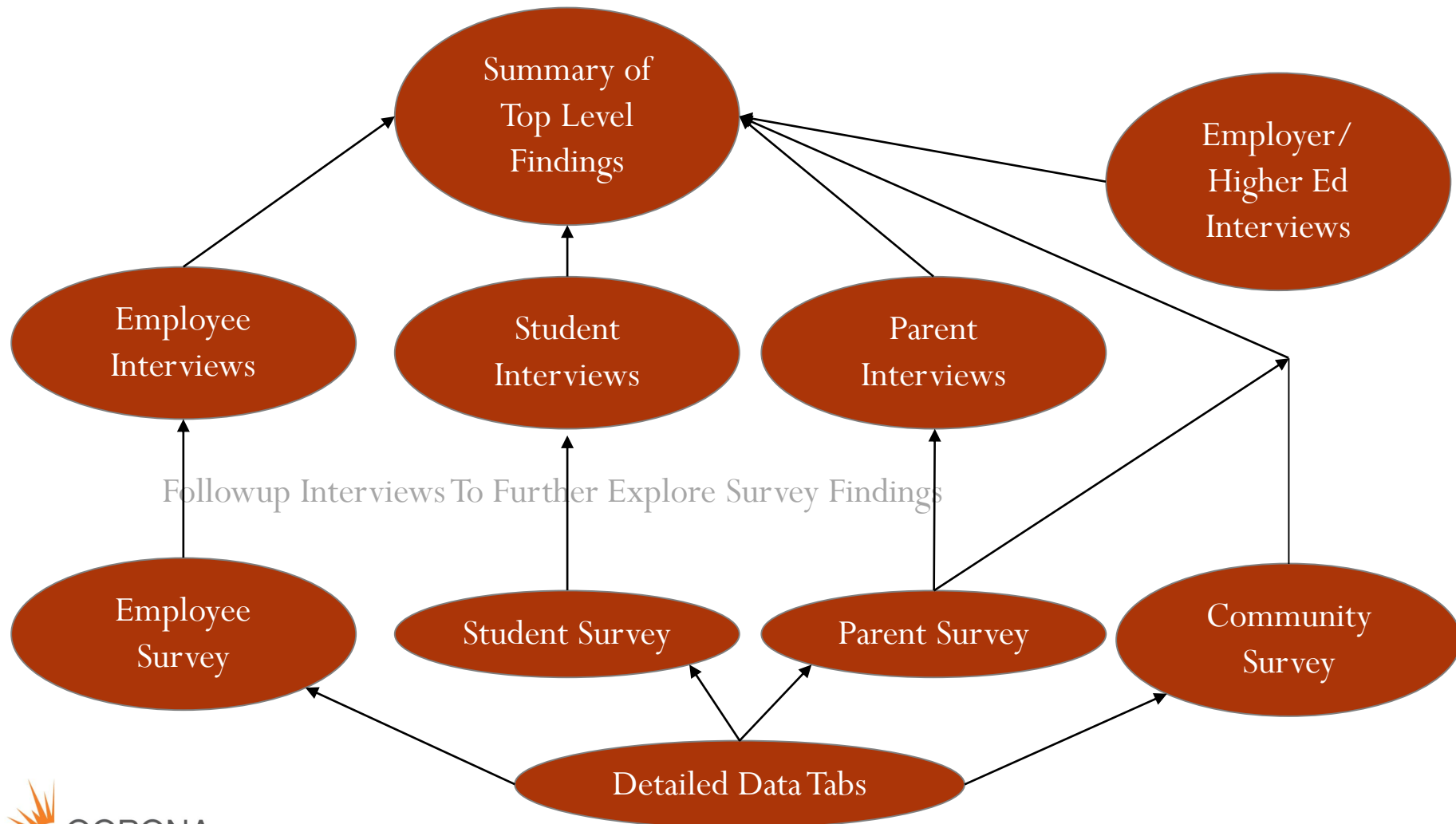
This report summarizes various key findings of the 2016-2017 Community Survey process undertaken by DCSD. This report provides selected observations drawn from a process that is documented in the following reports:

- 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**

The surveys were conducted in late 2016, with the exception of the community survey that was conducted in early 2017. The interviews were conducted in early 2017 with the exception of the higher education interviews, which were conducted in late 2016.

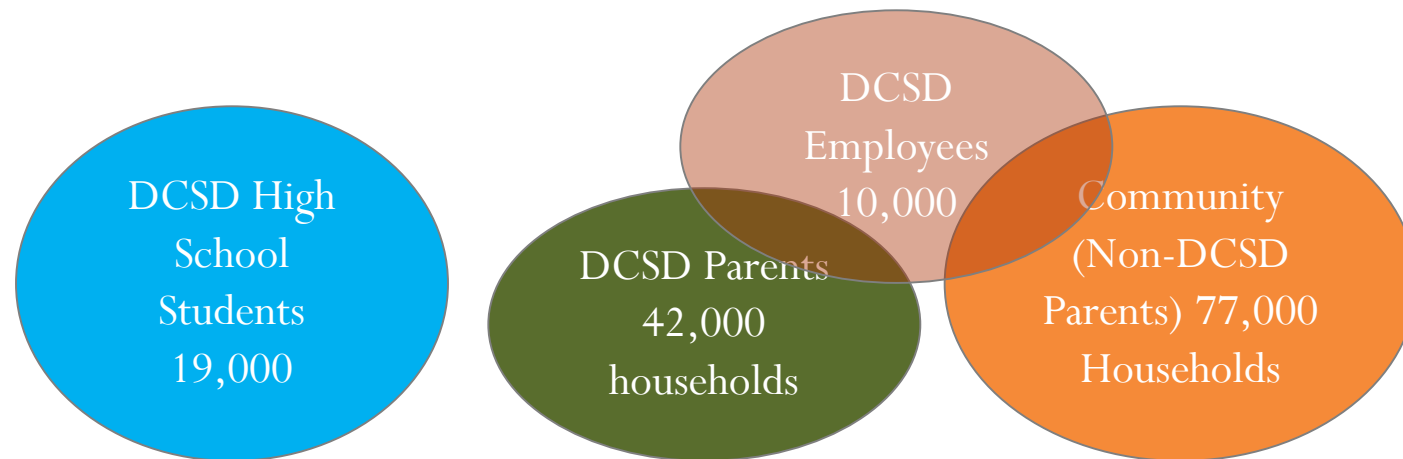
The other documents contain large amounts of data and information not included or cited in this report, and readers may easily identify other key findings based on their own experience and perspectives.

Concept Map of Individual Reports In This Study



Relative Sizes of Target Audiences

- ➔ Employees could also take the parent and community surveys if they fell into those groups.
- ➔ The only county populations not eligible for a survey were non-DCSD students and children in 8th grade or younger.



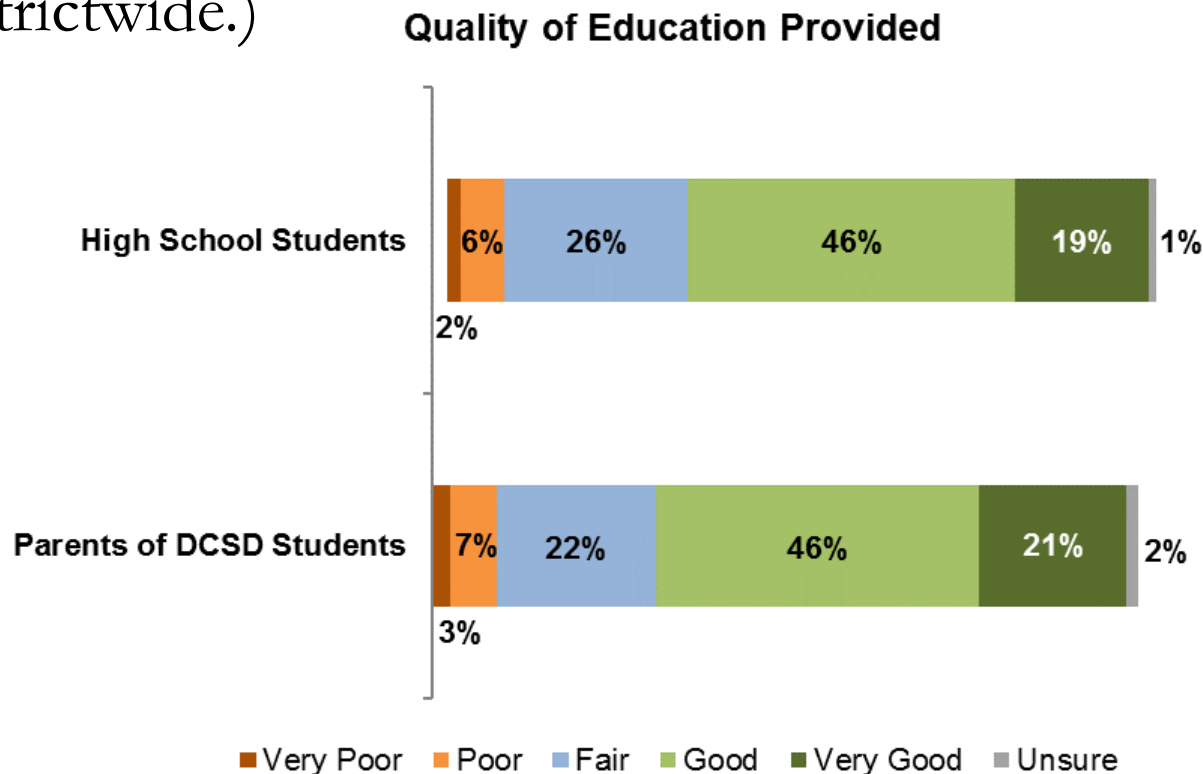
Research participation

➔ Participation:

