

Parent and Community Climate Survey

Results and Analysis

Ferndale School District
April 23 – May 14, 2013



*Serving the Communities of Ferndale, Lummi Island,
Custer, Lummi Reservation and North Bellingham.*

FERNDALE SCHOOLS

This report presents the following:

- **Overview**
- **Background** – Participation and participants
- **Main Findings** – School grade, summary of results by school level and topic area
- **Results** – School climate topic area results by school level and topic area, facilities & communications questions
- **Discussion** – Highlights, next steps
- **Appendix** – Content, formats

Overview

Ferndale School District surveyed parents and community members to engage them in a dialogue about school and district improvement. Survey content included:

- Teacher and school quality
- Technology use in instruction
- Personal use of technology
- Facilities improvement planning
- Communications improvement planning

This survey had a “looping” structure whereby parents with children at multiple schools responded to a set of questions about each school their children attend.

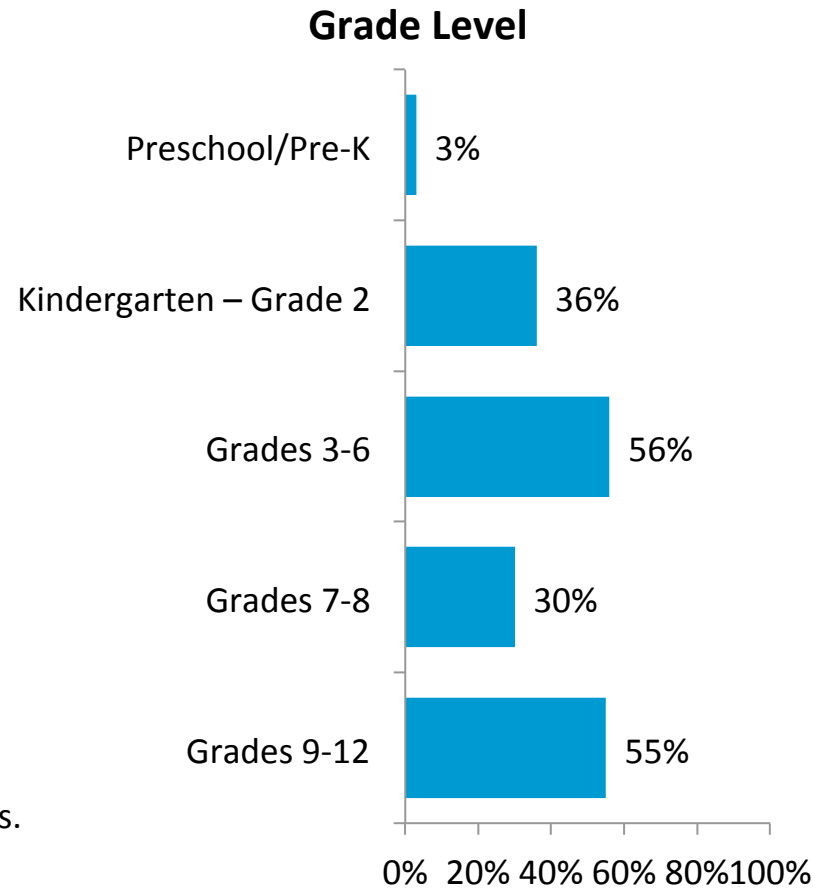
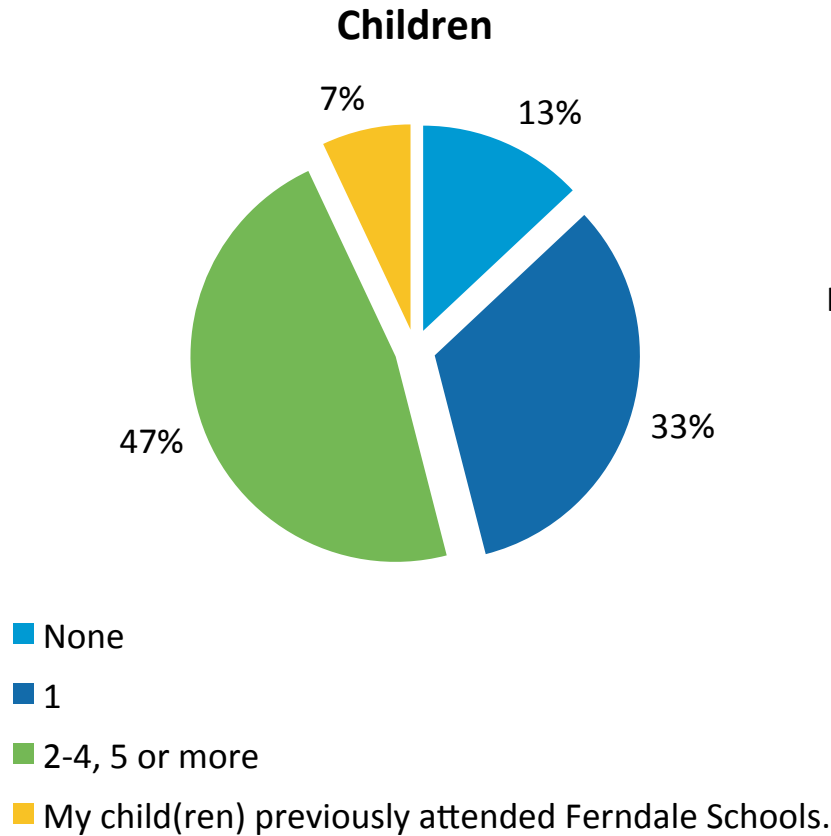
The survey was open to participation from April 23 to May 14, 2013. Parents for whom the district had email addresses received a unique link to the survey. A public link was also available to facilitate non-parent participation.

