

Meadowbrook Middle School
Value-Added School Review
Spring 2008



Meadowbrook Middle School

I. Value-Added School Review Overview

The Value-Added School Review (VSR) is an analytical model designed to use external review to assist schools in identifying and addressing opportunities for school improvement. The model consists of a set of investigative processes and analytical tools that are used by informed outside observers to enhance a school's self-assessment and continuous improvement capacity. The model allows for an internal as well as the external review of the same data to permit external perspectives and expertise to be supplemented and contextualized with observations and feedback from sources within the school or the authority central office. The aim is to use both Accountability Pillar and school-specific results related to student outcomes to understand the school and to offer constructive suggestions for school improvement. Its success depends on the valid interpretation of a range of data related to the school. The VSR process includes the possibility of engaging school and authority administrators, teachers, support staff, students, and parents in focused conversations related to key questions identified by the school.

School Review Research Questions

In the next section, a school profile presents details about the school (e.g. vision, mission, goals, staffing, attendance, Accountability Pillar results, etc.), provides demographic and economic details on the community of Airdrie, and also examines the education community in Airdrie and the surrounding area served by its schools.

This review also addresses some general questions in relationship to the specific questions the review team was asked to investigate:

1. What are the school's greatest strengths?
2. What are the school's greatest challenges?
3. Does the school's continuous improvement plan adequately reflect the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges?
4. Are the data driven approaches to decision-making utilized by the school valid and reliable, and does the information/data point to any unidentified challenges?

The primary theme for the value added school review (VASR) is school improvement. Related issues involve a potential value shift among staff over time as well as demographic shifts in parent support. Related school improvement indicators may focus on program quality, including both academic and option courses. Other factors may include

- student advocacy among the staff and the caring relationship for students
- staff generalization vs. specialization and levels of staff motivation re: assignments
- opportunities for teacher leadership, including consideration of departmentalization
- optimal approaches to option programming
- merits of a potential teacher advisor program
- efficacy of a Virtues or other character development program
- student council history and potential for conveying students' voice
- optimal role of the school council and school-community linkages

- staff access and use of central office specialists
- the optimal use of data to inform the school and jurisdiction planning processes.

Methodology

Alberta Education staff are facilitating the VASR at Meadowbrook. The review coordinator, John Burger (Alberta Education, System Improvement Group), will lead the preparation of the school profile document which forms the core of the VSR process. He will also facilitate the design of the focus group process and prepare a report on the findings from the whole process. The report will be presented to school staff for their consideration at the completion of the review.

During the first phase of the process, the school profile will be reviewed by an external and an internal review team. The **external** review team will be composed of the following people:

- David Townsend, Professor, University of Lethbridge
- Judith Edge – retired principal, Calgary Board of Education
- Phyllis McCallum-Hunter, Chair, Meadowbrook School Council
- John Burger, Senior Manager, Alberta Education

The **internal** review team will be composed of the following people:

- Craig Schwesinger, Principal
- Tim Fath, Assistant Principal
- Dave Morris,
- Murray Besenski
- Chris Nailer
- Andrea Craigie
- Jordan Flower
- Rhonda Johnson

The process has involved holding 10 focus group conversations with students, parents, and teachers to obtain feedback related to the research questions. The focus groups were conducted on May 9, 13, and 20, 2008. The external team participated in all of the focus group sessions.

The members of the external review team will be invited to provide comments and observations on the information presented in the final draft of the VSR report. The school principal will review this final draft to contribute to factual accuracy and may seek comments from other members of the internal team prior to completion of the report for presentation to the full school staff and to central office staff.

II. School Profile

A. Overview of School

School Mission

“At Meadowbrook Middle School we encourage an innovative, respectful and challenging environment which assists learners in reaching their potential as positive and functioning citizens of a global community to enhance the quality of life.”

School Vision

Meadowbrook Middle School is a caring learning community where there is a shared responsibility and commitment to:

- ✓ an understanding of the needs of students in the middle years
- ✓ providing a safe and healthy environment in which to work and learn
- ✓ providing an atmosphere of mutual respect
- ✓ providing accountability for all learners
- ✓ providing encouragement for meaningful participation in a variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities
- ✓ quality work and responsible citizenship

Values

In order to achieve our mission and vision, the following principles will be observed at Meadowbrook Middle School:

- a) We work collaboratively and with open communication to achieve our collective goals.
- b) We encourage and model behaviour and high expectations based on the six 'P's (proud, prompt, polite, prepared, positive, productive)
- c) We recognize and accommodate diverse needs of all learners and stakeholders.
- d) We actively seek professional development to improve teaching practice.
- e) We value a strong work ethic combined with a balance of social, emotional, intellectual and physical wellness.
- f) We recognize and celebrate effort, achievement and excellence.

Unique features of school

- Strong supportive parent group and school council
- Well maintained physical plant
- Excellent gym facility
- Excellent CTS facilities
- Good art room facility
- Good band room facility
- Three excellent science labs and science prep room

School Motto

The school motto is "Meadowbrook Pride". Meadowbrook Middle School has pride in the students, staff, building, grounds, programs, activities, teams, and organized groups. Meadowbrook Pride is reflected in all aspects of the school.

Meadowbrook Pride means being:

POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL, IMAGINATIVE, DETERMINED and ENTHUSIASTIC.

It is also reflected in the 6 P's...

- **PROUD** – Be proud and respectful of yourself, others, our school building and community.
- **PROMPT** – Be in your seat, ready for class. Assignments are done on time.
- **PREPARED** – Bring all equipment and assignments to class. Be ready to learn by being rested, nourished, and motivated.
- **POLITE** – Have good manners, be courteous and be respectful of others.
- **PRODUCTIVE** – Be a contributor, not a detractor. Participate actively in class. Complete

assignments appropriately.

- *POSITIVE* – Maintain a positive attitude towards self, peers, school and staff.

School Colours

Meadowbrook Middle School's colors are maroon, grey and gold. Maroon is a color of royalty and success, gold signifies light of knowledge, and grey is a neutral color symbolizing the equality with which we treat one another. When you wear school colors, you are representing these ideals with pride.

School Mascot

Meadowbrook Middle School's mascot is the "Bulldog". A bulldog is proud, determined and always works hard. These values are reflected in our students and our school motto.

Student Conduct and Responsibilities

At school, students are expected to focus on their studies. This occurs in an atmosphere of order, cooperation, safety and respect. All students have a right to learn and students have a responsibility to themselves and others to promote this. We expect students to demonstrate pride in their school and contribute to a positive climate in which to learn.

Students shall behave so as to comply with the following code of conduct as outlined in the School Act:

- Be diligent in pursuing their duties
- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and services, in accordance with this Act
- Understand and comply with the rules of the school
- Be accountable for their conduct and behavior
- Respect the rights of others (Section 12, School Act)

Any students who contravene school rules and expectations may be subject to disciplinary measures. Any student who is suspended from school for any reason may be precluded from attending *any* off-campus excursions for the remainder of the year.

Meadowbrook Middle School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment in which students may flourish and therefore will not condone any behavior that endangers the moral or physical well being of its students and staff. The school will adopt a Zero-Tolerance policy in relation to

- Physical, emotional, verbal or sexual harassment
- Use and/or possession of drugs, alcohol or other intoxicants
- Possession of weapons
- Intent to injure or harm other students

If students engage in any of these behaviors, they could face suspension and /or recommendation for expulsion.

AISI

Meadowbrook Middle School is currently in year 2 of a three year AISI project. The project at Meadowbrook is called 'Clear Targets', and its focus involves "clearly communicating to students what they are supposed to be learning at the outset of any unit and then referring to these outcomes regularly. Further, students work to help set and understand the criteria that will evaluate this learning.

Assessment *for* Learning (HOW one learns) is another of the Clear Targets objectives. Where Assessment *of* Learning evaluates student achievement at the end of curriculum (WHAT one learns), Assessment *for* learning guides instruction and progress throughout. It also involves the students as they develop the vocabulary necessary to self and peer assess each others' learning. More and more, students are being given opportunities to practice their curricular outcomes before they "count" towards report card marks. Research around assessment *for* learning tells us that students who receive ongoing feedback about their 'practice' opportunities will achieve higher on assessment *of* learning tasks, traditionally found at the end of units."

School Characteristics

- Meadowbrook Middle School is located on the east side of Airdrie at 1796 Meadowbrook Drive.
- Meadowbrook offers Grades 5 through 8.
- The school serves students who reside in the Kings' Heights, Thorburn, Big Springs and Meadowbrook communities.
- The school is in its twenty-first year of operation and has an enrollment of 368 students.
- The school's instructional schedules are presented below:

Monday to Thursday

| Start Time | Finish Time | Period |
|------------|---------------------|----------|
| 8:50 | 9:00 | Entrance |
| 9:00 | 9:47 | Period 1 |
| 9:50 | 10:37 | Period 2 |
| 10:43 | 11:30 | Period 3 |
| 11:33 | 12:20 | Period 4 |
| 12:20 | 12:56 Entrance 1:03 | Lunch |
| 1:03 | 1:50 | Period 5 |
| 1:53 | 2:40 | Period 6 |
| 2:43 | 3:30 | Period 7 |

Friday

| Start Time | Finish Time | Period |
|------------|----------------------|----------|
| 8:50 | 9:00 | Entrance |
| 9:00 | 9:34 | Period 1 |
| 9:37 | 10:11 | Period 2 |
| 10:14 | 10:48 | Period 3 |
| 11:51 | 11:25 | Period 4 |
| 11:28 | 12:02 | Period 5 |
| 12:02 | 12:32 Entrance 12:40 | Lunch |
| 12:40 | 1:14 | Period 6 |
| 1:17 | 1:51 | Period 7 |

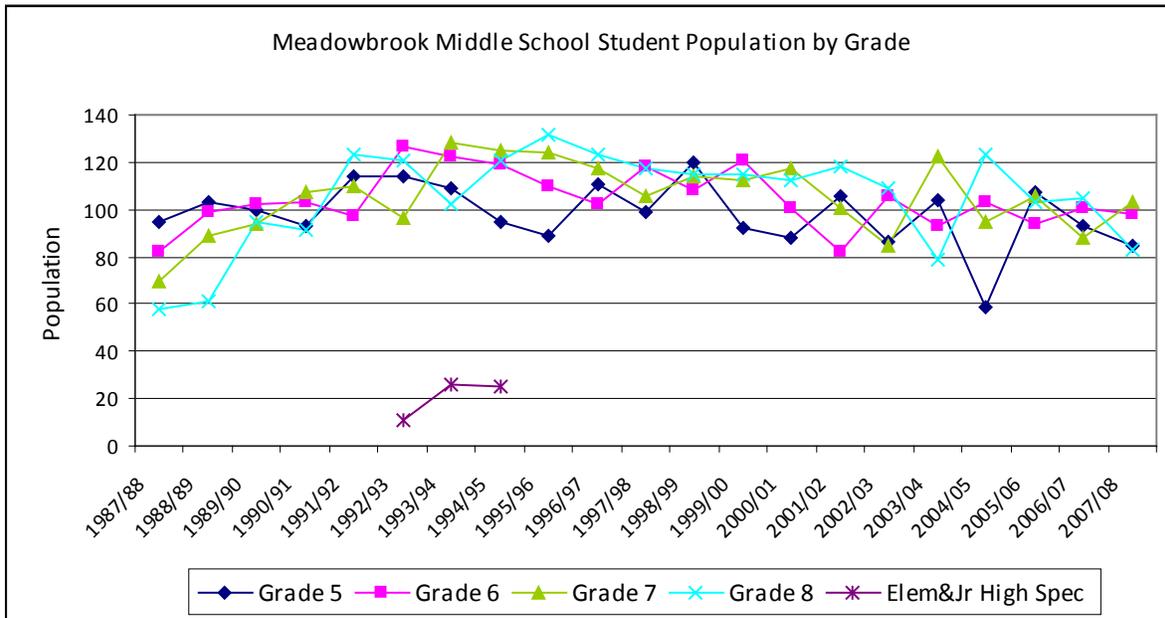
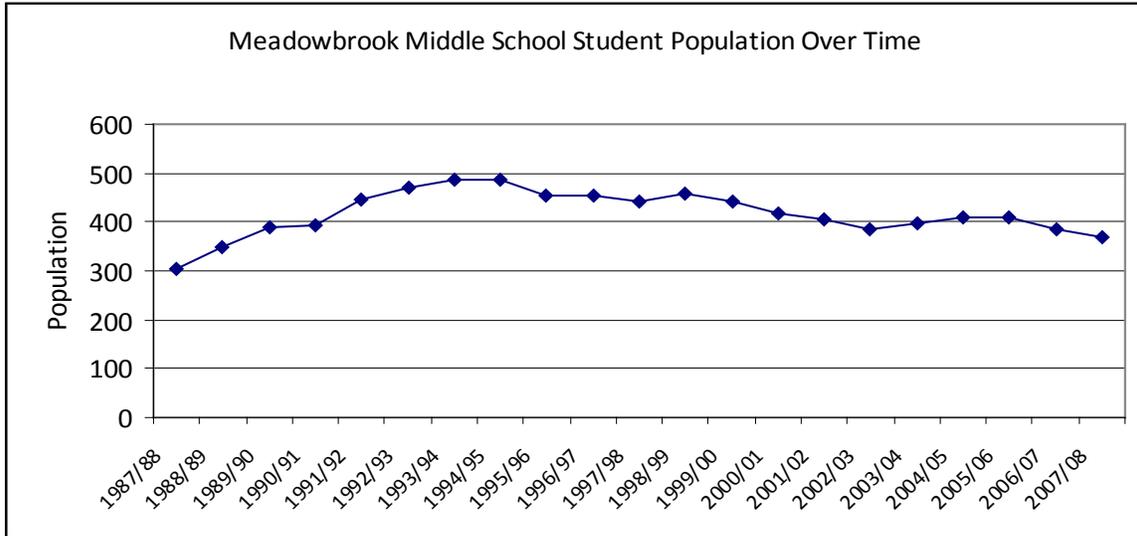
Staffing

- The students are serviced by 19 FTE teachers and four resource assistants. As well, support staff includes two office staff, a library technician, a technology assistant, and a child development advisor (CDA).

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

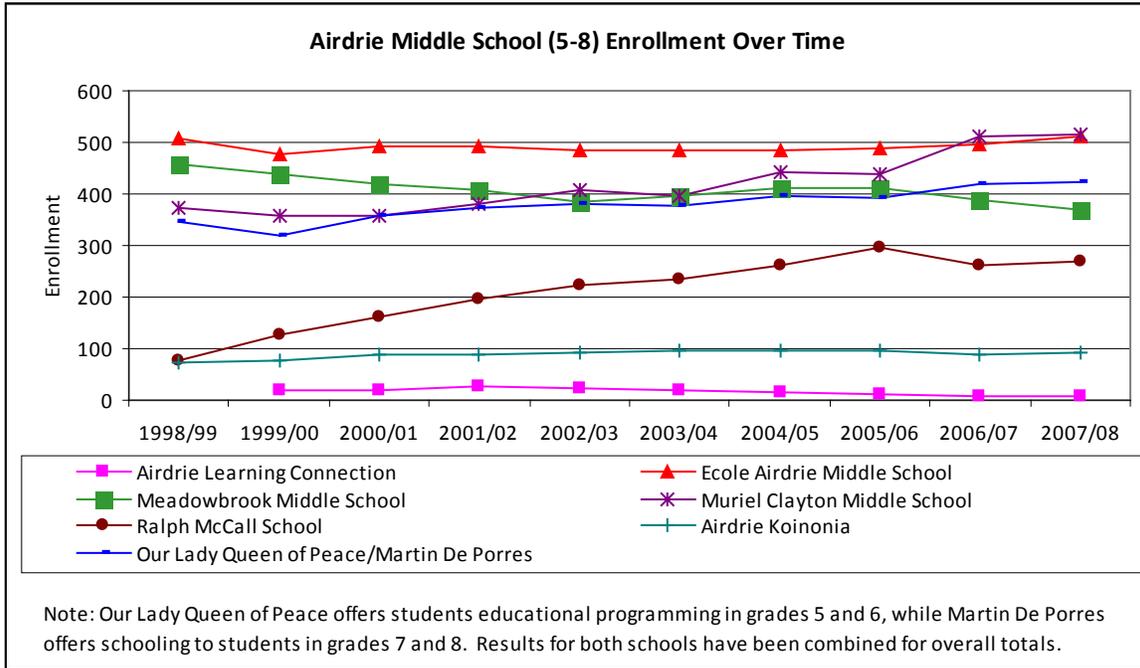
Student Population

The following graph summarizes the changes in enrolment at Meadowbrook Middle School since the 1987/88 school year. In the 1990/91 school year, Meadowbrook also offered grade 9, but the grade 9 count has been removed from the population total to accurately reflect the enrollment of students in grades 5 through 8 over time.



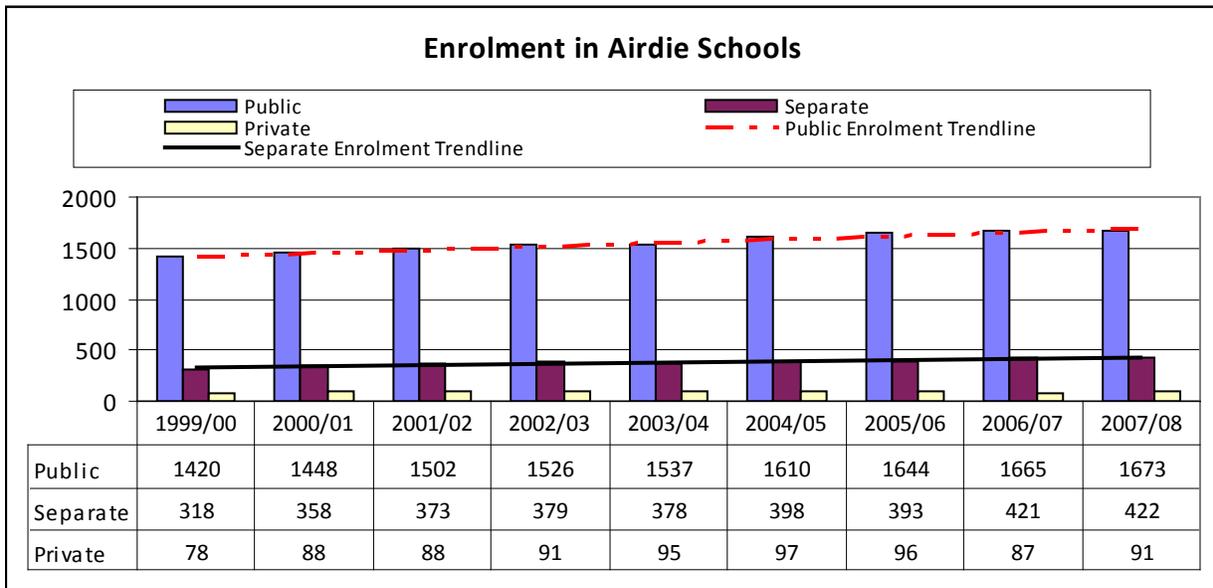
To place this information into a larger context, demographic data related to population change in Airdrie from 1996 to 2006 is presented in a later section of this profile. It shows that the total population grew by almost 86% between 1996 and 2006, with most of that growth occurring in the period between 2001 and 2006 (41%). This compares with enrolment decline at Meadowbrook of 19% between 1996/97 and 2007/08.

Comparison with other Airdrie Schools

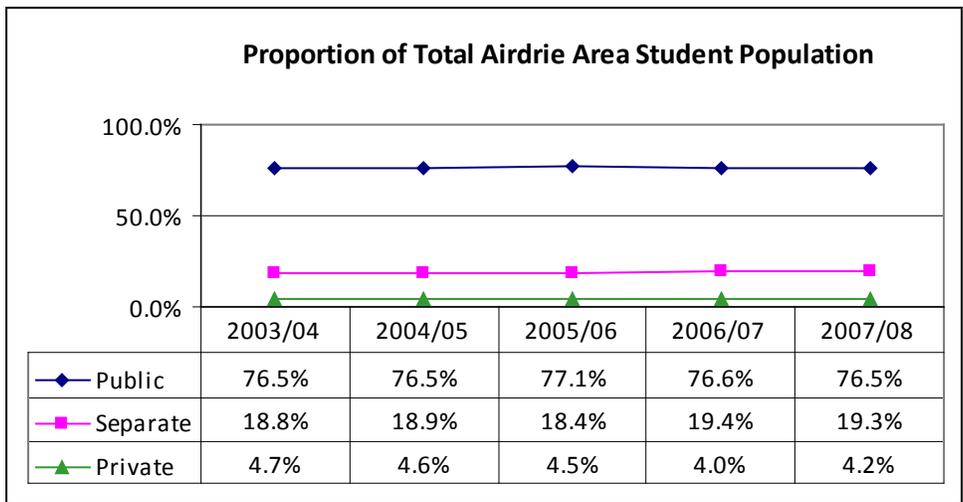
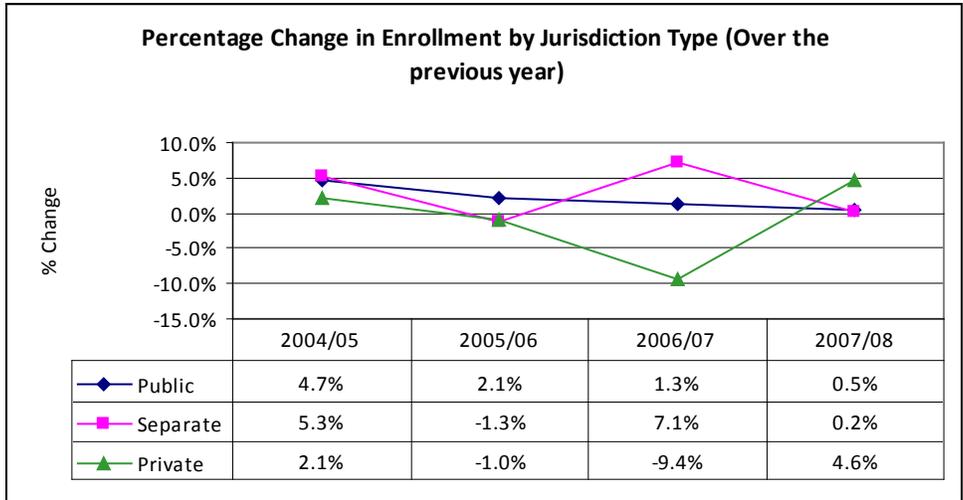


Enrolment in Airdrie Area Schools by School Authority

The following three graphs show enrolment data for Airdrie schools. They show an enrolment increase in both Airdrie public and separate schools and fluctuations in enrollment at Airdrie Koinonia School. The proportion of students attending each jurisdiction has remained stable over time.