- > 3,204 employees + 30 in in-depth pre- and post-research
- > 10,648 parents + 29 in in-depth pre- and post-research
- > 2,915 students + 30 in in-depth pre- and post-research
- > 165 community members (sampled) + 5 in in-depth pre-research
- > 36 employers and higher ed officials in in-depth pre- and post research

Customer Satisfaction - Students and Parents

- ➞ On the whole, both students and parents believe that students are getting a quality education. (Overall quality districtwide.)



Good Versus Very Good

➔ Interviews with parents about ‘good’ ratings inquired about the gap between ‘good’ and ‘very good’. Typically, we heard anecdotes about averaging their kids’ experiences over the years and across kids. It’s challenging to hit ‘very good’ on all levels.

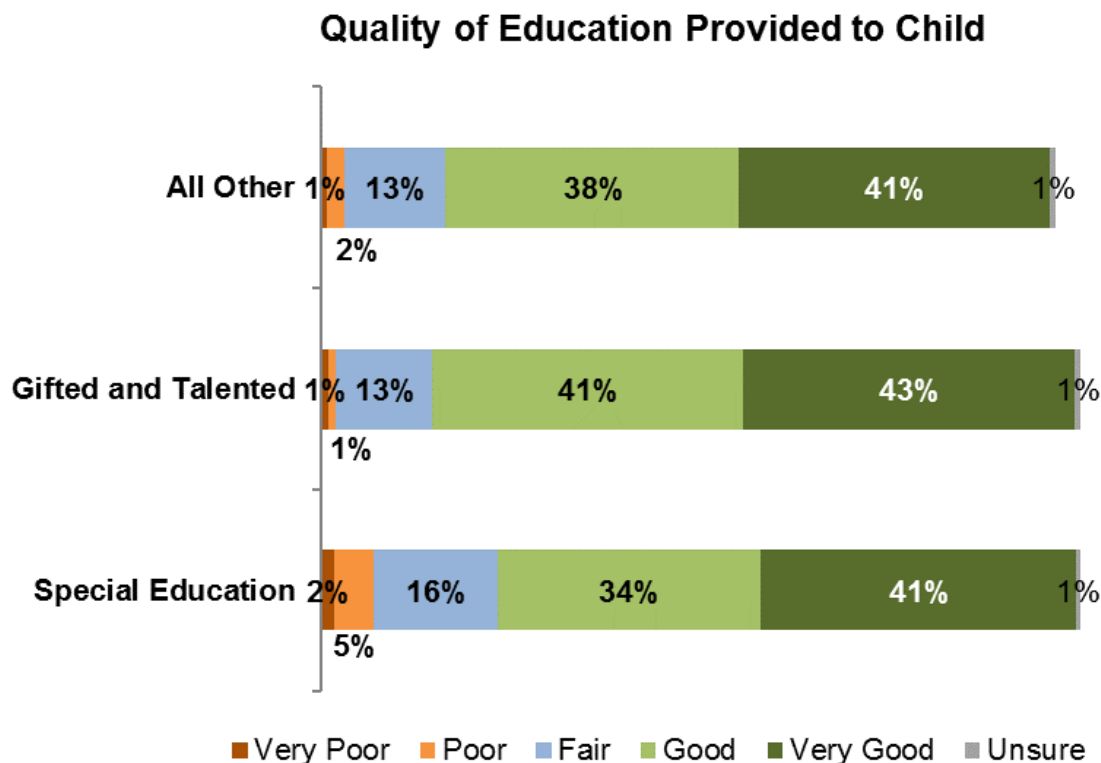
“ Overall, good, but it’s averaging out my three data points. Very good, poor but not the school’s fault, good but an experiment.
– Parent of three current or past DCSD students

Otherwise, ‘very good’ required hitting the child exactly at the right type of interaction.

“ Good. There are always things that could change. Each child is different, so it’s not always provided in the best way.
– Parent of two DCSD students

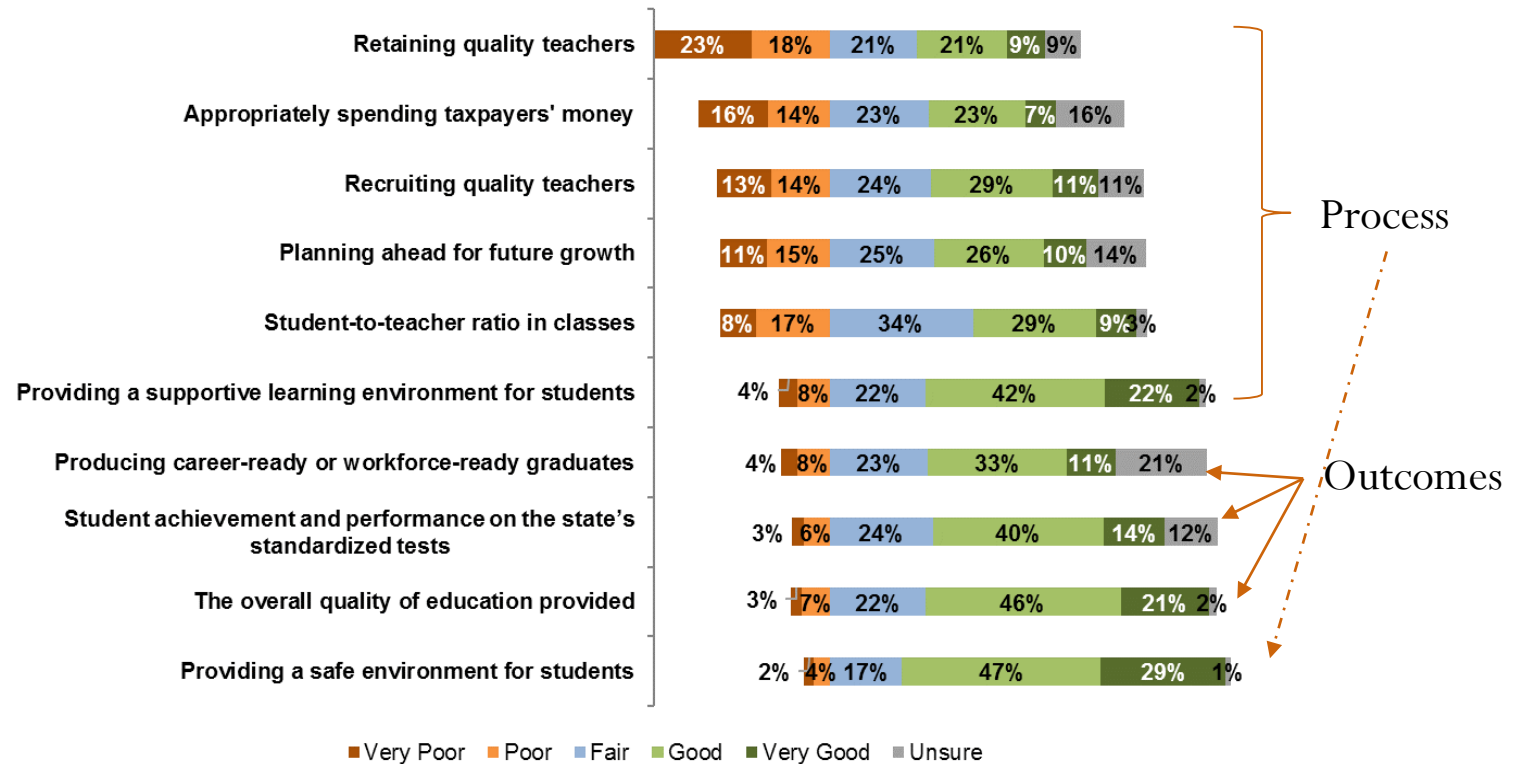
Customer Satisfaction – Parents by Segment

➔ Satisfaction seems to be well-rounded, and is higher for their own school/child than districtwide.



