



Columbia
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2019 Patron Telephone Survey REPORT

February 10, 2020

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EXCELLENCEK12

Columbia Public Schools 2019 Patron Telephone Survey Final Report February 10, 2020

Introduction

A high-quality school district is built on outstanding teaching, learning and relationships. And the Columbia Public Schools (CPS) has always and continues to do a stellar job in all these areas. As in year's past, the district continues to be seen by its patrons as a shining light of education in its community.

To ensure it continues to provide this high standard of education, Columbia Public Schools leaders engaged ExcellenceK12 in late 2019 to conduct a random-digit-dial survey with 400 head-of-household, registered voters living within the boundaries of the school district.

This is the seventh time the district has conducted this survey since 2010. While many of the questions from previous years remained, some were eliminated to ensure survey fatigue would not be an issue.

This year's findings continue to show strong public support. The district received the highest scores we have seen on this type of survey among other schools in the state of Missouri. Based on a 5-point weighted scale – where 5.00=A, 4.00=B, 3.00=C and 2.00=D – all 18 district factors – as well as the district's overall performance – received a score of 3.78 or higher. An overall score of 5 is only possible if all 400 respondents answered each statement with an A.

“Safety of students” received the top score of 4.51, followed by “Quality of school facilities” (4.45), and “The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event” (4.42).

Patrons were very complimentary about the district's curriculum and academics, as well as the teachers, but the data showed they struggled to find an area where the district needed to make any improvements. Patrons who indicated areas of concerns focused on finances and communication, which is common for surveys of this type.

The full report follows and includes all the findings and all the questions, applicable data and cross-tabulations (where applicable). An overall results summary closes the report.

It is important to note the data collected has a Margin of Error of plus or minus 4.9%, at the 95% confidence level. (The Margin of Error within the demographic and subgroups is higher because of the smaller number of respondents.)

It is a pleasure to share these findings with district leadership and your School Board.

FULL REPORT

Finding #1 **Survey participants continued to show strong support for the district, giving all 18 factors – plus the district’s overall performance – high marks. And more than half of the top-rated factors received a score of 4.00 or higher.**

To begin the survey, patrons were asked to rate 18 different people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors, plus the district’s overall performance.

Although there were fewer factors to grade than in 2017 (18 versus 26), respondents gave all 18 factors – plus the district’s overall performance (4.12) – a score of 3.78 or higher.

Twelve of those factors scored at 4.00 or above. As noted earlier, these are exceptionally high scores for school districts in the Midwest.

All the scores for all the factors are displayed below. However, to simplify the analysis, a 5-point weighted scale has also been applied.

At the top of the list for 2019 were:

- Safety of students – 4.51
- Quality of school facilities – 4.45
- The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event – 4.42
- Performance of district teachers – 4.24
- Offering innovative curriculum and programming for students – 4.12
- Overall grade – 4.12

The other aspect of the grading exercise was the identification of factors that received a “Don’t know” response – rather than a grade – from more than 20% of the respondents. In other words, these factors are not top of mind for a significant percentage of the respondents.

The one factor was “The district’s history of fulfilling promises.”

Since “fulfilling promises” is a rather nebulous item, it would not be in the district’s best interest to place much communication emphasis on this.

Note: Questions 1-3 confirmed the respondents were heads of households and registered voters, and they lived within the boundaries of the Columbia Public Schools. A “Yes” answer was required on each question to continue. As such, these questions are not displayed here. All responses with percentages may add to more or less than 100%, due to rounding.

4. To make certain we have people from all parts of the district participating in this survey, which of the following best describes where you live? *The number of respondents in each segment was identified by the school district as being representative of the population pattern in the district. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
West of Providence and north of Broadway	100
East of Providence and north of Broadway	100
West of Providence and south of Broadway	100
East of Providence and south of Broadway	100

As you know, students in school are usually given a grade to reflect the quality of their work. Those grades are usually A, B, C, D or F. Based on your experience, the experience of your children, or things you have heard about the Columbia Public Schools from others, please tell me what grade you would give the school district on each of the following items. Let's start with... *Questions 5 through 22 were rotated to eliminate order bias.*

5. Performance of district teachers

Response	Percentage
A	29%
B	62%
C	5%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	3%

6. Performance of school principals

Response	Percentage
A	25%
B	49%
C	14%
D	2%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	9%

