

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Collaborative for Evaluation  
and Assessment Capacity

**CEAC**



**Riverview School District**

**Strategic Plan Review  
Stakeholder Survey  
Summary Report**

**2018**

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## Introduction

In the spring of 2018, the Riverview School District, as part of the process of reviewing the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and planning for the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, asked for stakeholder input.

This survey was based on key focus areas established in the Riverview School District Strategic Plan. The survey was then collaboratively revised and expanded by the Collaborative for Evaluation and Assessment Capacity at the University of Pittsburgh and school district officials. The evaluation activities were designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Determine the students', parents', teachers', support staff, community members, and business owners' perceptions of the current school program at Riverview School District
- Provide input to school district officials and the planning team of the Riverview School District Strategic Plan. (2018-2021)

The survey was administered to students, teachers, support staff, administrators, parents, community members, business owners, school board directors, and alumni on-line during March/April 2018 using the Qualtrics Insight Survey System.

The following executive summary provides information related to the Riverview School District chosen focus areas: Academics, The Learning Environment, Individualized Support, Expanded Learning Opportunities, District Marketing, and District Finances and Sustainability.

## Key Findings:

A factor to consider throughout this report is that the majority of parent, community member, and business owner respondents listed that they either resided in Oakmont or their business was located in Oakmont.

With one being the most important, the budgetary priorities for the Riverview School District based on this survey are:

1. Challenging or enriching Academic Curriculum including a wide range of academic classes for our high school students
2. School Safety Enhancements
3. Small class sizes
4. Maintaining an elementary school in both Oakmont and Verona
5. Extra-curricular activities (Athletic, Music, and Art Programs)
6. Updated Technology and on-line learning
7. Need for innovative learning spaces
8. Marketing the school district

With regard to these priorities and the various sections throughout the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to comment. Themes that developed through out

were that academics should be the priority, but many respondents noted that this education should be well rounded. This includes supporting the arts and humanities. Safe schools are expected in the Riverview School District. When discussing learning spaces, respondents noted that small class sizes provide the opportunity for teacher to better know their students. Additionally, it was felt that technology should enhance the current learning spaces not replace, so there is a need for a balance. Providing online courses could enhance opportunities for students. The small community environment Oakmont and Verona provide is a selling point to the Riverview School District. Marketing was the lowest priority for respondents. Many expressed concerns about tax dollars being taken from other areas to provide for marketing. Respondents wondered about the impact of the new housing developments on their taxes and the accommodation of more students in the Riverview School District. Closing or reconfiguring the current school structure yielded mixed responses. This is a topic that will likely need greater deliberation.

### Respondent Characteristics

The total number of respondents was 574, and all identified their current connection to the school district. In this question respondents could select all identifying labels that apply. The highest number of respondents identified as parents (n=303, 52.8%) followed by community members (n=235, 40.9%).

Table 1. Respondents’ Current Connection to the District

Current Connection	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Parent	303	52.8%
Community Member (live in district)	235	40.9%
Teacher	55	9.6%
Alumni	54	9.4%
Students	39	6.8%
Other	30	5.2%
Support Staff	20	3.5%
Business Owner	15	2.6%
School Board Member	7	1.2%
Administrator	5	0.9%

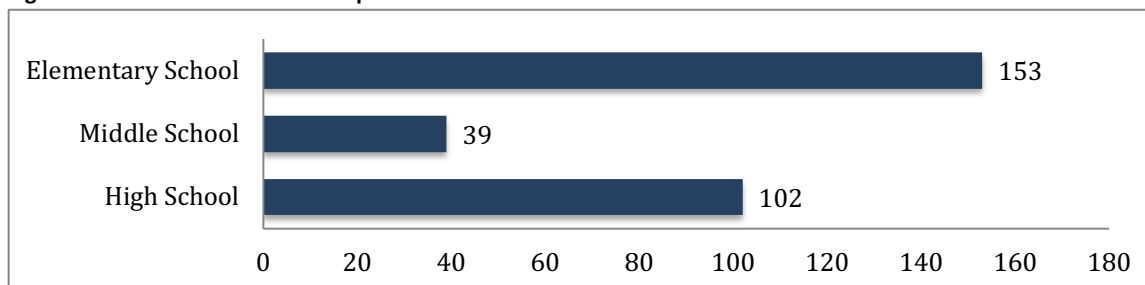
## Parents

For all respondents who selected “parent” they were also asked where they resided, in Oakmont or Verona. The majority of respondents (78.67%, n=236) live in Oakmont. Additionally, they were asked what grade level their child(ren) are in for the 2017-2018 school year. The elementary school section included preschool to sixth grade, middle school section included seventh to eighth grade, and the high school section included ninth to twelfth grade. The most parents selected that they had children in the elementary school (n = 153), and only 39 parents selected they had children in the middle school. Respondents could only choose one grade level. Some parents with children at multiple levels noted this in the comment section.

Table 2. Student’s Parents Residency within the District

Residence	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Oakmont	236	78.7%
Verona	64	21.3%

Figure 1. Grade Level of Parent Respondents’ Children



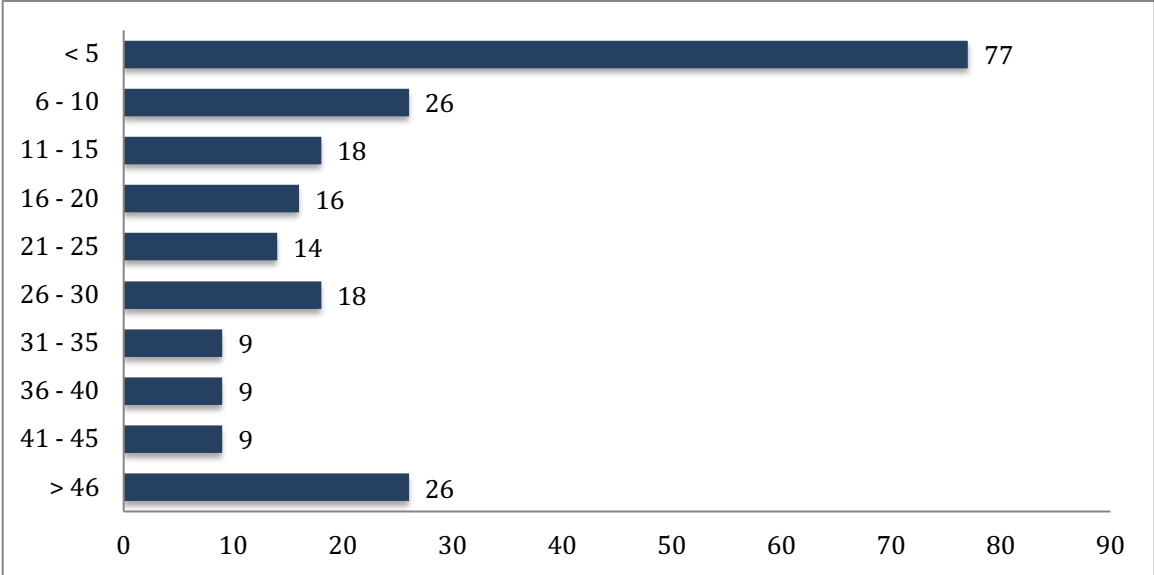
**Community Members**

For all respondents who selected community member they were ask how long they lived in the district. The mean was 19.3 years with a standard deviation of 18.4. These community members were also asked where they reside. Similar to the parents a large majority selected Oakmont as their residence.

