



Saint Charles
Catholic School

PARENT SURVEY 2016 RESULTS
“The Future Starts Here”

June 12, 2016

OVERVIEW

Thank you to all parents who took the time to complete the 2016 St. Charles Parent Survey. The response to the survey was quite good - we received surveys from 76 families, a response rate of 43%. While this may sound low, it is actually higher than one would expect from any survey.

We have summarized the results in this document and encourage all parents to browse through these pages. A full discussion of the survey will be held at the first PAC meeting in the fall. In the meantime, if you have any specific comments or questions about the survey, please contact us at boardchair@stccs.ca.

If the results could be summarized in one term it would be DIVERSE. The parents of St. Charles are a varied group in their opinions and desires for the school. We expected this – we have a diverse group of families, and this will of course lead to differences in opinions. Although this raises challenges for decision making and communication, we believe that having a variety of viewpoints within the school adds to the richness of our community.

We would like to take this opportunity to stress that the community aspect of the school is key to our success. In order to continually increase our quality while remaining financially accessible, the contribution of our parents is vital. We encourage all parents to take an active role in the school by volunteering your time on committees and being active in fundraising efforts. If you see a way to improve something, let us know. We will not always be able to follow through on suggestions, but we are always open to new ideas.

(A) DEMOGRAPHICS

- Currently at St. Charles, there are 177 families. Of these, 76 responded to the survey, a response rate of 43%.
- The responses are a good cross-section of families at St. Charles, as determined by the number of children at the school. The survey responses were slightly more likely from families with two children and more likely with families from one child, compared to actual numbers.

	Survey Results	Actual
1 Child	51.3	59.9
2 Children	42.1	33.3
3+ Children	6.6	6.8

(B) SCHOOL COMPARISONS: Why St. Charles?

Parents were asked which other schools they considered when choosing St. Charles, and which attributes of St. Charles were most important when they considered the school.

- The majority of our families (82.8%) began at St. Charles in kindergarten.
- The majority of families also considered the English Public School board when deciding on schools. Slightly less than one-quarter considered French Immersion for their children. Approximately 22% did not consider any alternatives.

Percent of Families who looked at the following other options:	
English Public Schools	50.0
French Immersion	23.7
None (Just St. Charles)	22.4
Other Catholic Schools	10.5
Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary	10.5
St. Jean Brebeuf	9.2
St. John's Ravenscourt	7.9
Other Independent Schools	6.6
Balmoral Hall	3.9
Linden Christian	3.9

FACTORS AFFECTING CHOICE

The factors that influenced parents' school choice were rated on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being *Not At All Important*, and 5 being *Most Important*. The average is provided, in order of most to least important.

Included in the table below are the number of responses (those who chose N/A are not included in the calculations), and to give some sense of the distribution, the proportion who responded 5, and the proportion who responded 1 or 2. These are sorted by most to least important.

	Responses	Average Score	% who Responded 5	% who responded 1 or 2
Teacher Quality	74	4.65	0.68	0.01
Focus on Whole Child Education	75	4.57	0.66	0.03
Reputation	76	4.43	0.55	0.03
Class Size	76	4.38	0.61	0.03
Personal Interaction with Staff	73	4.37	0.51	0.03
Full-Day Kindergarten	71	4.35	0.67	0.12
Sense of Community	76	4.29	0.41	0.00
Location	76	4.22	0.50	0.05
BASC	75	4.13	0.59	0.13
Spacious Kinder Rooms	70	4.13	0.45	0.08
Tuition	76	3.91	0.34	0.07
Catholic Education	74	3.86	0.41	0.18
Technology	75	3.69	0.25	0.17
Music Program	73	3.63	0.18	0.12
Physical Education Program	75	3.56	0.28	0.17
Sports	75	3.45	0.24	0.21
Daycare on Site	70	3.10	0.32	0.38
Learn to Skate Program	64	2.95	0.14	0.30
Private Music Lessons	71	2.89	0.14	0.38

Teacher quality and the focus on Whole Child Education were deemed to be most important, followed by Reputation and Class Size. These are factors that are very important for the large majority of parents. Our teachers are a great asset to the school!

There are a number of factors (Daycare on Site, Catholic Education, Tuition, BASC, Sports) that are very important for a large proportion of parents and unimportant for a sizeable number as well.

A number of families also wrote in responses, many of which echoed the responses in the survey (AKD for younger sibling, knew other families, faith-centered, etc.). Also mentioned were interaction among grades, school-wide specific goals, overall quality of education, TRACK.

