

Fall 2021 Safe Return to In-Person Learning Survey

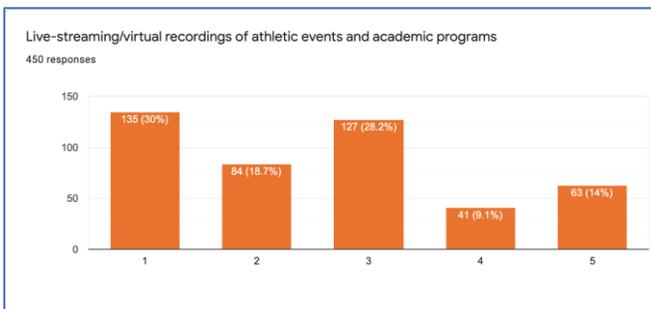
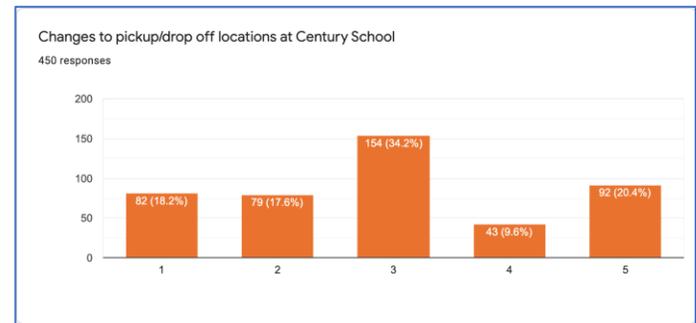
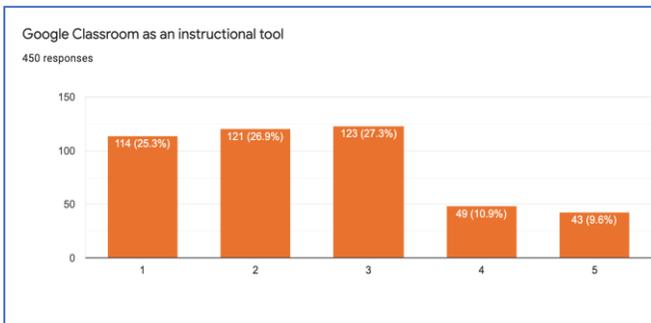
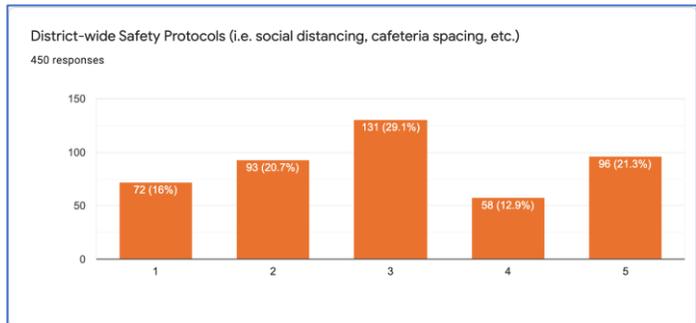
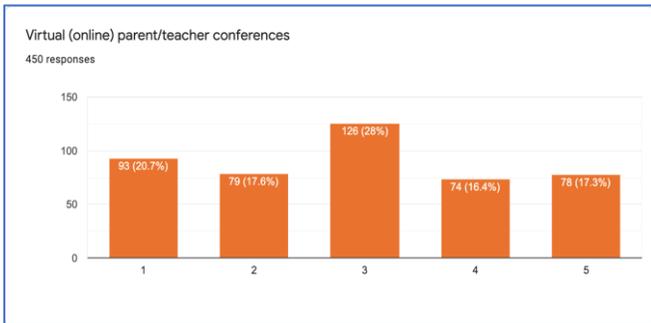
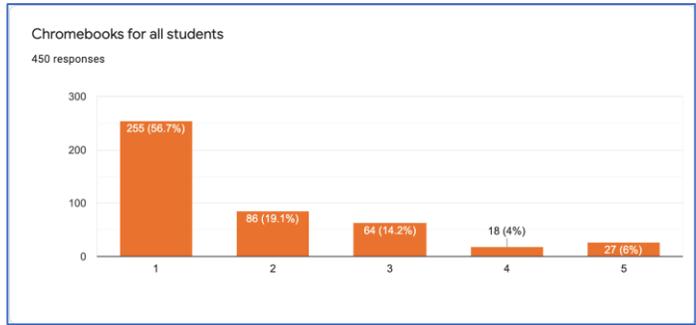
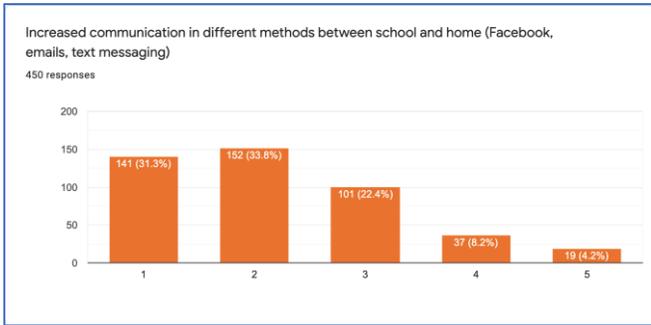
Park Rapids Area Schools