**Table 3. Community Members Residency within the District**

Residence	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Oakmont	213	92.2%
Verona	18	7.8%

**Figure 2. Length of Time in Years that Community Members have lived in the District**



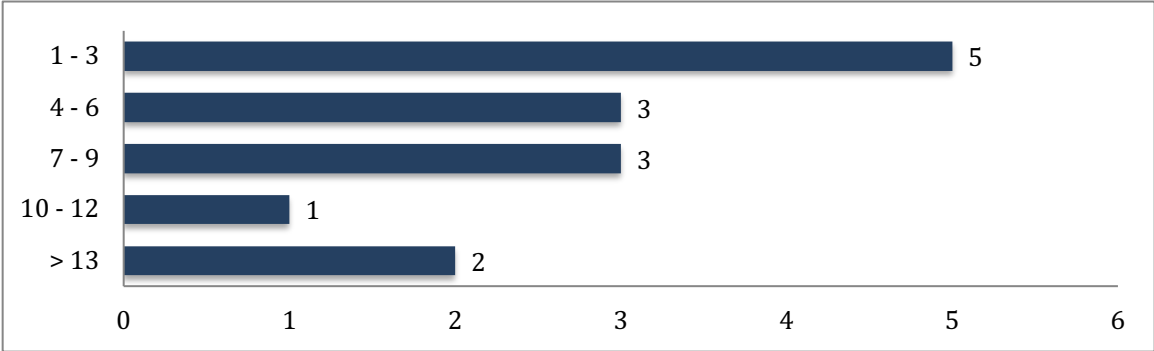
**Business Owners**

For respondents who selected business owner they were asked how long they owned their business in the Riverview School District. Of the 15 who responded, the mean was 9.1 and there is a standard deviation is 11.1. The minimum number of years was 1 and the maximum was 41. When asked where their business is located the majority selected Oakmont.

**Table 4. Business’s Location within the District**

Residence	Number of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Oakmont</b>	10	66.7%
<b>Verona</b>	5	33.3%

**Figure 3. Length of Time in Years that Businesses have been in the District**



**Alumni**

For respondents who selected alumni, 53 responses were collected. The oldest alumni graduated in 1956 and the most recent in 2010. The alumni were also asked what their current careers were, there were a diverse range of answers, so for simplicity the careers were separated into categories displayed below. For the complete list of careers please refer to the appendix.

**Figure 4. Alumni Respondents’ Year of Graduation from the District**

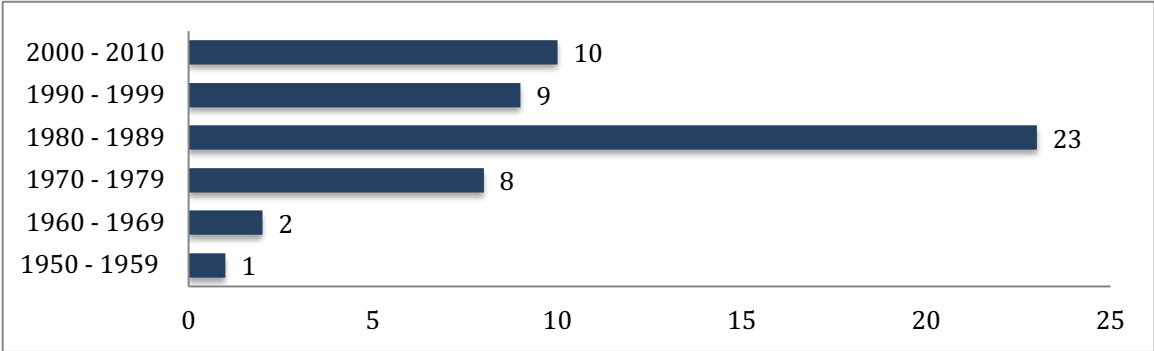


Table 5. Number of Alumni respondents' Careers

<b>Career Category</b>	<b>Number of Alumni</b>
<b>Management and Sales</b>	14
<b>Education</b>	7
<b>Health Care</b>	5
<b>Law</b>	4
<b>STEM</b>	4
<b>Public Service</b>	4
<b>Self Employed</b>	4
<b>Childcare and Homemakers</b>	3
<b>Retired</b>	3
<b>Service</b>	3
<b>Clerical</b>	2

# Analysis Overview and Findings

All respondents were asked to select their level of agreement from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The survey was broken up into seven categories: academics, learning environment, individualized support, expanded learning opportunities, district marketing, and district finances and sustainability. Open-response summary proceed the graphic scales relating to each category response.

## Academics

### Open Ended Responses:

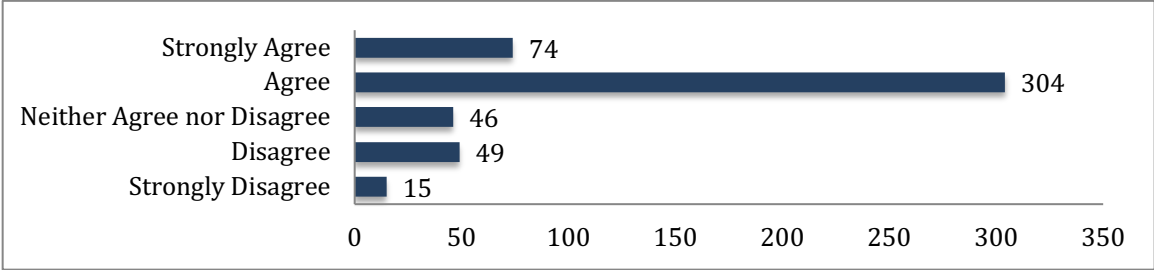
There were 558 responses, which included 155 responses to the open-ended question in the area of academics. The open-ended responses were categorized into 6 different subject areas: Academic Program, High Expectations, 7<sup>th</sup> grade Preparedness, Writing, Teachers Knowledgeable and Equipped, Academics should be top priority, and other. Most respondents (n=378) are satisfied (strongly agree or agree) with the academic program of Riverview School District. In the area of the Academic Program a well-rounded educational program was emphasized in numerous open-ended responses (n=24). Foreign language was noted (n=6) as being an area to improve in the Riverview School District. The inclusion of STEM activities (n=6) was noted as a positive in the academic program. Life-skills, such as tax preparation, personal finance, time management and study skills were noted in open-ended responses (n=5). The expectations of the kindergarten program were noted (n=2) as too high.

The majority of respondents (n=346) feel that the Riverview School District has high expectations for all students. Challenging the students more at the High School level was noted as an area of improvement (n=4). Although the majority of respondents (n=210) stated that the 7<sup>th</sup> grade is prepared for secondary school learning experiences, a few (n=3) open-ended responses stated concerns such a difference between the degree of preparedness of the two elementary schools.

Writing is an area that may need further review. A majority of the respondents (n=254) noted that writing is integrated well. A lower proportion (n=186) neither agreed or disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that writing is integrated well. The open-ended responses in the area (n=9) were both positive and negative.

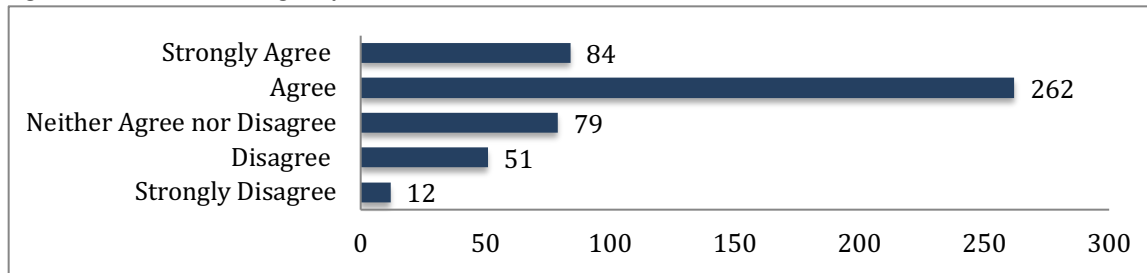
The majority of respondents (n=337) noted that the teachers in the Riverview School District are equipped to facilitate 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. All responses can be found in the appendix under Academics.