7. Performance of the district administration and the Board of Education

Response	Percentage
A	12%
B	54%
C	26%
D	3%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	5%

8. How the Columbia Public Schools is handling the growth in the district

Response	Percentage
A	27%
B	42%
C	13%
D	2%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	15%

9. Quality of education provided to students

Response	Percentage
A	24%
B	55%
C	18%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	2%

10. Offering innovative curriculum and programming for students

Response	Percentage
A	33%
B	39%
C	20%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	7%

11. Quality of school facilities

Response	Percentage
A	57%
B	28%
C	7%
D	2%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	4%

12. Safety of students

Response	Percentage
A	60%
B	31%
C	6%
D	2%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	1%

13. Value received by patrons for the tax dollars spent

Response	Percentage
A	38%
B	25%
C	17%
D	8%
F	3%
Don't know (not read)	10%

14. The district's efforts to report its plans and progress to patrons

Response	Percentage
A	39%
B	24%
C	27%
D	5%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	4%

15. The district's history of fulfilling promises

Response	Percentage
A	16%
B	35%
C	22%
D	2%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	25%

16. The district's performance in helping students to be college- and/or career-ready when they graduate from high school

Response	Percentage
A	26%
B	44%
C	17%
D	5%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	8%

17. The district's graduation rate

Response	Percentage
A	23%
B	46%
C	12%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	18%

18. The district's efforts to ensure equivalent school buildings, including accessibility

Response	Percentage
A	30%
B	40%
C	13%
D	2%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	14%

19. The district's efforts to ensure equivalent academic programming from school to school

Response	Percentage
A	29%
B	37%
C	15%
D	1%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	17%

20. Efforts of the district to offer equivalent music, art, athletic programs and activities in its schools

Response	Percentage
A	21%
B	38%
C	17%
D	4%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	19%

21. The district's efforts to get the community involved

Response	Percentage
A	25%
B	36%
C	20%
D	7%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	11%

22. The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event

Response	Percentage
A	49%
B	24%
C	13%
D	0%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	14%

23. Overall, what grade would you give Columbia Public Schools?

Response	Percentage
A	26%
B	62%
C	11%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	0%

Cross-tabulation: Below is the 5-point scale rating for each factor. The factors showing “n/a” from 2015 or earlier were new in 2017. Any factors that had minor wording changes for 2019 are shown, using the current year’s language.

Grade values: “A” grade is 5.0, “B” grade is 4.0, “C” grade is 3.0 and “D” grade is 2.0.

Factor	5-point scale rating/2019	Rating/ 2017	Rating/ 2015	Rating/ 2013	Rating/ 2012	Rating/ 2011
Safety of students	4.51	4.28	4.20	4.41	4.27	4.20
Quality of school facilities	4.45	4.33	4.18	4.36	4.05	3.94
The performance of district employees in making you feel welcome when you visit a school or attend a school event	4.42	4.31	4.40	4.38	4.45	4.45
Performance of district teachers	4.24	4.26	4.23	4.38	4.35	4.29
Offering innovative curriculum and programming for students	4.12	4.12	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Overall grade	4.12	4.07	4.13	4.17	4.18	4.03
The district’s efforts to ensure equivalent academic programming from school to school	4.11	3.95	3.84	4.07	4.03	3.81
The district’s effort to ensure equivalent school buildings, including accessibility	4.10	4.01	3.94	3.87	3.96	3.53
The district’s graduation rate	4.10	4.05	4.26	4.33	4.07	4.13
How the Columbia Public Schools is handling the growth in the district	4.07	3.92	3.99	n/a	n/a	n/a
Performance of school principals	4.07	4.12	4.07	4.20	4.27	4.28
Quality of education provided to students	4.04	4.16	4.13	4.36	4.34	4.15
The district’s efforts to report its plans and progress to patrons	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.74	3.98	3.97
The district’s performance in helping students be college- and/or career-ready when they graduate from high school	3.98	3.90	4.02	4.22	4.30	4.11
Value received by patrons for the tax dollars spent	3.98	3.83	3.69	3.65	3.97	3.84
Efforts of the district to offer equivalent music, art, athletic programs and activities in its schools	3.90	4.08	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
The district’s efforts to get the community involved	3.86	3.82	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
The district’s history of fulfilling promises	3.85	3.62	3.46	3.64	3.69	3.63
Performance of the district administration and the Board of Education	3.78	3.86	3.74	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Finding
#2**

As in past surveys, “Strong curriculum/academics,” “Teachers” and “Community support” topped the list of district strengths. In terms of areas for improvement, “Don’t know” was the top answer, which is the best place for this response. The suggested improvements included “Spend tax dollars wisely/control costs” and “Stress academics over athletics.”