Results from the Fall 2021 Safe Return to In-Person Learning Survey developed by Park Rapids Area Schools, posted on the District website and Facebook page from June 10-18, 2021, and completed by 450 community families.

Rate the educational and procedural changes that District 309 made in the 20-21 school year.

Use the rating scale of 1-5 to indicate the level of change:

1 = Very Effective 2 = Effective 3 = Neutral 4 = Ineffective 5 = Very Ineffective



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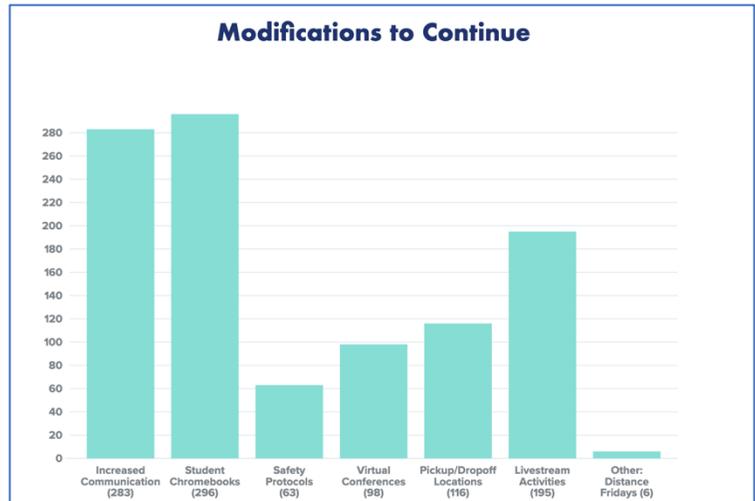
Modifications to Continue:

When asked to identify modifications to continue, participants in the survey listed these items (in order of rank: see chart)

1. Student Chromebooks
2. Increased Communication
3. Livestream of activities/events
4. Pickup/Dropoff changes
5. Virtual Conference Option
6. Safety Protocols

An option was available to add an additional response. All of these suggestions are reflected in the narrative comments below.

*Spelling, grammar and typographical errors have not been corrected.



Narrative Comments:

The following are comments made by individual survey participants. For the most part, duplicates have been removed unless a large group made the same response or comment. Complete survey results and comments are available upon request.

Positive Comments:

- I feel the district did a phenomenal job in handling the pandemic! It allowed the school to remain in person!
- Continue to use best judgement with recommendations from CDC and active case reports in the area. In Person learning is definitely important and I fully support my child being in-person but I am happy when the schools make the right decisions for quarantines and distance learning when there are reports of active cases in order to prevent the spread. I support being an advocate for vaccines as well as the ages extend to children in hopes that our communities embrace them. I think you are doing a wonderful job and I understand the pressure your administration must be under, thank you for your continued efforts to keep our children and teachers safe while providing the best learning opportunities as possible during these difficult times.
- I appreciate your efforts in keeping them in person for as long as you did last year while many surrounding schools were distance learning. Continue to keep them in person for as long as possible and consider working families. Even though pick up/drop off was changed, I still feel this new way is just as dangerous as before. Loved the live streaming events, would love that to continue.
- I think the way it was this year for the school worked out great for the school year
- Continue working with parents about symptoms and when and for how long a student should be gone . Also working with community businesses who employ parents trying to limit frustration when students are sent home and parents have to leave work.
- I think District 309 be highly commended for their innovation and diligence and commitment to keeping students in the classroom during the last school year
- I feel as a school district, you have done your best to follow state guidelines as required. In my opinion, state guidelines are too strict and hinder the social development, mental health, and learning of our students.
- There is only so much you can do during difficult times, but what you did do you did well.
- The district did everything right. We need to continue with in-person learning throughout the upcoming school year.
- Keep the distance learning on Fridays for the older kids. We loved it being continued through the end of the school year!!!
- Great job and Thank you for keeping the kids in school! Praying for normalcy in all aspects the coming year.
- Continue to use a sensible approach to the decision making process.