Figure 5. I am satisfied with the overall academic program provided to students at Riverview School District.

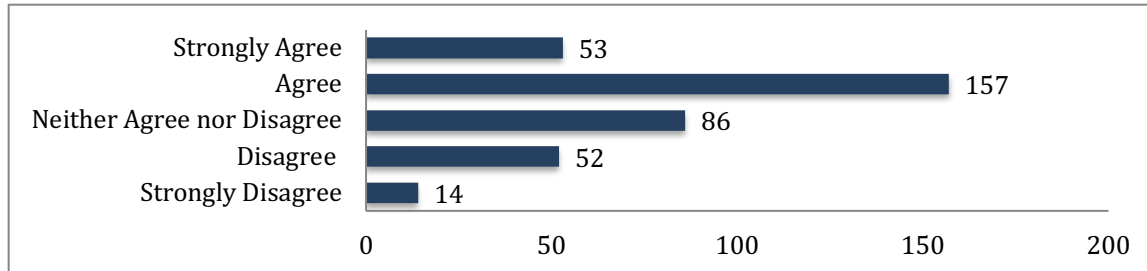




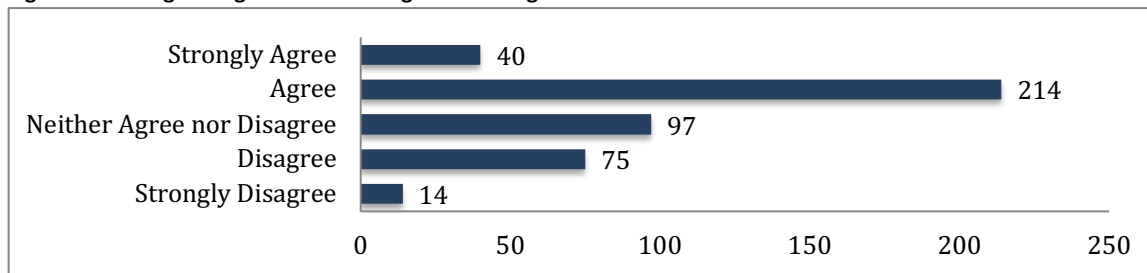
**Figure 6. The District has high expectations for all students**



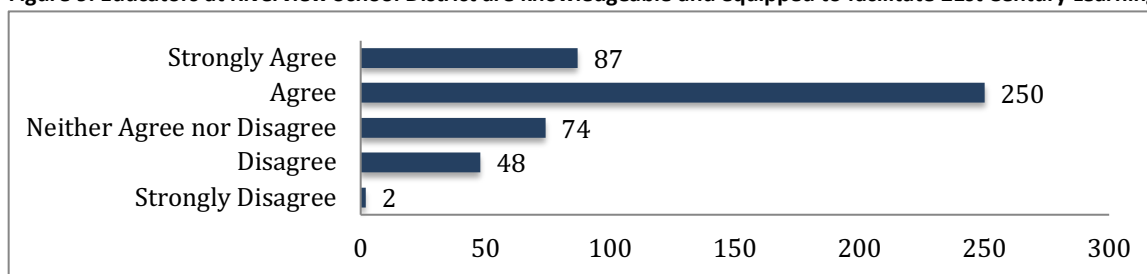
**Figure 7. Students entering seventh grade are well prepared for secondary school learning experiences**



**Figure 8. Writing is taught well and integrated at all grade levels.**



**Figure 9. Educators at Riverview School District are knowledgeable and equipped to facilitate 21st Century Learning**



## Learning Environment

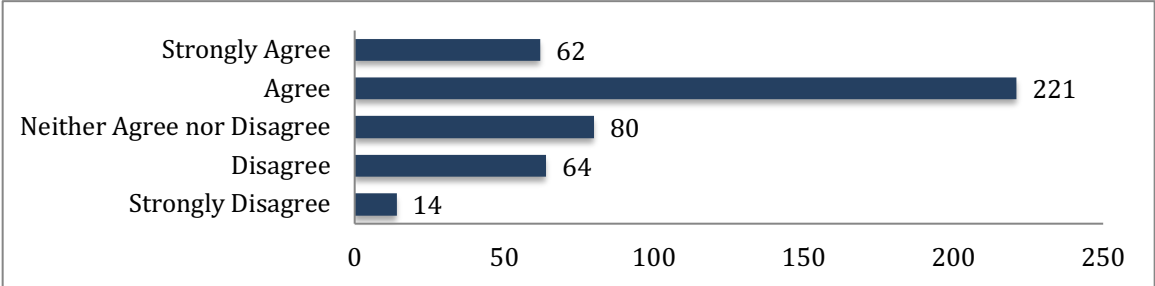
### Open Ended Responses:

There were 534 responses, which included 113 responses to the open-ended question in the area of learning environment. The learning environment category was broken down into sub categories of safety and security, bullying, and school culture.

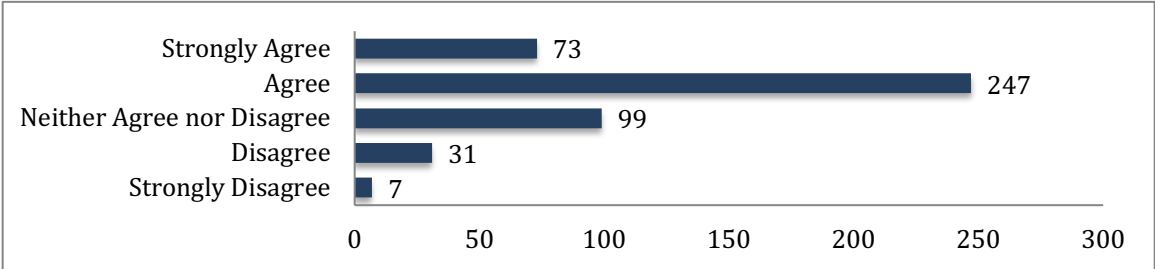
The open-ended comments in the area of safety and security stated that safety is a priority of the District (n=17) but not at the expense of the academic program. Metal detectors are seen (n=6) as a positive improvement to the current safety plan. Security guards are noted (n=3) as a positive option to strengthen safety.

Most of the open-ended responses (n=29) report that bullying is occurring in the District and addressing the issue could be improved. The school culture can be affected by inconsistent discipline (n=4) as noted in open-ended responses. It is also noted that students do not always feel comfortable coming to adults. All responses can be found in the appendix under Learning Environment.