Parents – Outcome Versus Process

➔ Parents generally like outcomes even if they're concerned about elements of the process.



Student Worries – “The Real World”

- ➔ Students aren't always convinced that their educational experience is positioning them for the next phase of life.
- ➔ They're particularly worried about daily life – getting a mortgage, paying taxes, and so on.
- ➔ Many have trouble linking particular classes with a career that they're considering
 - > Not yet realizing that they will likely ...
 - have more than one career
 - might change interests over time
 - can use knowledge in their personal life or to simply be a well-rounded person

Student Worries – “Real World” Quotes

“

Incorporate financial curriculum that everyone needs to know into core classes.

Bring more attention to outside world knowledge that can be applied to careers.

My school could find career paths I could take, or internships to look forward to.

Give more information about the options after high school, not just the obvious ones.

Make classes that deal with real world problems such as taxes, how to apply for a job etc.

Have a class that focuses on life necessities such as personal finance, tax, insurance etc.

Teach us how to do taxes, pay bills, tips on scholarships, saving money, **ACTUAL REAL LIFE STUFF.**

Employer Worries – “The Real World”

➔ Employers of high school graduates want to see students come better prepared to work a full-time job – customer relations, communications skills, and professional demeanor, as well as job interview skills and basics such as putting together a good resume and cover letter. Basic life skills are seen as useful as well.

“ I would encourage them to have classes on real life situations and interacting, appropriate behavior, what expectations are when in the working world, and what the standard rules are. – Local employer

I think it would be great if high schools had a career training class, module, or something like that where they conducted mock interviews with the kids so they can know what to expect when they are in an interview situation. Take some time to say “here’s what a job cover letter looks like,” and do that in the context of an English class. – Local employer

Student Concerns – Counseling

- ➔ Students are generally assigned a counselor, but often use them for academics and don't tend to know them well.
- ➔ Areas of interest for expanded counseling include:
 - > Career choice and exploration
 - > College choice, including application assistance, financial aid assistance, and other issues
 - > Personal issues

“

While having senior meetings with counselors, talk about my plans after college or about careers.

“

More scheduled one on one meetings with counselors where it's not rushed to get through as many kids as possible might be helpful.

Student Concerns – Collegebound Culture

➔ Students who are not interested in attending college can feel isolated in a school culture that strongly promotes college.

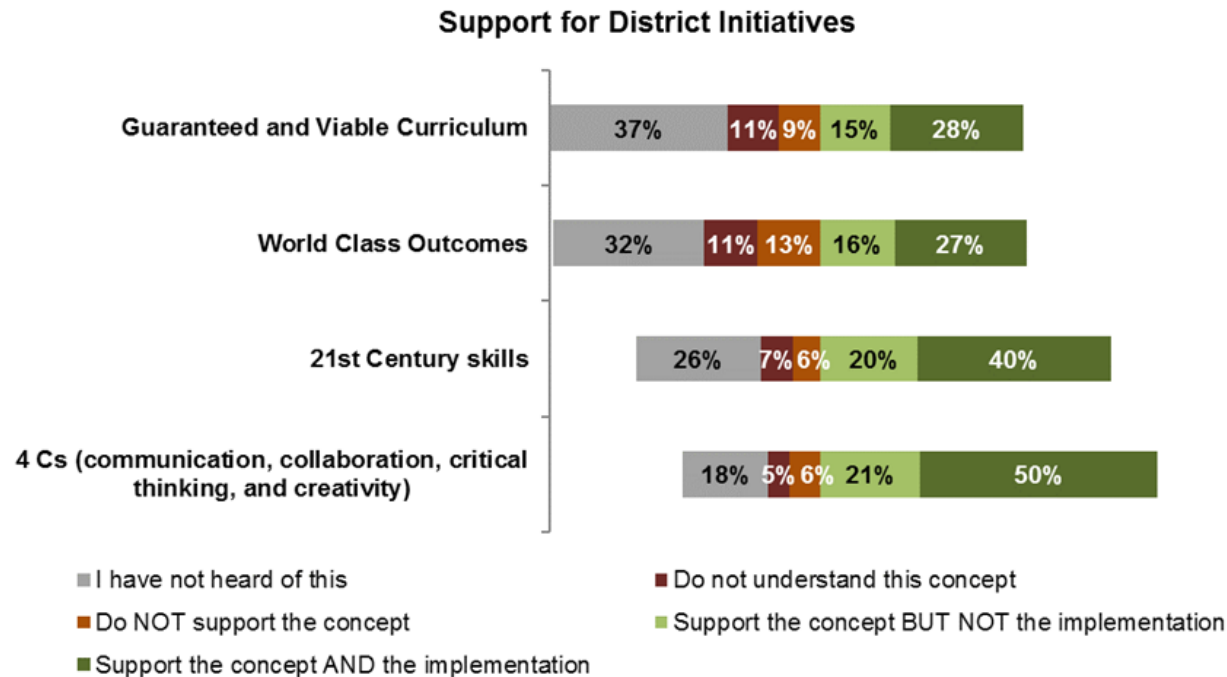
“ They could tell us about all the options for after high school, I really feel like they only catered to a 4 year college option.

“ ...they push us to go to college and put a negative connotation on working after because they want us to go to college.

“ Offer more insight to other options BESIDES a four year college: jobs, community college, other shorter degrees

Learning Concepts – Parent Support

➔ Many parents are unfamiliar with key learning concepts, and among those with familiarity, implementation concerns cost the district some support.



Learning Concepts – Parent Support

➔ A lack of familiarity may lead to skepticism, but parents are interested in learning more about concepts.

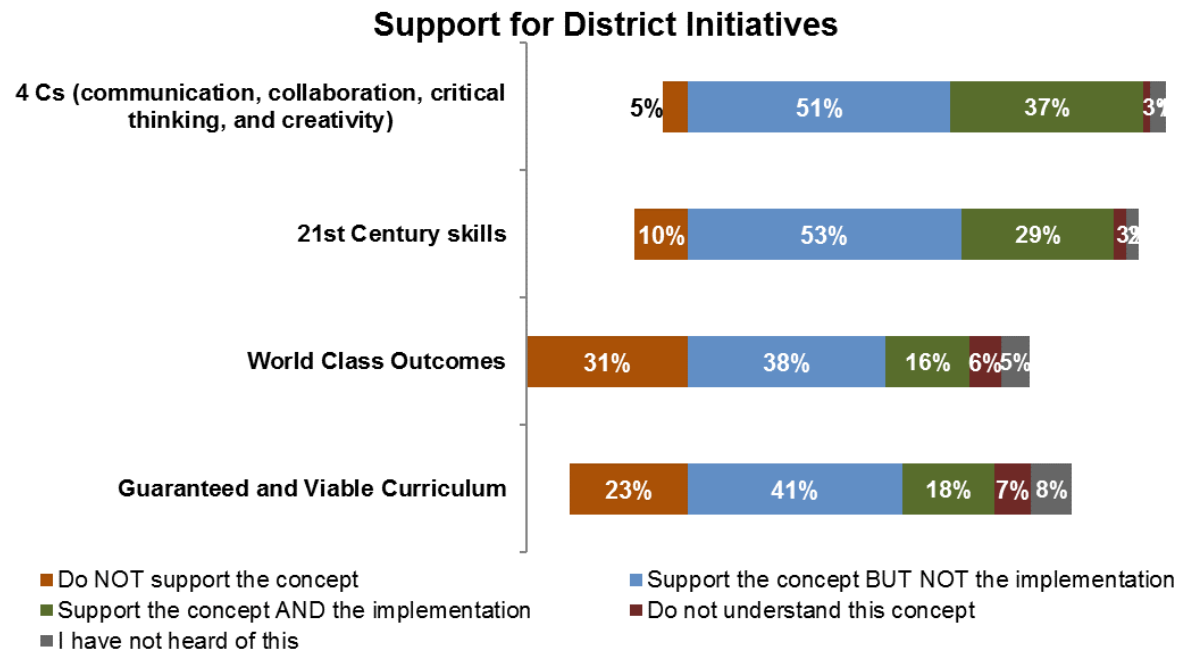
“The concepts are more catch-phrase than actual concepts. It’s like No Child Left Behind – it sounds great, but how do you make it work? When teachers were really pushing it in 5th and 6th grade, it didn’t seem to always work. What is the WCO of a math worksheet? It’s more of a catchphrase than anything. Maybe someone could explain it and I’ll go, “Oh!”, but no one has ever explained it.

Parent of children of varying ages

“I have heard of those things before. I don’t know how they all work at all. Even World skills, I get the concept, but I don’t know what would be broadened to the classroom. So it’s hard for me to give information on how to implement it. I trust that they know what they are doing. And that is kind of scary to me. I have no idea if my son is getting the best education. –Middle school parent

Learning Concepts – Teacher Support

➔ Licensed employees similarly support the concepts in general, but more strongly opposed the implementation of the concepts.