Where are we going?

The most popular high school choices are about equal between St. Paul's or St. Mary's and Westwood.

C: FUNDRAISING

The key point that comes out of the fundraising questions is the diversity of opinions.

The first questions ask generally about opinions on fundraising, on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” and 5 being “Strongly Agree”. On all questions, the average was between 3-4, indicating a wide variance of opinions.

The following table shows the average for each question, then the proportion who answered either 4 or 5, and the proportion who answered 1 or 2.

	Average	Proportion
Fundraising as Sense of Community	3.64	
<i>Agree or Strongly Agree</i>		0.63
<i>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</i>		0.13
Feel Pressure with fundraising	3.18	
<i>Agree or Strongly Agree</i>		0.47
<i>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</i>		0.38
Fundraising should be for extras	3.27	
<i>Agree or Strongly Agree</i>		0.45
<i>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</i>		0.32

We next asked families about specific fundraising at St. Charles. Again, the results demonstrated a great deal of diversity in opinions. Below the overall results are shown.¹

I do not like fundraising at all and would rather tuition be raised.	I dislike fundraising but will grudgingly participate if it offsets tuition.	I enjoy fundraising. It is a better alternative to tuition increases and should be used more often.
13.33	52.00	34.67

I prefer a Christmas Blitz approach with multiple fundraisers to choose from and then it is done.	I prefer to have one fundraiser per month than many at once so that I can spread out my purchases.	Either way works for me
49.32	21.92	28.77

I prefer sales based fundraisers.	I prefer event based fundraisers.	I am indifferent to the type of fundraiser.
25.33	18.67	56.00

Future Fundraisers:

Families were asked which fundraisers they would be most likely to participate in over the next few years. The table below shows the proportions who would participate:

Chocolates	0.65
Blitz	0.72
Family Bingo	0.51
Golf	0.22
Plant Sale	0.49
Skating	0.18
Parents Night Out	0.08
Discount Cards	0.36
Mabel's Labels	0.19
Hot Dog Pizza	0.74
Other/Suggestion	0.12

¹ A number of families wrote in 'in-between' responses here. These were noted, but for the purposes of presenting the results, they were combined with the middle response.

Suggestions:

A number of families provided suggestions for fundraisers (Thank you!). We are always looking for new ideas!

- *A lottery can be a great fundraiser
- *Bothwell cheese
- *Coupon Book - Show & Save
- *Craft sale
- *Farm to Table (Peak of the Market)
- *Fashion show, Gala Dinner
- *Frozen take home pizza
- *Link the parents night out idea with a dinner for parents.
- *Wine raffle with mandatory wine donations, another family bingo night.

Notes:

Fundraising monies at St. Charles are designated for capital projects. We aim to raise about \$55,000-\$65,000 per year which requires a great number of fundraising activities and effort from parent coordinators and volunteers. Given the diversity of opinions around fundraising, we try to provide a wide variety of opportunities so that parents can choose the fundraisers in which they will participate.

The time effort often means that the same fundraisers are run year after year, out of convenience. If you have an idea for a fundraiser and are willing to work on it, please contact us! We are also in need of individuals to take on the role of coordinator of fundraisers, both new and existing. Please contact us if this is something you could do.

D: VIP HOURS

Families were asked if they had difficulty completing the 20 hours, and how they split the hours between volunteering and raffle item donations.

Not at all, I volunteer over and above the 20 hours	36.0
I am able to complete the 20 hours easily	17.3
It is a stretch, but I am able to complete the 20 hours	29.3
I find it very difficult to complete 20 hours	9.3
Not applicable – I usually opt out of the VIP hours	8.0
Volunteer Items	55.1
Both	42.0
Raffle Item Donations	2.9

Our concern is with the families that find it difficult to complete the 20 hours. Please let us know at the beginning of the year if you fall into this category, what your preferences and constraints are and we can help steer you to potential volunteer opportunities that you may not be aware of.

E. BASC

BASC is a key feature of the school, with over 80% of families making use of the program, and 35% using BASC often or regularly.

We are glad to see that satisfaction with BASC is high. Close to 80% of users gave the highest satisfaction ratings, and many wrote in very complementary things about the program, the staff, and Kim in particular. The comments will be shared with the BASC staff.