Meadowbrook Middle School Profile



Distribution of coded students

The following table shows the average number of coded students, by category of coding, for the five-year period from 2003-04 to 2007-08.

| Coded Student Classification | Proportion of Meadowbrook Student Population | Proportion of Rocky View Student Population |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Severe (Codes 40-46) | 1.0% | 1.3% |
| Mild/Moderate (Codes 50-59) | 9.7% | 6.4% |
| Gifted (Code 80) | 0.2% | 0.5% |
| ESL (Codes 301, 302, 303) | 0.1% | 2.5% |

Source: Alberta Education records, based on information provided by the school and jurisdiction.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students

| FNMI Student Summary | Meadowbrook Student Population | Rocky View Student Population |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| FNMI (self-reported) | 3.0% | 1.6% |

B. Analysis of Accountability Pillar Data

The Accountability Pillar (AP) reports generated by Alberta Education each year give school authorities and schools a wide range of data that provides a variety of perspectives on how they are performing. As the AP measures qualitative aspects of school and authority performance as well as quantitative ones, it offers a more holistic approach to accountability than was previously possible using only achievement test or diploma exam results. Qualitative measures are those generated by Alberta Education's annual surveys of teachers, parents and students. They measure attitudes and beliefs related to a number of affective dimensions of the education system, including safe and caring schools, the quality and range of student learning opportunities, parent involvement, citizenship, preparation for work and satisfaction with the education experience.

On the following page is a summary of Meadowbrook Middle School's Accountability Pillar results as of October, 2007. The subsequent sections discuss the overall summary results for each goal and measure category and provide comparisons of the data between the province, Rocky View School Division and Meadowbrook Middle School. Additional breakdown of most of the survey data is provided by teacher, student and parent responses.

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

Accountability Pillar Overall Summary
October 1, 2007

5229 Meadowbrook Middle School

| Goal | Measure Category | Measure Category Evaluation | Measure | School Results | | | Provincial Results | | | Measure Evaluation | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|----------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| | | | | Current Result | Prev Year Result | Prev 3 Yr Average | Current Result | Prev Year Result | Prev 3 Yr Average | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Goal 1: High Quality Learning Opportunities for All | Safe and Caring Schools | Issue | Safe and Caring | 69.8 | 72.9 | 69.3 | 84.2 | 84.4 | 82.7 | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| | Student Learning Opportunities | n/a | Program of Studies | 76.7 | 75.9 | 76.4 | 78.5 | 78.1 | 76.9 | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |
| | | | Education Quality | 77.1 | 79.0 | 75.5 | 87.6 | 87.7 | 86.0 | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| | | | Drop Out Rate | 10.8 | * | n/a | 4.7 | 4.9 | 5.3 | Very Low | n/a | n/a |
| | | | High School Completion Rate (3 yr) | n/a | n/a | n/a | 70.4 | 70.4 | 69.1 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Goal 2: Excellence in Learner Outcomes | Student Learning Achievement (Grades K-9) | Good | PAT: Acceptable | 79.5 | 75.2 | 74.5 | 75.9 | 76.9 | 77.1 | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |
| | Student Learning Achievement (Grades 10-12) | n/a | PAT: Excellence | 16.2 | 11.2 | 10.7 | 19.5 | 19.1 | 19.3 | Intermediate | Improved | Good |
| | | | Diploma: Acceptable | n/a | n/a | n/a | 85.4 | 84.7 | 85.4 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | | | Diploma: Excellence | n/a | n/a | n/a | 23.3 | 23.0 | 22.7 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | | | Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams) | n/a | n/a | n/a | 53.7 | 53.5 | 52.4 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | | | Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate | n/a | n/a | n/a | 37.2 | 35.3 | 33.9 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | Preparation for Lifelong Learning, World of Work, Citizenship | n/a | Transition Rate (4 yr) | n/a | n/a | n/a | 39.5 | 37.0 | 34.6 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | | | Work Preparation | 66.2 | 61.4 | 65.2 | 77.1 | 77.0 | 74.7 | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Citizenship | | | 57.7 | 63.7 | 58.9 | 76.6 | 76.8 | 74.7 | Very Low | Maintained | Issue | |
| Goal 3: Highly Responsive and Responsible Jurisdiction (Ministry) | Parental Involvement | Issue | Parental Involvement | 72.9 | 73.3 | 72.1 | 77.5 | 77.9 | 76.0 | Low | Maintained | Issue |
| | Continuous Improvement | Acceptable | School Improvement | 70.5 | 63.3 | 58.8 | 76.3 | 76.8 | 73.2 | Low | Improved | Acceptable |

| Goal | Measure Category | Measure | School Results | | | Provincial Results | | |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | | Current Result | Prev Year Result | Prev 3 Yr Average | Current Result | Prev Year Result | Prev 3 Yr Average |
| ACOL measure | ACOL measure | Satisfaction with Program Access | 60.6 | 54.2 | 52.9 | 68.2 | 68.5 | 67.8 |
| | | In-service Jurisdiction Needs | 84.2 | 70.0 | 69.4 | 78.8 | 78.2 | 77.3 |

- Notes:
- 1) Student Learning Achievement: PAT Values reported are weighted averages of PAT Acceptable and PAT Excellence results. Courses included: ELA (Grades 3, 6, 9), Math (Grades 3, 6, 9), Social Studies (Grades 6, 9), Science (Grades 6 only), French Language Arts (Grades 6, 9), Français (Grades 6, 9).
 - 2) Student Learning Achievement: Diploma Exam Values reported are averages of Diploma Acceptable and Diploma Excellence results, weighted by the number of students enrolled in each course.
 - 3) Overall evaluations can only be calculated if both improvement and achievement evaluations are available.
 - 4) The ACOL measures are not evaluated as they are not part of the Accountability Pillar and are included only to enable inclusion in the AERR and 3-Year Education Plan reports.
 - 5) Data values have been suppressed where the number of respondents is less than 6.

Goal 1: High Quality Learning Opportunities for All

In this Alberta Education goal, the measures reported are related to safe and caring schools and student learning opportunities.

Provincial Outcome: Schools provide a safe and caring environment for students

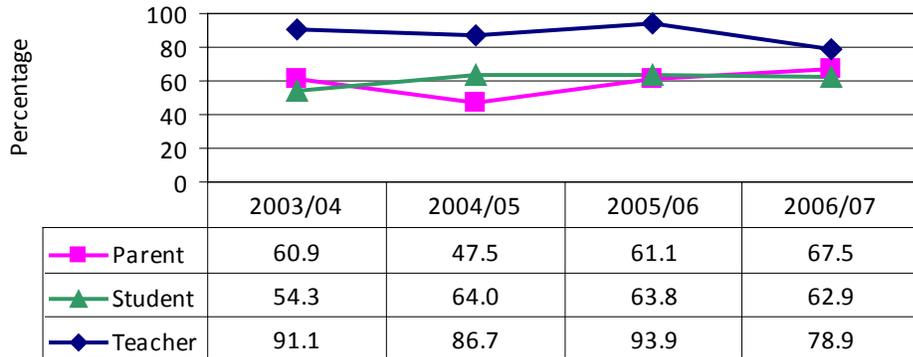
Percentage of teacher, parent and student agreement that: students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school.

Survey data is used to assess student, teacher and parent satisfaction that students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school.

Meadowbrook Safe and Caring Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

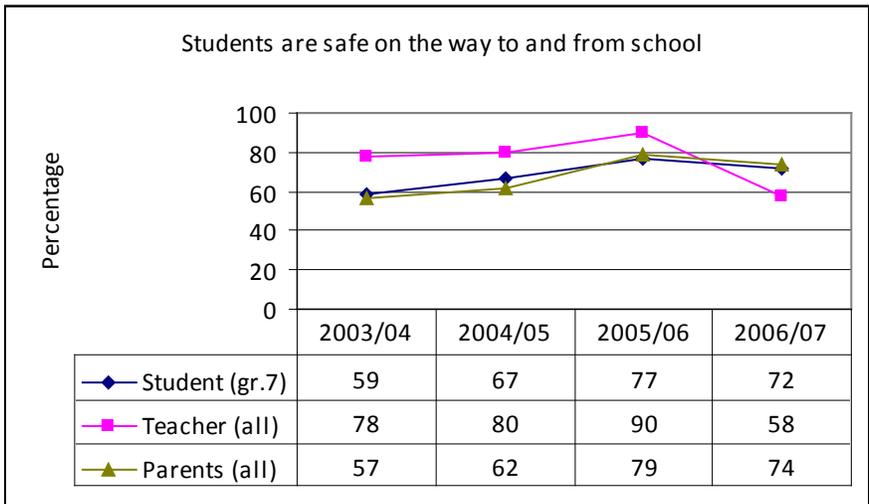
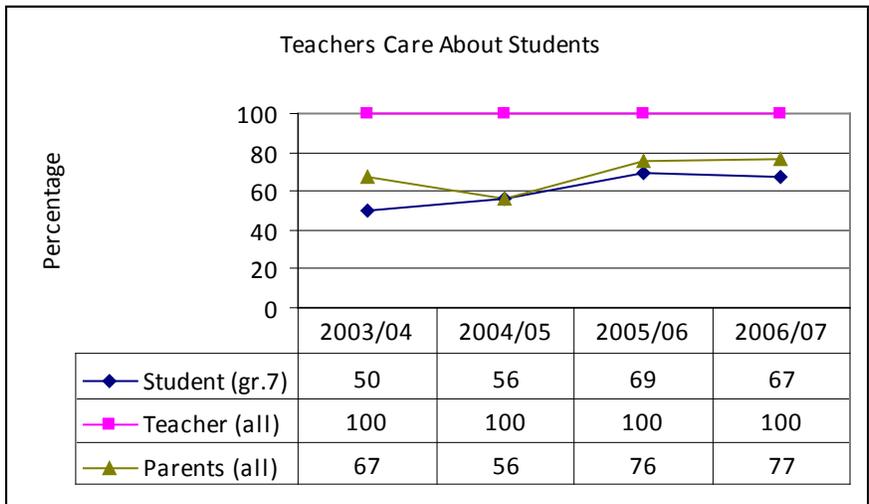
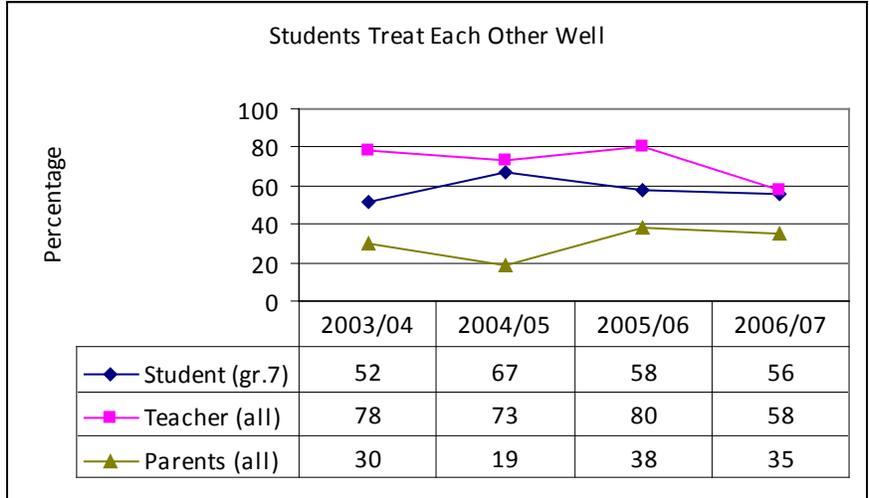
| Safe and Caring | Measure Evaluation | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook Middle School | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Jurisdiction | Intermediate | Improved | Good |
| Province | Intermediate | Improved Significantly | Good |

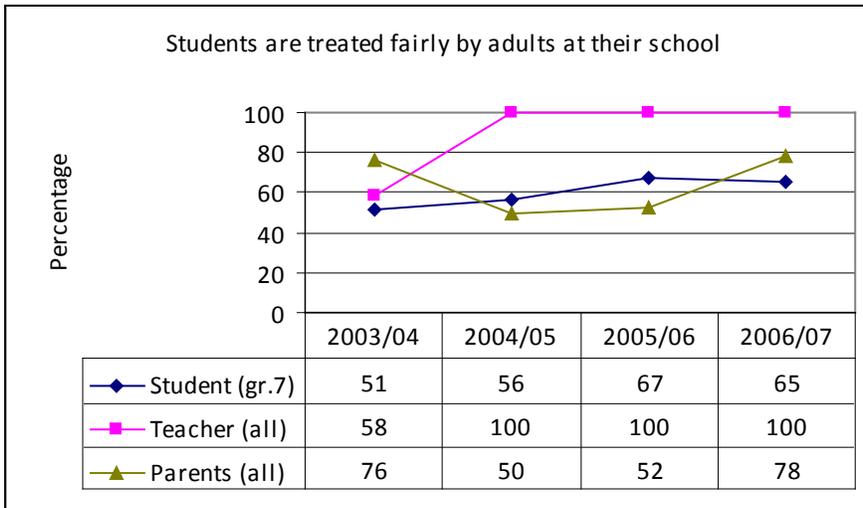
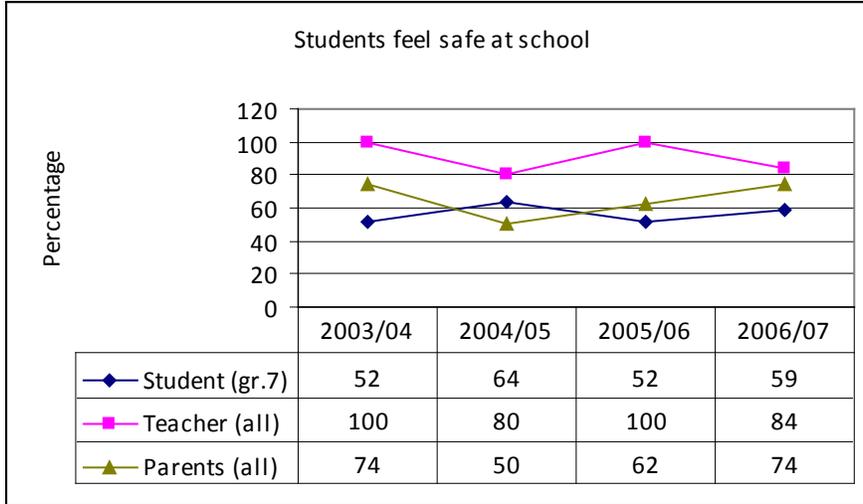
**Safe and Caring
Meadowbrook Middle School Details**



Within the Safe and Caring category, the responses to the individual survey questions are presented in the following five graphs.

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile





Key Observation/Discussion Points:

The Safe and Caring results for Meadowbrook Middle School are rated as very low in achievement and maintained over previous results. The graph provides the detailed responses for the parents, and teachers. Parents generally had lower satisfaction levels than teachers.

Compared with provincial averages, this result is an issue.

Provincial Outcome: The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.

Percentage of teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the opportunity to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education.

Student Learning Opportunities

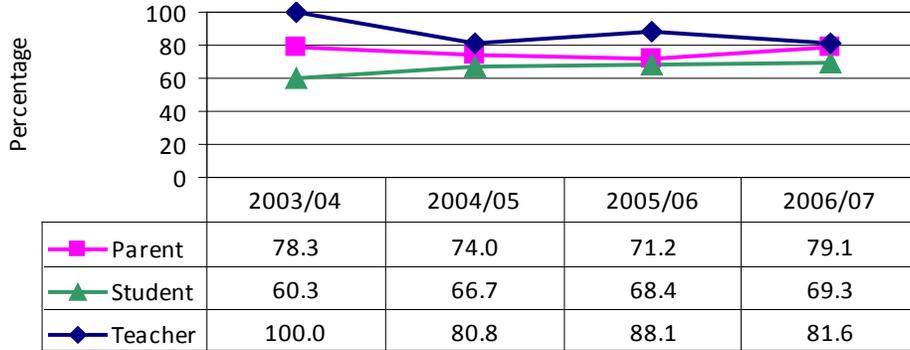
Student learning opportunities are measured by examining the survey results related to students receiving a broad range of programs and the quality of basic (K-12) education.

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

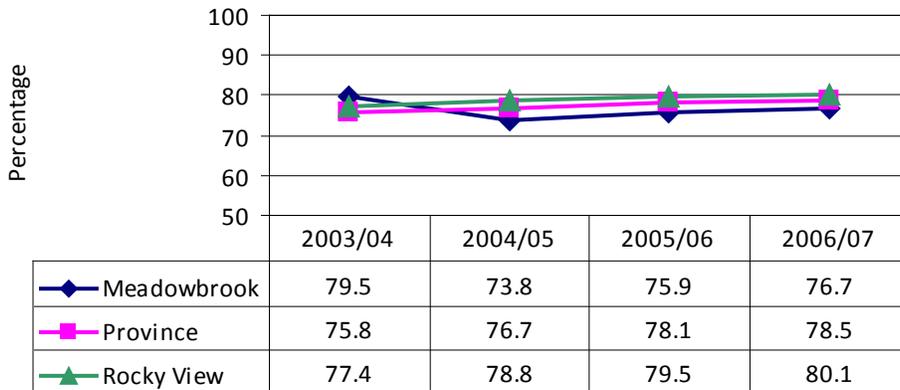
Program Of Studies Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

| Measure: Program of Studies | Measure Evaluation | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook Middle School | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |
| Jurisdiction | High | Improved | Good |
| Province | High | Improved Significantly | Good |

**Program of Studies
Meadowbrook Middle School Details**



Program of Studies Summary



Program of Studies Detail – Percent Satisfied and Very Satisfied

| Question | Year | Parent (all) | Teacher (all) | Student (Gr. 7) |
|---|---------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities to learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another language | 2003/04 | 79 | 100 | 60 |
| | 2004/05 | 75 | 93 | 69 |
| | 2005/06 | 62 | 95 | 62 |
| | 2006/07 | 57 | 74 | 61 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art | 2003/04 | 71 | 100 | 78 |
| | 2004/05 | 69 | 73 | 81 |
| | 2005/06 | 61 | 85 | 56 |
| | 2006/07 | 74 | 63 | 43 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers | 2003/04 | 86 | 100 | 23 |
| | 2004/05 | 69 | 80 | 43 |
| | 2005/06 | 72 | 80 | 63 |

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

| Question | Year | Parent (all) | Teacher (all) | Student (Gr. 7) |
|--|---------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | 2006/07 | 78 | 63 | 61 |
| • Drama | 2003/04 | 59 | 100 | 46 |
| | 2004/05 | 62 | 73 | 49 |
| | 2005/06 | 56 | 90 | 66 |
| | 2006/07 | 61 | 95 | 81 |
| • Health | 2003/04 | 83 | 100 | 65 |
| | 2004/05 | 73 | 53 | 78 |
| | 2005/06 | 75 | 70 | 79 |
| | 2006/07 | 96 | 84 | 75 |
| • Music | 2003/04 | 79 | 100 | 58 |
| | 2004/05 | 81 | 87 | 64 |
| | 2005/06 | 90 | 100 | 60 |
| | 2006/07 | 83 | 95 | 75 |
| • Physical Education | 2003/04 | 90 | 100 | 93 |
| | 2004/05 | 81 | 100 | 91 |
| | 2005/06 | 86 | 95 | 95 |
| | 2006/07 | 100 | 100 | 92 |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the variety of subjects available | 2003/04 | 79 | 100 | 59 |
| | 2004/05 | 81 | 87 | 60 |
| | 2005/06 | 67 | 90 | 67 |
| | 2006/07 | 86 | 79 | 67 |

Provincial Outcome: The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.

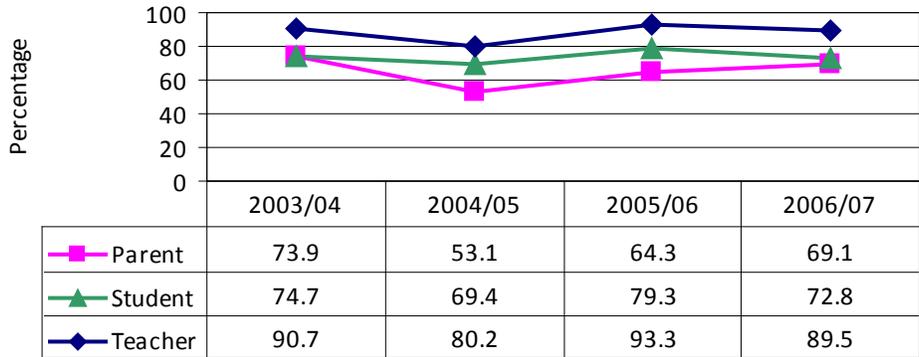
Percentage of teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of education in Alberta.

Data is aggregated from responses to several survey questions related to clarity of student expectations, challenging school work, usefulness of learning, and the quality of education and teaching at the school.