Learning Concepts – Licensed Employee Support

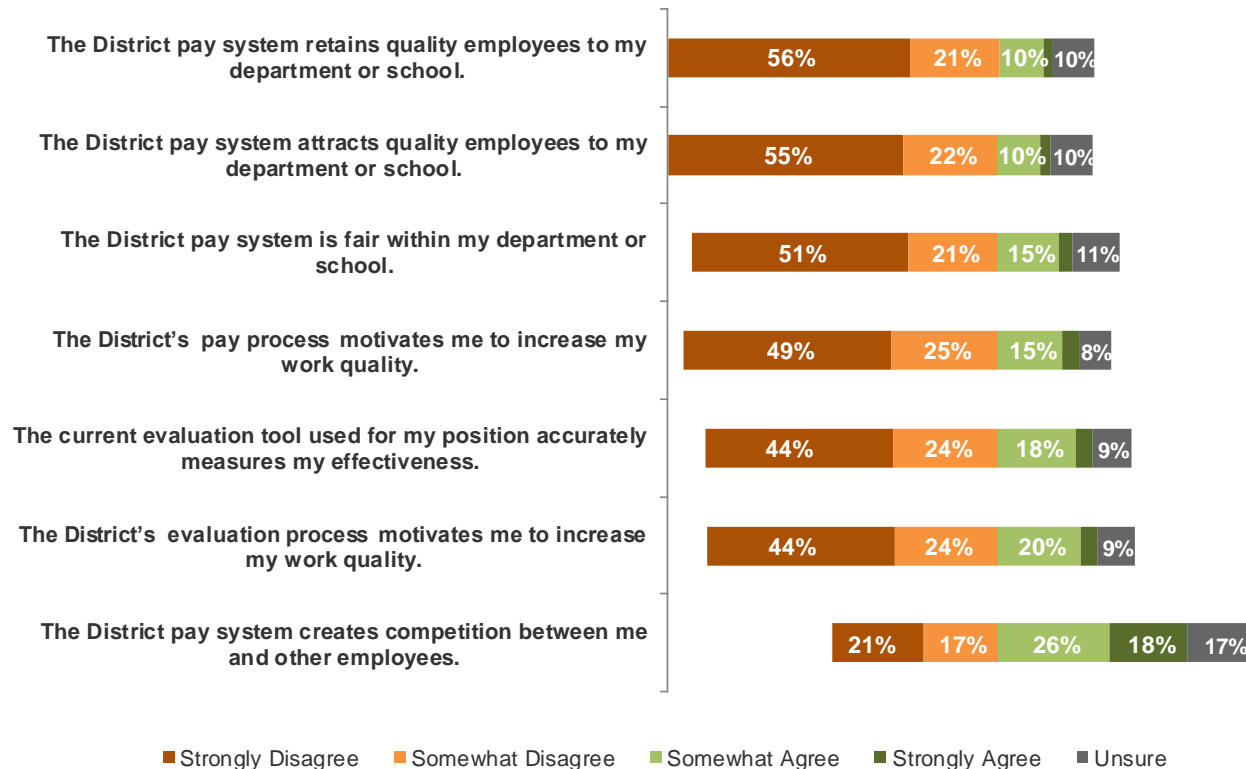
➔ Licensed employees have specific suggestions and thoughts on improving implementation.

“ I think the concepts are great, but the implementation has been too much at one time. It's been handed off with no instruction on how to make it work in a classroom setting, so it's flying by the seat of your pants.
–*Licensed Employee*

“ The concept of them is good, but the implementation was awful. They said that you had to focus on all of them every day. But now they say you can focus on one. Some of them fit for some classes, and some don't. When you make these things mandatory and say you have to have a specified amount, it's hard. I can see it as something that we say, but not part of the evaluation.
–*Licensed Employee*

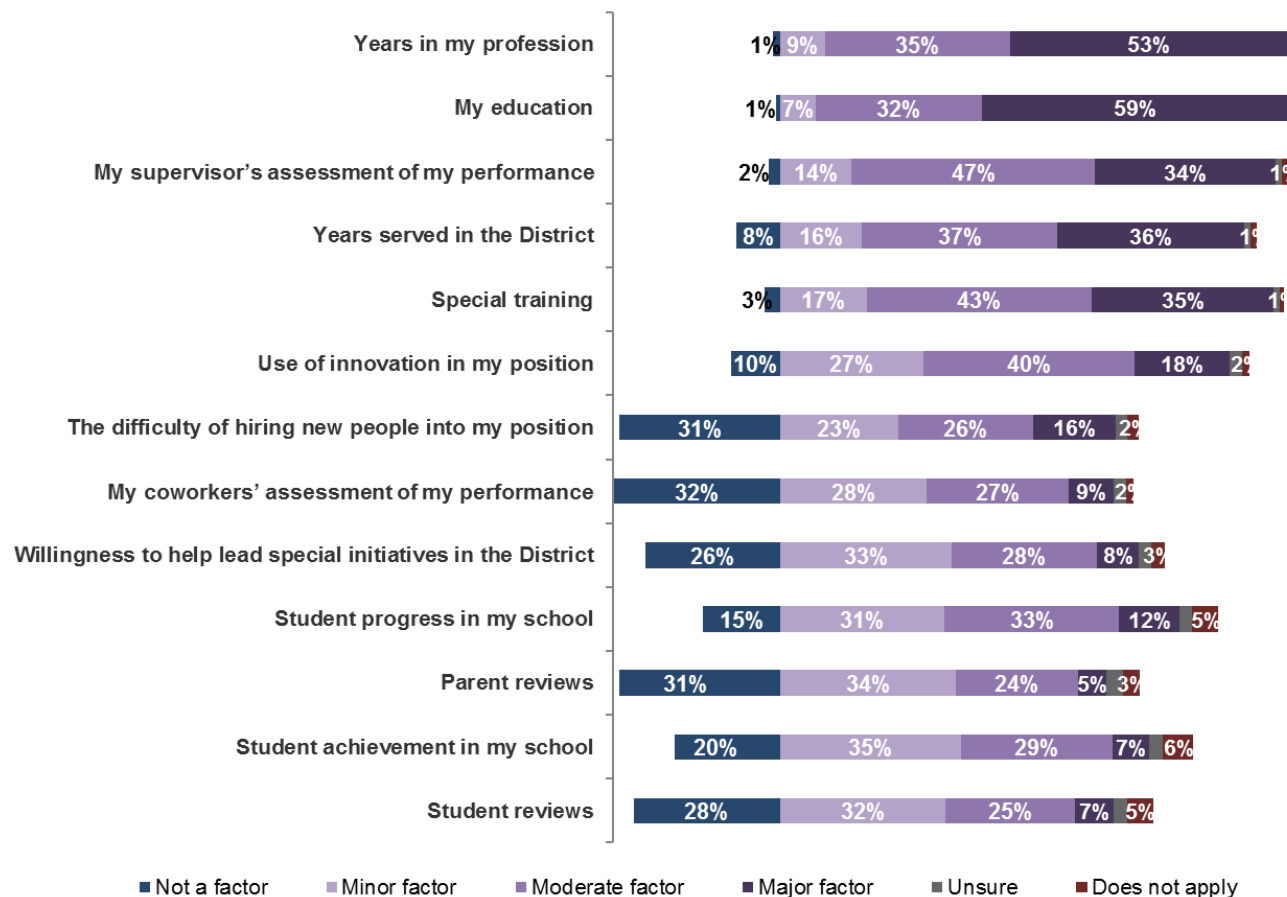
Pay and Evaluation Systems

➔ There is significant concern among employees about pay and evaluation systems.