Background – Participation

Participant Group	Number of Responses (N)			Max Possible Responses (Nmax)			Response Rate (%)		
	Survey Year			Survey Year			Survey Year		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	2013	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	2013	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	2013
Parents	414	846	884	2,200	2,200	2,165	19%	38%	41%
Community Members (No children attending district schools)	34	151	136						

Notes: There were a total of 1,020 responses to this survey.

Background – Participants

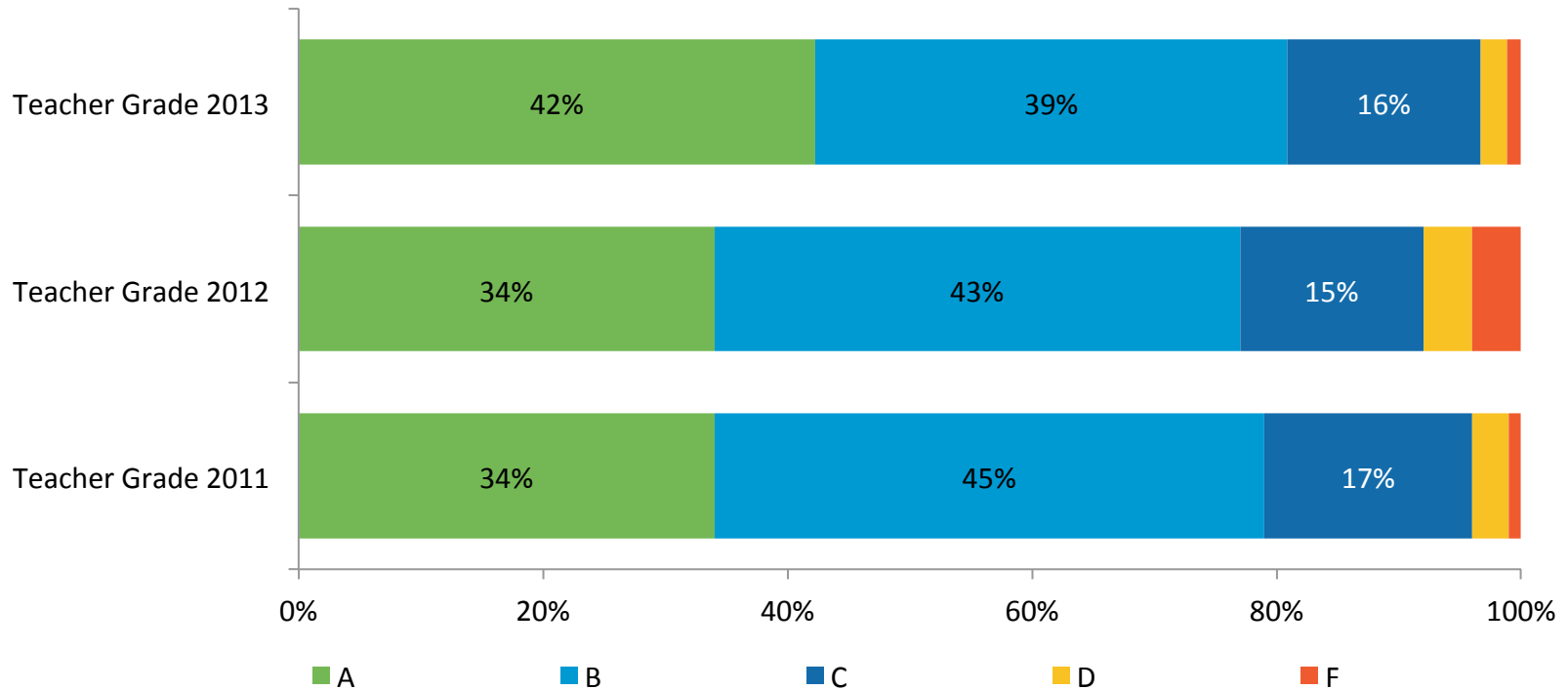


Note: In the “Grade Level” chart (right), percentages sum to more than 100% because parents could select more than one answer option.