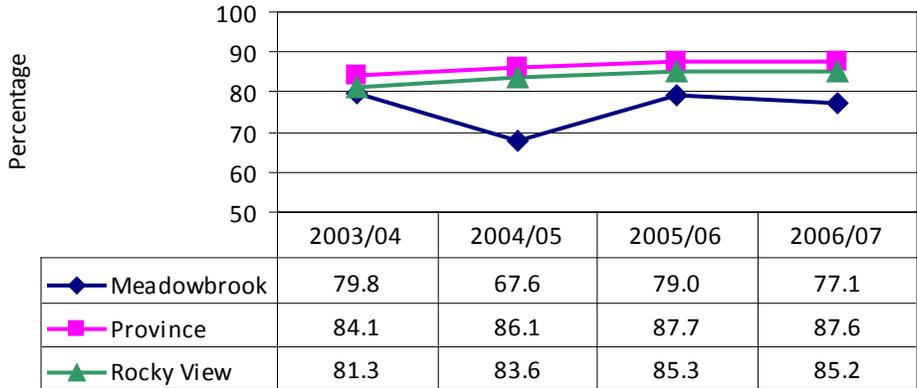
Education Quality Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

| Measure: Education Quality | Measure Evaluation | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook Middle School | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Jurisdiction | Intermediate | Improved Significantly | Good |
| Province | High | Improved Significantly | Good |

**Education Quality
Meadowbrook Middle School Details**



Education Quality Summary



Education Quality Detail– Percent Satisfied and Very Satisfied

| Question | Year | Parent (all) | Teacher (all) | Student (Gr. 7) |
|---|---------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Students/your child clearly understand(s) what he or she is expected to learn at school | 2003/04 | 61 | 100 | 68 |
| | 2004/05 | 56 | 60 | 70 |
| | 2005/06 | 45 | 95 | 79 |
| | 2006/07 | 61 | 79 | 73 |
| Students/your child find(s) school work challenging | 2003/04 | 69 | 100 | 80 |
| | 2004/05 | 56 | 87 | 75 |
| | 2005/06 | 72 | 100 | 82 |
| | 2006/07 | 74 | 89 | 72 |
| Students/your child find(s) school work interesting | 2003/04 | 70 | 100 | 45 |
| | 2004/05 | 56 | 73 | 38 |
| | 2005/06 | 43 | 90 | 47 |
| | 2006/07 | 48 | 89 | 47 |
| Your child/students is/are learning what he or she/ they need(s) to know | 2003/04 | 78 | 78 | 81 |
| | 2004/05 | 56 | 80 | 80 |
| | 2005/06 | 69 | 90 | 84 |
| | 2006/07 | 74 | 95 | |

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

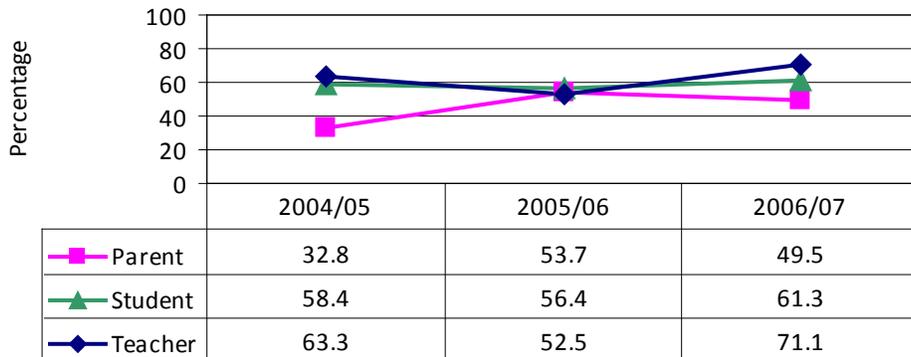
| Question | Year | Parent (all) | Teacher (all) | Student (Gr. 7) |
|---|---------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of education your child/students is/are receiving at school? | 2003/04 | 89 | 78 | |
| | 2004/05 | 56 | 88 | |
| | 2005/06 | 79 | 90 | |
| | 2006/07 | 86 | 95 | |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of teaching at your (child's) school? | 2003/04 | 77 | 89 | |
| | 2004/05 | 38 | 93 | |
| | 2005/06 | 79 | 95 | |
| | 2006/07 | 73 | 89 | |

Student Questions (Percent who said Very Good or Good)

| Question | Year | Student (Gr. 7) |
|---|---------|-----------------|
| Is the quality of teaching at your school | 2003/04 | 85 |
| | 2004/05 | 65 |
| | 2005/06 | 90 |
| | 2006/07 | 80 |
| Overall, is the education you are receiving at school | 2003/04 | 88 |
| | 2004/05 | 88 |
| | 2005/06 | 94 |
| | 2006/07 | 84 |

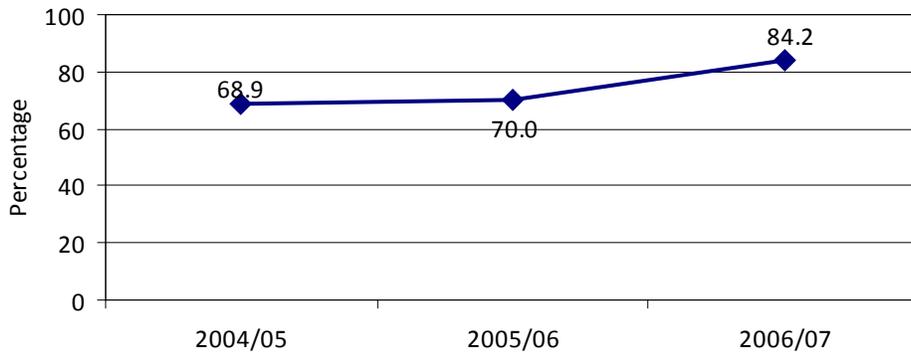
The following two graphs present data that do not form part of the Accountability Pillar, but are obtained from the AP surveys. The first graph is based on responses to questions related to satisfaction with accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services for students in the community.

Satisfaction with Program Access
Meadowbrook Middle School Details



This second graph is based on teacher responses to questions related to agreement that in the past 3-5 years the professional development and in-servicing received from the school authority has been focused, systematic, and contributed significantly to their ongoing professional growth.

**Teacher Satisfaction with Inservice Jurisdiction Needs
Meadowbrook Middle School Details**



Key Observation/Discussion Points:

Program of Studies: Perceptions regarding the breadth of the program of studies at Meadowbrook Middle School has an overall evaluation of acceptable. While teacher satisfaction has decreased since 2003/04, teachers report the highest level of satisfaction. Both parent and student satisfaction has increased over time. However, overall, Meadowbrook Middle School reports less satisfaction than both the province and the school authority.

Education Quality: Perceptions of the education quality at Meadowbrook Middle School has a low rating. Overall, the school scores over 10% lower than the province, and over 8% lower than the school authority on this survey measure. Perceptions of education quality is an issue overall.

Satisfaction with Program Access: Teachers report the greatest satisfaction while parents report the least satisfaction with program access. All three groups report increased satisfaction over 2004/05.

Satisfaction with Inservice Jurisdiction Needs: Teachers at Meadowbrook Middle School show an increase in satisfaction with inservice jurisdiction needs over time.

Goal 2: Excellence in Learner Outcomes

For all schools, the Accountability Pillar examines two categories of measures – student achievement, and preparation for lifelong learning, work and citizenship.

Student learning achievement (Grades K-9)

In this category, the Provincial Achievement Test participation rates and results are examined, both in summary and by individual subject. Results for Meadowbrook include Grade 6 English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

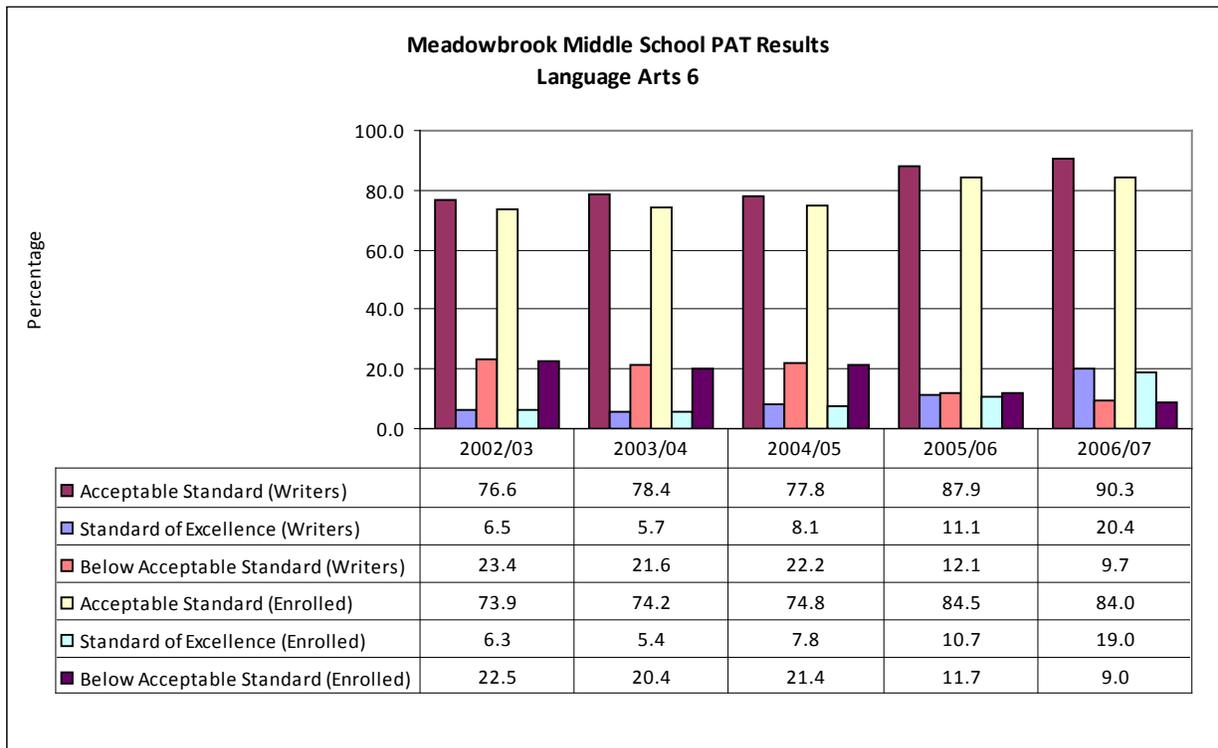
Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

Student Achievement Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

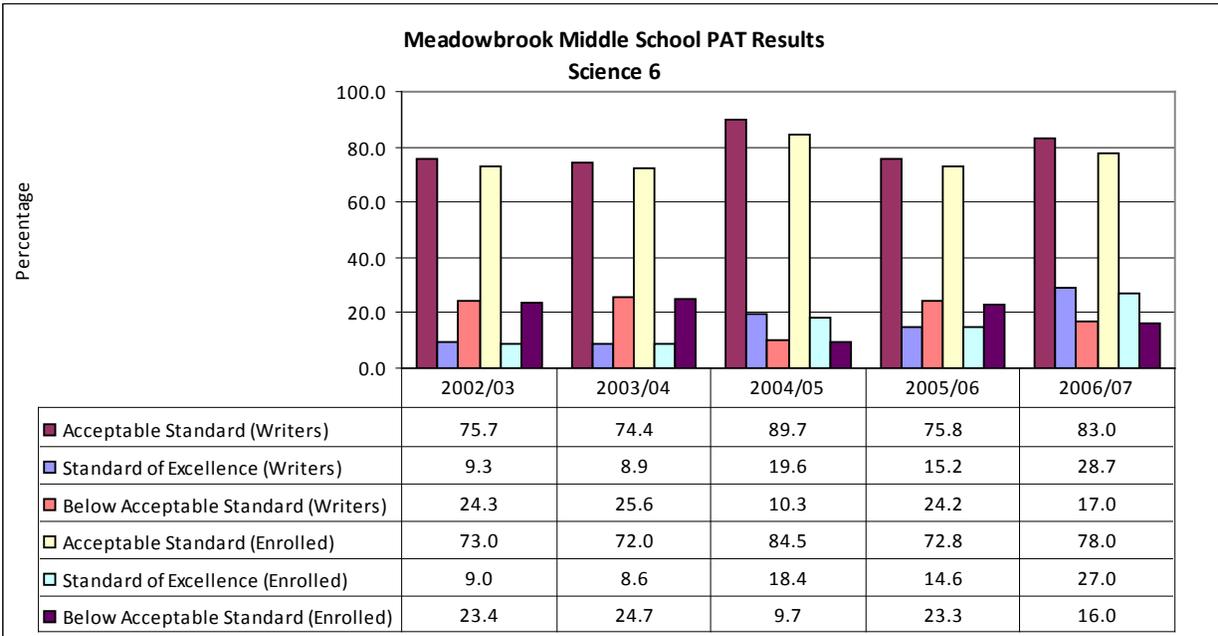
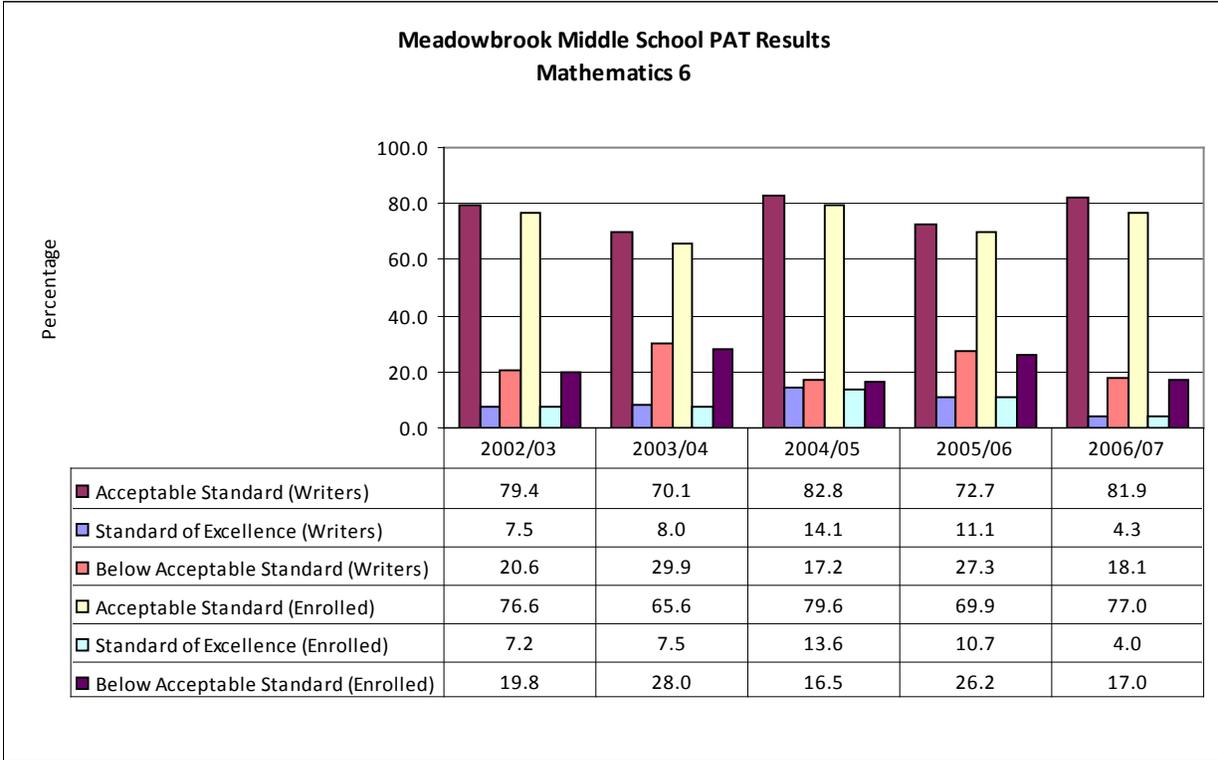
| Meadowbrook | Measure Evaluation | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| PAT: Acceptable | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |
| PAT: Excellence | Intermediate | Improved | Good |
| Jurisdiction | Measure Evaluation | | |
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| PAT: Acceptable | Intermediate | Declined | Issue |
| PAT: Excellence | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |
| Province | Measure Evaluation | | |
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| PAT: Acceptable | Intermediate | Declined Significantly | Issue |
| PAT: Excellence | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |

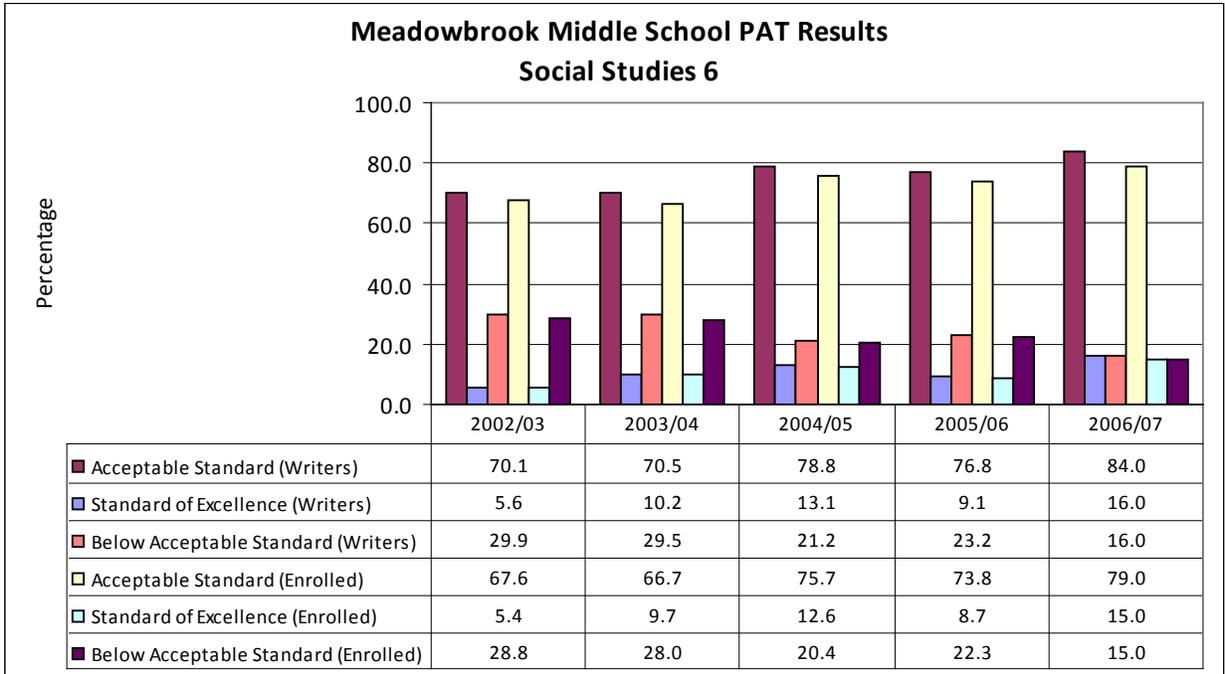
PAT Results

The following two charts present the percentage of students achieving the Acceptable Standard and the Standard of Excellence in Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests.