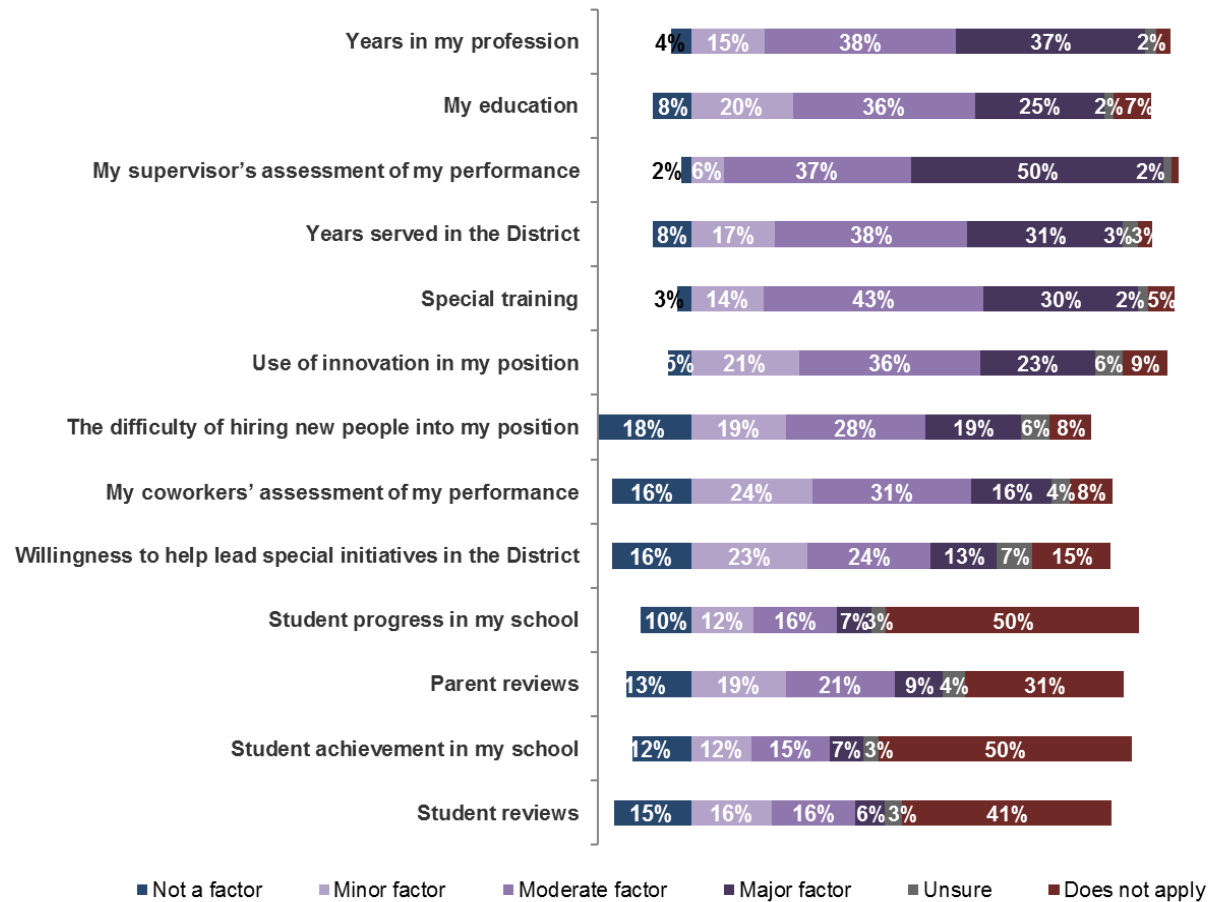
Pay and Evaluation Systems – Licensed Employee Opinions

- ➔ Licensed district employees believe that a variety of factors should be considered as at least a minor factor in determining compensation for employees, though disagreement is notable for several of those factors.



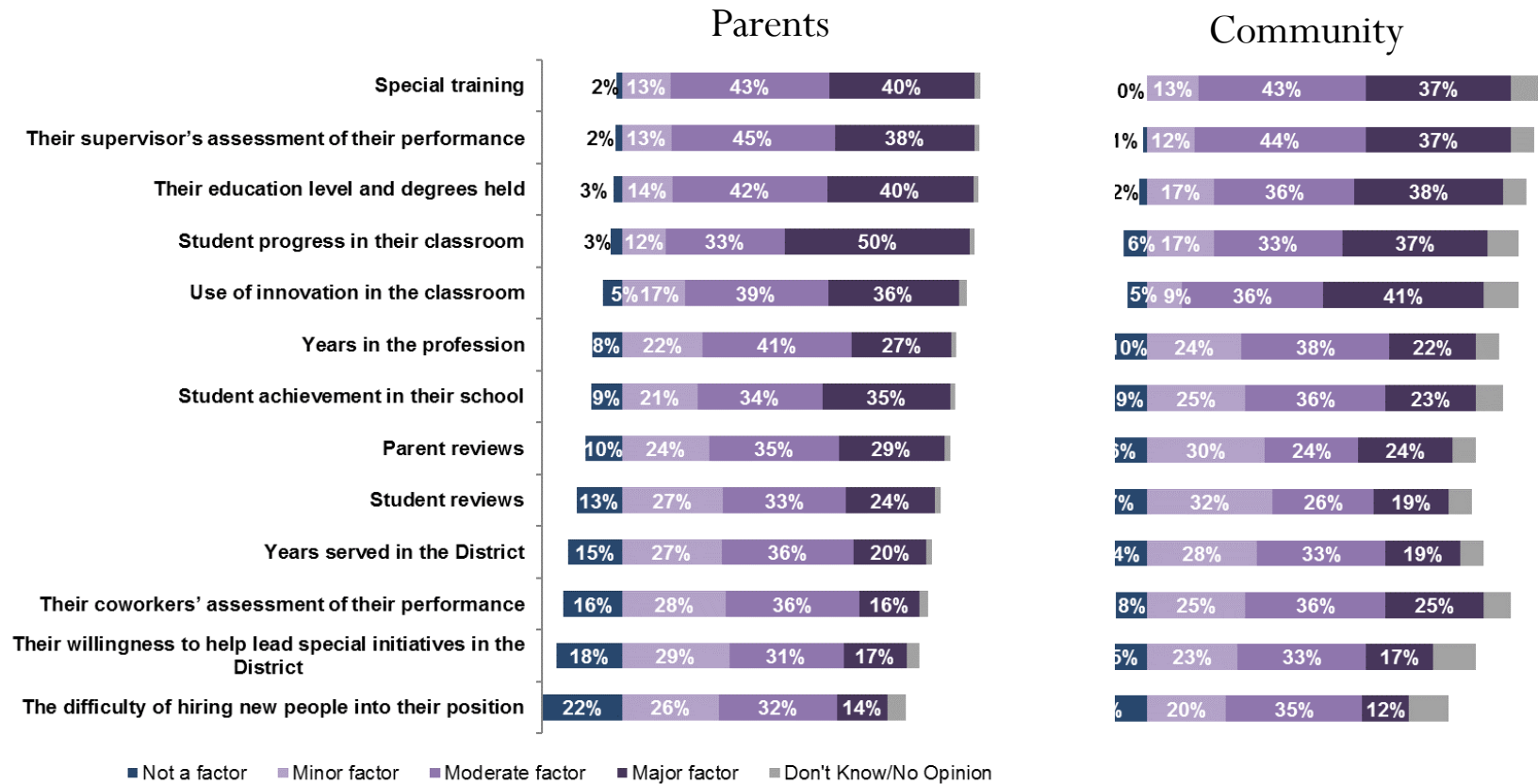
Pay and Evaluation Systems – Classified Employee Opinions

➔ Licensed district employees also believe that many factors should be considered to at least a minor degree, though several of the tested factors were less relevant to them.



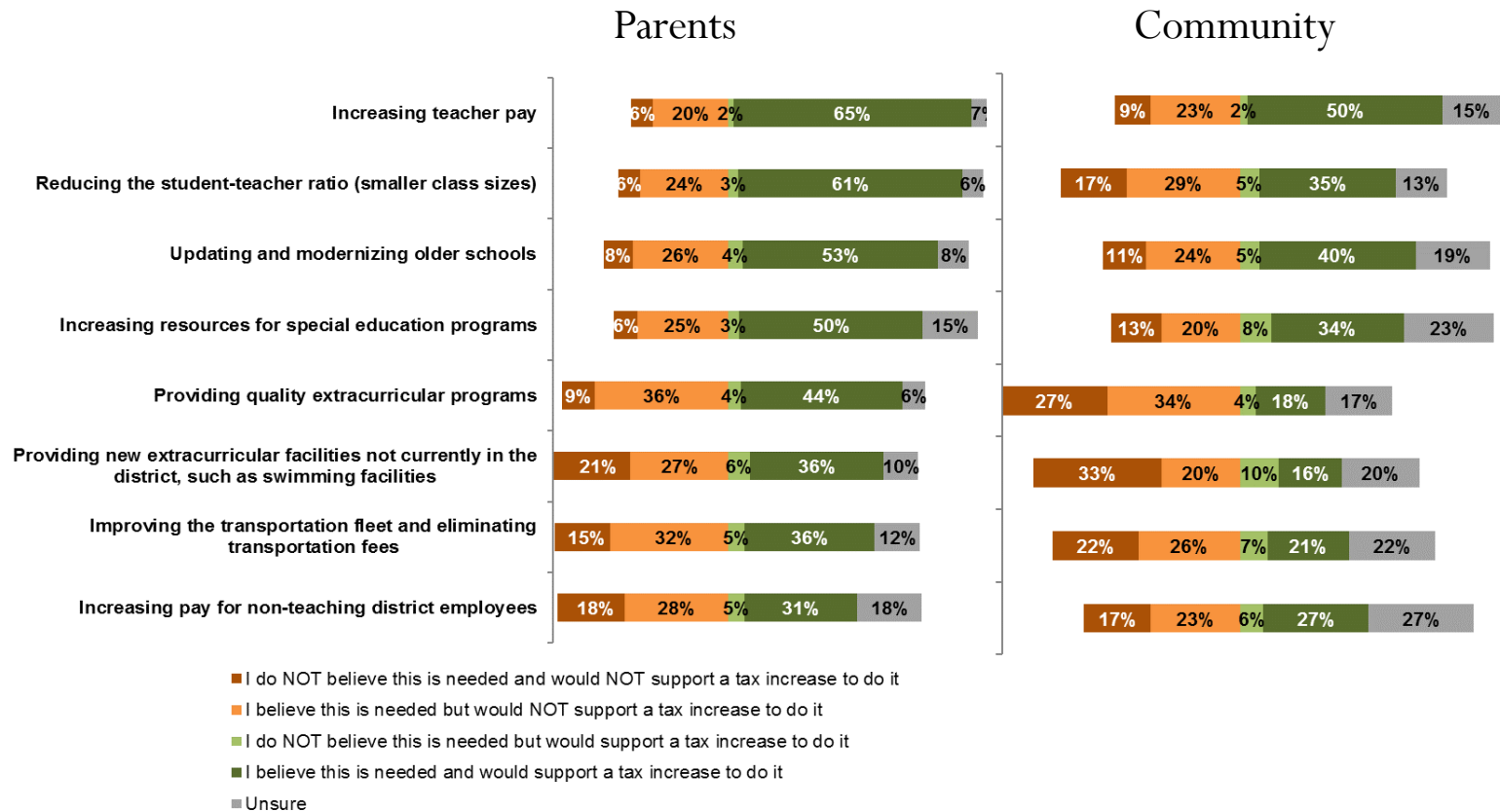
Pay and Evaluation Systems – Parent and Community Opinions