Main Findings

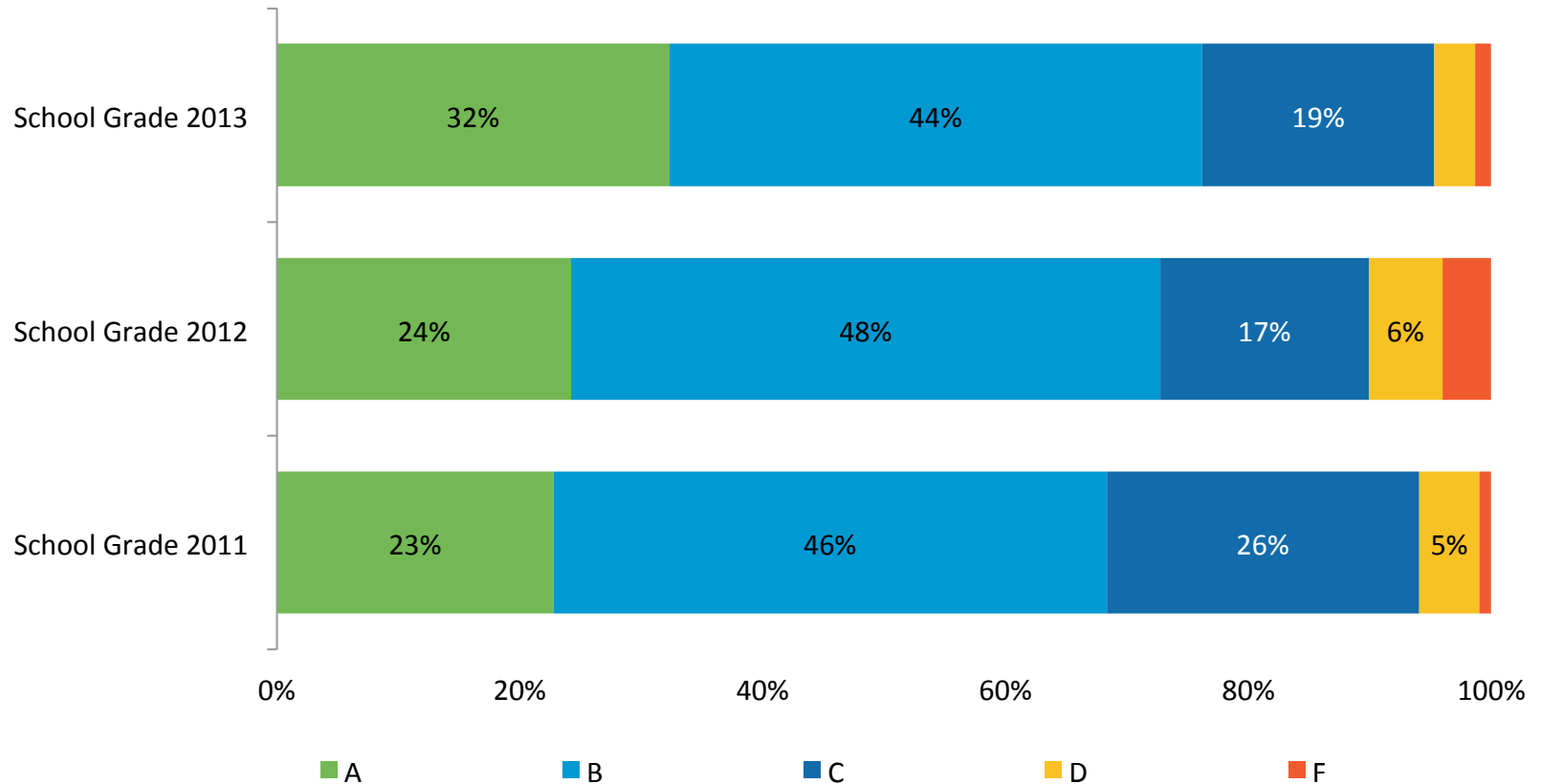
Most participants gave teachers high marks.

- A greater share of participating parents gave an A to their children's teachers than to their children's schools.



Note: Data labels less than 5% are not shown.

Most participants gave schools high marks.



Note: Data labels less than 5% are not shown.