The evaluation portion of the survey closed with two open-ended questions offering respondents the chance to share their thoughts on the district’s strengths and areas for improvement.

All 400 responses to each question were read and, where possible, coded, based on common words, phrases and ideas to pinpoint the most frequently mentioned areas. Those that were outside of these “common” responses or that had more than one idea in the response are shown in verbatim form, with minor edits for punctuation and grammar.

In doing so, “Strong curriculum/academics” topped the list of strengths (83 mentions). This was followed by “Teachers” (66 mentions) and “Community support” (54 mentions).

In terms of areas needing improvement, that list was led by “Don’t know” (93 mentions), followed by “Spend tax dollars wisely/control costs” (78 mentions), “Stress academics over athletics” (51 mentions) and “Communication” (42 mentions).

Having “Don’t know” be the top response on this question is good news because it means a notable percentage of the population has no specific concerns that are top of mind; their issues seem to be more broad-based.

The other three top areas for improvement are very typical for school districts on this question.

24. What do you think are the greatest strengths of the Columbia Public Schools?

Responses were coded, based on common words, phrase and ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.

Response	Number
Strong curriculum/academics	83
Teachers	66
Community support	54
Don’t know	51
Facilities	35
Diverse student body	30
Updated technology	27
Other (see below)	24
Activities students can get involved in	18
Having resources at the university	12

Verbatim “other” comments

Curriculum is varied and strong. Their use of technology is good. Teachers are dedicated and concerned for the students.

Columbia teachers really do focus on each child they work with, not just those who are high achievers. They help those who are struggling.

I do not know details about the district. I hear from friends and I read the district news that is sent to us. My image is very positive.

Science and math programs.

Most teachers are excellent at every grade level. Advanced placement classes are a wonderful advantage.

Managing the growth of the district, and overall, the staff cares.

After completing their education, they work with the students to find colleges that fit them.

Not sure there are any.

The district is keeping up with technology. It has ramped up its math and science curriculum. It is encouraging girls to work in math and science and is making girls more welcome in athletics.

I appreciate the efforts made by teachers to make the curriculum, but I don't care for it.

My children received an excellent education.

I am a former teacher in another state. I have been to some events in the district, including one in the planetarium, and I was very impressed.

Kids graduate.

A great strength is the education level of the community. Education is highly valued, so aspirations for the children's success are to encourage students to work hard and achieve. This happens naturally.

CPS covers a lot of territory that includes downtown and the suburbs, so there are large social-economic households.

Dedicated teachers are the greatest strength. The patron support shows up in always passing bond issue requests.

Growth is a challenge and they seem to have handled it pretty well so far.

Good administration that cares.

Facilities are very good, and I think the community is involved, maybe, too much.

Teachers are well-trained and care about their students. Support staff is also excellent.

I think everybody has the students' best interests at hand from the administration to the teachers.

Curriculum is excellent. Most teachers are dedicated to teaching their best.

Everyone cares.

Today's students are a challenge with their short attention span, but I think they provide many activities to help them learn.

25. Where could the district improve? Responses were coded, based on common words, phrase and ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.

Response	Number
Don't know	93
Spend tax dollars wisely/control costs	78
Stress academics over athletics	51
Communication	42
Other (see below)	33
Fine as is	27
Helping those academically challenged more	24
Preparing students for college/careers	22
Smaller class sizes	19
Teach real-life skills	11

Verbatim "other" comments

I believe the district needs to develop a way of working with minority students and students living at the poverty level. Many struggle with grades. The graduation rate seems to be dropping a little.

I want the good teachers and other staff to keep up their excellent work and continue the tradition of excellence.

Monitor drug problems.

Administration failed in its allocation of funds. Teachers need to be allowed to teach. They should be autonomous and earn their worth.

Improve the special needs program.

Some schools could be cleaner.

Focus on solutions to bullying.

The quality of some of the teachers.