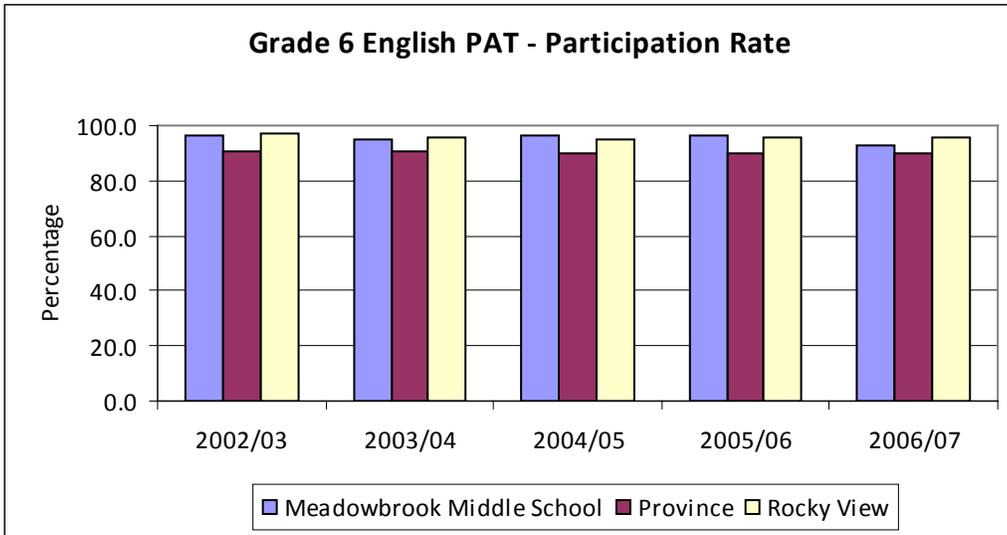


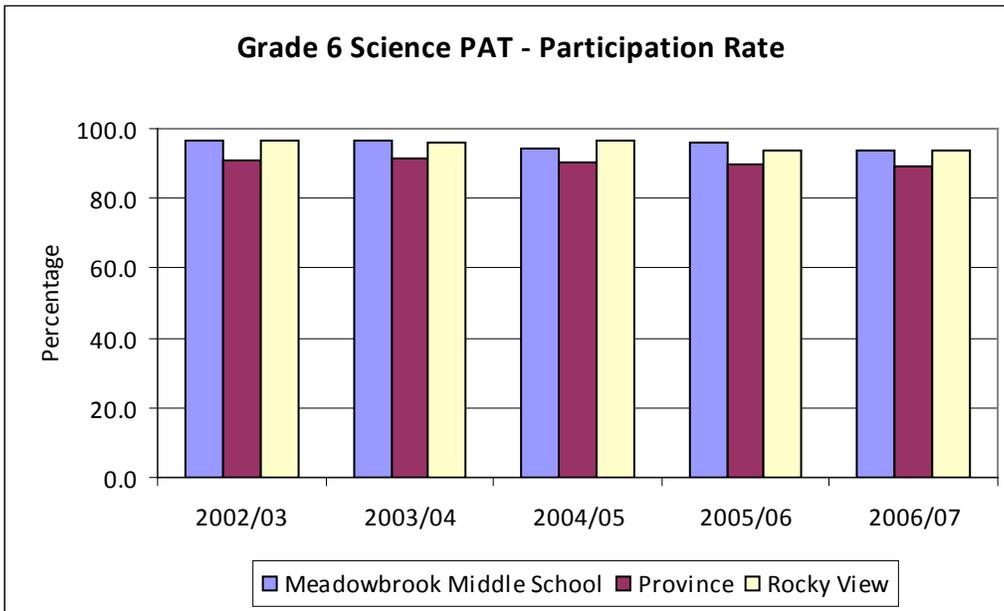
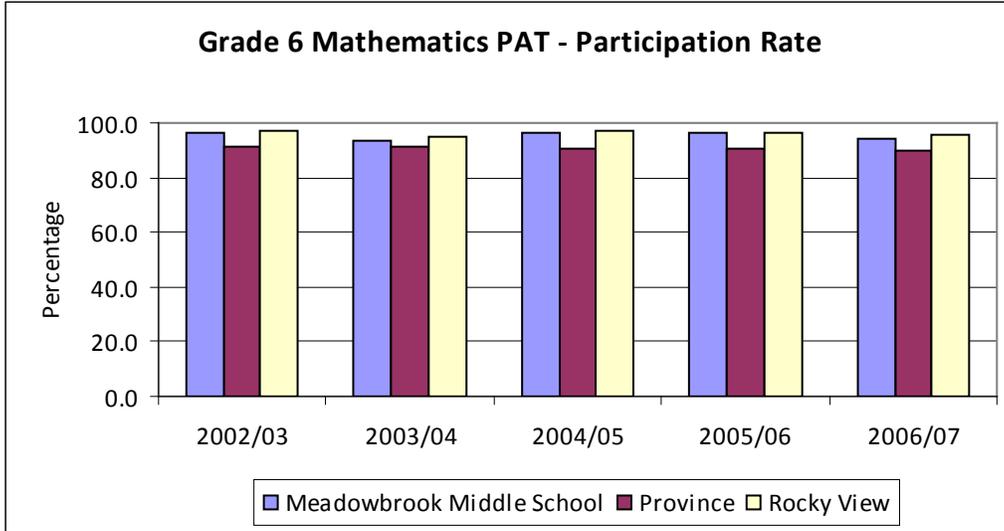
Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

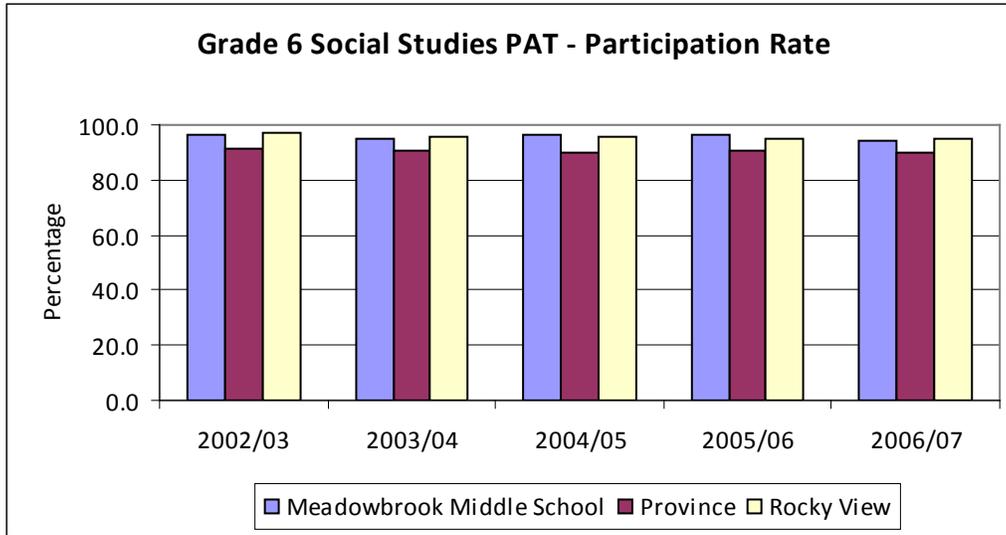




The next four graphs show a comparison of PAT participation rates for Meadowbrook, Rocky View Regional Division and the province as a whole.







Key Observation/Discussion Points:

Provincial Achievement Tests – Percent Acceptable

With an overall evaluation of acceptable, Meadowbrook Middle School performed better than both the jurisdiction and the province.

Provincial Achievement Tests – Percent Standard of Excellence

With an overall evaluation of good, Meadowbrook Middle School performed better than both the jurisdiction and the province.

Provincial Achievement Tests – Participation Rate

The participation rate on 3 of 4 grade 6 PATs at Meadowbrook Middle School is below authority results, but exceeds provincial participation rates on all 4 exams.

Preparation for Lifelong Learning, World of Work, Citizenship

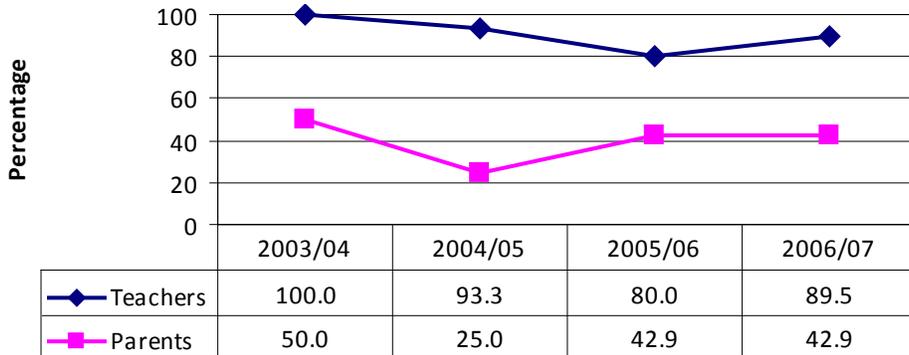
This category examines teacher and parent satisfaction with how well schools prepare students for work and develop citizenship traits.

The first measure addresses the degree to which teachers and parents agree that students have attitudes that make them successful at work. Parents were asked “Your child is taught attitudes and behaviors to be successful at work when he or she leaves school.” Teachers were asked “Students at your school are taught attitudes and behaviors to be successful at work when they leave school.” Results are displayed below.

Work Preparation Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

| Work Preparation | Measure Evaluation | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Jurisdiction | Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Province | Intermediate | Improved Significantly | Good |

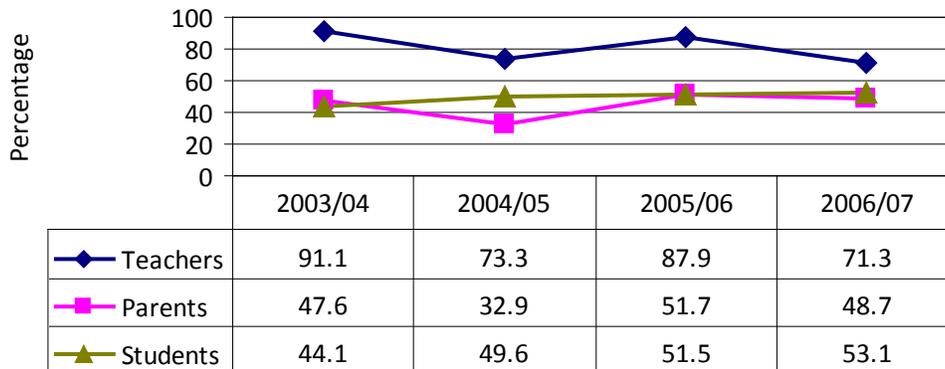
Work Preparation
Meadowbrook Middle School Details



The second measure addresses the extent to which parents, teachers and students agree that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.

| Citizenship | Measure Evaluation | | |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook | Very Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Jurisdiction | Intermediate | Maintained | Acceptable |
| Province | Intermediate | Improved Significantly | Good |

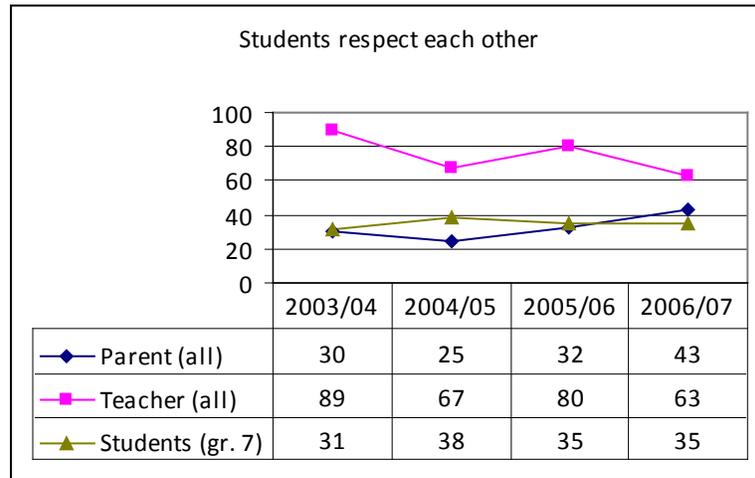
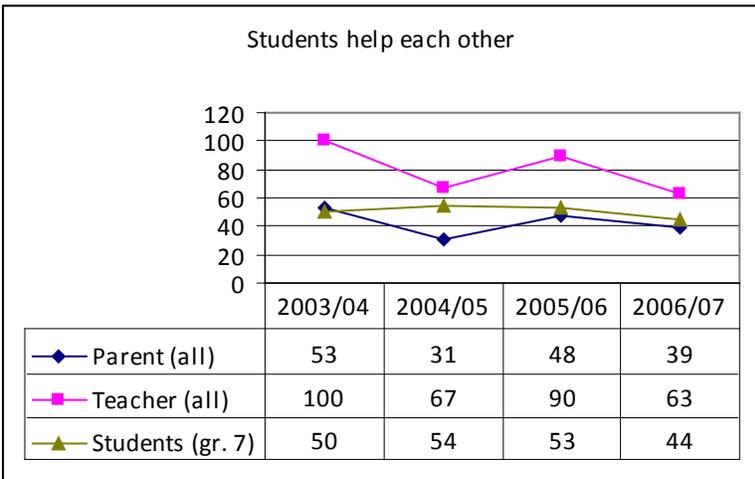
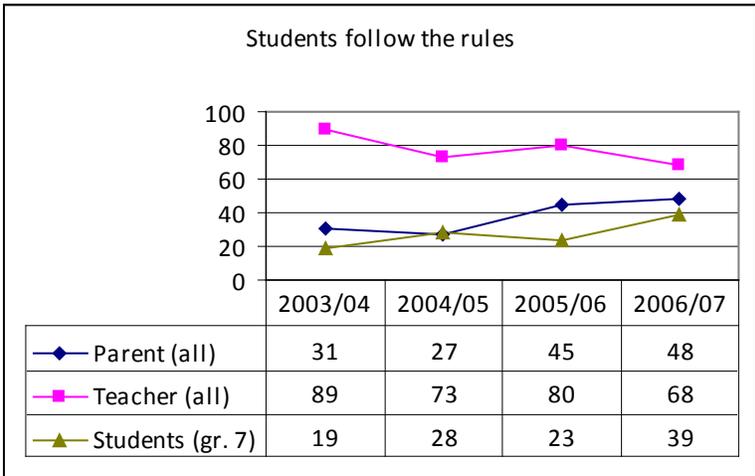
Citizenship
Meadowbrook Middle School Details



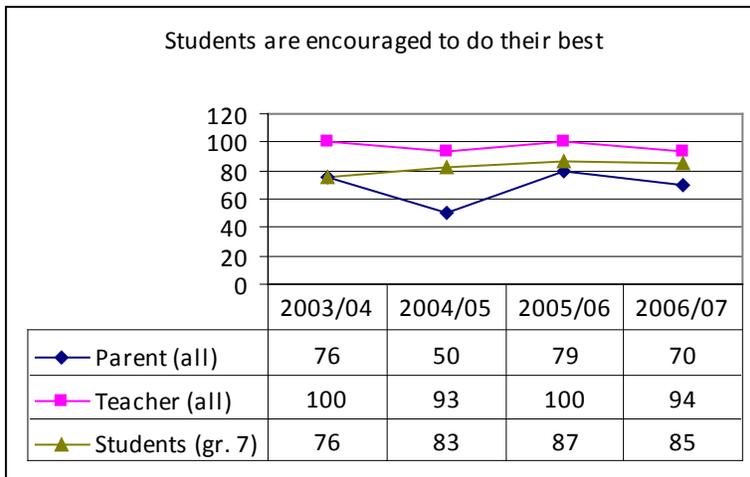
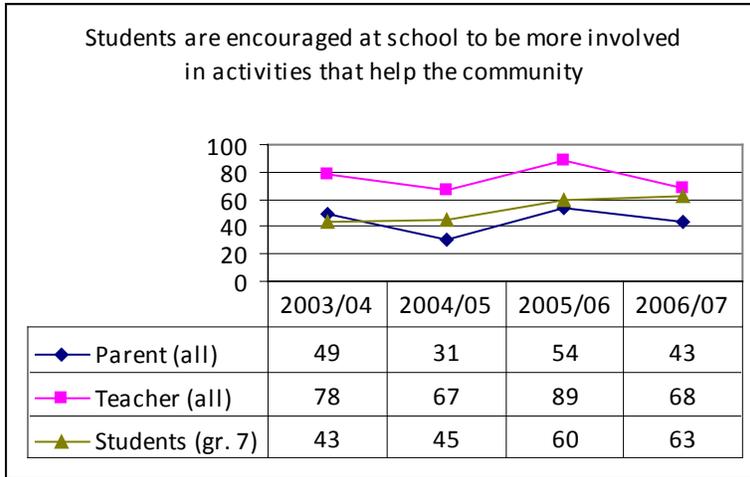
Citizenship Details

The following five graphs show differences between teachers, parents and students who agree or strongly agree on the five survey questions that are aggregated into the Citizenship measure.

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile



Meadowbrook Middle School Profile



Key Observation/Discussion Points:

Work Preparation: Meadowbrook Middle School has an achievement level of very low for work preparation, and is an issue overall. Fewer than half of parents are satisfied or very satisfied that students are taught attitudes and behaviors that will make them successful at work when they finish school. And while almost 90% of teachers are satisfied (or very satisfied) with student work preparation, results have declined since 2003/04.

Citizenship: Meadowbrook Middle School has an achievement level of very low for citizenship, and is an issue overall. Of the 5 citizenship survey measures, teachers report greater satisfaction than both students and parents. Students report greater than 50% satisfaction on two measures (students are encouraged to do their best and students are encouraged to be more involved in activities that help the community), while parents only report greater than 50% satisfaction with one measure (students are encouraged to do their best).

Goal 3: Highly Responsive and Responsible Jurisdiction

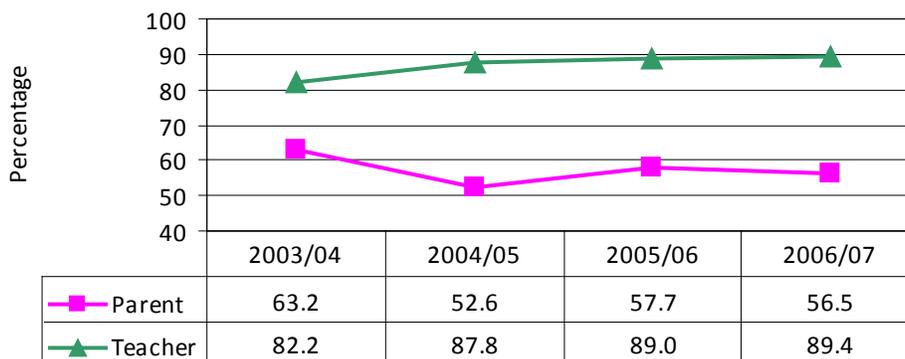
The purpose of this goal is to determine the level of satisfaction with parental involvement and continuous improvement as measured by parent and teacher feedback.

Parental Involvement & Continuous Improvement

Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

| Parental Involvement | Measure Evaluation | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook | Low | Maintained | Issue |
| Jurisdiction | Intermediate | Improved | Good |
| Province | Intermediate | Improved Significantly | Good |

**Parental Involvement
Meadowbrook High School Details**



Parental Involvement Details (Top 2 Responses)

| Question | Year | Parent | Teacher |
|---|---------|--------|---------|
| To what extent are parents involved in decisions about the child's education? [Some or a lot] | 2003/04 | 69 | 67 |
| | 2004/05 | 80 | 87 |
| | 2005/06 | 75 | 75 |
| | 2006/07 | 70 | 68 |
| To what extent are parents involved in decisions at the child's school? [Some or a lot] | 2003/04 | 58 | 67 |
| | 2004/05 | 56 | 80 |
| | 2005/06 | 61 | 90 |
| | 2006/07 | 39 | 89 |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that parents' input into decisions at the child's school is considered? | 2003/04 | 55 | 89 |
| | 2004/05 | 19 | 87 |
| | 2005/06 | 42 | 95 |
| | 2006/07 | 57 | 95 |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunity for parents to be involved in decisions about the child's education? | 2003/04 | 67 | 100 |
| | 2004/05 | 69 | 93 |
| | 2005/06 | 52 | 95 |
| | 2006/07 | 57 | 95 |

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

| Question | Year | Parent | Teacher |
|---|---------|--------|---------|
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunity for parents to be involved in decisions at the child's school? | 2003/04 | 68 | 89 |
| | 2004/05 | 40 | 93 |
| | 2005/06 | 57 | 90 |
| | 2006/07 | 61 | 100 |

Accountability Pillar October 2007 Results

| Continuous Improvement | Measure Evaluation | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | Achievement | Improvement | Overall |
| Meadowbrook | Low | Improved | Acceptable |
| Jurisdiction | Intermediate | Improved Significantly | Good |
| Province | High | Improved Significantly | Good |

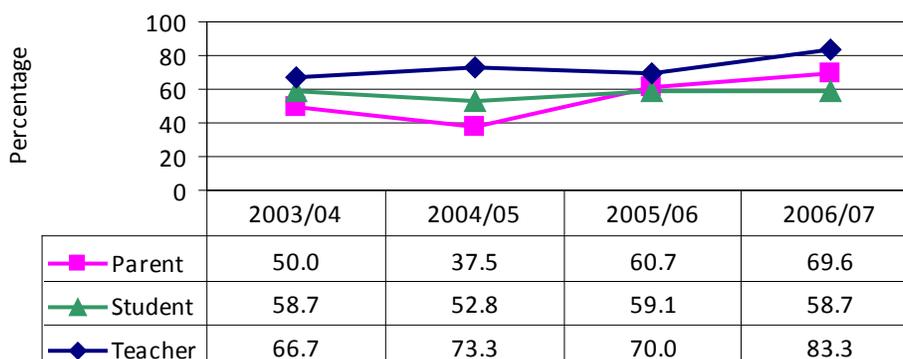
School Improved Details (Top 2 Responses)

| Question | Year | Parent | Teacher |
|---|---------|--------|---------|
| In your opinion, has the quality of education that your child experienced at school improved, stayed the same, or declined in the past three years? [Improved or Stayed the Same] | 2003/04 | 50 | 67 |
| | 2004/05 | 38 | 73 |
| | 2005/06 | 61 | 70 |
| | 2006/07 | 70 | 83 |

School Improved Details (Top 2 Responses Strongly Agree/Agree)

| Question | Year | Student (gr. 7) |
|---|---------|-----------------|
| I am proud of my school | 2003/04 | 60 |
| | 2004/05 | 51 |
| | 2005/06 | 65 |
| | 2006/07 | 61 |
| I would recommend my school to a friend | 2003/04 | 58 |
| | 2004/05 | 55 |
| | 2005/06 | 53 |
| | 2006/07 | 56 |

School Improvement
Meadowbrook Middle School Details



Key Observation/Discussion Points:

Parental Involvement: Meadowbrook Middle School has an achievement level of low for parental involvement, and is an issue overall. Teachers report higher parental involvement than parents, and teacher results have increased over time while parental results have decreased.

Continuous Improvement: Meadowbrook Middle School has an achievement level of low for continuous improvement, and is acceptable overall. Both parent and teacher results have increased since 2003/04, and students results have remained fairly stable.

SES Data

Data on each of the school jurisdictions in Alberta has been reviewed to determine the socioeconomic status (SES) index for each. This index provides some context for the community that the school jurisdiction inhabits and is useful to consider when examining the results of each jurisdiction. The table below provides the details for categorizing the SES index for Rocky View School Division. School jurisdictions fall into six SES clusters with one being the cluster with the highest SES index and six with the cluster with the lowest SES index.

Rocky View School Division No. 41

| Variable | Value | Rank | Group |
|--|-------|------|-------|
| Overall SES index | 0.98 | 7 | 2 |
| Student mobility index | 0.53 | 44 | 3 |
| Percent of families below low income cut off | 17.3% | 2 | 1 |
| Percent of families headed by a lone parent | 16.8% | 13 | 2 |
| Average years of school for mothers | 13.8 | 8 | 2 |
| Percent of dwellings that are owned | 83.6% | 7 | 2 |
| Percent of population that is FNMI | 2.5% | 9 | 2 |
| Average family income | 99943 | 1 | 1 |
| Two year teacher retention rate | 73.9% | 8 | 2 |
| Sparsity (students per square kilometer) | 3.13 | 19 | 3 |
| Accountability Pillar all-measures average | 2.14 | 17 | 3 |
| PAT average rank | | 16 | 2 |

III. Community of Airdrie*Community Profile*

- Airdrie is a city of approximately 29,000, located 3 kilometres north of Calgary.
- The population of Airdrie is increasing at a rate almost 4 times greater than the provincial average.
- According to the 2006 federal census, Airdrie is the fastest growing city in Canada.
- The average age of Airdrie residents are 30-34 years of age.
- Two new schools opened their doors in 2007 – Ecole Edwards Elementary and Nose Creek Elementary.
- A building permit was issued for the new Thorburn Catholic Elementary School.
- In 2007, Airdrie saw a shift from the issuance of primarily single-family dwelling permits to more of a focus on multi-family projects.