School-level differences minimal, but more positive in lower grades

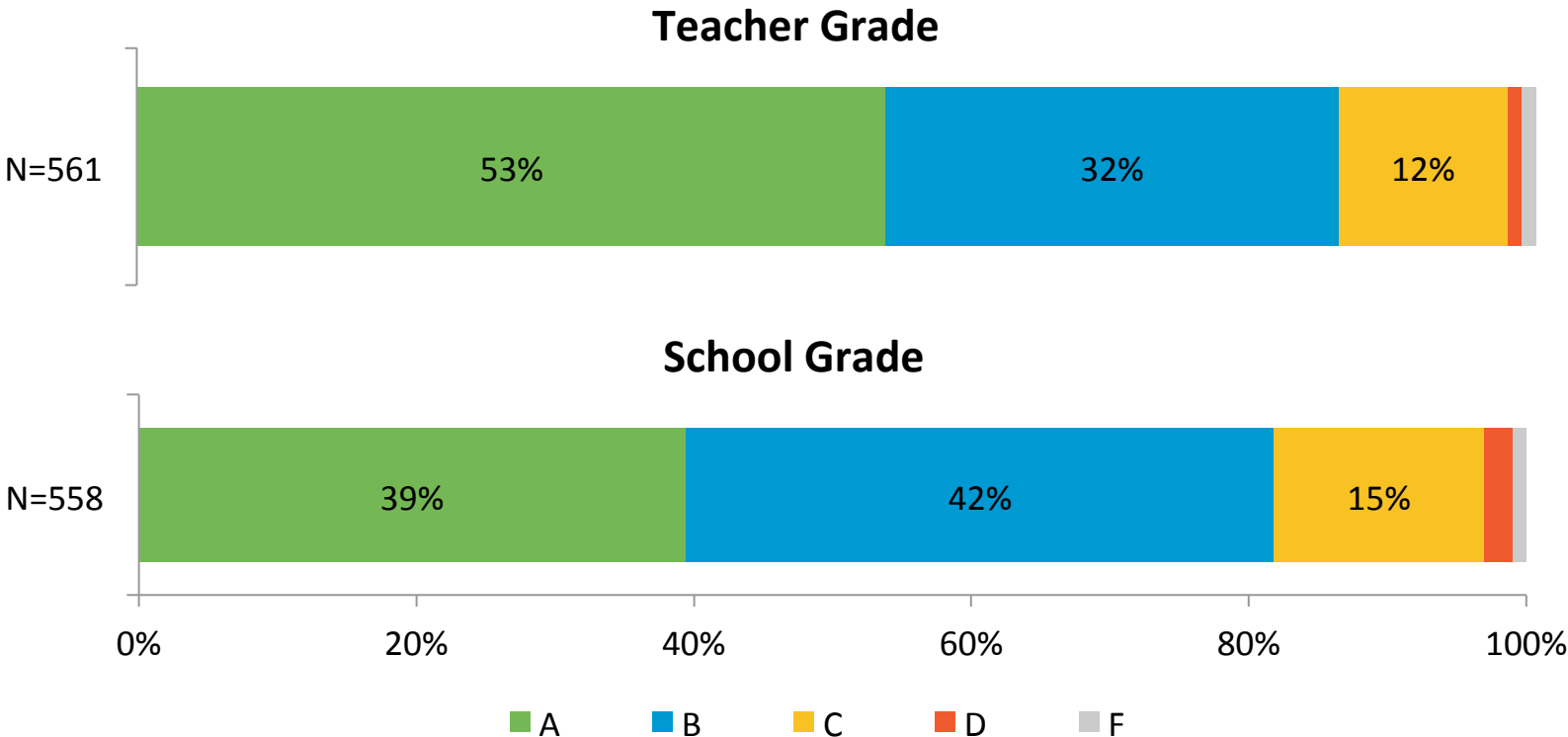
- A greater share of participants with children in elementary and middle school gave teachers and schools an A than did participants with children in high school.
- The percentage of participating parents with favorable views was similar across school levels for student technology and transportation.
- The percentage of participants with favorable views about cafeteria services was highest among parents of elementary school students, followed by parents of middle school students and then parents of high school students.

Results:

Teacher and School

4 out of 5 participants gave elementary schools an A or B.