- ➔ Parents and community members have generally similar opinions about factors that should impact teacher pay.



Tax Measures – Support By Segment

- ➔ Parents and community members would both support a tax measure aimed at increasing teacher pay.



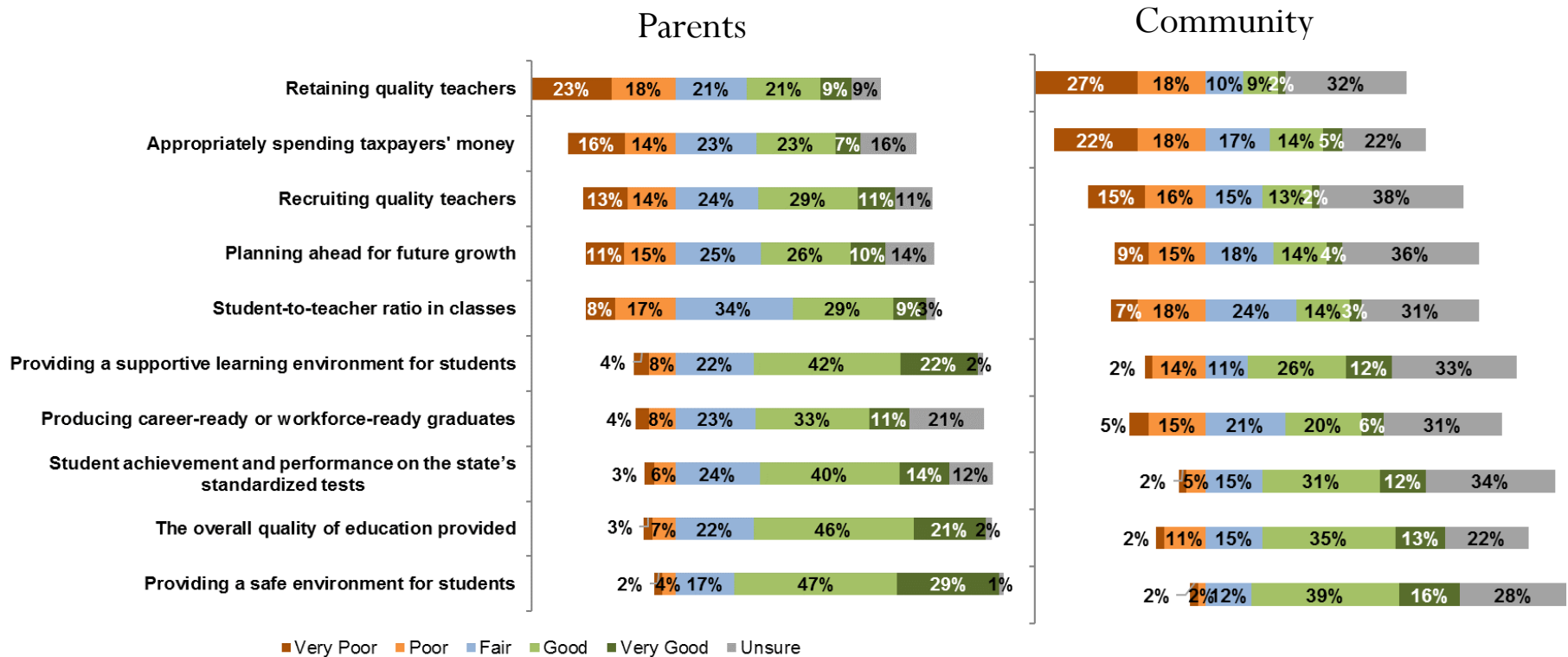
Tax Measures – Total Population Support

- ➔ The surveys did not ask about voter registration or voting tendencies, so population support does not necessarily equal voter support. However, the figures indicate a willingness to support teacher pay measures, and borderline support of several other measures.

Measure	Estimated Population Support
Increasing Teacher Pay	57%
Updating and Modernizing Older Schools	49%
Reducing Student-Teacher Ratio	48%
Increasing Resources for Special Education	46%
Increasing Pay for Non-Teaching District Employees	34%
Improving Transportation Fleet/ Eliminating Fees	33%
Providing New Extracurricular Facilities Not Currently Present	32%
Providing Quality Extracurricular Programs	31%

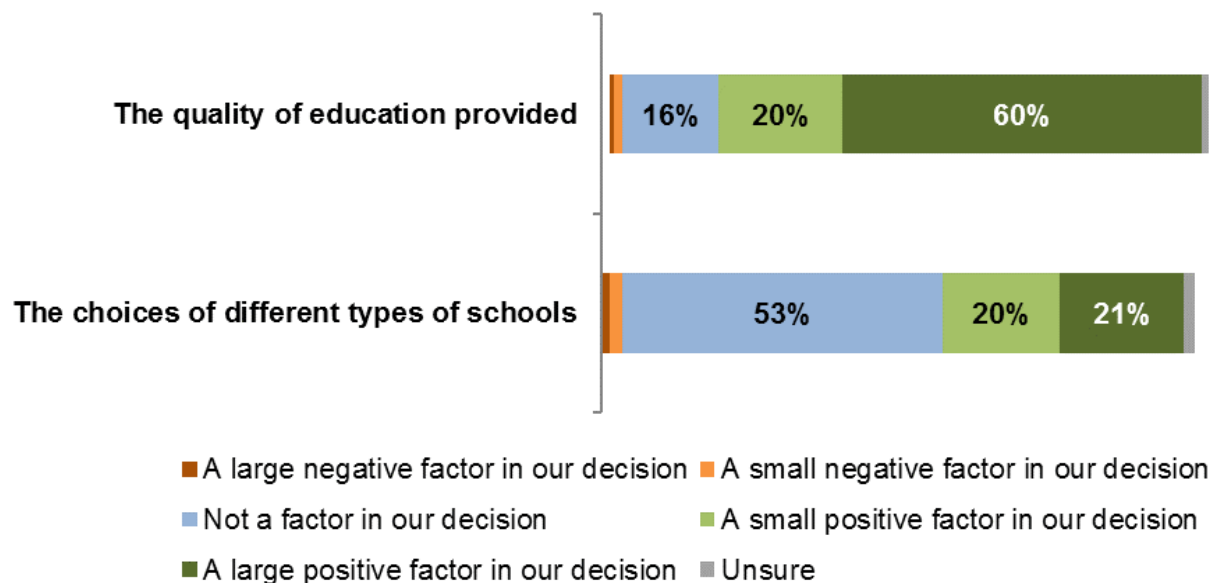
Concerns About Teacher Retention

➔ As noted earlier, both groups are concerned with teacher retention.