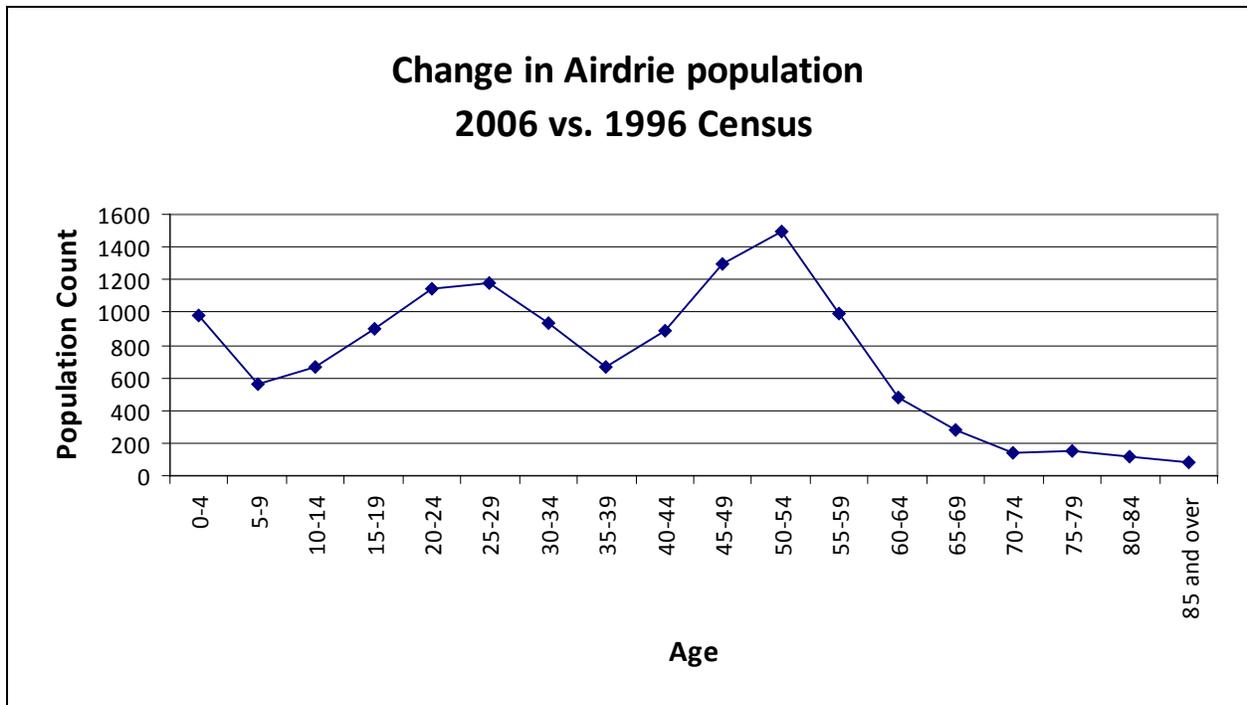
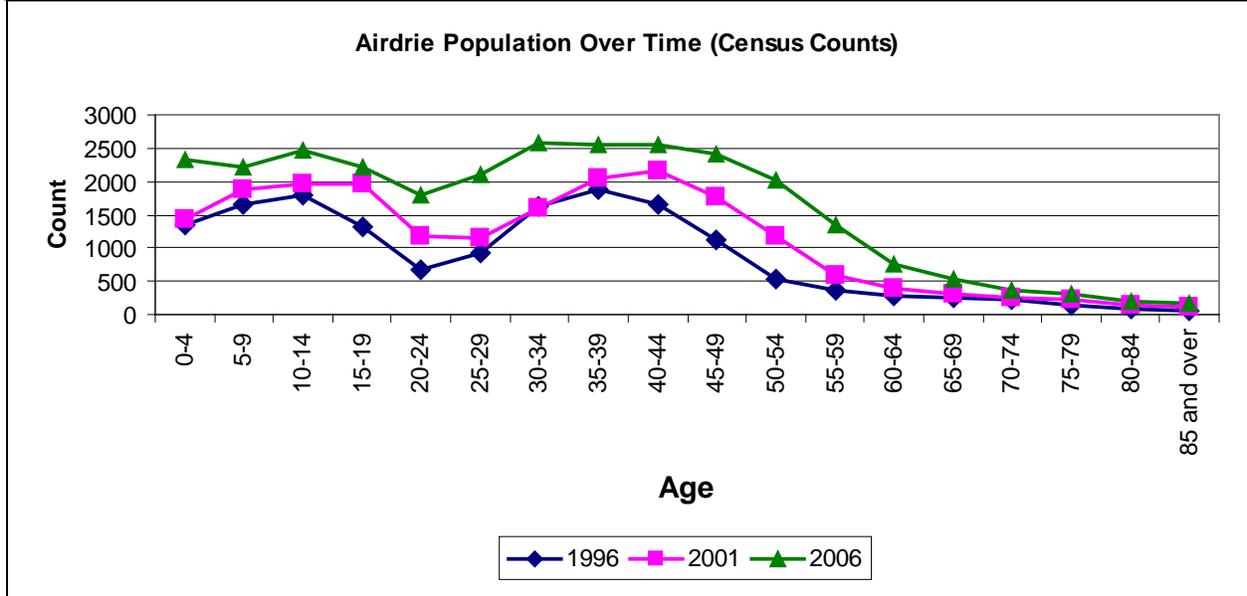
Summary of Community Demographics

The table below presents a sample of census data that include several factors known to influence student learning outcomes, notably level of family income, proportion of owned vs. rented homes, and percentage of lone-parent families. Population statistics are the official count from Statistics Canada and may not match unofficial census counts published by the City of Airdrie or Alberta Municipal Affairs.

| Demographic Data | Airdrie 2006 | Alberta 2006 |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Population</i> | 28,927 | 3,290,350 |
| Percent of population that were: | | |
| • male | 50.3% | 50.0% |
| • school age (5-19) | 23.9% | 20.2% |
| • 24 years or younger | 38.2% | 34.1% |
| | Airdrie 2006 | Alberta 2006 |
| <i>Population</i> | 28,795 | 3,256,360 |
| Aboriginal | 3.0% | 5.8% |
| <i>Education and Employment</i> | | |
| Unemployment Rate | 3.1% | 4.3% |
| Family Income | | |
| ∅ Less than \$19,999 | 2006 data not available | 2006 data not available |
| ∅ \$20,000 - \$39,999 | | |
| ∅ \$40,000-\$59,999 | | |
| ∅ \$60,000 and over | | |
| Average family income | | |
| <i>Population</i> | 21,770 | 2,625,145 |
| Highest level of education for population 15 years and over | | |
| • No certificate, diploma or degree | 19.6% | 23.4% |
| • High school certificate or equivalent | 28.2% | 26.2% |
| • Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma | 12.0% | 10.9% |
| • College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma | 23.6% | 18.0% |
| • University certificate or diploma below the bachelor level | 3.9% | 4.0% |
| • University certificate, diploma or degree | 12.7% | 17.5% |
| <i>Family</i> | Airdrie 2006 | Alberta 2006 |
| <i>Population</i> | 21,905 | 2,658,835 |
| Marital status (population age 15 and over) | | |
| • Married | 57.5% | 50.7% |
| • Common-Law | 8.6% | 8.6% |
| • Never married | 28.9% | 34.0% |
| • Separated | 2.9% | 2.8% |
| • Divorced | 7.7% | 7.7% |

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

| | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widowed | 3.0% | 4.8% |
| <i>Housing</i> | Airdrie 2006 | Alberta 2006 |
| <i>Population</i> | 10,095 | 1,256,200 |
| Occupied Private Dwellings | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private dwellings owned Private dwellings rented | 89.40% | 73.10% |
| | 10.60% | 26.30% |



The table below shows data demonstrating that residents of Airdrie are more likely to have been born and grown up in the area than the Alberta average.

Proportion of Population by Generation Status – 2006 Census

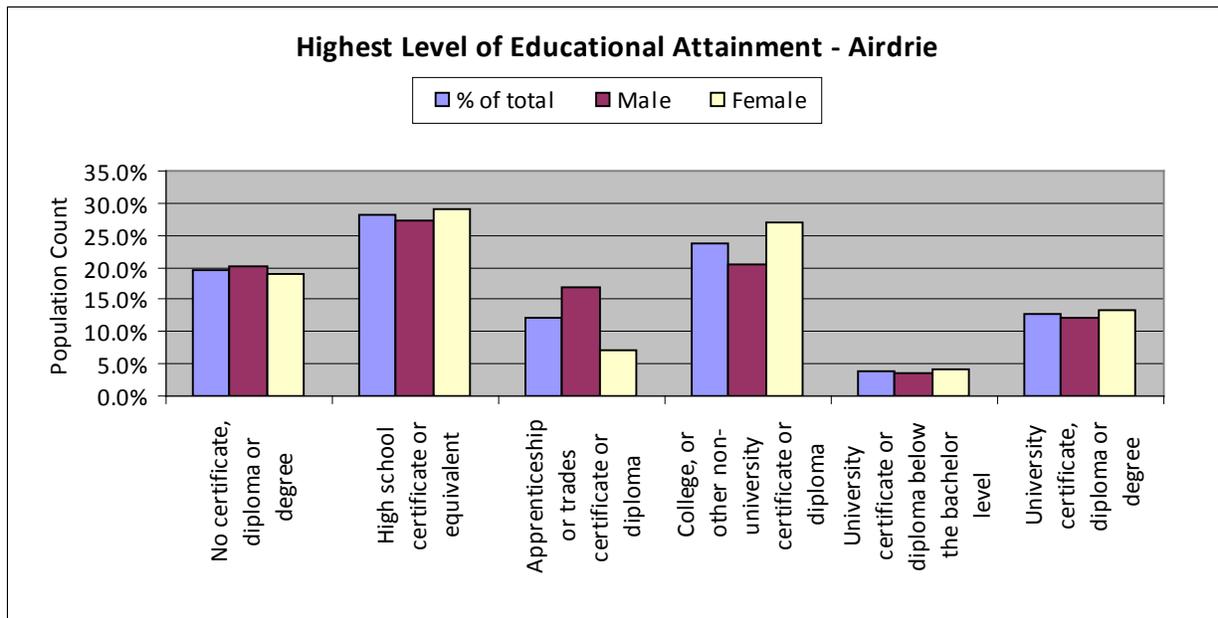
| Proportion of Population 15 years and over | Airdrie | | | Alberta | | |
|--|---------|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| 1st generation | 9.4% | 9.8% | 9.0% | 20.0% | 19.5% | 20.6% |
| 2nd generation | 17.8% | 17.4% | 18.2% | 19.7% | 19.4% | 20.1% |
| 3rd generation or more | 72.8% | 72.8% | 72.8% | 60.2% | 61.2% | 59.3% |

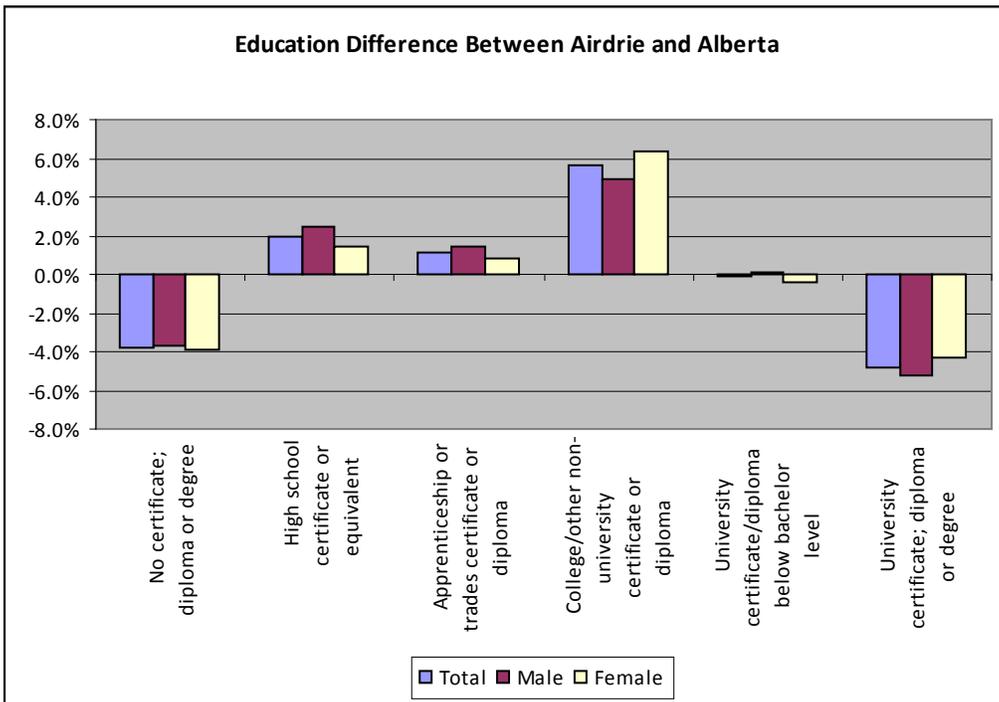
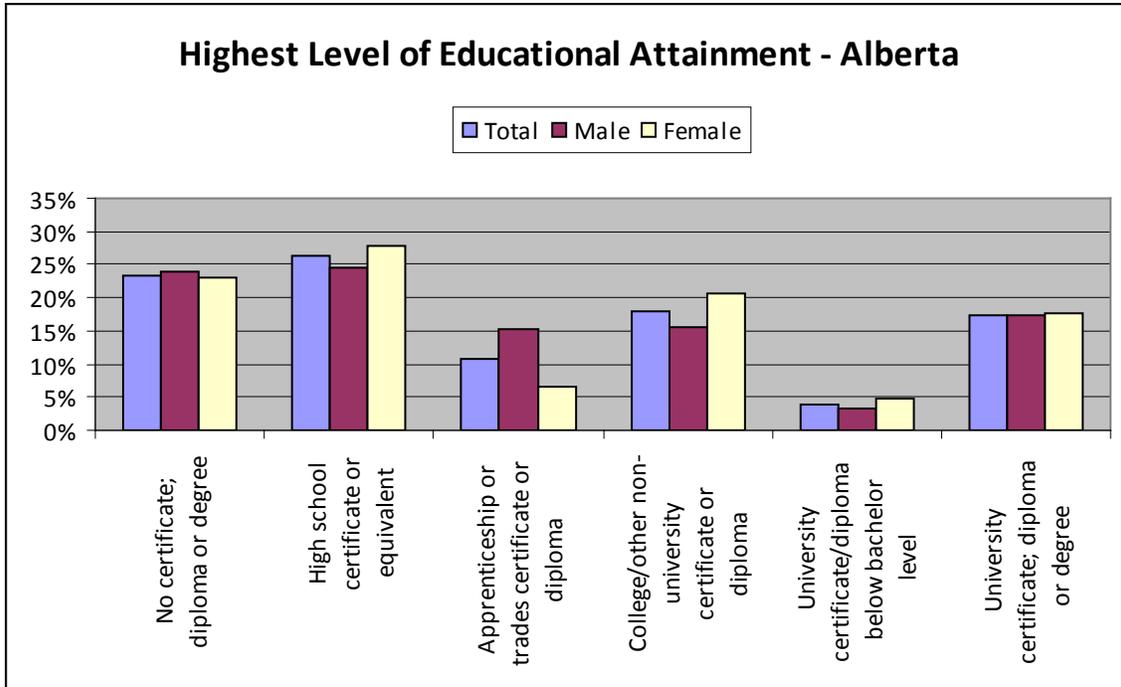
Highest Level of Education

The following three graphs present data on highest level of educational attainment, as obtained from the 2006 Census.

They show that Airdrie has a higher proportion than the Alberta average of residents whose highest educational level is high school certificate or equivalent, apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, and college, other non-university certificate or diploma. Those with a university certificate/diploma below bachelor level occur in roughly the same proportion as the Alberta average. There is a much lower proportion of individuals who have no certificate; diploma or degree or a university certificate, diploma, or degree.

This information is also disaggregated to show male and female comparisons. Consistent with broad social trends, females tend to have higher average levels of educational attainment than males. The only category of credential completion in which females do not at least match males is in trades completions.





Key Observation/Discussion Points:

- The total population of the City of Airdrie, as shown in the Statistics Canada census counts, is increasing.
- Airdrie has peaks in population for children aged 0-4, and adults aged 25-34 and 50-54.
- Since 1996, the group with the greatest increase in population has been those aged 50-54.
- Most of the population of Airdrie is 3rd generation or greater.

III. Focus Group Results

Focus groups were the primary means of collecting input from students, parents and staff (both professional and support) relative to the primary questions that guided this value added school review. The focus groups were held on May 9, 13 and 20 and were facilitated by one of the external team members while the other three external team members took notes. Five focus groups were held with students, three with various staff members and two with parents. The focus group notes were then cross-checked against the set of external team members' notes for verification of the key themes.

The reader is cautioned that focus groups reflect the perceptions of the participants and as such have some limitations relative to other more empirical methods of data collection regarding school effectiveness. Therefore, it is important to consider the focus group outcomes in relationship to the whole report as well as other information that may be available outside of this report.

In the focus group summary tables below content analysis of the focus group notes have been completed to capture the frequency of responses. Color coding has been applied to categorize the responses:

- red represents negative comments
- yellow represents somewhat neutral commentary
- green represents positive comments

The actual notes from the focus groups are reproduced in Appendix 1. Each focus group has been given a random name to reduce any potential for individual respondents being identified.

The general image that emerged from the focus group sessions was of a school that was relatively healthy, a perspective that is reinforced in terms of the performance measures in the Alberta Education Accountability Pillar results. The general positive nature at Meadowbrook is also reflected by a friendly school environment, whereby external team members were frequently greeted by students and staff during the team's visits to the school.

Meadowbrook school is located in a solid, middle class community with socio-economic factors that would tend to support above average performance. And yet, while Meadowbrook is doing relatively well given its physical and human resource attributes the overwhelming sense was that it has the potential to achieve excellence in all aspects of the school's operation. This is not an unusual situation for a complex organization such as a school and the focus group analysis that follows will both elaborate on why the external team came to this overall conclusion and will point to specific input that may point to recommendations, actions or strategies that might propel Meadowbrook towards the excellent school it can be.

Students were asked, **"When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest strengths that help with your learning?"** Many student responses were general observations regarding a recent experience or observation shared by a student that did not relate directly to the schools strengths, but the pattern that did emerge was appreciation of the teachers in the school who were perceived by the students of making specific efforts to adapt their teaching to the students and establish effective teacher-student relationships. School facilities were generally recognized as being very good, although the playground facilities were referenced here and in relationship to other questions as a negative component of the physical facilities.