I encourage the district to keep up with technology.

I would like to see less use of computers and more actual homework. I would love to see my nephew using a real book for his homework.

Children, today, do not get the high quality of individual education they used to. I have seen grads that could not make change or read a newspaper.

Teaching the students priorities of how to learn.

No comment.

I appreciate the survey but still think the patrons are ignored too much.

Too many to mention.

Keeping up with growth and increasing pay for the teachers.

Perhaps find ways to include all that are interested in playing athletics. Maybe put together an intermural league for some activities.

Hire more quality teachers.

Lower our taxes.

Teachers who came out of MU's College of Education are not prepared for the real world.

I understand there is too much drinking and smoking with vape pens.

Reduce the value of test scores for funding. Teach skills that can be used for a lifetime.

Class sizes, safety and responsiveness to citizen concerns.

Lower taxes.

Somehow, I see such a change since my last graduate. There is less emphasis on basics. Curriculum seems to be a mile wide and an inch deep. Trends are being followed.

I would like a more even-handed approach within the district. For example, class sizes are low in one school and high in another. There is an excellent course offered in one school but not in another. Provide an early childhood center available at no charge to the community.

Have them read more.

I've heard of some bullying going on.

In their teaching of the U.S. history.

Safety is always a concern. Keep up with the best way to continue this.

Develop the skills to be able to communicate without technology.

Writing skills have diminished tremendously.

It would be nice to have a later start time for school. I think a lot of kids are half asleep and spend the day struggling with paying attention.

**Finding
#3**

The *Quarterly Connection* continues to be an important communication vehicle for the district and satisfaction with the newsletter's look and quality continues to grow.

The next set of questions was intended to determine whether patrons still deem the *Quarterly Connection*, the district's printed newsletter, an important resource for district information.

While slightly fewer than in 2017, more than half of the respondents (52%) still considered themselves regular readers – every issue or every other issue – of the newsletter. More than one-third (34%) said they were infrequent readers – at least once a year or less than once a year. And the number of respondents who have never read the newsletter dropped from 16% in 2017 to 9% in 2019, a decrease of 7%. In comparison to other districts we work with in Missouri, these are strikingly high numbers.

Those respondents who read every issue or every other issue of *Quarterly Connection* or read it at least once a year then were asked to rate the quality and completeness of the news. Nearly all the respondents (96%) thought it was either “Excellent” or “Good,” an increase of 11% from 2017.

While slightly fewer, 85% also thought the newsletter's look was “Excellent” or “Good.”

To determine if where a respondent lived or one or more demographic characteristics had an influence on how often he or she read the newsletter, a cross-tabulation analysis was conducted.

In reviewing this data, it is important to keep in mind the “n” number, which is shown at the top of each chart. This is the number of participants in each subgroup. The smaller the “n” number, the higher the Margin of Error and the greater the impact a small number of votes within that group can have on the final score within that subgroup. For example, only 18 respondents have lived in the district up to five years. As such, it is best to look for trends, rather than to focus on individual numbers.

The cross-tabulation analysis showed the oldest residents, those with the most time in the district, current and past parents, and female participants were the most frequent readers of the newsletter.

Among the geographic subgroups, those respondents living west of Providence and south of Broadway read the newsletter *most* often and those living east of Providence and south of Broadway read the newsletter *least* often.

The next few questions are about the printed communication pieces coming from either the district or from individual schools in the district.

26. How often do you read the school district’s printed newsletter, called *Quarterly Connection*? Is it...? The choices were read to respondents. Also, the newsletter was called, *Quarterly Report* prior to 2017.

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011
Every issue	40%	44%	32%	43%	57%	54%
Every other issue	12%	15%	23%	14%	13%	15%
At least once a year	18%	9%	16%	9%	11%	11%
Less than once a year	16%	13%	9%	17%	3%	6%
Never	9%	16%	14%	15%	15%	13%
Don't know (not read)	5%	4%	7%	2%	1%	2%

27. How would you rate the quality and completeness of the news that you see in the *Quarterly Connection* newsletter? This question was only asked of the 277 respondents who answered, “Every issue,” “Every other issue,” or “At least once a year” on question 26.