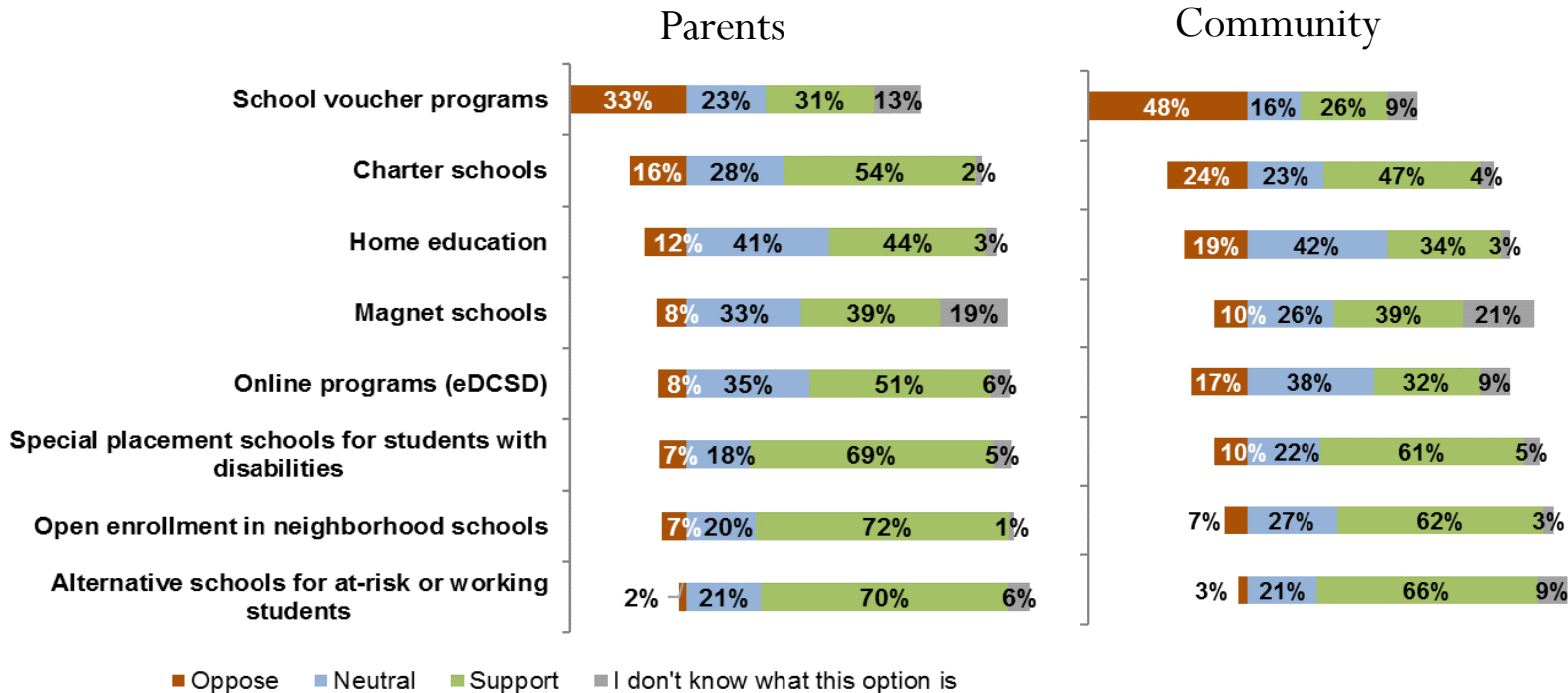
Destination District

- ➔ Parents noted that the quality of schools was often a large positive factor in their decision to move to Douglas County. Choice is a positive factor to many, but to a smaller degree.



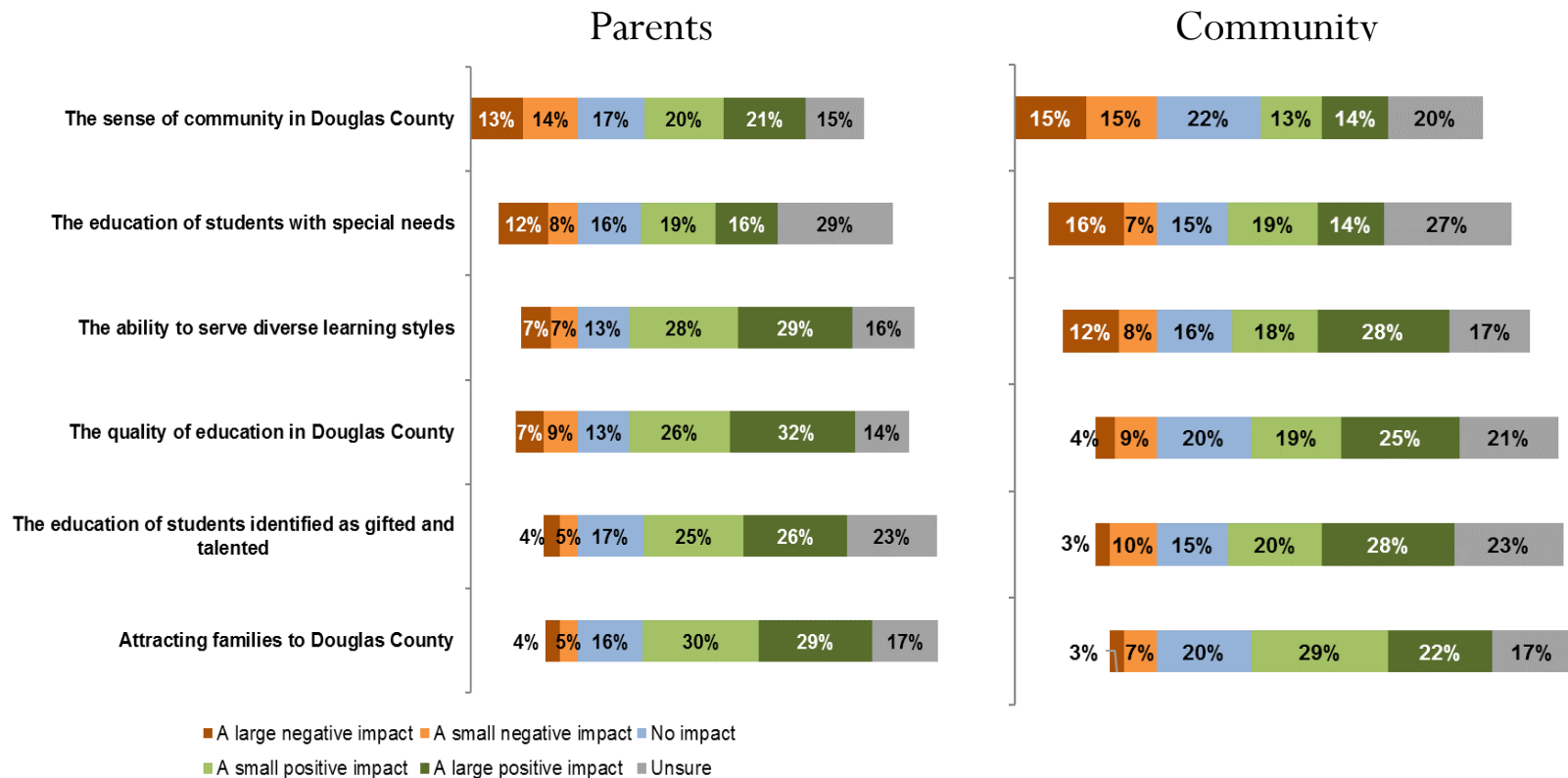
Support for School Choices

- ➔ Parents and the community both tend to support most education options, the exception being vouchers. Charter schools are supported by a large majority, but also have a significant level of opposition.



Impacts of Charter Schools

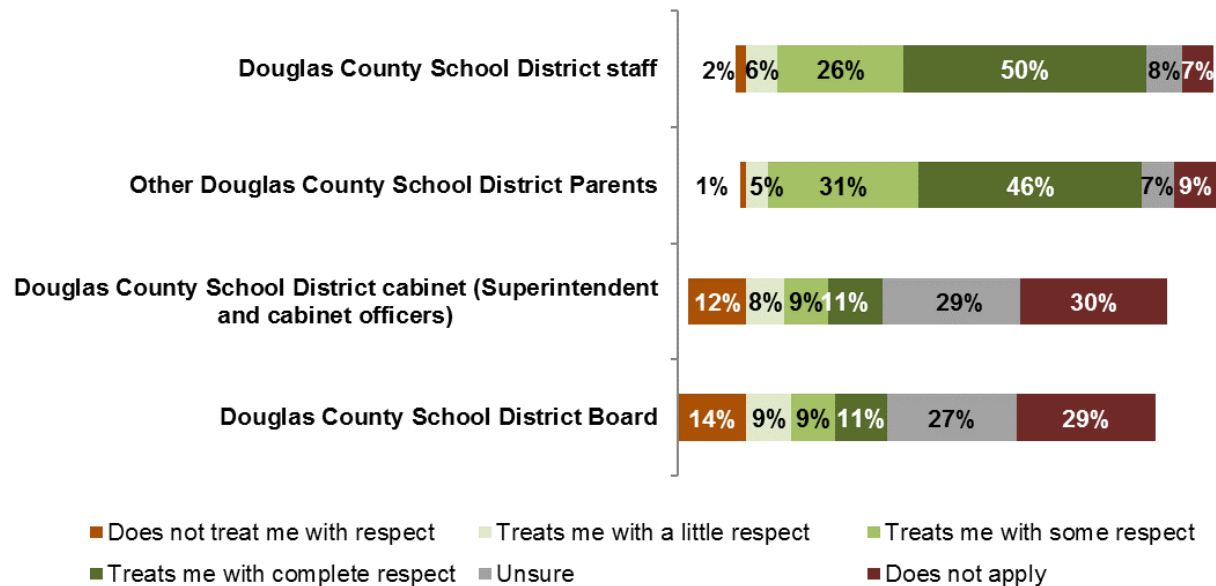
- ➔ Charter schools are generally seen as a positive force on the community, though there is uncertainty about their impact on the sense of community in the district.