	Proportion of Sample
Never Use BASC	18.42
Mornings Only	5.26
Afternoons Only	46.05
Both	30.26
Proportion with often/regular use	35.53
<i>Of those who use BASC:</i>	
Average Satisfaction	4.71
Proportion with Satisfaction '5'	77.42

F. PREFERENCES – St. Charles the way you want it.

F1. Classroom technology

Families were asked their agreement with the following Statements:

1. I am satisfied with current classroom technology
2. iPad use should be expanded.

These were rated on a 5 point scale (1 to 5). These numbers have been shifted to (-2, -1, 0, 1, 2) so that a score less than zero is a general disagreement, a score above zero is a general agreement.

Overall, families are satisfied with the use of technology in the classrooms, but there is a lot of variation in opinion. The views on iPad use are even more diverse.

Many families indicated that they were unaware of the use of iPads in the classroom: currently, students in grades 7 & 8 are required to have an iPad for classroom use.

Agreement on a 5 point Scale (-2 to +2)	
Satisfaction Agreement Average	0.73
Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree	11.8
Proportion with Unknown	19.7
Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree	68.4
Ipap Agreement Average	0.34
Proportion with 1 or 2	18.4
Proportion with 3	36.8
Proportion with 4 or 5	44.7

F2. Class Size

There were three questions pertaining to class size. Answers are again on a 5-point scale (1-5 but transposed to -2 to +2).

- i. Overall, I am satisfied with the class sizes at St. Charles
- ii. I am satisfied with the current approach to split classes
- iii. I would prefer smaller class sizes even if this meant tuition increases.

Average Satisfaction on a 5-point Scale (-2 to +2)	
Class Size Satisfaction Average	0.80
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	21.1
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	1.3
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	77.6
Split Class Satisfaction Average	0.75
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	7.9
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	22.4
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	69.7
Prefer smaller class sizes & lower tuition	-0.32
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	53.9
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	18.4
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	27.6

This is a topic that always raises some strong opinions. Similar to other results, there is a great deal of variation in opinion for St. Charles families. The majority of families are satisfied with class sizes and split classes, and the majority would not want lower class sizes if this meant higher tuition. However, there is a sizeable group that disagrees with the majority in all cases.

Class sizes and split classes at St. Charles are determined both for financial concerns and teaching philosophy. As a relatively small school, split classes are often necessary especially in the primary grades, to keep class sizes reasonable.

To provide some context, here are the current class sizes at St. Charles:

KL	18
KR	17
Grade 1	19
Split 1/2	21
Grade 2	22
Grade 3	25
Split 3/4	25
Grade 4	20
Grade 5	27
Grade 6	26
Grade 7	20
Grade 8	21
Total	261

Discussions and debates about class size and class structure are common at the board level as we continue to strive for both excellence and accessibility. Your feedback through this survey is important to these discussions.

F3. Playground Improvements

Overall, parents are satisfied with the playground area, although the comments yielded many areas where these could be improved. Comments were passed to the Buildings & Grounds committee.

Agreement on a 5 point Scale (-2 to +2)	
Satisfaction Agreement Average	0.49
Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree	26.3
Proportion with Unknown	7.9
Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree	65.8

G. The Future – Making St. Charles the best version of itself.

Parents were asked five questions about the layout of the school. Again, these are on a five point agreement scale, transposed to range from -2 (strongly disagree) to +2 (strongly agree) so that positive values are agreements, negative are disagreements.

The five statements were:

- I. Kindergarten classes should be separate from the remainder of the school
- II. The middle year classes should be separate from the remainder of the school
- III. The middle year classes should have their own space incorporating communal spaces, dedicated technology area, break out rooms, and study rooms.
- IV. The future St. Charles should have a daycare on the premises even if this brings significant additional cost to the capital plan.
- V. The future St. Charles should have a daycare on the premises even if this consumes space that could otherwise be given to other programs.
- VI.

Average Satisfaction on a 5-point Scale (-2 to +2)	
Kindergarten Classes Separate	-0.23
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	38.2
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	34.2
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	27.6
Middle Years Separate	-0.18
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	38.2
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	28.9
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	32.9
Middle Years Communal Spaces	0.84
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	6.6
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	21.1
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	72.4
Daycare even if significant cost	-0.07
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	36.8
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	30.3
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	32.9
Daycare even if significant space	-0.18
<i>Proportion with Disagree/Strongly Disagree</i>	43.4
<i>Proportion with Unknown</i>	27.6
<i>Proportion with Agree/Strongly Agree</i>	28.9

Again, what is striking here is the lack of agreement on any dimension. Middle years having a communal space has the most agreement. Otherwise, there are strong views in both directions. As we move forward with any structural changes to the school, families will be kept informed of any and all plans.

Thank you!