Students

| When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest strengths that help with your learning? | Frequency |
|---|------------------|
| Miscellaneous comments about classroom experiences, teachers or school procedures | 23 |
| Teachers teach for different learning styles | 6 |
| Like the facilities (building, locker rooms etc) | 5 |
| Student likes a specific subject | 5 |
| Teachers help/take action | 4 |
| Computer labs | 3 |
| Options are good | 3 |
| Teachers interact well with students | 2 |
| Likes lots of teachers | 2 |
| Teachers give experiences | 2 |
| Need new playground | 2 |
| Students involved in extracurricular | 2 |
| Single teacher brings consistency | 1 |
| Some kids are bad for subs | 1 |
| Field trips are good | 1 |
| School nurse | 1 |
| Resource room | 1 |
| Short timeframe between classes | 1 |
| Students have respect | 1 |
| Counselor helps students | 1 |
| Most teachers listen | 1 |
| Positive reinforcement | 1 |
| Takes too long to travel | 1 |
| CSI learning/more experiments | 1 |
| Teachers are kind | 1 |
| Most teachers are fair | 1 |
| Teachers are knowledgeable | 1 |
| Students opinions count | 1 |
| Good sports teams | 1 |
| Good security | 1 |

Students were next asked, **“When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the school's greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning?”** Many of the students’ responses to this question tended to focus on student dysfunction and teachers who struggle with motivating alienated students while losing the attention or focus of the rest of the class. The older students were particularly frustrated when they felt students who acted out in class interfered with their opportunities to learn. The lunch routine at the school was an issue for several students where the entire student body who do not go home for lunch share a few benches and the gym floor for eating lunch, and students who elected to eat at a nearby convenience store were described as not always getting a healthy lunch. The lack of playground facilities also received prominent mention relative to this question.

| When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the school's greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning? | Frequency |
|--|------------------|
|--|------------------|

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

| When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the school's greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning? | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Teachers give poor explanations | 6 |
| Bullying | 4 |
| Comment is not a challenge | 4 |
| More extracurricular | 3 |
| Clean up/repair the school | 3 |
| Let students decorate the school | 3 |
| Teachers aren't supportive | 3 |
| Teachers and subs aren't respected | 3 |
| Get a playground | 2 |
| Update the mascot | 2 |
| Lunchroom tables | 2 |
| Teachers yell | 2 |
| Provincial achievement tests | 2 |
| More help in class | 2 |
| Called a welfare school | 2 |
| HiHo (a restaurant) | 1 |
| Angel's restaurant | 1 |
| Should be able to listen to iPods | 1 |
| Some students do not stay on task | 1 |
| Some teachers are too quiet | 1 |
| Upgrade computers | 1 |
| Difficult to get into leadership | 1 |
| Grade 8s smoke less than previously | 1 |
| Grade 8s like to be bad | 1 |
| More school spirit is needed | 1 |
| School blocked good computer games | 1 |
| More options for grade 5 | 1 |
| Student injuries | 1 |
| Peer help doesn't always work | 1 |
| Overwhelming tests later in the year | 1 |
| Lots of homework | 1 |
| Some students don't study | 1 |
| Poor classroom management | 1 |
| Keep cohort together | 1 |
| Longer lunch | 1 |
| New gym equipment | 1 |
| Students with ADD should have their own class | 1 |
| Lack of respect | 1 |
| Too much work at once | 1 |
| Coloring title pages and posters is a waste of trees | 1 |
| Better sports equipment | 1 |
| Boredom | 1 |
| Engaged teachers are gone | 1 |

The third question asked of the five student focus groups was, “Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook) support the strengths and address the challenges?” This question

was made more real by reframing it as, **If you were Principal for the day, what changes would you make?** Not surprisingly many student responses to this question would improve the comfort level for students by providing an improved lunch environment and recess options including playground facilities or intramural programs, but there was also relatively strong interest in improving the course options available to them, and in improving learning opportunities by ensuring teachers were teaching to the specific learning styles and needs of the students. A couple of students also voiced concern over the relatively high number of principals the school has seen in recent years.

| Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges? Principal for the day question.... | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Change the timetable | 3 |
| Not a plan, or policy implemented poorly | 3 |
| New playground is needed | 3 |
| Healthier food and more choice in the kiosk - Don't let the kids go to HiHo | 3 |
| Fewer options now than before – lost Outdoor Ed – need more options | 3 |
| Differentiated instruction - Help students after looking at their marks - Ability grouping of students | 3 |
| Stress relief between classes (like recess) - Intramurals | 3 |
| Reduce principal turnover | 2 |
| Take more interest in the students | 2 |
| All students should have input, not just leadership | 2 |
| Use up-to-date/current technology | 2 |
| Help teachers teach better - Have teachers teach only one subject | 2 |
| Shorter class periods | 1 |
| More Sports | 1 |
| Cleaner change rooms | 1 |
| Change school colours | 1 |
| Used to be more choices in Active living | 1 |
| Do fundraisers so programs can continue | 1 |
| Music program with more instruments | 1 |
| Lots of cliques | 1 |
| Unfair that everyone gets detention | 1 |
| Install security cameras | 1 |
| Cops going around the school are scary | 1 |
| New gym supplies | 1 |
| Team teaching | 1 |
| Give kids more freedom like listening to iPods | 1 |
| Start school later | 1 |
| Teachers should have a dress code | 1 |
| Solve more problems | 1 |
| Retain students | 1 |
| Ability grouping of students | 1 |
| Look at how teachers are teaching | 1 |
| VP should circulate through school more | 1 |
| More dances | 1 |
| More field trips | 1 |
| Better mascot | 1 |
| Pep rallies | 1 |

| Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges? Principal for the day question.... | Frequencies |
|---|-------------|
| Have contests for students | 1 |
| Extend the school year | 1 |
| Get tables for lunchroom | 1 |

The last questions asked of the student focus groups addressed the design and application of the report cards used at Meadowbrook, “Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card?” Student responses to these questions were balanced between comments that suggest the usefulness of the report cards could be improved with those that suggested the report cards provide useful feedback to students and their parents. The use of marks to judge student effort was not seen as a particularly consistent measure and thus was questioned by the students.

| Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card? | Frequency |
|--|-----------|
| Comment indirectly related to report card and other miscellaneous | 27 |
| Effort mark is meaningless | 5 |
| Favoritism boosts mark | 3 |
| Report cards say the same thing for all students | 2 |
| Some teachers personalize the report card | 2 |
| Achievement mark is fair | 2 |
| Allows parents to distinguish between high and low b | 1 |
| Some students like it, some don't | 1 |
| Teacher feedback helps | 1 |
| Concern with report card wording | 1 |
| Students should do their own effort (self-evaluation) | 1 |
| More ongoing feedback is needed | 1 |
| Homework should be marked but count for less | 1 |

Each focus group ended with the participants being asked to express their overall sense of Meadowbrook school in one word. The table below summarizes these responses for the five student focus groups. When compared side by side it is apparent that an attitude shift occurs between grade 6 and 7 with the older students demonstrating progressively more negative feelings about their school experience.

One word:

| Grade 5 | Grade 6 | Grade 7 | Grade 7/8 | Grade 8 |
|---------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------|
| No word | Loving and respectful | Fun | Odd | Negative |
| Helpful | Awesome | Busy | Cold | Boring |
| Alright | Exciting | Alright | Old fashioned | Plain |
| Good | Very very interesting | I have no clue | Different | Terrible |

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|----------|--------|------|
| Nice | Funky | Teachers | Boring | Lame |
| Respectful | | | | |
| Excellent | | | | |
| Awesome | | | | |

Two focus groups were held with parents. The first was held as part of the school council meeting agenda on May 13 and was attended by 5 parents. The second was attended by a group of 6 parents who came to the school during the school day on May 20. The first question asked of the parents was, **“What are the school’s greatest strengths related to student outcomes?”** Parent responses to this question focused on the staff and programs available at Meadowbrook. Parents acknowledged the commitment of a “core group” of teachers at the school and several parents noted to responsiveness of the school administration in solving problems as they arise in the school. The band program, extracurricular activities and options were also cited as positive program components. The students also generally were characterized as a positive force within the school and for having positive relationships with the staff.

Parents

| What are the school's greatest strengths related to student outcomes? | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Core group of teachers are great | 4 |
| The band | 3 |
| Extracurricular Activities | 3 |
| Staff interaction with students - Work done outside class by teachers | 3 |
| Students treat each other well | 2 |
| School weather station on the web | 2 |
| The school mascot is ok. | 1 |
| Lets students be leaders | 1 |
| Involved parents | 1 |
| Sports program | 1 |
| Excellent school facilities | 1 |
| Concerns are dealt with effectively by admin | 1 |
| Students are recognized for their achievements | 1 |
| Student birthday board | 1 |
| School website | 1 |
| School location | 1 |
| Small school/class size | 1 |
| Anti-bullying initiatives | 1 |
| Strong school council | 1 |

In responding to the question, “What are the school’s greatest challenges,” parents focused extensively on their perceptions that a sub-group of students with special needs were presenting challenges for teachers and that these teachers were not getting the extra help they need to work with these particularly challenging students. Staff turnover at the school was also cited as a challenge for the school. Although the students were generally perceived as being a positive force the existence of

bullying was also identified as having a presence in the school. Meadowbrook school was thought to have an underserved negative image in the Airdrie community, a phenomenon that was felt would take long term and focused effort to correct. Issues related to the school’s image centered on the need for better school-community communications and better support for the school by parents who may be under stress at home.

| What are the school's greatest challenges? | Frequencies |
|---|-------------|
| Lack of support (staff) for spec needs including gifted | 7 |
| Teacher turnover – principal turnover | 7 |
| Poor school image - Negative school reputation in community | 5 |
| Bullying | 4 |
| Not applicable – not a challenge | 3 |
| Teachers tolerate too much disrespect | 3 |
| Middle school structure | 3 |
| Fairness | 2 |
| Large classes | 2 |
| Student home life | 2 |
| Teachers lacking experience | 1 |
| Rumors of sexually active students in middle school | 1 |
| Lack of support | 1 |
| Communication | 1 |
| Improved computer technology | 1 |
| School demographics | 1 |
| Safety in school yard | 1 |
| Older students as negative role models | 1 |
| Not enough time spent on curriculum | 1 |

Parents were next asked a question about school plans and policies efficacy in supporting strengths or addressing challenges. This question was made for practical for the parents by asking, “**if you were the principal for a day or longer, what would you change in the school?**” Parent suggestions in response to this question focused on staffing stability and improving staff capacity to teach challenging students effectively. Several specific suggestions for meeting the needs of the students with more challenging needs included gender based classrooms, ability grouping or retaining students who do not achieve the curricular outcomes.

| Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges? Principal for the day... | Frequencies |
|--|-------------|
| Numerous teachers – reasons for teacher turnover and students experience too much diversity – need succession planning | 6 |
| New strategies for dealing with problem students – see the kids change | 2 |
| Hold parents and students responsible for bullying | 1 |
| Gender specific classrooms | 1 |
| Inclusive classrooms | 1 |
| Retain failing students | 1 |
| Ability grouping | 1 |
| Change evacuation plans | 1 |
| Make schools more interactive in the community | 1 |
| Lunchroom | 1 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Bigger lunch kiosk | 1 |
| Playground is an issue | 1 |
| School admin should be guiding | 1 |
| Technology is an issue | 1 |
| Finding a solution is the challenge | 1 |
| Find a purpose | 1 |

The last question asked of parents was, “**Do you understand how staff use data or other information to inform planning, evaluation and decision making?**” Parent responses to this last question focused on improving the communications and involvement of the school council as more engaged partners in the strategies to achieve improvements in the operation of Meadowbrook school.

| Do you understand how staff use data or other information to inform planning, evaluation and decision making? | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Communicate internally and externally | 5 |
| Keep school council involved | 4 |
| Issue with report cards | 3 |
| Issue with grading | 2 |
| Reduce the teacher turnover | 2 |
| Improve school spirit | 2 |
| Early interviews are good | 1 |
| Interviews are hectic | 1 |
| Interview nights are good | 1 |
| Acknowledge all birthdays | 1 |
| Likes letter grades | 1 |
| Parent dealt with bullying | 1 |
| Parents changing kids schools | 1 |

Parents were also asked at the conclusion of the focus groups to describe their sense of the school with one word. These responses are captured below and reflect a range of emotions.

One Word

| Group 1 | Group 2 |
|-------------|---------|
| Challenging | ? |
| Complex | |
| Eclectic | |
| Hope | |
| Mediocre | |

Staff Results

Three staff focus groups were held on May 9, 13 and 20 with a range of participants typically around 5-7 professional and support staff. In response to the question, “**What are the schools greatest strengths**

related to student outcomes?” staff responses reflected some similarities with parent and to a lesser extent student responses in that the staff viewed the staff component in the school as a source of strength. The second most frequent strength cited was curricular programs especially the option programs. The quality of the school facility was also identified as a strength. Other strengths mentioned were a range of student-staff-parent dynamics.

| What are the schools greatest strengths related to student outcomes? | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Staff is excellent – experienced and knowledgeable | 10 |
| Curricular program - Physical Education - Good selection of options e.g. drama program and band program - Technology | 7 |
| Building is good - Library | 3 |
| Quebec Trip | 2 |
| Teachers are teaching areas of strength | 2 |
| AISI project – staff learning | 2 |
| Supportive parents | 1 |
| Caring environment | 1 |
| High achieving students | 1 |
| Strong school council | 1 |
| School health nurse and family liason | 1 |
| Recognition of students | 1 |
| Strong student leadership | 1 |
| Balance between spirit building and student supports | 1 |
| Positive rapport with students | 1 |
| Staff cared about the community in the past | 1 |
| Students believe they are polite | 1 |

In response to the question, **“What are the school's greatest challenges?”** by far the largest issue revolved around challenges the staff were experiencing in meeting the needs of a sub-cohort of students with special needs. Some staff thought the school was better positioned in the past to address these challenges, while others felt the school and central office-based assistance available to the staff in meeting these students’ needs was lacking. The presence of this school-wide challenge may explain the expressed desire for better team work among the staff of Meadowbrook school. The third most critical issue identified as a challenge by staff focuses on the desire for the principal to be more present as an instructional leader in the school. This issue may be related to the fourth most frequent issue, i.e. the expressed need or desire for more comprehensive information on funding issues in relationship to decisions being made relative to the school budget. Additional closely related issues focus on staff issues relating to more general expressions of the need for more support for staff, frustration among staff and more adequate staff consultation. The remainder of the issues were not frequent but taken together tend to underscore the issues previously summarized in this section.

| What are the school's greatest challenges? | Frequencies |
|---|--------------------|
| Resource demands for students with special needs - Lack of support for special needs - Inadequate student support - Delays in assessment of students with special needs - Cannot meet the needs of students - Lack of student discipline for some students – Struggling students - Diversity among students | 18 |
| All staff need to be considered part of the same team | 10 |
| Principal is not around - Better admin support - Principal needs to be seen teaching - Lots of pressure on the AP | 8 |

Meadowbrook Middle School Profile

| What are the school's greatest challenges? | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Poor communication - Issue with funding - More info on funding | 7 |
| Too much staff/ principal turnover - Too much admin turnover | 6 |
| More support for teachers/staff | 5 |
| Frustration among staff | 4 |
| More adequate staff consultation | 3 |
| Lack of resources | 2 |
| Lack of parental support | 2 |
| Equality among teachers | 2 |
| Class size parameters | 2 |
| Student nutrition is often poor | 1 |
| Staff end up parenting | 1 |
| New ideas among staff | 1 |
| Negative image of school in community | 1 |
| Perception of mold in a classroom | 1 |
| Lack of time (prep, meeting etc) | 1 |
| IPPs too time consuming | 1 |
| Getting new equipment can take a long time | 1 |
| Double block for options could be useful | 1 |
| Computers not located strategically | 1 |
| Cluster students by ability | 1 |
| Excellent parental support | 1 |

In focusing on the efficacy of school plans and policies to address the challenges identified above the general directions were to focus positive energies on building stronger team-based solutions. Such strategies need to be highly selective and narrowly focused on challenges that can demonstrate in the short term the capacity and merit of team-based efforts in ways that convince staff that the benefits obtained or objectives achieved more than return the time invested. Underscoring this theme was the desire for more “dialogue” with staff characterized by deep conversations between school administration and the school community.

| Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges? | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Focus on internal change - Should be an opportunity to try new ideas - There are formal and informal staff meetings - Difficult translating strategies into reality - Refocus PD days – Focus on the positive - Build up to staff retreats - More positive team building | 10 |
| More communication - Dialogue with staff - Principal needs to communicate/be more involved - Have a school admin involved IN the school | 9 |
| Issues with committee membership - Time management is important | 3 |
| Staff are stressed because of special needs - Specialist needs more time in classroom | 2 |
| Staff are uninspired - Staff are tired/burned out - | 2 |
| Review vision and value statements | 1 |

The next question addressed to the staff was more narrow than previous question and so the responses are also more focused, specifically on the approaches to classroom assessment employed in the school. The advice derived from this discussion very likely builds on the work undertaken in the school over the current school year in relationship to the Alberta Initiative on School Improvement (AIS) project on classroom assessment. It appears that the AIS project is providing a good basis for continued work so

that more comprehensive approaches to classroom assessment may more fully inform decision making around student and program success and challenges in the school.

| Are the data driven approaches to decision-making used by the school valid and reliable, and does the information/data point to any unidentified challenges? | Frequencies |
|---|--------------------|
| Assessment should be driven by love of learning - Should be more understanding of achievement data - Current focus on formative assessment | 5 |
| All grade approach to data review & strategies for improvement | 1 |

The last question asked of the staff referenced the alignment of school level measures in relationship to jurisdiction plans and reports. Responses indicate a need to review the design and procedures associated with the report card and the use and application made of Individual Program Plans (IPPs) for students with special needs. Work undertaken in the area of reporting student results to students and parents should be considered within a broader, more community engaged approach to school-level planning and results reporting so that there is greater opportunity for ownership of these processes at the school level.

| How do school-level performance measures align with the authority performance measures as defined in plans and reports maintained by the board of trustees? | Frequencies |
|--|--------------------|
| Report card is inadequate - Inadequate staff communication re: GLA - Parents don't understand report card - Emphasis on assessment limits creative goals - Curriculum must be clearly defined - Cooperation skills are important | 6 |
| IPPs are done out of fear - IPPs take a lot of time - IPPs are not working | 3 |
| Use division Ed Plan - School goals must reflect division, not school - Staff who aren't teachers excluded from school planning | 3 |
| Lack of celebration | 2 |
| Lack of retention creates negative student attitude | 1 |

Two of the staff focus groups had an opportunity to share in the one word to describe the school exercise. The responses captured below reflect a rather mixed set of thoughts and feeling, demonstrating both the potential and challenges present for the school community in moving from mediocre to excellent in future school improvement efforts.

One word you would use to describe the school

| | |
|-------------|------------|
| Hijacked | Potential |
| Commitment | First base |
| Optimistic | Disjointed |
| Supportive | Committed |
| Caring | |
| Frustration | |

Recommendations

1. **Key observations - Shared responsibility/shared leadership are concepts that should be reinforced.** Comments of the STUDENTS somehow HAVE to be acknowledged, valued and addressed. Their comments in the appendix offer some astute responses! There are large discrepancies within the Accountability Pillar survey results as well as the aforementioned appendix comments. The staff has to take more responsibility for some of Meadowbrook's 'baseline' results. School spirit: the pride of the school is falling, and the kids are noticing it, and then this becomes a behavior management issue, we need to get the kids involved in planning 'fun' things for them to be excited about – doesn't have to be just recess stuff or intramurals, but things that have community impact – like for instance this upcoming year in Airdrie is the celebration of their 100th – so what 'projects in LA, or Social' could be focused on the community? The kids want meaningful activities. The students also need to be involved in the planning process.

Recommendation - Team Building and working together for students, e.g. need for a feeling of pride in the school and of the student's achievements, should become a key priority for Meadowbrook School. Parents must be part of this team, and their role and responsibilities must be clearly understood by staff, parents and students. A review of the decision making model in the school should be undertaken, e.g. how are decisions made: collaboration or consensus? Administration should be part of the role and responsibility definition process. Improving school spirit and the sense of pride and excitement for all the stakeholders in the school should be incorporated as a desired outcome of the Team Building strategies. Members of the Internal Team and other key members of the school staff, parent and student representatives should plan a Retreat for as early as possible in the new school year. The retreat should be led by an expert facilitator and should focus on developing some tentative answers to the following questions (for example):

- a. Who are we?
 - b. What are we here for?
 - c. What must we do as a school community to ensure that our school is the best it can be?
2. **Key observations - -** The critical issues facing this school are too obvious to ignore. The **quality of communication is a major cause of dysfunction.** Rumor overwhelms fact; gossip is rife; misunderstanding is the typical state of affairs. All of us need to accept the perceptions that are out there and the differences (some extreme) between staff and the other stakeholders. Communication seems to be an overriding area where there is need for improvement. A recommendation on this topic could be broken down into sub sections - Daily, Staff, Report Cards, etc. - but perhaps these will happen within the strategies brainstormed by staff. What is happening in the school, in the system, in the province?

Recommendation - Improve the communication opportunities in the school so all staff (support and professional) may receive the same messages at the same time. A desired outcome is improved transparency with decision-making regarding the budget, allocation of print and human resources, etc. Everyone needs to take ownership of getting information out to all stakeholders. For parents a mail-out may be needed, because not all parents are accessing the school website. Use of the School Council agenda for parents as a tool from school to home and home to school should be implemented. **Report Cards** need to be reviewed but as this is part of the proposed AISI PD it should happen within this context.

3. **Key observation -** The **principal and VP need to be seen as a unit.** Leadership by the administration team needs to be visible to all staff, students and parents. Staff perceptions expressing concern

about the principal being away too much may be a metaphor for the need for more effective manifestation of better coordinated administrative leadership.

Recommendation - Mentoring of the administrative team should be a priority with the central office staff. The TPGPs of the school administration team need to have a goal related to effective leadership. District office staff should meet as soon as possible with the Meadowbrook Administration team to discuss a process of ongoing mentoring, starting in September and continuing until the staff, students and parents perceive a highly effective administrative team is in control of the issues that confront the Meadowbrook School community. Key issues include addressing immediately any evidence of ineffective teaching in classrooms in which student behavior is problematic or teacher performance is deficient.

4. **Key observations - There are few effective strategies in place for dealing with conflict.** The management of conflict is poor; the resolution of conflict is clearly limited. The evidence of low morale is to be seen in every part of the school yet it is ignored almost as often as it presents itself. The administrative Team must work extra hard to turn things around but it's not going to be easy. They will have to show they can work with those functional teams of staff members who are ready and willing to collaborate on planned action aimed at helping in the achievement of school goals as a means to engage staff who are waiting to see if school improvement is going to happen. That being said, it's going to be another major hurdle to ensure that a majority of staff members ARE working towards the achievement of AGREED-UPON goals. They are going to have to devise a plan for the use of their Learning Communities time, their AISI time, and their PD days so that all the work they hope to accomplish is clearly focused on school goals, and is not seen as separate sets of add-ons!

Recommendation - A model of shared leadership facilitated by a well coordinated administrative team should be developed in the school so staff knowledge and expertise energize the school. Collective wisdom is very valuable and involves giving people permission to take the initiative to try something new, be inventive in their approach to teaching/learning, etc. – along with the necessary resources, and monitoring the results. When determining the PD days and meeting schedules in the school take into account the 'rhythm and the cycle' of the school year as there are more opportune times for various activities e.g. scheduling PD at report card time may not work. It is important to be aware of the big picture in the school when meetings and events are organized. When staff, students and parents are part of the leadership process they feel a sense of empowerment to participate and support all events and activities.

5. **Key observations - What does trust look like in the school?** Are all students, parents and staff treating each other with dignity and respect?

Recommendation - Investigate a 'character education' and 'personal development' focus within the school. What virtues would Meadowbrook School want to be the foundation of their beliefs since their beliefs drive their practice.

6. **Key observations** - The revisiting of the delivery model for meeting the needs of students (regular and coded), for example the resource program, needs further discussion to improve implementation. Education of all students is important - don't focus just on the 'special' needs group – because all students are special in their own way. But how can we deal with the situations that we are presented with – is it a push from parents to get adequate funding, is it a restructuring of the present system, is it a different way of teaching/learning that needs to be done?

Recommendation - Review the behaviour support plan in the school, including the supports available from central office, so all staff are aware of the steps needed to support students who experience behavioural issues, e.g. what does the classroom teacher do? Is there a behaviour support plan for students with behavioural-learning issues? Are all staff following the plan? When does administration get involved with behavioural issues? Are the consequences clearly articulated? When and how are the parents informed? What documentation or tracking is used for repeated behaviours? Are IPP's created in the most effective and efficient manner? Do the students know what the behaviour plan is – where is it written?

7. **Key observation** - The **whole VASR document, including the appendix should be shared with staff** along with a review of our School Education Plan during our August 28th pd day.