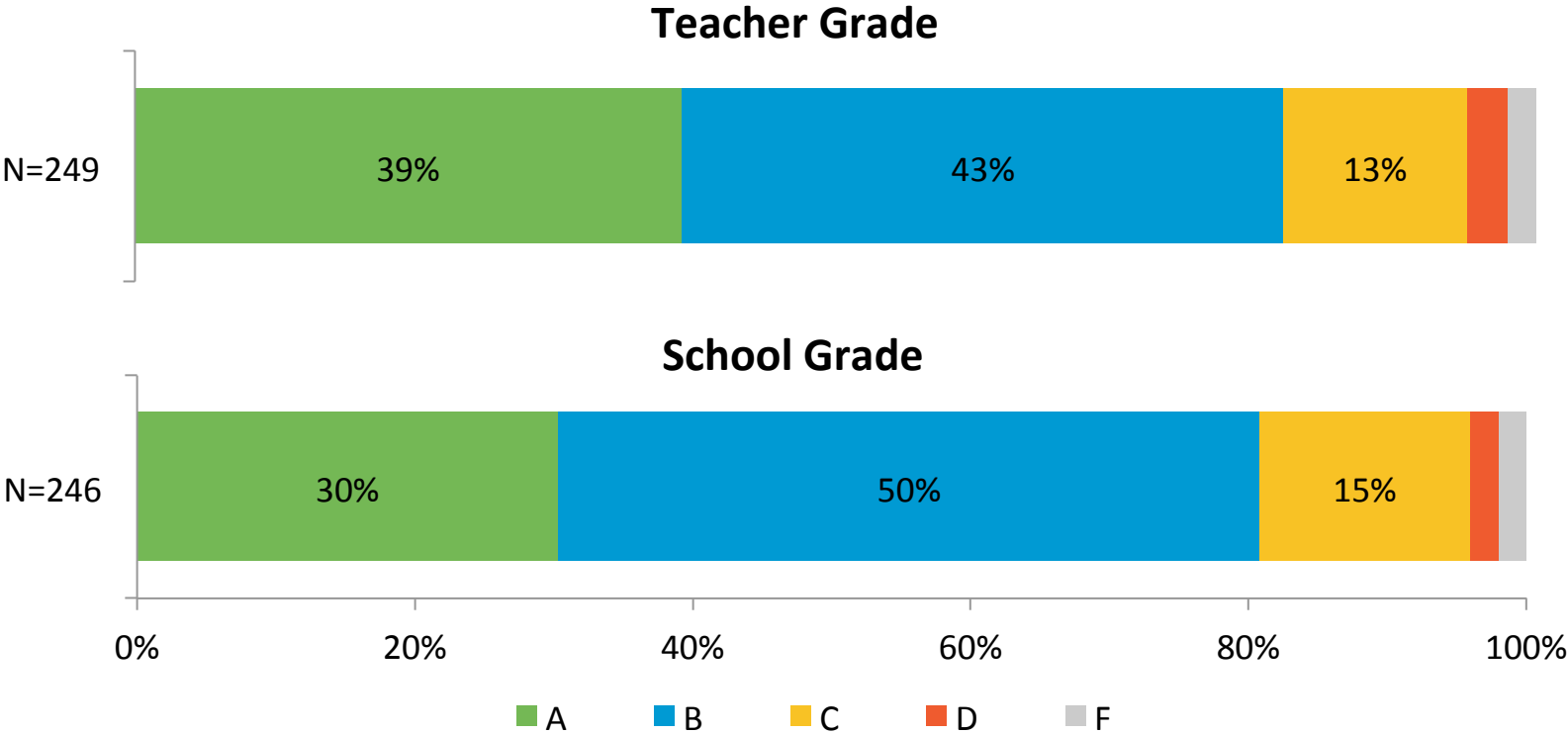
- Four out of five participating parents of elementary school students gave their children's schools and teachers an A or a B.
- A greater share of participants gave their children's teachers an A.



Note: Percentages less than 5% are not shown.

4 out of 5 participants gave middle schools an A or B.