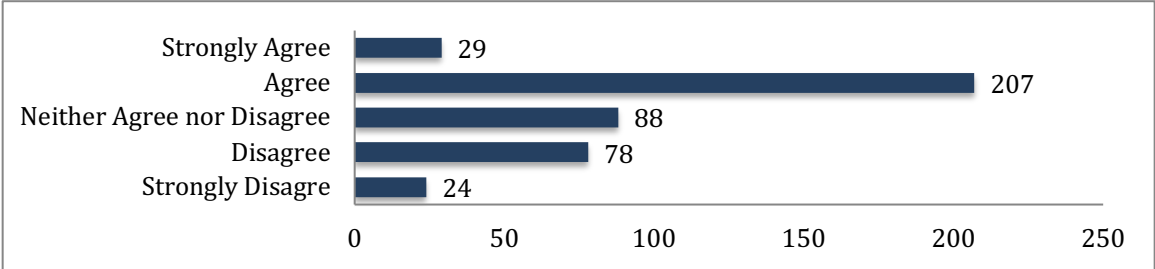
**Figure 10. A culture of respect exists at each school**



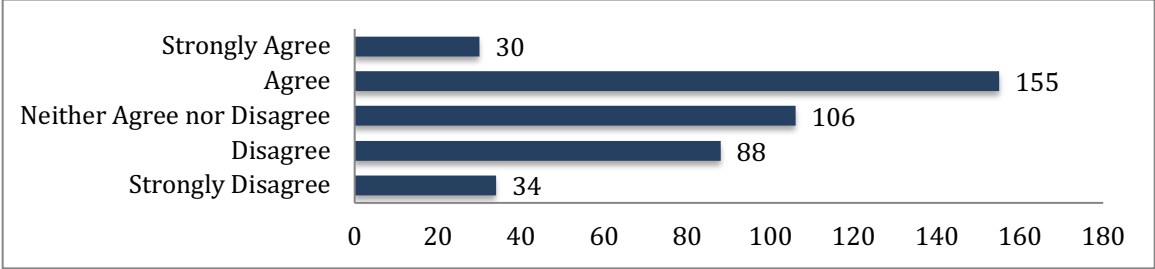
**Figure 11. Children in Riverview enjoy going to school to learn**



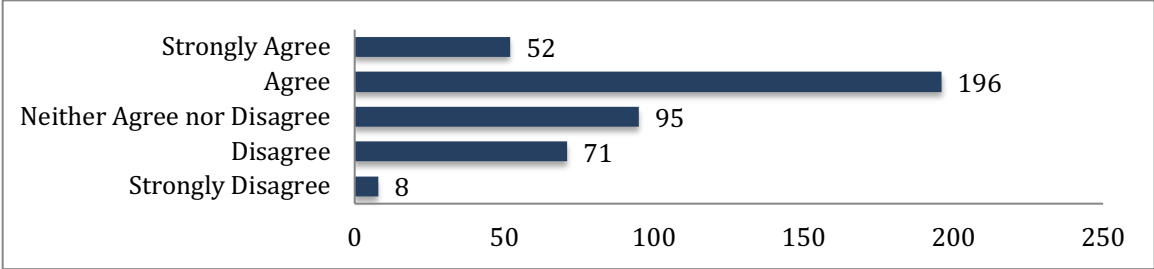
**Figure 12. Appropriate security measures are in place in the schools**



**Figure 13. Riverview implements effective anti-bullying programs.**



**Figure 14. Children are comfortable seeking out adults for help if they have concerns or problems**



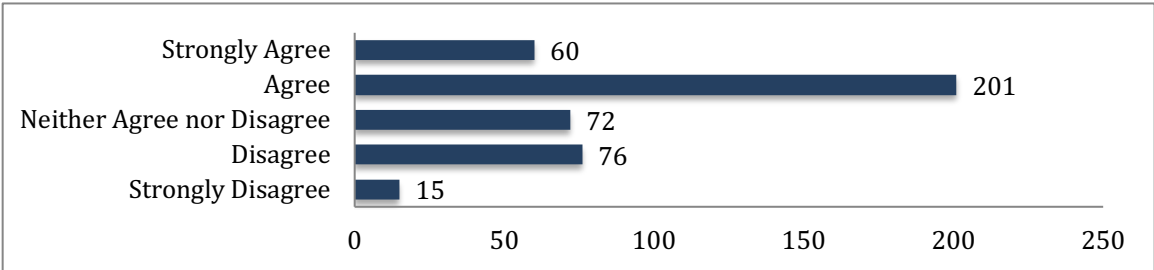
**Individualized Support**

**Open Ended Responses:**

There were 520 responses, which included 90 responses to the open-ended question in the area of individualized support. This area was categorized into needs of students, excel in areas of talent, remedial support, class size, Jr/Sr High scheduling, and cyber/online courses.

The needs of the students are met (n=281), however areas of improvement may focus on a more individualized approach to learning. Respondents (n=8) stated that they feel the focus is more on grade level, rather than individual. Mental health concerns and training was noted in 5 open ended responses. Remedial support is noted as not being consistent (n=8) or non-existent (n=3) at different levels. Smaller class sizes are noted as a positive (n=7) at the elementary, but a concern of larger classes at different grades or higher academic classes can be a detriment (n=4). Jr/Sr High scheduling is noted (n=3) as difficult when stand-alone courses are offered few times and often during lunch. Cyber and online courses may present some flexibility to the schedule. All responses can be found in the appendix under Individualized Support.

**Figure 15. The needs of students are met through an individualized approach to learning.**



**Figure 16. Students have the ability to excel in areas where they are talented.**

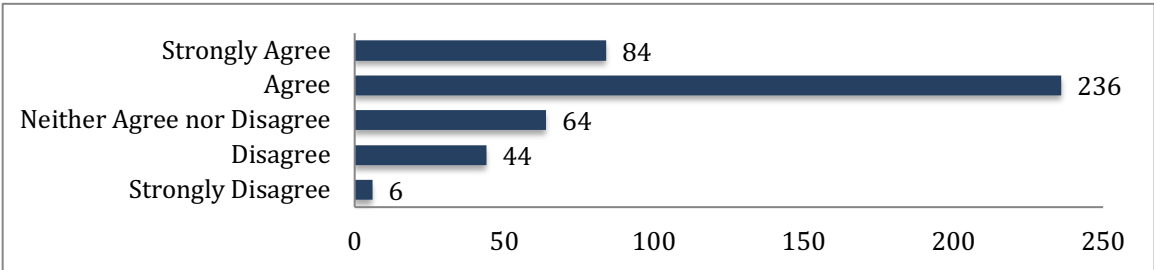


Figure 17. Remedial support is available for students who need help.

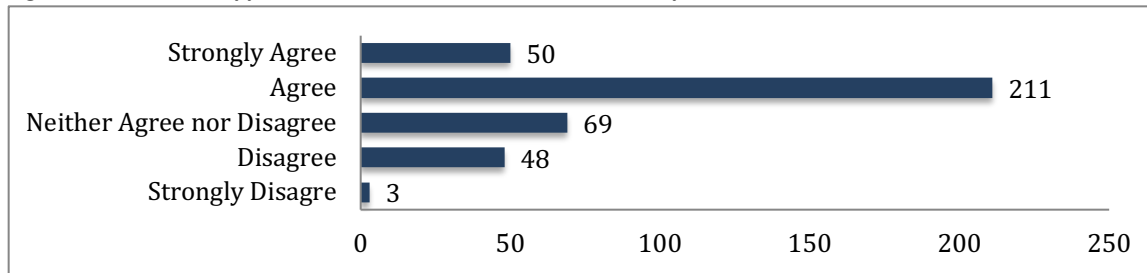


Figure 18. Class sizes throughout the district are just right

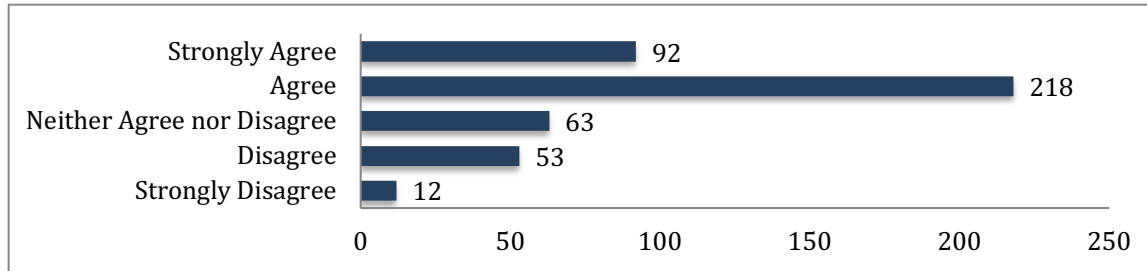


Figure 19. Scheduling is flexible enough to meet learner needs at the Junior/Senior High School