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011
Excellent	31%	26%	20%	24%	27%	19%
Good	65%	59%	60%	55%	59%	61%
Fair	3%	14%	19%	18%	12%	15%
Poor	0%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%
Don't know (not read)	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%

28. How about the way the *Quarterly Connection* looks? The percentages are, again, of the 277 respondents who read *Quarterly Connection* at least once a year.

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011
Excellent	33%	27%	18%	25%	29%	23%
Good	52%	59%	62%	57%	65%	64%
Fair	9%	11%	18%	15%	6%	10%
Poor	0%	3%	2%	2%	0%	<1%
Don't know (not read)	6%	0%	0%	0%	<1%	3%

Cross-tabulation: “Regular readers” (every issue or every other issue), “Infrequent readers” (at least once a year or less than once a year), and “Never readers” of *Quarterly Connection* by age, length of time living in the district, and the presence of a current district student, past district student or no district student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and “age” will not square with the “overall” total, because nine respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=77)	35-54 (n=175)	55 or older (n=139)	Up to 5 years (n=18)	5 to 15 years (n=104)	More than 15 years (n=278)	Student yes (n=128)	Student past (n=160)	Student never (n=112)
Regular readers of <i>Quarterly Connection</i>	52%	34%	57%	57%	28%	50%	54%	58%	58%	36%
Infrequent readers of <i>Quarterly Connection</i>	34%	51%	31%	27%	33%	32%	35%	33%	30%	41%
Never readers of <i>Quarterly Connection</i>	9%	9%	9%	10%	17%	13%	8%	5%	9%	13%

Cross-tabulation: “Regular readers” (every issue or every other issue), “Infrequent readers” (at least once a year or less than once a year), and “Never readers” of *Quarterly Connection* by location of the respondent’s residence and the ethnicity and gender of the respondent. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group. The racial/ethnic groups will not square with the “overall” total, because only groups with at least a modest level of participation are included below. Plus, three respondents refused to answer the “gender” question.

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/N of B'way (n=100)	E of Prov/N of B'way (n=100)	W of Prov/S of B'way (n=100)	E of Prov/S of B'way (n=100)	African-American (n=26)	Caucasian (n=322)	Hispanic/Latino (n=23)	Female (n=214)	Male (n=183)
Regular readers of <i>Quarterly Connection</i>	52%	52%	53%	69%	32%	50%	52%	43%	53%	49%
Infrequent readers of <i>Quarterly Connection</i>	34%	36%	26%	19%	55%	31%	34%	39%	36%	32%
Never readers of <i>Quarterly Connection</i>	9%	7%	13%	11%	6%	19%	9%	9%	8%	11%

**Finding
#4**

While only about one-third of the respondents recalled seeing one or more individual school newsletters, those that did were happy with the quality of the information presented.

The survey then moved from the quality of the district newsletter to the printed or e-newsletters at the individual schools. Of the 400 respondents, only about one-third (32%) recalled seeing one or more newsletters.

Of those who had seen one or more newsletters, 86% rated them either “Excellent” or “Good.” Only 11% said they were “Fair,” and no respondents said they were “Poor.”

29. Do you recall seeing one or more individual school newsletters – either printed or e-newsletters – during the last school year?

Response	Percentage
Yes	32%
No	66%
Don't know/ Don't remember (not read)	2%

30. How would you rate the individual school printed newsletters or e-newsletters you saw in the last school year on the quality of the information presented? If you saw more than one individual school newsletter, please answer based on your overall feelings. This question was only asked of the 128 respondents who answered question 29, “Yes.”

Response	Percentage
Excellent	26%
Good	60%
Fair	11%
Poor	0%
Don't know (not read)	3%

**Finding
#5**

While visits to the Columbia Public Schools' website continue to be modest, nearly all the respondents felt it was "Very easy" or "Easy" to navigate.

As in year's past, the highest number of respondents (42%) still has never visited the district's website.

And while the number who visited at least once a month (25%) was down from 2017, those who visited less than once a month (33%) went slightly up.

Those who visited at least once a month were then asked how easy it was to find their way around, and 97% said it was either "Very easy" or "Easy" to do so. This is a big jump from 2017 (13%), where only 84% were able to easily navigate it.

In the cross-tabulation data, the trend was slightly different than earlier in the survey. The oldest residents and those with the most time in the district were not as frequent visitors to the website as their younger counterparts and those who had been in the district for a lot less time.