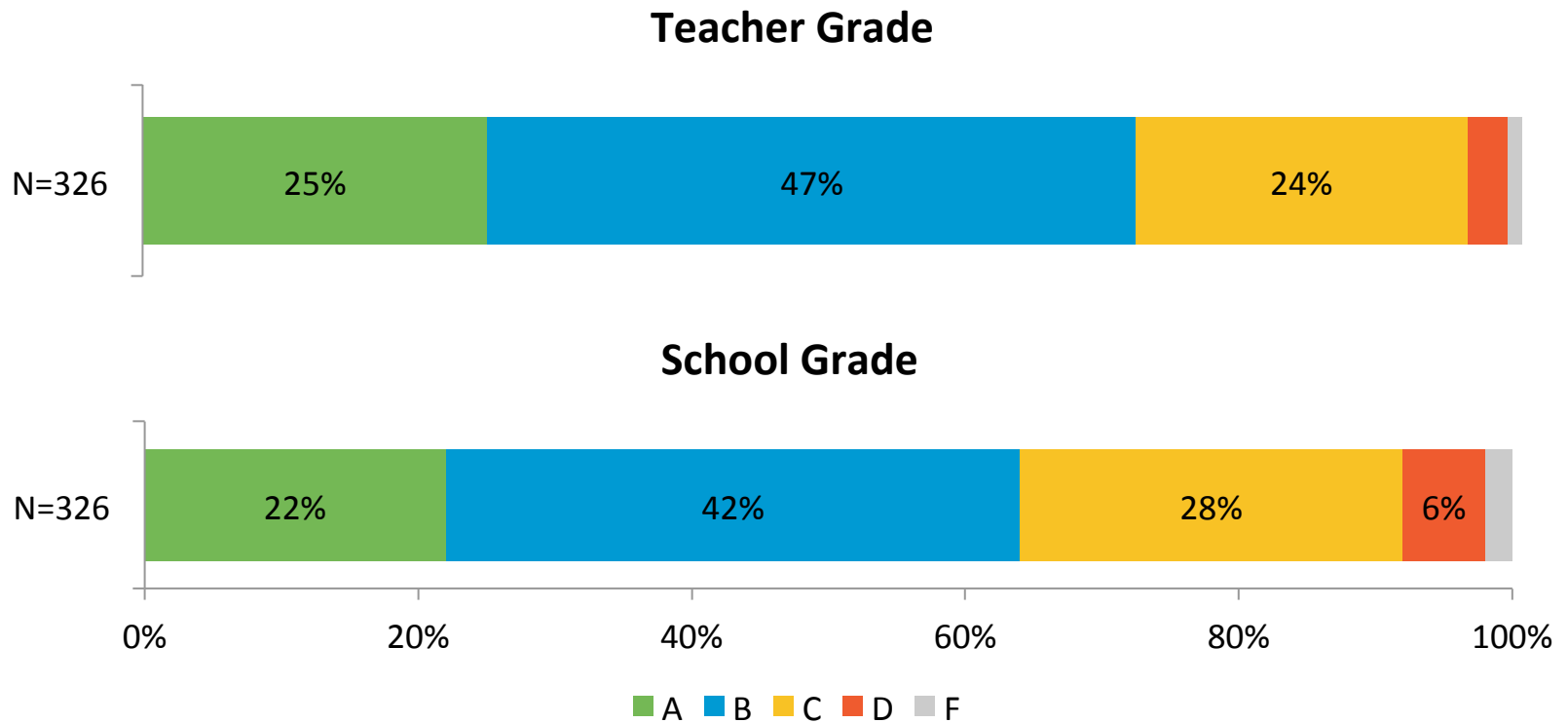
- Two out of three participating parents of middle school students gave their children's schools and teachers an A or B.
- A greater share of participants gave their children's teachers an A.



Note: Percentages less than 5% are not shown.

2 out of 3 participants gave high schools an A or B.

- Two out of three participating parents of high school students gave their children's schools and teachers an A or B.
- Participants gave their children's teachers slightly higher marks than they gave their children's schools.



Note: Percentages less than 5% are not shown.

Results:

Technology, Social Media,
Communication, Facilities,
Cafeteria & Transportation

Student Technology

- Between 52 and 95 percent of participating parents of students at all school levels had positive views of each technology statement.
- Participants had the most positive views of Internet access and the least positive views of district technology initiatives.

	Elementary (N=532)	Middle (N=250)	High (N=313)
	Percent "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"		
Technology such as computers and the Internet are used to enhance my child's learning experience at school.	85%	83%	84%
My child has access to the Internet at home for completion of school assignments.	91%	93%	95%
The use of technology to support learning is a high priority for my child and me.	83%	82%	87%
The district's One-to-One middle school program and the Bring Your Own Device high school program are good ways of increasing student access to educational technology.	52%	57%	53%

Personal Access to Technology

Please indicate the technology you have available for use.

Laptop computer	75%
Desktop computer	69%
Smartphone (Internet access)	64%
Tablet (iPad or similar)	48%
Dedicated eBook reader (Kindle, Nook, etc.)	32%
Standard mobile phone (No Internet access)	25%
Netbook	7%
Other	5%

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Total percentages exceed 100 since participants could select more than one answer for this question.

Social Media – Attitudes

Which statement most closely describes you with regard to use of social media?

I am using social media more often now and am comfortable with it.	32%
I use social media tools and consider myself an "advanced" user.	15%
I am using social media and consider myself a "beginner".	12%
I am skeptical of social media and do not use it at all.	10%
I use social media as a regular part of my work or professional development.	9%
Other	7%
I have tried social media but am not comfortable with it.	6%
I am curious about social media but have not used it yet.	3%
I have tried social media but am just now beginning to use it personally.	3%
I consider myself an "expert" when it comes to social media.	3%

Social Media – Use

Which social media do you use?