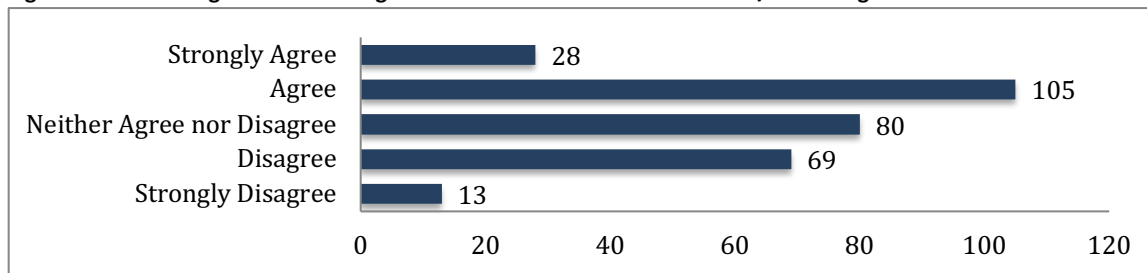
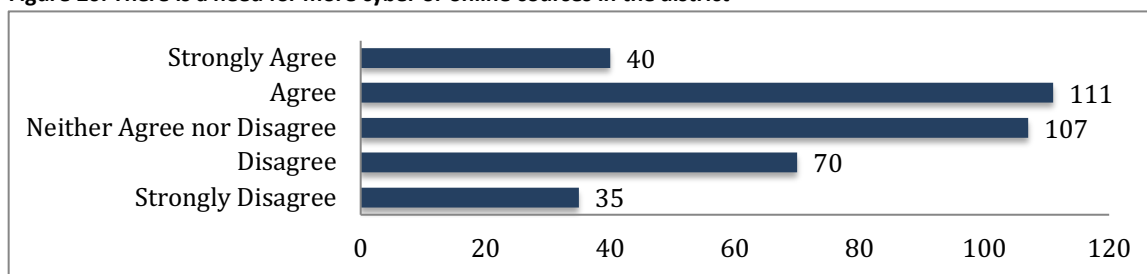


Figure 20. There is a need for more cyber or online courses in the district



## Expanded Learning Opportunities

### Open Ended Responses:

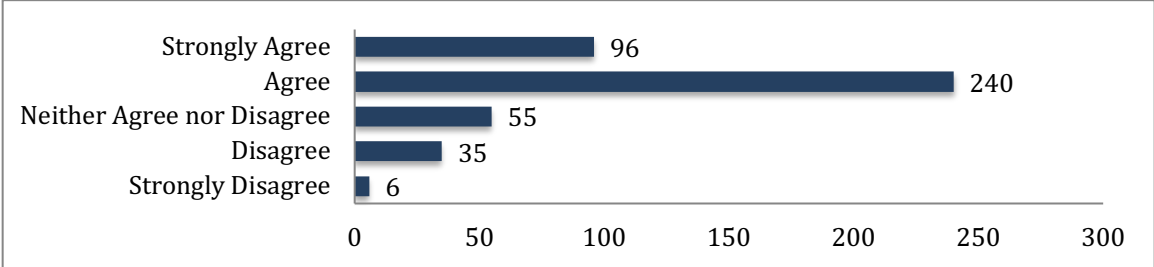
Following section of questions related to expanded learning opportunities all respondents were able to comment on any of the statements in that section. With regard to educators help all children (n=6) respondents further elaborated on their response and stated that most educators are willing to help students who approach them, but do not push those who do not. With regard to STEM education, there is a mix from the 19 responses, some respondents find that it should be better integrated earlier and have more advanced classes at higher levels. Many pro-increased STEM education feel as though it

should not be at the expense of music and arts programs. Other respondents feel as though STEM is somewhat over hyped.

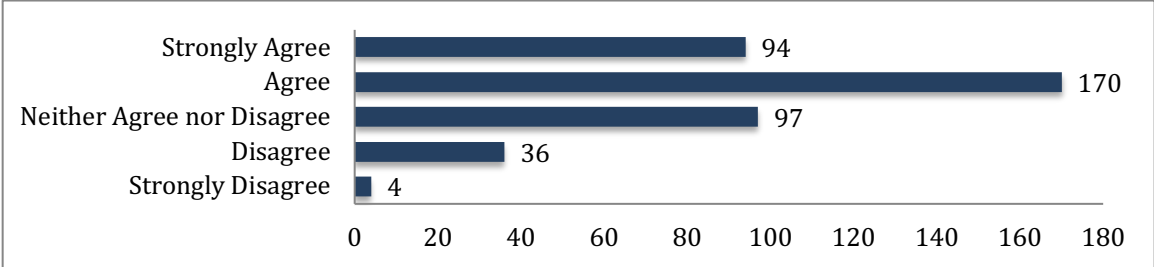
In the high school curriculum of the twelve respondents many find that dual-enrollment and partnering with CCAC would be beneficial in enhancing the education of students, as well as a better display of options available for classes, electives, and extra-curricular activities. There is also a desire for just more classes to be available. As for extra/co-curricular activities of the ten respondents some are worried about the money put into failing sports programs, others find that there should be more activities available, but understand the limitations of a small school district. It is noted the unequal distribution of activities between the two elementary schools, with Oakmont having these opportunities and Verona not. One parent noted, "Verner has nearly zero extracurricular activities. My child has been involved in private activities (usually costly) out of the district offering, for the past 4 years, due to lack of options."

With regard to the larger auditorium, respondents who are in favor of this, do not think the expansion is necessary, but rather the addition of an auditorium at the high school. A few respondents stated that a larger auditorium is not needed to meet learning needs. Additionally, more respondents stated that other things such as academics should be a greater priority than an auditorium. Other themes that stood out in the responses are the need for more afterschool programs, and for foreign languages being taught in the elementary school. All responses can be found in the appendix under Expanded Learning Opportunities Open Ended Responses.