However, current parents and female participants were still the most frequent visitors among their subgroups. Within the geographic subgroups, those respondents living east of Providence and south of Broadway visited the website *most* often and those living west of Providence and north of Broadway visited it the *least*.

The next few questions are about the district website.

31. Which of the following best describes how often you visit the Columbia Public School District’s website? *The choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011
At least once a week	n/a	n/a	n/a	11%	6%	11%
At least once every two weeks	n/a	n/a	n/a	3%	9%	12%
At least once a month	25%	34%	22%	13%	10%	6%
Less than once a month	33%	30%	36%	32%	22%	20%
I’ve never visited the website	42%	36%	43%	42%	53%	52%

32. Thinking about the last time you visited the Columbia Public School District’s website, how would you rate how easy it was to navigate and find what you were looking for? *This question was only asked of the 101 respondents who said they visited “at least once a month.”*

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011
Very easy	56%	43%	45%	39%	43%	38%
Easy	41%	41%	49%	52%	42%	59%
Difficult	3%	16%	5%	9%	14%	4%
Very difficult	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don’t know (not read)	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Cross-tabulation: “Regular visitors” (at least once a month), “Infrequent visitors” (less than once a month), and “Never visitors” to the Columbia Public Schools website by age, length of time living in the district, and the presence of a current district student, past district student or no district student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and “age” will not square with the “overall” total, because nine respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=77)	35-54 (n=175)	55 or older (n=139)	Up to 5 years (n=18)	5 to 15 years (n=104)	More than 15 years (n=278)	Student yes (n=128)	Student past (n=160)	Student never (n=112)
Regular visitors/CPS website	25%	43%	29%	12%	28%	28%	24%	55%	9%	14%
Infrequent visitors/CPS website	33%	26%	37%	34%	17%	38%	32%	33%	34%	31%
Never visitors/CPS website	42%	31%	35%	54%	56%	34%	44%	13%	56%	54%

Cross-tabulation: “Regular visitors” (at least once a month), “Infrequent visitors” (less than once a month), and “Never visitors” to the Columbia Public Schools website by location of the respondent’s residence and the ethnicity and gender of the respondent. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group. The racial/ethnic groups will not square with the “overall” total, because only groups with at least a modest level of participation are included below. Plus, three respondents refused to answer the “gender” question.

Response	Overall score	W of Prov/ N of B'way (n=100)	E of Prov/ N of B'way (n=100)	W of Prov/ S of B'way (n=100)	E of Prov/ S of B'way (n=100)	African-American (n=26)	Caucasian (n=322)	Hispanic/ Latino (n=23)	Female (n=214)	Male (n=183)
Regular visitors/CPS website	25%	23%	24%	24%	30%	27%	24%	43%	26%	25%
Infrequent visitors/CPS website	33%	36%	36%	33%	27%	38%	34%	17%	34%	31%
Never visitors/CPS website	42%	41%	40%	43%	43%	35%	43%	39%	40%	44%

Finding #6

Columbia Public Schools Television continued to have limited viewers. And those who watched “Frequently” or “Sometimes” had very few suggestions for other programming.

The number of respondents who watched CPS Television at least “Sometimes” was down slightly from 2017 (19% vs. 25%). The number one response in 2019, again, was “Never” at 58%.

Like in 2017, most viewers were watching “Scheduled activities” (51 mentions) or “Programs” (32 mentions).

As in the past, respondents struggled to come up with additional ideas for CPS Television programming, with 97% saying, “Don’t know/Not sure/None.”

33. How often do you watch Columbia Public Schools Television, either on cable or streamed on the district’s website? *The choices were read to respondents. The percentages for surveys from 2015, 2013, 2012 and 2011 are available in previous reports.*

Response	Percentage/2019	Percentage/2017
Every day	0%	1%
Frequently	9%	6%
Sometimes	10%	18%
Rarely	24%	17%
Never	58%	60%

34. What types of programming do you watch on the school district’s television station? *This question was only asked of the 73 respondents who answered question 33, “Frequently” or “Sometimes.” Responses were coded, based on common words, phrases and ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number/2019	Number/2017
Scheduled activities (date/time, etc.)	51	44
Programs (music, etc.)	32	29
Meetings with administration	14	15
Other (see below)	2	7

Verbatim “other” comments (2019 only)

I can’t remember.

Maybe, a program that provides information on part-time job opportunities for students.