Recommendation - The **VASR recommendations should be reviewed and used for strategic planning** with the School Education Plan on scheduled pd days: August 28; October 31; March 2; and May 15. Information from the VASR should also be considered in guiding A.I.S.I. plans. (ie. developing productive PLC's to improve communication).

Appendix 1

Students Focus Group – Aspens

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest strengths that help with your learning?

When the teacher listens to your problems and tries to help.

The teachers here help you in anything.

If you are getting bullied the teachers will do something about it.

I like sticking with one teacher – all year long. I don't like having four teachers in a row because one can skip subjects or make you take a lot of tests and I found that hard. One teacher brings consistency.

Some kids think they have to test subs and misbehave and that gets us all into trouble. Usually about five kids cause trouble for subs.

I like the bigger school.

I like two levels in the school building.

Field trips are good.

The gym is good and I like changing for phys. Ed in nice change rooms. Changing is challenging because the timeframe between classes is too quick.

I am proud of this school cause the other students are respectful. I have never been bullied here.

We have a school counselor and you can go to them to help with problems. Counselor gives good advice.

We also have a school nurse who can help you if the teacher is not sure what you should do about a problem.

It is good to have an elevator so if a student has a broken leg they can use it.

We have a resource room for people who have trouble and can get extra help.

We have two computer labs so two classes can access the computers at the same time.

Computers help with music and in LA we work on stories in a writing lab.

We also have computers in the library

Most teachers listen to me but some do not.

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning?

One thing I don't like is grade 5 and 6 don't get choices, but 7 and 8 do and the older students have more teachers. We need more options for grade 5.

Sometimes students climb on things and get hurt.

My xxx teacher is hard to approach. Some don't take things seriously. Not very supportive.

We have to sit on the floor of the gym at lunch, some students go to Hi Ho for lunch but we should have tables for lunch in the gym.

Some students leave a mess in the gym and don't clean up after themselves at lunch time and the teachers get upset.

Sometimes when someone wants to sit where you are sitting another student shoves your food around so they can take your spot. Other times you can get squished by older students. Three groups tend to be pushy in the gym.

Some kids will steal food from other students from the micro –wave.

Who do you tell about these problems – I usually keep it to myself. Because if they are older than you they will find you and do mean stuff to you.

Once my big brother protected me.

The lockers sometimes have things taken from them – especially if you set the lock for quick opening.

One day one student got the master key and started opening a bunch of lockers.

Five of seven students have had things taken from their lockers. I've had my DS stolen. I said hey give that back. I told a teacher but she said I was out of luck if I could not identify him – it could have been a student from another school.

We should be able to get our own locks – not the school locks.

I've known students to switch locks on students.

Sometimes students from other schools come here and they think they might be selling drugs.

We don't have a playground. I worry there might be fights when the new catholic school opens.

I know a gang called Third Street and they wrote graffiti on the school. They threw things at us. They are high school students who hang out outside of the school.

All we have to do is walk around outside. They even took down our basketball court and a lot of people used to play there.

I worry about the gangs in town and that they might do graffiti on the school

Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges?)

I think we should have intramurals cause we have nothing to do here at recess.

Something that helps is kids who don't do the right things get detentions, but sometimes we all get detentions and that is not fair.

I would give the students a big playground. We want a new one.

Give grade 5 and 6 students option classes. Do more things like sculpting for art.

I don't like the cops going around the school in their cars or in the school cause it makes me worry and it scares me.

I'd get new supplies like badminton and dodge balls for the gym.

I'd get all the teachers to do a fund raiser for a new playground.

I'd install security cameras so students would not mess with your lockers, and I'd create student solution teams, like safety patrol, peer support

Report cards help with remediation. I don't like the design; another said she liked it. One student did not like ABC scale; one student did.

Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card?

The report card gives you information on what you need to do to improve, could give more ideas of what to work on.

Some kids gloat if they get mostly A's.

But that's better than getting straight 1's. cause 4's could be good too.

This report card says what you are doing good, work ethics.

I don't like the design because its not an exciting –

I like the design a little bit – but sometimes the teachers write the same thing about everybody but sometimes with a different grade.

If I get good grades my parents reward me. I like school when I get rewarded.

Some parents give their kids money for A's and B's but not all do and I don't think that is fair – I just get a "good job"

Like the report card to be a different colour – brighter – and kept in a folder so it's confidential.

Like more comments that are specific to each student, not the same as everyone else's report card.

Students Focus Group– Spruces

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook School, what do you think are the schools greatest strengths that help with your learning?

I think the way the teachers interact with the students and if you do the right things you get to do more.

For example once we had an actual hang glider in our room and we got to check it out.

I like when teachers give us experiences. CSI learning; more experiments.

If you don't understand they try different things.

Some teachers get mad if you don't understand something and ask a friend.

We have different teachers for different subjects – varies by class – 8, 8, and 7.

Having so many teachers can be hard because you have to move around so much. – travel time can cause you to be late.

I think it is fun to have many teachers so if you don't get along with a teacher you don't have to spend the whole day with them.

If you have a teacher you don't like it is creepy, especially if you don't get the subject. One teacher "creeps me out."

One teacher doesn't care if you don't do well but he is a fun teacher but sometimes he is not so nice.

Different teachers have different teaching styles – creative activities are very motivating. For example a duct taping competition with teams. – spirit activities

Its also a good idea to change teachers from one year to another.

When teachers use visual aides and do hands on activities it really helps with our learning.

If you are bad you might not get to do the fun things.

We get help with learning; we learn through teamwork.

Color-coding helps us to remember in science.

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning?

Some teachers don't explain things as well as they should. I told one teacher I didn't understand something and she told me to sit down and my Dad could not help me. IF I ask a friend for help I then get into trouble for talking.

Textbooks don't always help – so when you have homework it's hard if you don't understand from school.

Teachers that yell

Peer help sometimes helps and other times it doesn't.

Sometimes teachers get mad for not listening or not studying and then ask for help.

I don't like the provincial ach tests cause you have two weeks of nothing but tests.

Early in the school year you have few tests, projects, quizzes, etc. and later you have a lot more. These are overwhelming at the moment.

We have lots of homework.

We think about the provincial achievement differently cause they count more than the other tests we take. I worry about not passing them. One teacher said the test results will go on our record and follow us everywhere, so then you get so anxious that you don't do as well.

Some kids don't study – the guys just guess on the multiple choice.

Bullying – it's the popular boys. All grades have bullies.

Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges? Principal for a day...

I would ask each teacher what their style of teaching was and if they could not explain it I would tell them to work on explaining more. Use different ways of teaching, use more of a team approach.

I would give students more freedom to chew gum or listen to music on my Ipod so kids could learn better. Some teachers allow you to listen to your Ipod if you are working alone.

You could have a longer recess when it's warm outside – and give students a choice if you wanted to share a locker with a friend.

I'd like school to start a little later – so the morning is not so rushed.

Would like a playground. There's nothing to do. People just stand around talking, chasing boys.

We should have bigger lockers and the teachers should follow a dress code because sometimes you can see way too much.

I'd start school at 9:30 instead of 8:50 cause I am now staying up later doing homework.

As principal, I'd help some teachers to teach better.

Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card?

Some teachers have the exact same comments for all students cause we all like to share our marks. After school we all gather and share our report cards.

Other teachers are more personalized in their report card comments.

We like when teachers make it clear what we are going to be learning. When teachers give us feedback as we are studying something it really helps.

My parents give me a reward if I do well and it really encourages me.

Concerns with the wording of 'placed' and 'promoted' to next grade.

One more thing you'd like us to know...

If one of our teachers was nicer and more respectful to students.

Teachers should not make students feel badly about themselves.

There are some bullies in the school – usually the class clowns and popular boys in all grades.

Students – Tamarack Group

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest strengths that help with your learning?

Most of our teachers are kind.

I hate all my subjects because I fail them all. I come to school just to be with my friends.

Option classes are good. I especially like the shop. We make things there.

You vote for your favorite options at the beginning of the school year and the staff provide the most popular.

I am taking fashion, outdoor ed and French.

We spent 50 dollars in outdoor ed but haven't done anything yet.

I am taking computers and drama and band. I got two of my choices.

We did one project in science, using spaghetti to build a bridge.

Most teachers are fair, but some teachers occasionally have favorites.

I have more fun at home than at school, but if you don't do well it will haunt you your whole life.

Students get suspended too easily, e.g. a girl was afraid to play floor hockey and was suspended.

I usually don't get into trouble so I can get away with more than a student who often gets into trouble.

About five kids in grade 7 are often in trouble and in the office.

There are some kids who treat other students badly. I stopped telling people because they get into trouble and then they treat me even worse.

Lunch time can be pretty chaotic, it's not a big problem but is pervasive.

We discussed our learning styles with our teachers and they try to teach to our learning style. I think I could get the work in a six hour school day in three hours, because we waste a lot of time with teachers helping other students who need extra help.

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning?

The only class I don't get help in is in math and language cause the teacher just explains things in the same way. Tells lots of stories that are off topic. Needs to focus more on the subject matter more in Math and health.

I failed my first subject this year in xxx, but I don't understand why.

It would be good to have one teacher teach and another go around and help students who need help.

Lots of teachers explain things too fast and then you don't get it.

Classroom management.

Organizing classes so that the same kids are in them.

Subs – no one listens to them.

I have pretty well given up applying myself at school and work on my own at home. This started changing for me in grade 5. More help at school would be a good idea and would help me.

Teachers should explain things slower and ensure they get help when we ask for it.

We are learning at school especially in xxx because the teacher explains things better and tells us what to do. I can talk with this teacher.

I do a lot of peer oriented learning.

Students don't respect the sub teachers very much. And some teachers are more respected than others.

Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges? Principal for the day question...

I'd solve more of the problems – I would find more of the stuff that is going on and find out more stuff about the students. I'd take more interest in the students.

I'd look more at students marks and talk to those whose marks are low and try to help them do better.

I'd want the teachers to be more friendly and connect more with students. I have not really had a chance to get to know the principals.

I would hold students back who are having trouble so they can get the extra help they need because then they start getting into trouble when they know they are behind and they slow the whole class down.

Gym should be longer cause it takes too long to change and get organized.
I would change some of the classes – (essentially ability grouping) so students are more similar.

It gets on my nerves when other students waste my time.

I would take a closer look at how teachers are teaching to maybe change attitudes of some teachers.

I would go around the school more cause when the VP comes into class it improves how students behave in some classes.

I'd organize intramurals more – cause organized sport would have a positive influence. – could be student organized.

More dances.

Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card?

I think effort mark is useless – some teachers dangle the effort mark over your head but I don't even care about it anymore – it does not work to use the effort mark as a threat.

I don't think the effort mark has any meaning anymore – it really just shows how much the teacher likes you.

The achievement mark is more fair and objective – the teacher has to give you what you have earned.

There is favoritism that influences the effort mark.

Me and my parents don't care so much about the report cards because of the effort mark issue.

The students talk a lot about whether some of the teachers like you or not. About half of my teachers have favorites that influence the class negatively.

It is important that teachers care about you, treats you fairly – if they don't care then I don't feel like working very hard.

When students don't like a teacher they say things that are not true and are disrespectful and I don't like that.

I'd like Meadowbrook to be known for its intelligence, for its students getting good marks. For being a good school overall, no fighting.

Where students don't punch each other and where supervision is better especially before and after school especially on the periphery of the school grounds.

One student when leaving commented – thank you very much for doing this.

Students – Spruce Group

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest strengths that help with your learning?

The teachers really know what they are doing when they teach, except sometimes.

Alternatively, Mr x can't control the class and a few kids have ADD and stuff and the teacher can't control the class.

There are the popular students who are pretty rude, then there are the smart students who are called dumb.

The school does try to involve students like in sports. Hockey school idea.

Fun things just stop.

But the staff get good ideas but don't always follow up – like the playground issue – the school needs a new playground facility for the younger students.

We have to be a certain distance from the door cause we scare parents. The teachers tell us we intimidate people who want to come inside.

Cause like we can give the reputation that the school is bad.

The playground should be planned for all students.

This is a good school but I am looking forward to going to Bert Church school cause of sports and more course choices.

The options here are pretty good, esp. band and French. The other options are more boring.

Sometimes we're proud of the sports teams and the fund raising activities, like the heart fund.

Chance to have a say in making things different in the school.

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning?

Lunch hour is too short – 15-20 minutes to eat. It sometimes is a big disaster with everyone sitting on the floor. We need tables in the gym, less people throwing food around and more benches. The older students run to get the benches.

I often go off campus for lunch.

We need newer gym equipment

Students with ADD shouldn't be in the same class. They get out of control in some classes.

Teachers get picked on.

Teachers not as attentive as they could be – to bullying and educational needs.

Not everyone respects each other.

Some of the projects are really hard and sometimes we get too many projects at the same time.

Some projects are good and others are lame. I hate coloring like title pages or posters – it is a waste of trees.

The schools reputation is okay – somewhere in the middle – but it's called a welfare school.

I almost transferred out cause I don't always get the help I need or another student gives you a hard time and the teacher doesn't intervene.

An intramural program would have to be voluntary – in nice weather a lot of students like to go outside.

Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges? Principal for the day question...

I think the kiosk should only serve healthy food and expand the range of choices.

Don't let the kids go to HIHO.

I would add a short break in the morning and afternoon to provide some stress relief between classes. I had this in my last school and it was a good idea – younger students go out for recess and older students hang out.

I'd make the periods shorter add more sports and keep the class and change rooms cleaner.

I'd change the colours of the school.

The previous principal was an awesome principal but things have fallen apart since then. The new principal hasn't provided much opportunity to get to know him. The V P is great and easy to talk to. We've had three different principals in four years.

Different principals have different techniques so there is a lack of consistency. Like we don't have as many options as when we were in grade 5. Yea, we lost outdoor ed. Active living had more choices then too.

I would raise more money – cause by the sound of it, it seems they are always losing money – so programs can continue.

We need a new music program with a wider range of instruments. - guitar

I would change the timetable so students wouldn't have the same teacher for five periods in a row.

There are a lot of cliques in the school – there is the popular kids like every school has but others talk a lot and you feel like knocking their lights out.

Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card?

Not as much effort put in to school.

The report cards often say the same comments for all the students.

Yea I got all A's for three years but this year I didn't get any – the subjects are more boring reflecting what we already know – they teach the same thing but perhaps in more depth.

And this is our last year here so we want to have more fun.

For me to learn it has to be fun, but it is boring now. Math is really boring.

Instead of threatening that we won't do well next year the teachers should make the subjects more interesting. Teachers shouldn't put you down to motivate you.

We should be allowed to listen to our Ipods when we are running. Most people are in good shape but they don't want to run.

I like running though.

But you're a crack head.

Does the effort mark on the report card hold meaning for you?

I don't think they are really accurate – the teachers just add it relative to your mark. My parents say the effort mark is meaningless – like blowing smoke up your butt.

The percentages used in grade 7 and 8 are good.

But I don't like it cause it allows your parents to distinguish between a low and a high B.

Parents rewards for high marks varies as with other student groups.

Parent support is pretty important relative to students focus at school. Motivation is also very important and is independent of just being popular. Popular kids don't always get good grades though.

If the school calls my mom doesn't pick up the phone. Cause the school only calls if there is a problem.

The school is sometimes viewed wrong and other times it is justified. The reputation of the school is pretty bad with other people laughing when you say you are from Meadowbrook.

Kids with ADD should be spread out – cause they laugh at each other and cause a lot of trouble.

I'd put them all in one class with a really strict teacher.

The school needs air conditioning really badly.

Hopefully you can change this school to make it a little bit better – but I don't think it will happen cause we have tried to change it.

The Bulldog mascot is okay, but we've had it for too long and it does not necessarily convey the six P's -

Students – Willow Group

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest that help with your learning?

It is a bigger school with a large gym.

Lockers are good cause you can store your stuff not in your desk.

The security is good, but my lock is broken

We have lots of nice teachers who let you do your work and have fun.

I like math because you are always going to use it.

I like math because it is a challenge.

I like fashion cause I like to make things. – it's fun and peaceful.

I like science cause you get to do labs and stuff.

I like science cause we got to dissect an eyeball and learn how the eye works.

I you don't understand things you can get help after school.

Teachers explain things well

When you think about how well students learn at Meadowbrook school, what do you think are the schools greatest challenges or weaknesses that do not help with your learning?

We need a playground so people would have things to do and stay out of trouble.

Swings would be good to have even for older students.

Intramurals would be a good idea as well. They give people more things to do so they stay out of trouble. Other students tend to bug each other quite a bit.

The grade 8's usually go to the Angel's parents' restaurant or HI Ho for lunch.

It would be good if we could listen to Ipods when working independently – some students talk too much in class and students goof around sometimes. Sometimes the teacher does not notice.

Some teachers are too quiet in class as well.

It would be good if we could have more after school sports as well like Frisbee golf

If the school was nicer less kids would call it the “welfare school” cause it is not very nice. Too many students write on the bricks of the school. It should be cleaned off right away. It implies the school lacks resources and we feel that is true.

There have also been a lot of broken windows and that doesn’t make you feel good about the school.

Inside the school gives you a cold feeling – like the colours and stuff. There should be more opportunity for students to help decorate the school on a regular basis.

Hanging up student artwork.

Better sports equipment would help as well.

Our computers are okay but some are pretty slow – other schools have better computers like Macs. We have good access but could use newer ones.

I think we need more colour in the school

We have had the school mascot like forever. We could use a bulldog outfit that students could wear.

But it is a big drooly dog.

If we wanted to change it we should have a campaign to select a replacement.

The only way you can be in the leadership group is if you get it as a option.

The grade 8’s have a bit of a reputation in the school, but we are better than past classes cause we don’t smoke as much.

I think my marks are down cause I get bored or lazy after I am in the same school for a few years.

The grade 8’s see themselves as pretty bad and sometimes even compete to get this reputation.

We would like to have more school spirit, but it has died down over time. Some of the more engaged teachers have moved on.

Too many of the computer games we used to play on computers are blocked.

Too many

Do school plans and policies (the way things are done at Meadowbrook support the strengths and address the challenges? Principal for the day question...

I'd get more field trips. For grade 7's the upcoming swimming trip is the first.

Change the mascot.

Hold pep rallies.

Put more food into the Kiosk with better selection. – and have two outlets to reduce the line-ups.

I'd make social studies more fun and use more current A-V.

I'd start classes earlier in the year to avoid the rush at the end of the school year.

Make the classes longer to provide more time to learn – instead of 7 periods have five.

Get tables to eat on at lunch time.

Get projectors for each class to share internet information more effectively.

I'd have a different teacher for each subject so the teachers are less rushed and would have only one subject to worry about.

Have contests for the students, e.g. guitar hero.

The dances are boring – no grade 8's are going. They should do more music videos. They didn't plan it well cause many grade 8's are in Quebec.

Student input to the leadership group is limited.

All students should have input into the school not just the leadership group.

Do you like the design of the report cards used at Meadowbrook? Do the report cards tell you everything you think is important about your learning at Meadowbrook? Do you have suggestions for changing the report card?

Report cards tell you if you need to improve – and if you need to study more.

Students do best in project work when it is hands on.

Sometimes it's hard to bring up your mark because the teacher doesn't give you any other opportunities to improve your mark.

Students learn the worst when you just sit and take notes or if the teacher just talks and it sometimes doesn't make any sense.

The effort mark is not too helpful. It does not represent your actual effort very well, cause the teachers don't have enough information about what you are really doing.

It would be better for students to do their own self-evaluations regarding effort.

Last term I failed health and I didn't know I was not doing well. We need more on-going feedback.

Homework should be marked, but it should not count for too much.

Detentions are used often like when you are late – even if it is my family's fault.

You can talk to the counselor if you can't talk to your teacher.

But I don't go to the counselor cause I don't know him – he is pretty new at the school.

Do you know who your superintendent is or his name? No.

Sometimes my teacher loses it.

Not all of my teachers are approachable when you want to talk to them. Some teachers leave early after school so you can't see them.

It is ironic that we're having an IPOD raffle when you can't listen to IPODS at school.

Parent Focus Group Delta

What are the schools greatest strengths related to student outcomes?

The parents – there is a good group of parents at this school – a core group that come to every meeting with strong involvement.

The band is unique for a middle school with a wide range of extracurricular activities and a good sports program sometimes supported by parent volunteers.

The school itself has good facilities – e.g. the shop class, the home ec room, and computer lab are pretty good for a middle school.

The core group of teachers is very good. We've had turnover in the administration. The staff interaction with the students is good for the most part. We don't have too many complaints. Some teachers put in extra time.

The band went to camp for a few days and they are going to a festival tomorrow. They also go on other field trips and they went to Quebec.

I don't get a lot of complaints about how kids treat each other and I have been very pleased with the support the students show my son.

There are a lot of strong friendships among the students. Interaction was pretty mixed and diversified within grades/classes. New kids are welcomed into the student population. We are not too big.

The teachers can joke around with the kids and show that they are human.

It starts at the top because if you have a concern both the principal and VP are very professional and deal with it effectively- guiding you through the issue.

Students are recognized for achievement with medallions, and a citizenship award.

The bulldog symbol is okay – I don't mind it. My son loves it and is proud of it.

The school has an official weather station on the web.

I like the students' birthday board in the school.

What are the school's greatest challenges?

The biggest challenge I saw coming into the community is the reputation the school has in the community. The community has a long term east-west competition.

But even parents of Meadowbrook students maintain the image of the school as poor.

And some staff perpetuate the image of Meadowbrook as a “welfare school.”

And yet our perceptions of the school are pretty positive. A clean, quality building.

The image is ingrained in people’s mind and it would be a challenge to change this, but welfare schools don’t have weather stations.

Communications is a big challenge. We have a large board out front but it is empty. The school newsletter is on the website, but many parents do not check it. We’ve been discussing mailing it out.

It is negatively affecting fund raising and parent awareness generally. Volunteering has gone down and fundraising has decreased.