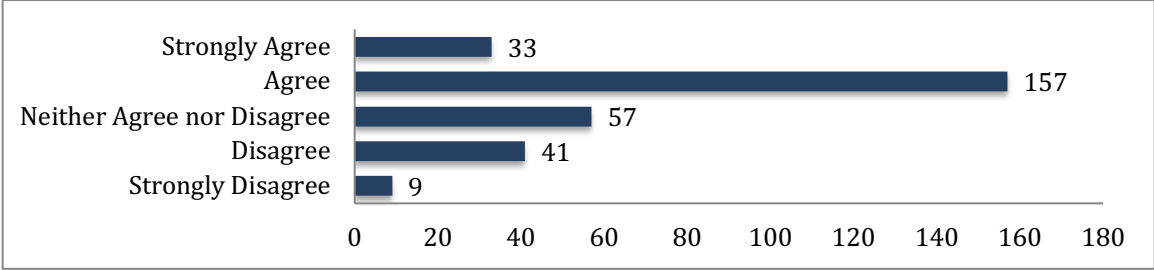
**Figure 21. Educators in the district help all children to learn**



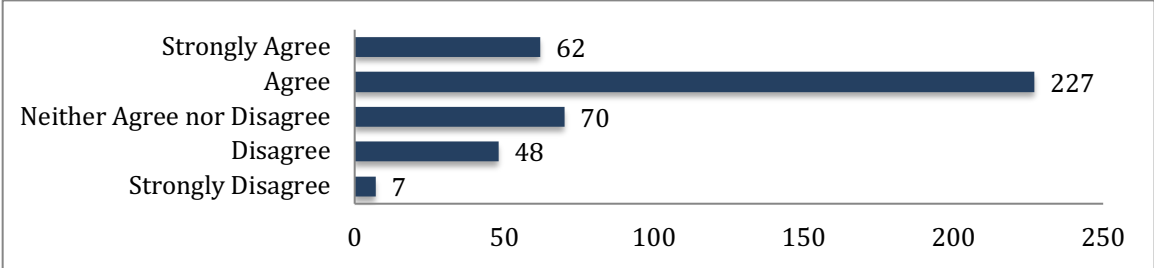
**Figure 22. There is a need to upgrade current STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) resources for our students**



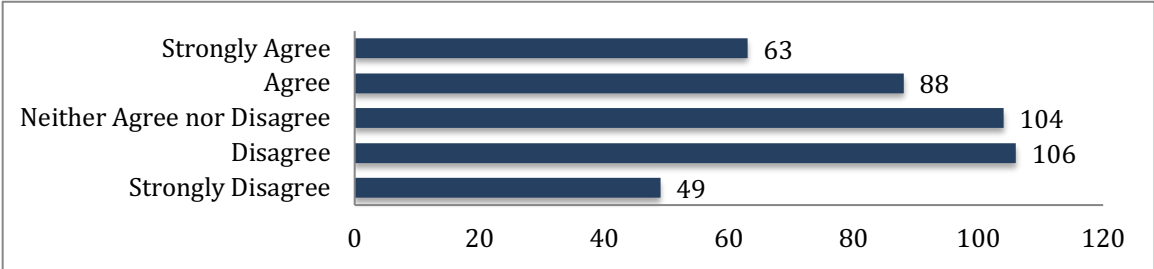
**Figure 23. Riverview High School curriculum provides enough opportunities for students to participate in opportunities to earn college credit**



**Figure 24. Overall, I am satisfied with the extracurricular and co-curricular programs offered by the Riverview School District**



**Figure 25. A larger auditorium space is needed to meet learning needs**



**District Marketing**

**Open Ended Responses:**

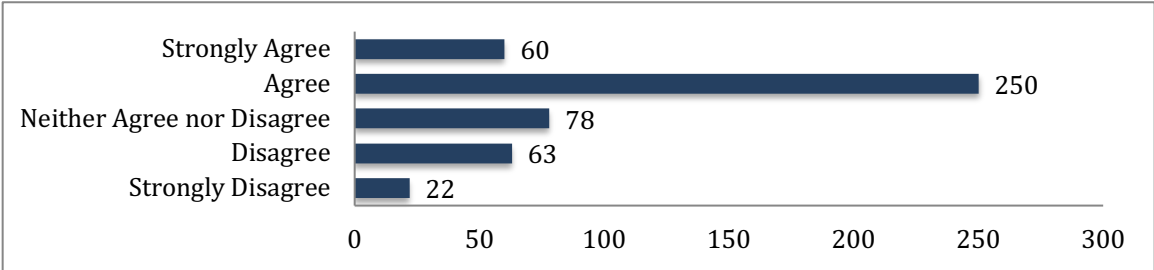
There was not a section on the survey after answering the district marketing section for respondents to comment on the statements, so 63 respondents commented on district marketing in the following section, district finances and future sustainability. The majority of respondents felt as though marketing would not be proper use of budgeting funds. A point that which was made many times was along the line of, let the district speak for itself. Respondents think that enhancing marketing from an academic standpoint will allow the district to gain recognition. A respondent states, “The most important market factor for a school is the academic achievement of the students. That’s where the investment should go, not into marketing.” There were some respondents who understood the need for marketing to attract new residents, but they did not find the current methods entirely effective. A few respondents additionally wanted to know the goals of marketing and what research is done on its success. All responses can be found in the appendix under Finances and Future Sustainability.

Participants were asked where they get their information about the schools. 323 respondents answered the question, some listing multiple outlets. The responses are:

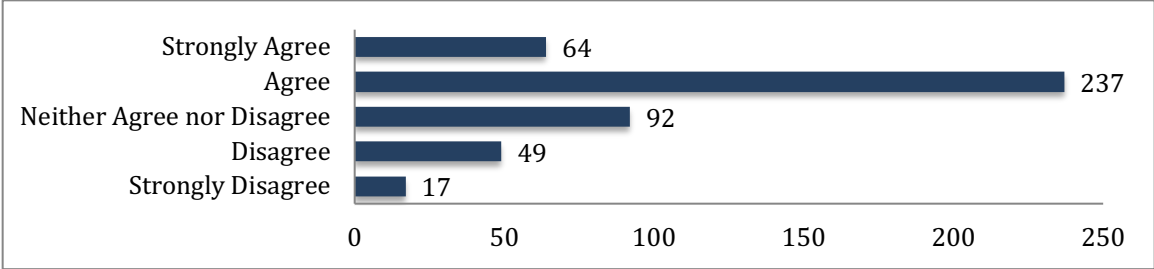
**Table 6. Most common outlets for receiving information.**

Information Received From:	Number of respondents	Percentage
Website/Webpage	119	36.8%
Newsletter	82	25.4%
Facebook	79	24.5%
Email	50	15.5%
Other parents, grapevine, or word of mouth	18	5.6%
Newspaper	17	5.3%
Notes from school	7	2.2%
None	6	1.9%
From Kids	5	1.5%
All	5	1.5%
Other	4	1.2%
Attending Meetings	2	0.6%
Online Newspaper	1	0.3%
Phone Calls	1	0.3%

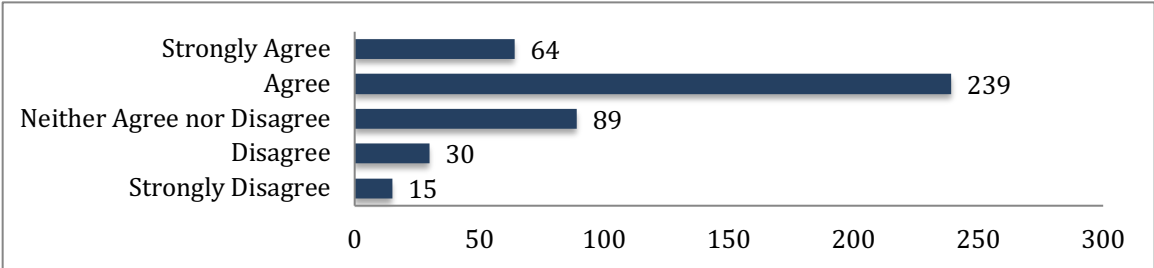
**Figure 26. In general, I am satisfied with the level of communication that comes from the Riverview School District**



**Figure 27. The Riverview School District web page provides helpful information**



**Figure 28. Other communication sources like Facebook, e-newsletters, message systems, and the Riverview Reporter provide helpful information**



**District Finances and Sustainability**

**Key Findings**

Following section of questions related to the district finances and future sustainability respondents were able to comment on any of the statements in that section. In regard to the question are you satisfied with use of funds in the budget, 24 respondents commented on this subject. Many expressed concerns for why their taxes are high for such a small school district and if new developments in the Riverview School District are being properly taxed. Respondents also want the budget more accessible, one suggestion was a transparent break down of the budget in a town hall setting or making it easily accessible on the website.