Relationships - Parents

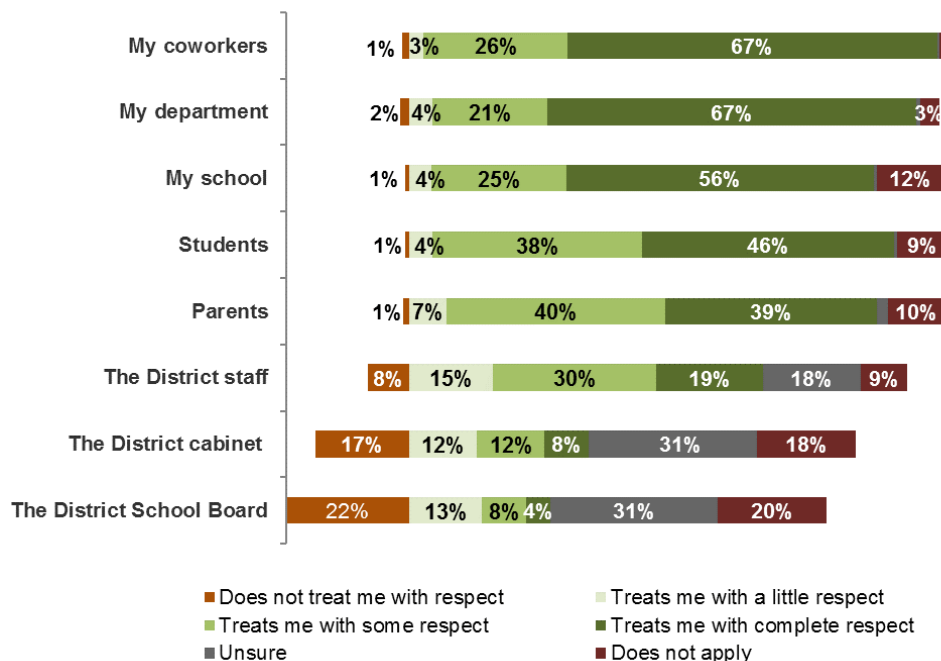
- ➔ Parents perceive a relatively smooth relationship with lower level district staff, and a turbulent relationship with higher level district staff.
- ➔ While a majority of parents have no familiarity with the board and senior staff, those who do have cited a concern about board relationships with each other and with other parties. There is a strong desire to see the board “put aside politics” and identify some areas of consensus.

Treated With Respect By...



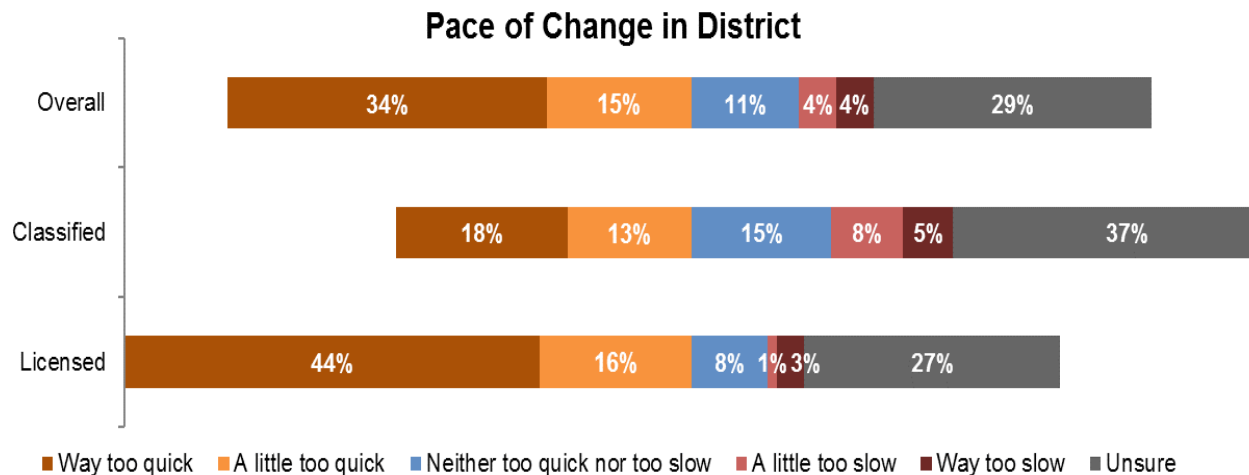
Relationships - Employees

➔ Employees similarly see a notable drop in perceived respect as the chain of command goes up.



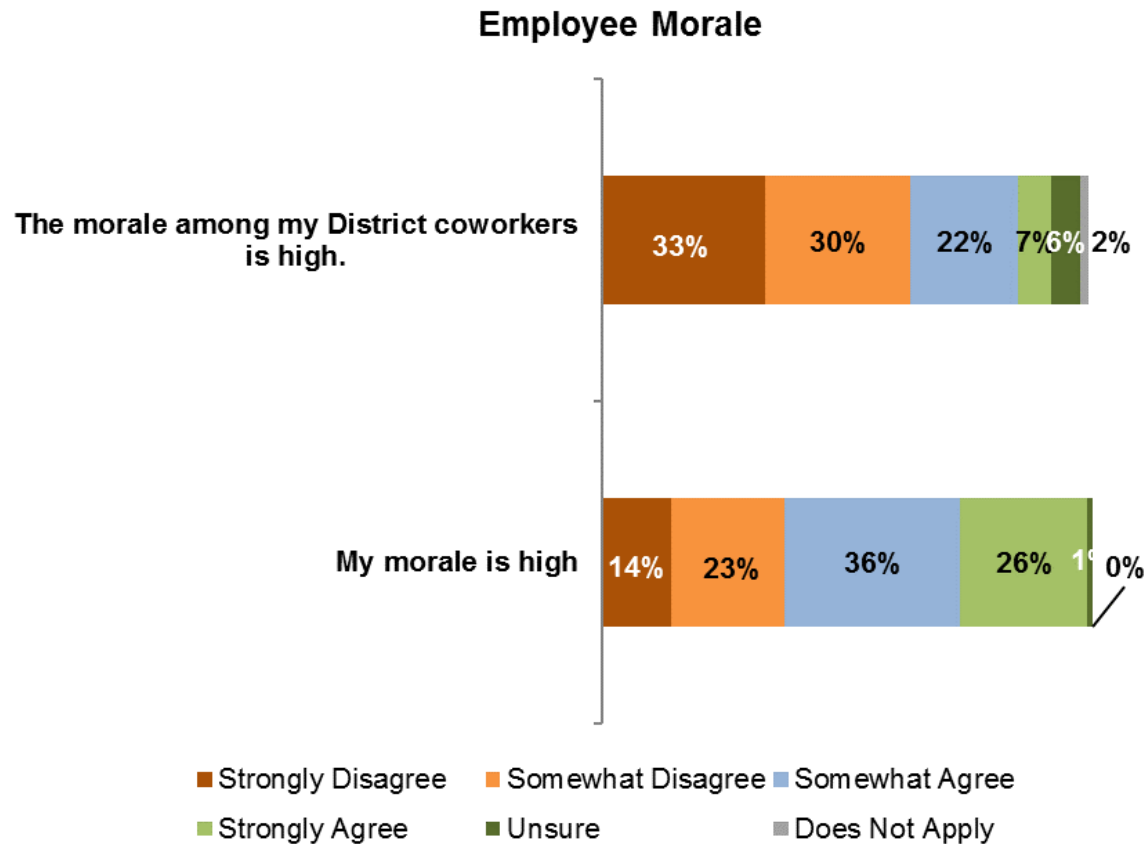
Pace of Change - Employees

➔ Employees cited the pace of change in the district as a notable stressor.



Morale - Employees

➔ Morale is better than it may appear.



Job Satisfaction Measures- Employees

➔ Despite frustrations with some elements, employees generally like their jobs.



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.

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