35. What additional types of programming about the school district would you like to see on Columbia Public Schools Television? *This question was only asked of the 73 respondents who watch Columbia Public Schools Television “Every day,” “Frequently” or “Sometimes.” Of those 73 respondents, 71 said, “Don’t know/Not sure/None.” The two other responses are displayed in verbatim form below.*

Perhaps the opportunity to view into a classroom. This might create problems, but it’s a thought.

Teacher and administration profiles/history.

Finding #7 **“Student and teacher success stories” are of more interest than ever from year’s past, while “Information on the district’s finances and budget” continues to be less newsworthy.**

Stories about students’ and teachers’ successes continued to gain momentum in 2019, with 87% interest from the respondents (up from 76% in 2017).

Other top areas of interest were “Safety and Security” (82%), “Information on curriculum and curriculum changes” (71%), and “Updates on facilities, construction and renovation projects” (57%).

The interest in “Information on the district’s finances and budget” declined from 68% in 2017 to 56% in 2019. And the areas with the least interest were “School Board news” (39%), “School lunch and nutrition news” (24%), and “Transportation news” (19%).

36. Please tell me which of the following topics you, personally, are interested in hearing more about from the school district on a regular basis – either in print, electronically or both. If you’d really be interested in knowing more on this topic, please say, “Yes.” If you’d only be a little interested – or you wouldn’t be interested at all – please say, “No.” *The list was read to respondents. The percentages will add to more than 100%, because respondents were free to select more than one choice. “Safety and security” was added in 2015 and “News about test scores and academic achievements” was added in 2019. The “college-ready” and “career-ready” items were added in 2017 and were combined into one item for 2019.*

Response	Percentage/ 2019	Percentage/ 2017	Percentage/ 2015	Percentage/ 2013	Percentage/ 2012	Percentage/ 2011
Student and teacher success stories	87%	76%	68%	72%	79%	85%
Safety and security	82%	78%	74%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Information on curriculum and curriculum changes	71%	63%	69%	60%	69%	52%
Updates on facilities, construction and renovation projects	57%	54%	51%	59%	57%	53%
Information on the district’s finances and budget	56%	68%	64%	77%	74%	81%
News about activities and athletics	50%	50%	50%	41%	38%	35%
News about test scores and academic achievements	46%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
News about preparing students to be college- or career-ready (combined for 2019)	43%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
School Board news	39%	46%	54%	45%	41%	47%
School lunch and nutrition news	24%	29%	35%	28%	23%	21%
Transportation news	19%	22%	18%	24%	27%	18%
None of these (not read)	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Don’t know (not read)	0%	0%	<1%	0%	0%	0%

**Finding
#8**

Five of the 27 sources of district news (aside from weather-related school closing information) are consulted “frequently” by the survey respondents for such information.

To find out the best way to communicate with district patrons, the last question of the survey asked respondents which of the 27 potential sources they consulted “frequently” for school district news.

Five of the sources were said to be consulted “frequently” by more than 40% of the respondents. The number one source – which is typical for surveys of this type – was “Friends and neighbors” (85%). This was followed by “The print edition of *The Columbia Daily Tribune* newspaper” at 52% and “Students who attend school in the district” at 49%.

The other top sources were:

- Teachers and other staff members in the district, either in person or via email – 46%
- The School Board, either in person or in the media – 42%

While the number of sources identified as being consulted “frequently” is about average, only three are district-related ones.

37. If you were looking for school district news – BESIDES information about weather-related school closings – which of the following sources would you frequently consult? The choices were read to the respondents and rotated. The percentages will add up to more than 100%, because respondents were free to select more than one information source. Items with “n/a” in previous years are new to the 2019 survey.