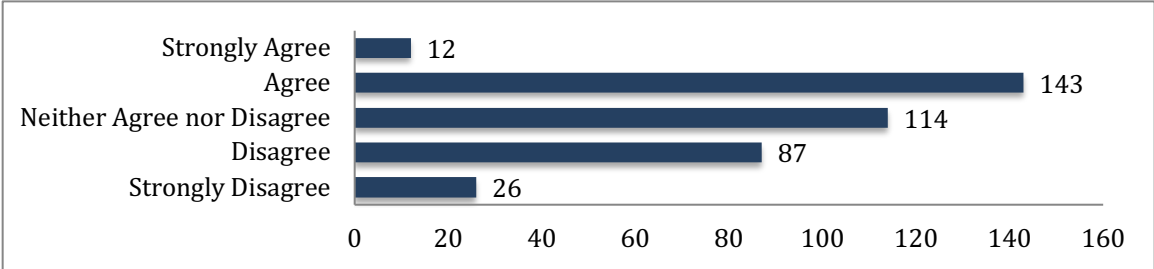
The 14 who responded to the open-ended section are mostly for in favor of the district combining the elementary. But when looking at the data below in Figure 33, 261 (55.9%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it should be a budgeting priority to maintain the two elementary schools. Further data needs to be collected on this subject. Almost every respondent has a different idea on how the schools should be recombined. Some respondents see the advantages of combining the elementary schools to include better school programs for gifted and special needs students and the quality of after school programs would be the same due to the schools being combined. Additionally some respondents find this could help to reduce any tension between Oakmont and Verona. Those who find the schools should not be combined cited the pride Verona has in their community, and that kids should be able to walk to school because it creates a sense of community.

When discussing small class size there were nine responses in which a majority felt as though small class sizes were what made Riverview great. Some respondents found that the class size could be increased, and one cited a previous district they were in as a having bigger class sizes, but separating children of similar ability to keep more children in class engaged with the

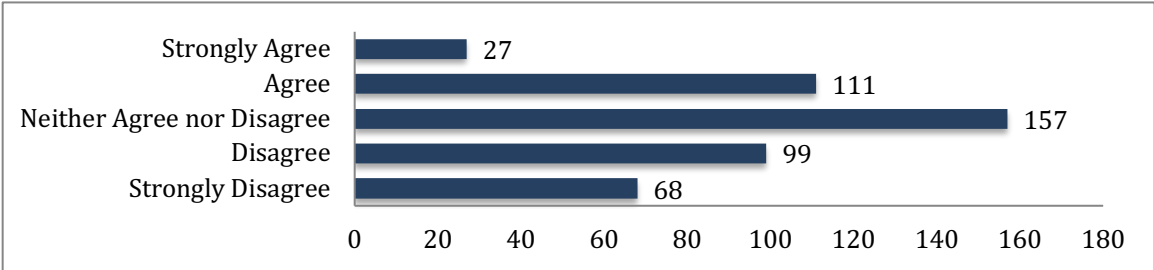


content. As for athletic, music and arts programs all of the respondents who commented on the subject found these opportunities are essential for a well-rounded curriculum. When discussing non-traditional learning opportunities four of the respondents cited a need for expanded before and after school programs. One respondent suggested partnering with other schools for expanded learning opportunities. All responses can be found in the appendix under Finances and Future Sustainability.

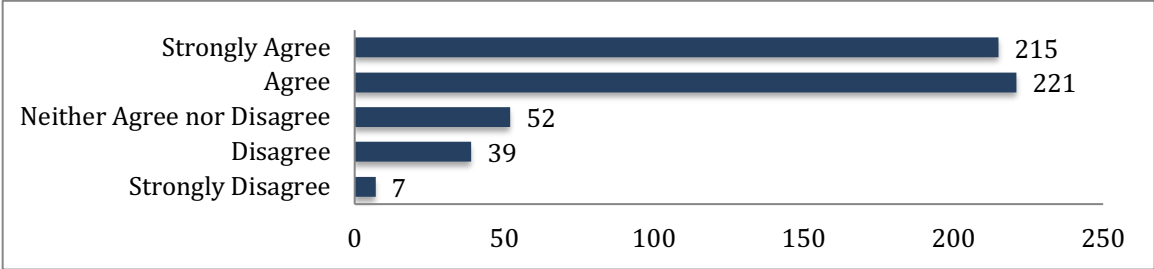
**Figure 29. In general, I am satisfied with the Riverview School District’s budget and use of funds**



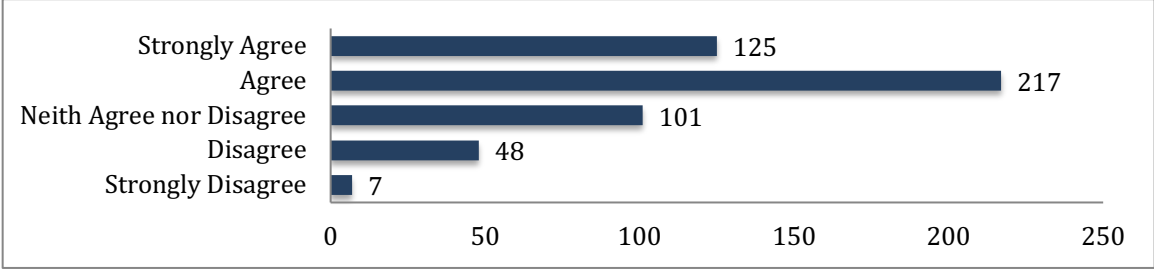
**Figure 30. Money dedicated to the district budget for marketing is important to support the Riverview School District's future sustainability.**



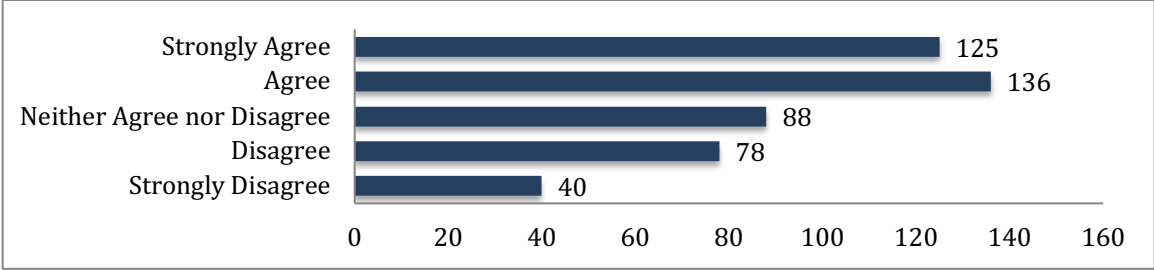
**Figure 31. Academics should be the most important priority when it comes to making tough budgeting decisions**



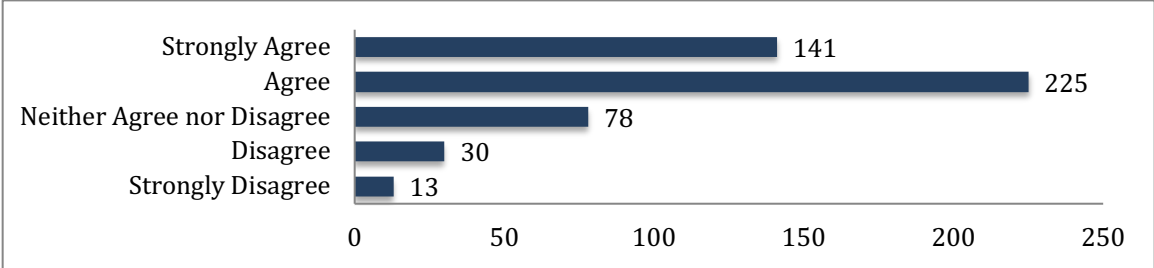
**Figure 32. Safe facilities should be the most important priority when it comes to making tough budgeting decisions**