Web based, password protected school databases could be a useful tool.

The school has a lack of support staff for the percent of special needs students at the school. The school has a higher percentage of special needs students, but a lower proportion of support staff. Teachers should not have other students helping my son with special needs.

Parents don’t feel they are able to access the quantity of support for students with special needs that they feel entitled to.

Teachers are also stressed in developing IPP’s in ways that negatively effect teachers’ ability to teach all the students in their classes.

My son complains that he is being held back by the broad range of student abilities in his class. He doesn’t want to be teaching other students.

The outside supports, speech, OT, etc. are not coming into the school. Fairness is an issue for everyone – teachers, students and parents.

The change over in teachers now seems to be greater than other schools I have been involved with – eight teachers, support staff just last year.

Some teachers have disengaged and have lost their patience with the kids. There seems to be an increase in medical leaves as teachers become frustrated with the lack of supports. Some staff seem to be in survival mode.

Large class sizes. Fairness of education for all students.

Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges? Principal for the day...

If students need to evacuate the school the walk to Bert Church is not realistic – this needs to be reviewed – perhaps a reciprocal agreement with the new catholic school.

The schools in Airdrie could do more interactive, fun activities to build a stronger sense of community.

I would bring in new blood to reinvigorate the staff, i.e. creating a staff succession plan. Some students in grade five and six are seeing 7 to 9 different adults each day.

But that can be good for students to experience diversity as well.

But, high school students may have only 4 or 5 teachers per semester.

A lunch room is needed and use of the gym ties it up for intramurals. The kiosk for food needs to be expanded as well.

The playground is an issue of concern for the school council and is a current topic of discussion.

Do you understand how staff use data or other or information to inform planning, evaluation and decision-making?

The parent teacher interviews are not working – too hectic but parents can follow up.

Interview nights are at mid-term and are a good idea, but parents don't attend. There is a lack of communication as there are no report cards at this point to remind parents of interviews.

Teachers write the same canned comments.

Could we have some acknowledgement of every child's birthday?

The school council would like to know when staff are going to be away so get well cards, etc can be sent.

The staff infrequently ask for parents to volunteer and there does seem to be a gulf between the staff and the school council – the us vs. them dynamic.

School council involvement in the school plan and results report is pretty limited and it is important to us.

Use of message board, phone fan out, recorded message.

More community events would help with communication.

A lot of the spirit has disappeared.

School council members are not adequately involved in school planning.

Parent Focus Group Echo

What are the schools greatest strengths related to student outcomes?

Off the top of my head one of the strengths is they let students be leaders themselves in the different leadership positions they provide.

For me my child has had learning issues only identified once he came to the school, so for him the strength has been the teachers ability to diagnose and help my son.

Being close to home is a benefit as my kids can easily walk to school and not spend time on a school bus. My daughter likes to have a break (grade 7).

It's not a huge school but is a good size so the staff can know the kids by name. It has a cozier atmosphere. The class sizes are an advantage to in grades 5 and 6.

Over the years on strength I found is staff are generally approachable and are very human. Contact is made where required usually.

The school website is helpful with homework being put up, but not all parents are aware of it.

The weather station on the website is pretty cool as well.

The amount of work the teachers do outside of the classroom is a real strength. I certainly applaud this extra effort as it gives the kids some good opportunities. They really care about the students. Sports, music, and drama were noted. Anti-bullying initiatives were mentioned.

The school council is also a strength with a strong core group of people who are quite representative of the community.

What are the school's greatest challenges?

My son is frequently picked on by other students and I don't understand why – I keep looking for the targets on his shirts. I've often had to come to talk to teachers about some of the language students might use and I will confront the students if there is a teacher there. Grade 5 was very difficult. Grade 6 was quiet the first half of the year and then got worse. Mrs x is very good with dealing with the kids, but she has some very challenging students in her class. The teacher has been supportive of me and has the most success when the parents are involved. He is handling things better now.

I wonder if the challenge for the school is the demographic regarding where the students are coming from. There are various sub-groups in the school with a broad range of student

maturity in the middle school structure. Is this a big challenge to keep the elementary from the older students?

Most incidents occur at lunch time or on the playground cause that's when all the students are together.

I found my son was exposed to issues in grade 5 much sooner than if he were in an elementary school. The older students are their role models which presents problems for the teachers in the school as well.

Teachers seem to tolerate too much disrespect from certain students.

I dreaded sending my daughter to a middle school cause the older students are dealing with issues that they don't have the maturity to deal with.

As odd as it sounds they sooner my daughter can be exposed to things the sooner I can provide direction to her.

My choice would be for elementary structure.

They do focus on anti-bullying here and in my experience older students do tend to pick on younger students. The teachers have a big job in trying to prevent bullying given the students age range.

Things that have changed since we were in school – bullying about the same, less smoking, more informed regarding sex, but although these problems exist here it is not worse than in other schools – it is very much related to home life.

I had heard rumours that sex was a problem with the grade 7 and 8 students at Meadowbrook that has been affected the schools image.

The previous principal was a real benefit for the school – like the clouds had parted and the sun had come out.

I am concerned that some of the new teachers tolerate way too much disrespect from some of the grade 7 or 8 students. They seem to have lost their control of the class and the impact on the students in terms of lost content is of concern. Once these students are given a little space it is very difficult to regain control.

There has recently been a huge turnover in the staff and I don't know why this is happening. I am very concerned that we are not keeping the effective teachers on staff. Consistency, continuity and advance planning is hard when staff changes or subs are used.

As a school community there needs to be a system that is working for students who are disrespectful.

My son is on his third science teacher this year which has been very disruptive.

Is it because the teachers are on stress leave dealing with the more challenging students.

Are our kids missing out?

I am frustrated by teachers who are pregnant and start teaching knowing they are going to leave so the system seems to set up this situation so the teacher can qualify for leave.

The one complaint I hear most often from my kids deals with the class being punished as a whole for the misbehavior of a few kids. My son came home in tears one time when the teacher threatened to cancel a field trip for the whole class.

There seems to be good support systems for students who need extra help but there are not very good programs or supports for gifted students. There is a need for students to get enrichment to ensure students have success in post secondary.

Without dedicated programs for gifted students they get lost in the system.

Coping mechanisms for kids are perhaps too much of the curriculum and not enough time is spent on the curriculum. Behaviour management seems to interfere with the teaching and learning.

Parents are often part of the problem if there are problems with students. Suspension is not an effective means for improving student behavior. Punishment must be painful to be effective and corporal punishment is now banned. Teachers and parents must be behavioral gatekeepers. Those five boys come back from suspension and cause even more problems.

Kids get picked on more if they are too shy.

Some young teachers lack the skill to handle difficult students.

Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges? Principal for the day...

I would find out why the quality teachers have left – do a thorough exit interview to find out why. I'd then petition the school board for new strategies for working with the kids who are presenting the problems.

We spend too much time protecting the bullies and not enough holding the student and their parents responsible for their behavior.

I would ask why the school want to pull me as principal out of the school so much that it prevents me from doing my job. I wonder if the principal's absence affects the potential for misbehavior.

I'd like to see boys and girls in separate classrooms because of different learning styles and maturity levels which holds implications for teaching styles, etc.

But I would not want my son left with a boys only class.

Do you want the school to lead or reflect the community?

Sub groups of students become pronounced by grade 7 or 8 – and technology is presenting more for the students and school to deal with.

I think those kids who fail should repeat the grade. This would get the parents and the students' attention.

I can talk and complain as much as I want but the challenge is in finding a solution.

There is a need to refocus on why the students are here.

Another option would be ability grouping regardless of age so a stronger focus on learning could result.

Do you understand how staff use data or other or information to inform planning, evaluation and decision-making?

I really dislike the stock comments on the report card.

If you get an A you get this comment a B and you get that comment.

More personal comments would be desirable.

Early interviews like were held this year is very positive and helpful.

I have always felt the effort mark was meaningless and often just reflects the achievement mark.

I relate to letter grades so I like that.

I don't have a good idea where the school is heading and wonder if the staff have this vision or direction.

I see the sweetest kids morph into these great big dorks.

I was proud of the school last year but not so much this year and have lost hope because of the staff changes.

My kids don't feel passionate about the school so I don't feel passionate either.

I am planning on home schooling my child next year cause for him the lack of continuity with teachers have made it very difficult for him and he is becoming frustrated and in tears.

I would never do that.

My son begged me to not come to the school when he was bullied cause he thought it would make it worse, but I came anyway and it did seem to help.

I am looking elsewhere for schooling for our girls next year.

Staff Focus Group - Zebra

What are the schools greatest strengths related to student outcomes?

The school has a caring environment

In the past we have had the opportunity to teach to our strengths.

Rapport with students is positive.

The staff at the school for the most part have good experience and have always tried to meet the emotional needs of the students.

Up till three years ago the staff were highly committed to meeting the expectations of the community.

We have had a strong options program e.g. drama that has involved 2-3 teachers.

School building – gym, music room, shop, home ec

Option – good selection

Amazing support staff

Sports team well run

What are the school's greatest challenges?

We have a large special needs population that are not coded or supported.

We have been told we don't have money for extra staff.

Last three years we have not had opportunity for engagement with planning for special needs programs.

The class size parameters are guidelines and do not work as well at a middle school organization.

Do you have enough information on the funding parameters – if not it is a serious challenge for you.

When you have so many low ability students you cannot differentiate your teaching to meet the students needs.

We also have a lot of great kids that we are not able to give enough attention to.

What kind of help are you getting from district office – some but it seems to be a bit of a miss. Often students lose their coding and teachers have too little opportunity for involvement.

Drafting the IPP takes so much time that you then don't have time to implement it, and the resources are too limited.

We are on the bare minimum of prep time. There is no time set aside in the school day for team meetings. Other jurisdictions provide more time so again it is the budget mystery. It seems every year the budget gets tighter.

In eight years we are on our fourth principal – you start to establish a pattern and then it all changes.

We used to be a team – we, but now we don't have a say anymore.

You get frustrated and then end up taking it out on yourself.

Computers don't seem to be strategically allocated in the school. And, acquiring new equipment via central office can take a highly variable amount of time.

We share a tech support person with another school – cut back from a ft person last year – another source of frustration.

Leadership has not been as communicative with the full staff. Committees may be too focused. We may not be providing a safe environment with mold in the school – I cough all night – yes I am frustrated. The testing that was done was very mysterious with neither the methodology or the results being shared.

Failure to communicate is being identified as a significant challenge. It affects people differently. As an aide I asked a psychologist a question and was told she could not talk to me because I was not a teacher.

In one class are three boys who are very disruptive. One was recommended for expulsion – we cannot begin to meet the needs of the students and this is the worst I have ever seen it in 20+ years.

In the past we have had similar challenges but we had a greater say in the decision making process on how to address the challenges.

The level of discipline and follow through are different issues. Sending students to the office is not effecting change in the student's behavior. This can set up a growing problem.

In the past three years with budget cuts we started to see an erosion in the behavior management strategies in the schools. The loss of the SITS room removed a nurturing, mid-level strategy for behavior management.

A future challenge will be related to the Divisions decision it wants to focus on gifted students and the fear is we won't have the supports to meet the students program needs.

There is a need for fresh ideas among the staff given the relatively stable staff, although teachers have opportunities to visit other schools.

Staff morale started dropping in the past three years with increased staff mobility.

One perspective is the middle school concept in mid level schools are experiencing more fiscal pressures.

A negative attitude towards the school is out there – with parents or in the community. The concept of Meadowbrook being the “welfare school” is out there in the community.

Or is it generated because we have so many students who are struggling.

And yet we have had excellent parent support.

Maybe we have been

Need a double block for option courses.

Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges?

The first question I would ask is what can I do for you – what do you see as the key needs for the school – dialogue as a staff.

I am so tired of blaming outside for what is wrong – we need to focus internally, we know what is not working and I don't need my hand slapped for wanting to try something differently by central office.

The staff are fantastic and committed and if we could brainstorm as a group it would be amazing. The support staff are amazing. So the foundations are there.

We have gotten into a negative spin and we need to focus on the positive and avoid the small thinking.

I've even suggested they move the group home to Springbank.

It is also important for the school administration to be highly involved with the school and not get called away too often from the school. It feels that the ship has gone to sea without the captain on board. No body is driving, but the VP is doing an excellent job.

You have more and more meetings and less and less communication.

Perhaps the specialist need less meetings and more time in the classroom observing kids and interacting with the students in the classroom context.

Staff have an informal meeting every Monday morning regarding upcoming events that week. Formal staff meetings are held once a month and support staff can attend on a voluntary basis.

PD days should be about things we care about at the school. There is zero time for discussion about what is going on in our school. IT is not clear if we can reorient PD in this direction.

Are your vision and values statement meaningful? There were at one time.

Principal needs to share what their direction/focus is.

Are the data driven approaches to decision-making used by the school valid and reliable, and does the information/data point to any unidentified challenges?

Assessment should be driven by love of learning rather than fear of failure (in the accountability pillar) and fear of are we being judged.

The focus needs to be on assessment based on the love of learning with students – this is a school based opportunity.

How do school-level performance measures align with the authority performance measures as defined in plans and reports mandated by the board of trustees?

We were told that our goals and vision and mission have to fit with Alberta Ed and the Division and cannot reflect the school's desires in this regard.

The greater emphasis on assessment may be limiting creative approaches to instruction in a play it safe scenario.

IPP's are taking forever with the new program and the amount of work seems to be motivated more by fear of lawsuits than in meeting the learning needs of students.

When students don't think there is any chance of being held back they evolve an attitude that it doesn't matter what you do in middle school.

The report card does not work well – and does not provide an adequate focus on the child.

Things like people skills or team work skills are important – maybe you can't assign a percent but they are important skills.

I don't think parents understand the report card all that well, and the IPP's are not working well.

And now we have to add the GLA and kids just shut down with this mark. We have not had the opportunity to discuss this adequately as a staff.

There is a real lack of celebrating what the students bring to the school and what they can achieve.

Celebrate love of learning.

Curriculum needs to be clearly defined, so assessment should be easier, and not rewriting things each time.

Staff Focus Group - Lions

What are the schools greatest strengths related to student outcomes?

We have a variety of programs that we offer the students. I've taken polls every year regarding how we can improve the options. When the classes are small in the options we can really help them.

I know the staff have a lot of experience and a wealth of knowledge.

Yes, we have a strong staff.

The staff are caring and intelligent. The Quebec trip was fantastic. We offer a good program.

The building is very good. It needs some upgrading, but overall it is very good.

We put on a musical the last three years with lots of staff involvement at the beginning of spring.

We've had a strong band program.

The people who work in resource are very good and caring but the demand is very high with 34 coded and another 30 with special needs as well.

The phys. Ed. Program is strong. We've shifted from team sports more to lifelong fitness. We are not doing as well in the competitive sports and we'll see how we do with the fitness aspect.

The library is a strong program as well with strong support staff.

The computer tech is great in working in a team context.

Its great that a lot of students return from high school and they convey that they think they are more polite than kids from other feeder schools.

We received very positive feedback while on the Quebec field trip.

We have a number of parents who are extremely supportive of the school. We could use more of them but you can really see it in their students attitudes.

What are the school's greatest challenges?

Resource demand is high with a lot of students (coded and non) with special needs. Some students have had codes removed after transferring from another jurisdiction (approx. 20 students). This really frustrates the classroom teachers.

A lot of students have LD – that require very lengthy IPP's typically 25 pages long and often they may not be assigned to the resource teachers. Feedback is often that the classroom teacher cannot implement the IPP which creates lots of frustration for the staff and the students. IPPs are largely dysfunctional.

A big issue in the increase in demand and level of need. We ask for more staff but always hear back that there are no resources.

Our clientele can be a challenge with lots of foster kids from the group home or kids with wealthy parents but with kids out roaming free getting into trouble. A lot of parents are struggling and can't support the school in working with the students. Staff end up doing a lot of parenting with students with a very diverse range of needs.

I end up calling parents with news that their child is awol or not doing homework etc, and sometimes the parents just don't or can't care.

The SITS program was fabulous but the money ran out and we used resources for aides in the classroom.

Class sizes are too big with 25-26 in grade 5; and around 30 in the other grades.

What we teach (assignments) change every year and sometimes we don't know what we will be teaching until September due to timetable – enrollment uncertainty till then.

We are down to three preps in a six day cycle. It is what happens when the admin does not teach very much.

The VP is maxed out and the principal is away too much. The trustees were touring the school with the principal and one of the students asked who is that guy? It's like a ship without a captain.

We've also had a lot of principals and its like, back up – rewind.

More consultation with the staff would be good. Many things are just instituted without adequate consultation. Like the Teacher Advisory program being planned for next year without adequate consultation.

We are professionals but have too little opportunity to consult with administration to share our experience.

There are a few new and experienced staff who really needed support in the classroom, but they didn't get the help (ideas they could do) that they need. The principal has never visited my classroom this year. Also, when the principal has been asked to cover a class to free up a teacher he has never done it.

Generally needs to be better admin support and supervision for teachers in need of help.

Nutrition of the students is atrocious with lots of junk food purchased at the convenience store – it affects the students energy levels at a manic level and contributes to some of the behavioral issues in the school.

AISI days were brutal this year with so many subs in the school.

Teachers should not be pulled from their classes for meetings. Consistency is important for the students. This is true for the principal as well.

All the staff – certified and non certified, need to be considered to be on the same team.

The principal must not be above us, or looking down on us.

Inequality of work load within a school or between schools is an issue, how do you deal with that?

Are four Language Arts Classes the same as full-time gym?

Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges?

We are a part of hearing about it, but I don't know how much pull we have on it. If you are willing to be on committees you can have more say.

Time is an issue regarding committee membership. I don't want to be on committees, occasional, informal grade level meetings are okay but also difficult to organize. We do need more positive team building and respect for all staff in the school and we need for fun things that engage the staff as a group.

Everyone is tired, frustrated and burnt out so how time is managed is very important.

We did a weekend retreat some years ago that was good, but we may need to build up to that type of activity.

I came recently and I didn't see much evidence of team. Other schools I've been in have felt like family

We used to have that but we have lost that.

We are so tired, so burned out, so frustrated.

This is the first school I've been in where three different teachers have screamed at me. It shows you that the stress levels are high.

5:00 p.m. so no time for question 4 and 5.

I get snapped at by support staff.

5:00 pm so not time for Question 4 and 5.

Are the data driven approaches to decision-making used by the school valid and reliable, and does the information/data point to any unidentified challenges?

How do school-level performance measures align with the authority performance measures as defined in plans and reports mandated by the board of trustees?

Staff Focus Group - Leopards

What are the schools greatest strengths related to student outcomes?

Desire is a school that moves from accountability to shared responsibility – David T.

We have the physical structure here, good labs, gym and moving into tech.

Teachers are teaching in the areas of strengths.

There has been significant learning among staff that is moving student achievement forward. The AISI project involves all teachers and there has been differential uptake.

The office does good work in recognizing students. We have a steady group of high achieving students.

We have a great support staff who go beyond the normal expectations.

We have had strong student leadership in the past – we are doing more in this area more recently

We have the new child development assistant (CDA) who is really supportive of the students. A balance between spirit building and student supports.

We have a lot of high needs students – 55 coded out of 379 not including low average learners or students with emotional needs.

We have a strong school council – a small but dedicated core group.

We have five mentors working with five students.

The school health nurse and family school liaison provide helpful supports.

Mentoring program with students from Bert Church High School.

What are the school's greatest challenges?

Students' backgrounds are very diversified and present the biggest challenge to teachers.

Opportunities for shared perspectives on meeting individual students needs are not strongly present. Staff become quite frustrated and bogged down with these challenges.

Confidence in central office staff could be better – make recommendations that are not feasible and then leave.

Delays in assessment are a frustration in the formal special needs area.

One student was recommended for expulsion and came with a code 42 that was removed when he arrived. The student is back with inadequate supports in place. The bureaucracy seems unresponsive in this context. Staff have no information on how best to work with this student.

A team approach is typically used in defining programs for students with special needs.

The group home transition team exists but does not always involve classroom teachers in the process of programming for these particular students – teachers may or may not welcome the time demand of being more involved.

Grade team leaders are supposed to be meeting with admin regularly, but the meetings are too infrequent and the model is essentially not working in communicating solutions to the other teachers in the grade level.

The turnover in admin has mitigated against establishing effective routines and loose procedures tend to dominate.

The principal is not in the school enough with difficult issues he needs to deal with and it is affecting the leadership capacity in the school. The investment in school is not seen to be strong.

A lot of pressure gets put on the AP.

Good leaders are managers of people and are good with people and can motivate them. Instructional leadership is important and the principal may need to model good instruction for the staff by teaching a course.

Staff turnover this year has been a challenge wrt building team attitudes, and teachers who have been here for years may be losing the motivation to step up and take risks to create change and improvements.

Would clustering students of like needs be beneficial to the learning of all students.

Ongoing student offenders cause chaos in classroom.

Do school plans and policies adequately support the strengths and include strategies to address the challenges?

Translating plan strategies into meaningful actions at the school and classroom level is a challenge. “a loosely coupled structure.”

We are considered a high needs school, but the staff feel stretched to the limit. It is difficult to reach out when you are feeling stressed out.

We are not inspired to come forward, to commit.

Developing and attitude of working 'for' instead of 'with'

Are the data driven approaches to decision-making used by the school valid and reliable, and does the information/data point to any unidentified challenges?

What is the schools use of PAT data – a routine exercise in November – that does not have a profound impact on teachers reflection or understanding of the program or teaching implications.

There is a need for more consistency in using and reviewing student achievement data that is created in our own classrooms.

The school staff are focusing more on formative assessment.

Need an all grade approach to the review of data and strategy for improvement.

How do school-level performance measures align with the authority performance measures as defined in plans and reports mandated by the board of trustees?

The school division ed plan is now driving school planning more directly whereas in the past it was more alignment with the provincial plan.

All the teachers participate in the school planning in relationship to the division plan. Other staff are not included.