Response	Percentage 2019	Percentage 2017	Percentage 2015	Percentage 2013	Percentage 2012	Percentage 2011
Friends and neighbors	85%	80%	73%	86%	87%	86%
The print edition of <i>The Columbia Daily Tribune</i> newspaper	52%	57%	61%	58%	61%	54%
Students who attend school in the district	49%	45%	43%	39%	42%	32%
Teachers and other staff members in the district, either in person or via email	46%	42%	39%	37%	39%	33%
The School Board, either in person or in the media	42%	37%	32%	24%	27%	20%
Local television stations	34%	64%	56%	42%	68%	38%
Through the school district’s messaging system that connects individual schools and the district to parents through automated phone calls, texts or emails	32%	30%	22%	15%	9%	12%
The district’s central office administration, either in person or via email	31%	29%	25%	21%	21%	18%
The school district’s website	30%	43%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Social networking sites, like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram	29%	25%	15%	9%	6%	4%
Individual school newsletters	28%	24%	31%	27%	26%	35%
<i>Inside Columbia</i> magazine	28%	23%	25%	16%	21%	18%
Local radio stations	27%	41%	38%	23%	40%	17%
Principals at district schools	25%	26%	18%	26%	24%	18%
The print edition of <i>The Columbia Missourian</i> newspaper	23%	13%	11%	10%	12%	9%
The Columbia Public Schools free mobile app for cell phones	20%	18%	8%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Volunteering in a school	17%	21%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>CEO</i> magazine	14%	7%	2%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Various parent organizations at the schools	13%	19%	17%	11%	14%	15%
The online edition of <i>The Columbia Daily Tribune</i>	10%	15%	13%	9%	14%	12%
The Partners in Education program	10%	13%	11%	8%	5%	4%
The online edition of <i>The Columbia Missourian</i>	9%	6%	4%	2%	3%	6%
<i>VOX</i> magazine	8%	5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>COMO</i> magazine	2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Relocating</i> magazine	1%	2%	1%	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Boom</i> magazine	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>The Move</i> magazine	0%	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Demographics

The final section of the survey collected key demographic information, including:

- In the length of residence category, 70% of the respondents had lived in the district more than 15 years.
- In the age category, 61% of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 54.
- There were 128 “Current student” families, 160 “Past student” families and 112 “Never student” families.
- In the racial/ethnic groups, 81% of the participants were Caucasian/white, 7% were African-American/black, and 6% were Hispanic or Latino.
- In terms of gender, the survey group was 54% female and 46% male. No respondents answered, “Transgender female,” “Transgender male” or “Gender variant/non-conforming.”

38. How long have you, yourself, lived within the boundaries of the Columbia Public Schools? Is it...? *The choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Less than 2 years	0%
2 years to 5 years	5%
More than 5 years to 10 years	14%
More than 10 years to 15 years	12%
More than 15 years	62%
I’ve lived here all my life	8%

39. In what age group are you? Is it...? *The choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
18 to 24	2%
25 to 34	17%
35 to 44	21%
45 to 54	23%
55 to 64	20%
65 or older	15%
Refused (not read)	2%

40. Do you have any children or grandchildren who attend school in the Columbia Public Schools right now? *Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	126
Yes, children and grandchildren	2
Yes, grandchildren	63
No	209

41. Do you have any children or grandchildren who previously were students in the district, but who have graduated? *This question was only asked of the 272 respondents who did not say either, “Yes, children” or “Yes, children and grandchildren” on question 40. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	152
Yes, children and grandchildren	8
Yes, grandchildren	3
No	109

42. Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic group? Is it...? *The choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Caucasian, or white	81%
African-American, or black	7%
Hispanic or Latino	6%
Mixed race	3%
Asian	2%
Refused (not read)	2%
Other (not read – “American Indian”)	<1%

43. And, finally, to which gender do you most identify?

Response	Percentage
Female	54%
Male	46%
Transgender female	0%
Transgender male	0%
Gender variant/non-conforming	0%
Not listed	0%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Overall results summary

The Columbia Public Schools continues to be highly respected in the community – going above and beyond to provide a top-notch education to its students. As mentioned earlier, the scores for the district factors far exceeded what we normally see on surveys of this type, especially ones that have been conducted for multiple years.

While it continues to excel, there are some things the district could do to raise the bar even higher. Specifically:

- Concern was expressed about the district needing to stress academics over athletics. This coupled with the increased interest in student success stories is a great jumping-off place to engage your patrons more by talking about what is happening in the classroom.
- Since patrons sited, “Spend tax dollars wisely/control costs” as an area of improvement, continue to demonstrate ways the district is being fiscally responsible.
- Set a goal to decrease the number of people turning to their “Friends and neighbors” – which equates to listening to mostly gossip – for district news. With it being the top source on every survey to date, work to shift people toward more district-related communication sources.
- Since CPS Television viewership continues to be light, conducting a cost-benefit ratio analysis would be wise.