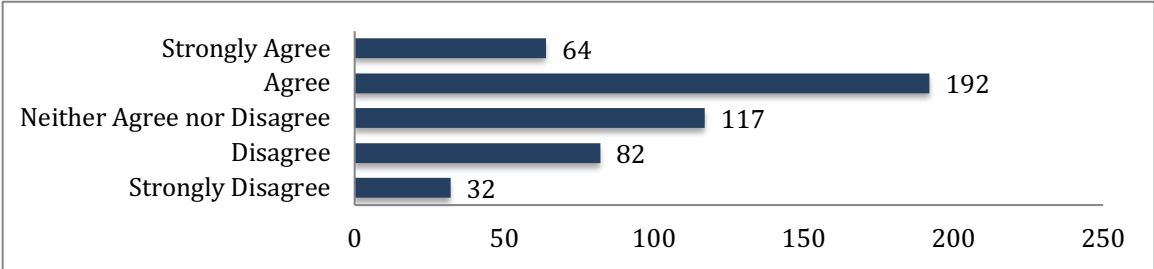
**Figure 33. Maintaining an elementary school in both Verona and Oakmont should be a priority to the Riverview School Board when developing a budget**



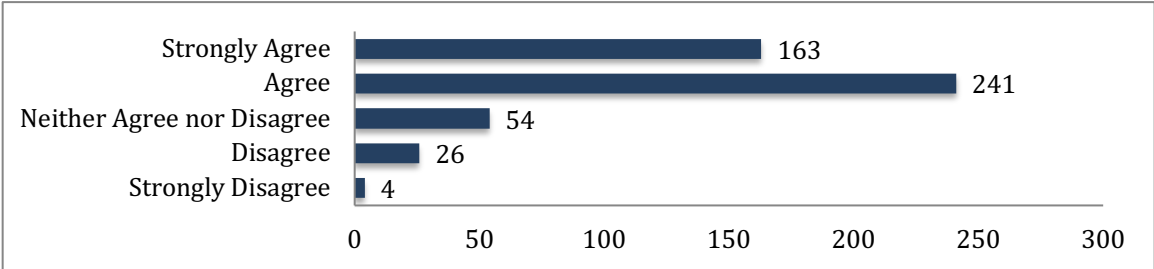
**Figure 34. Small class sizes should be a priority to the Riverview School Board when developing a budget**



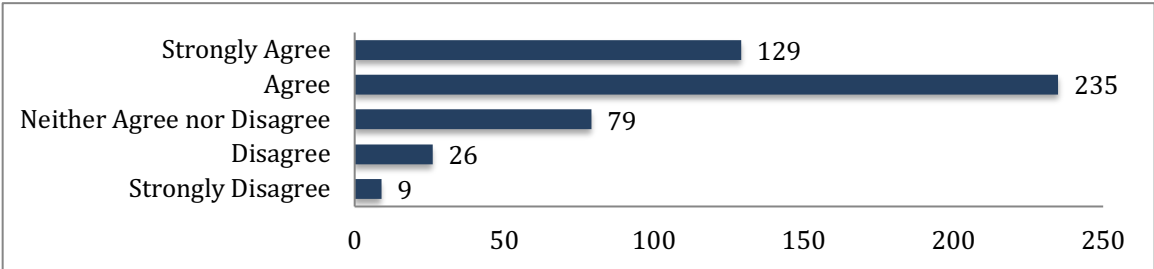
**Figure 35. Athletic programs should be priority to the Riverview School Board when developing a budget**



**Figure 36. Music and Arts programs should be a priority to the Riverview School Board when developing a budget**



**Figure 37. Providing opportunities for learning, beyond the traditional classroom walls, should be a high priority to the Riverview School Board when developing a budget.**



Respondents were asked to rank eight priority areas for district budgeting, from highest (1) to lowest (8). A total of 489 respondents answered the question. Scores were calculated in two ways (Table 7). Total scores were calculated by assigning a value of 8 for a ranking of 1, a value of 7 for a ranking of 2, etc., then calculating the sum of all rankings of each item. Cumulative frequency percent of the frequency an item was ranked 1 or 2 was also calculated. Table 8 includes a full frequency table of rankings.

**Table 7. Ranking priorities when it comes to budgeting; total score and CFP 1 or 2**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Rank by total score</b>	<b>CFP 1 or 2 ranking</b>
<b>Challenging or enriching Academic Curriculum including a wide range of academic classes for our high school students</b>	1	73% (n=356)
<b>School Safety Enhancements</b>	2	55% (n=268)
<b>Small class sizes</b>	3	30% (n=147)
<b>Maintaining an elementary school in both Oakmont and Verona</b>	6	12% (n=61)
<b>Extra-curricular activities (Athletic, Music, and Art Programs)</b>	4	12% (n=61)
<b>Updated Technology and on-line learning</b>	5	10% (n=48)
<b>Need for innovative learning spaces</b>	7	6% (n=31)
<b>Marketing the school district</b>	8	1% (n=6)

Table 8 categories are ranked from top to bottom with the top being the statement with the highest number of respondents rating this 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> on their importance scale. Same number of respondents (61) ranked “maintaining an elementary school in both Oakmont and Verona” and “Extra-curricular activities (Athletic, Music, and Art Programs)” as 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> importance.

**Table 8. Ranking priorities when it comes to budgeting; frequency table**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Challenging or enriching Academic Curriculum including a wide range of academic classes for our high school students</b>	255 (52.2%)	101 (20.7%)	49 (10.0%)	40 (8.2%)	17 (3.5%)	12 (2.5%)	14 (2.9%)	1 (0.2%)
<b>School Safety Enhancements</b>	127 (26.0%)	141 (28.8%)	57 (11.7%)	43 (8.8%)	39 (8.0%)	33 (6.8%)	31 (6.3%)	18 (3.7%)
<b>Small class sizes</b>	51 (10.4%)	96 (19.6%)	112 (22.9%)	66 (13.5%)	65 (13.3%)	61 (12.5%)	29 (5.9%)	9 (1.8%)
<b>Maintaining an elementary school in both Oakmont and Verona</b>	24 (4.9%)	37 (7.6%)	55 (11.3%)	76 (15.5%)	57 (11.7%)	62 (12.7%)	102 (20.9%)	76 (15.5%)
<b>Extra-curricular activities (Athletic, Music, and Art Programs)</b>	8 (1.6%)	53 (10.8%)	119 (24.3%)	112 (22.9%)	107 (21.9%)	59 (12.1%)	24 (4.9%)	7 (1.4%)
<b>Updated Technology and on-line learning</b>	9 (1.8%)	39 (8.0%)	61 (12.5%)	104 (21.3%)	116 (23.3%)	114 (23.3%)	37 (7.6%)	9 (1.8%)
<b>Need for innovative learning spaces</b>	13 (2.7%)	18 (3.7%)	35 (7.2%)	47 (9.6%)	74 (14.9%)	109 (22.3%)	122 (25.0%)	71 (14.5%)
<b>Marketing the school district</b>	2 (0.4%)	4 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)	14 (2.9%)	39 (8.0%)	130 (26.6%)	298 (60.9%)

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