Facebook	77%
Websites	68%
YouTube	54%
Pinterest	34%
LinkedIn	22%
Blogs	22%
Twitter	13%
RSS News Feeds	10%
I do not use social media	9%
Other	5%
Flickr	4%
Myspace	2%
SchoolTube	2%

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Total percentages exceed 100 since participants could select more than one answer for this question.

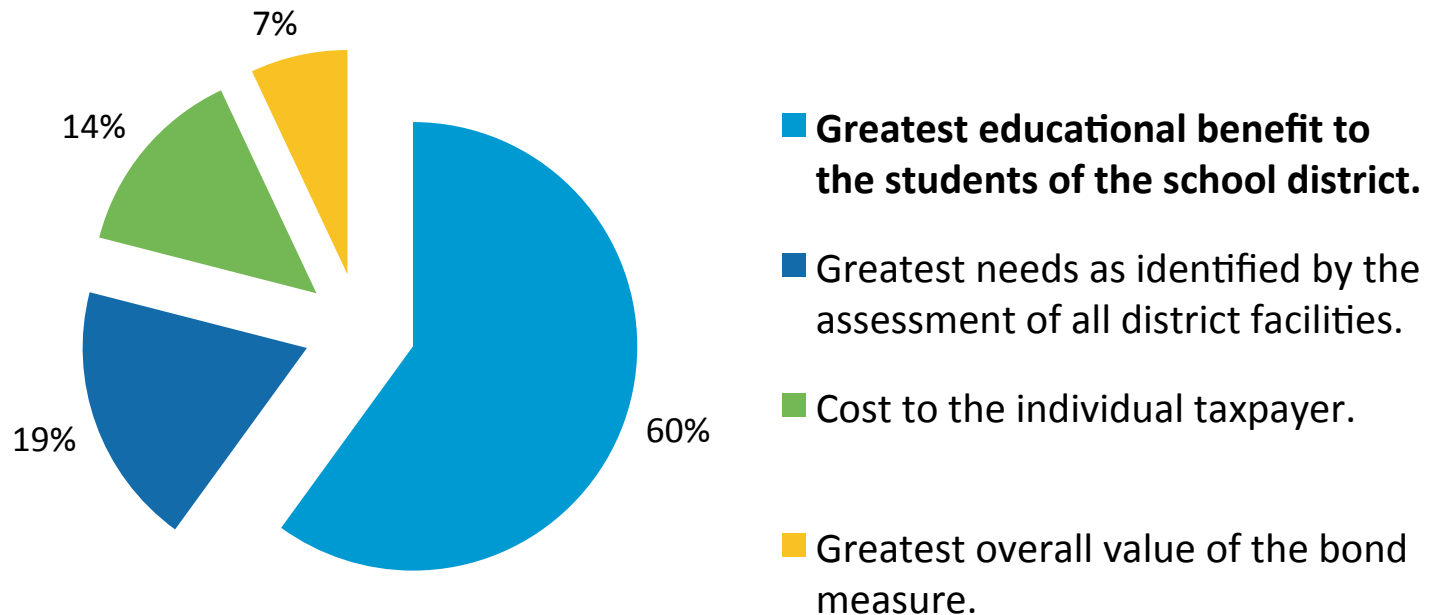
Communication

Please rank the top 3 ways you would prefer to receive information from the district.

	Overall Rank
Email	1
Automated Phone Calls	2
Mail (Hard copy postal service)	3
Text Messages	4
Flyers sent home with students	5
Website	6
Electronic Newsletter	7
Live, Face-to-Face meetings	8
Facebook	9
Twitter	10

Facilities – Most Important Bond Considerations

Please identify the most important factor you think we should consider in proposing the next bond measure for improving our school facilities:



Facilities – Highest-Priority Projects

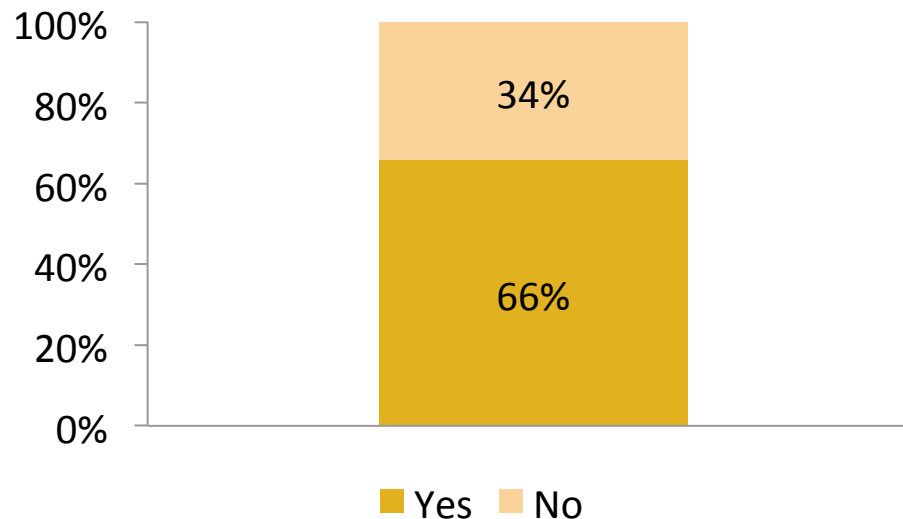
From the list below, please select the two projects you feel are the community's highest priorities:

	Percent of Participants Who Selected Project as One of the District's Two Highest Priorities
District High Schools	69%
Vista Middle School	40%
North Bellingham Elementary School	35%
Custer Elementary School	35%

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Total percentages exceed 100 since participants could select more than one answer for this question.

Facilities – Timing of Proposed Bond Measure

Given current low interest rates and favorable environment for construction projects, do you feel this is a good time to run a bond measure to enhance our community assets by rebuilding one or more schools?



Cafeteria

- Between 63 and 90 percent of participating parents at all school levels had positive views of their children’s school cafeteria services.
- Participants had the most positive views of the cafeteria staff and the least positive views of its healthiness.

	Percent “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”
Foods served in the cafeteria include choices that are age-appropriate.	78%
Cafeteria menu items are healthy.	63%
The cost of the food is appropriate.	76%
The cafeteria staff is professional and courteous.	90%

Note: participants who selected “Not enough information” are excluded from the above calculations.

School Bus/Transportation

- Between 80 and 93 percent of participating parents at all school levels had positive views of the district’s transportation services.
- Participants had the most positive views of school bus safety and the least positive views in terms of their overall satisfaction with the transportation system.

	Percent “Strongly Agree” or “Agree”
The school bus my child rides runs on time most days.	93%
My child is safe when riding the school bus.	88%
I am satisfied with the transportation system.	80%

Note: participants who selected “Not enough information” are excluded from the above calculations.

Themes From Open-Ended Questions

District Strengths

What are the strengths of this district?

Teachers are committed and high-quality educators.

The academic programs are working, specifically the Advanced Placement program.

Communication between the district and parents

Strong sense of community in the district

District Improvement

Please share any ideas to help us improve the school district.

Increase the number and variety of rigorous courses while focusing on core subjects.

Customize education and focus on preparing students for life post-graduation.

Decrease class sizes. Consider building a new high school to help with overcrowding.

Increase communications both between the district and the community, and between teachers and parents.

Key Findings

Highlights	Next Steps
<p>Over a thousand parents and community members responded to this year's survey, which is more than either of the past two year.</p>	<p>While we are pleased with the growing number of stakeholders who are willing to give us their feedback, we want to find ways to increase the participation rate even more in the spring of 2014.</p>
<p>A higher percentage of participants gave both teachers and schools high grades (81% and 76%) than they did in the past.</p>	<p>We are happy about this result, but we want to know more. We are studying the rest of the survey, including the comments, to discover what our community members think we are doing well and what they think we need to improve.</p>
<p>A very high number of respondents said that the use of technology to support learning is a high priority for them (over 80% in all categories). However, a lower number rated the district's plan to implement one-to-one technology as a good approach (52-57%).</p>	<p>We need to find out the specific concerns people have about our one-to-one plan and then address those concerns. During the coming year, we will use questionnaires, focus groups, and face-to-face conversations to gather feedback to improve our technology plan.</p>

Key Findings (cont'd)

Highlights	Next Steps
<p>One out of three respondents indicated they use social media regularly and feel comfortable with it, and three out of four said they have a Facebook account.</p>	<p>Working with the Communications Advisory Committee (CAC), we plan to add a social media component to our district communications plan, since this appears to be a growing way people get information.</p>
<p>Approximately two thirds of the parents and community members who responded to the survey believe this is a good time for the school district to run a bond issue. Almost 70% indicated the district's high school facilities are the highest priority.</p>	<p>We will take this information back to the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) to guide its future work; and we will also share it with the members of the School Board, who are the ultimate decision-makers when it comes to taking such initiatives to the voters.</p>
<p>In their comments, respondents said they felt we could improve the district by: (1) increasing the number of rigorous courses we offer; (2) customizing each child's educational program to the greatest extent possible; (3) making sure all students leave us college and career ready; (4) keeping class sizes as low as possible; and (5) increasing communications at all levels.</p>	<p>The School Board and district leadership team will use these five suggestions to guide them as they establish goals for the upcoming school year.</p>

Thank you!

For questions relating to Ferndale Schools climate, please refer to the district's YourVoice page on our website: <http://www.ferndale.wednet.edu/>