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Positive Comments, cont:

- I think the school did great considering the circumstances. I would say in the coming year it will still be important to have students wear masks, wash hands frequently, and isolate if exposed to covid until the younger ones have a chance to get vaccinated. It didn't seem like social distancing was very important when the other steps were taken from what I saw in pictures, on the playground, field day, etc. (I had a 1st grader). Once vaccines become available, it would be nice if there was an option for students to get one at the school with parental consent.
- I know a lot has been made of mask wearing. In our family, it wasn't a big deal and we appreciated the lack of sickness in general that resulted. It was really great to not have to go through the flu or stomach viruses this year!
- Thank you for all the care you extended to our kiddos this last year. I have family members whose kids were home for the majority of the year and we really appreciate that our son was able to go in person with some modifications.
- I think District 309 be highly commended for their innovation and diligence and commitment to keeping students in the classroom during the last school year
- We are thankful for a full school year of in-person learning. We hope to see our kids have a normal year for the 21-22 school year without masks.
- Masks seemed to be a good addition in elementary! My son didn't mind wearing it and it also seemed to have a bonus effect of protecting him from the common cold, flu, etc. He had a very healthy year!
- I feel our school did a great job this last year trying to make it as "normal" as they could while still following CDC, but we've been there, done that so let's move forward.

Suggestions and Constructive Comments:

- Please bring back the open house before school starts but maybe do 2 nights; one for middle school & one for elementary. Having it all in one night makes for a very crowded and hectic event.
- I genuinely appreciate the school district's efforts in keeping our kids safe and in school and efforts in keeping families included in decision making for what works best for everyone, and in doing so would like to see the same efforts implemented to the students themselves since they are the ones that are in attendance. I think that students should have a voice also in the choices being made in what works best for their schooling since it is their everyday life that we are making changes to without them being allowed to voice an opinion.

Comments related to Safety Protocols:

- More than 27 respondents commented "No masks"
- Over 28 people responded "Go back to Normal" or "Let kids be free" or something similar
- Make all vaccinated teachers where mask they are unsafe for our children to be around.
- When you have a policy, enforce it.

Comments related to Facility Cleanliness:

- Hire more custodial staff to help keep the buildings clean every night/day
- Keep the facility cleaner
- Cleaning of facilities. The high school really needs to step up the cleaning.

Comments related to Communications:

- All staff, administrators and other employees must be on the same page as far as messages being sent about various issues. We have kids in all three buildings and heard different messages from all three administrators and even within the school, it seemed different teachers had different rules than what the school had. The school needs to be unified in messages and follow through must happen within staff.
- Consistent contact tracing with kinder and more professional communication. A staff meeting and parent notice should happen at the beginning of the year as to what needs to be reported, by who, and how this info will be handled.
- Consistent, monthly staff meetings to keep everyone informed at the elementary.
- I wish we could choose which method for the school to contact us with....receiving a text, phone call AND email gets to be a lot, especially when reminders go out. I am hopefully masks will NOT be required for the next school year.
- I would like more face to face connection somehow. Whether it's a timed meeting or more google meets with the parents. I felt a little disconnected this past year.

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Comments related to Communications, cont:

- If paper forms are sent home to all students, please sent it digitally as well or put it on the website: forms being sent home today or this week or whatever. Forms do not always make it home to the parents.
- You're not meeting communication needs for non English speaking families
- Send either text, email or phone call not all three back to back
- Communication was with parents & students was subpar with the exception of a few teachers. Granted, this was uncharted territory, but rather than being bombarded with calls, texts & emails pushing the referendum, keep us better informed on what's actually happening in school. Let the kids use their lockers. That was a big fail making the kids carry everything on their person throughout the day.

Technology

- Chromebooks block too much for research... audio for online classes was poor, especially when some were in house (can't hear student questions & teacher muffled from mask)
- It would be nice if all the teachers would input school work the same into google classroom some post all work on there and some do not post any of it on there. especially with the high school
- Less chromebook time. My student definitely learns better by having physical papers. It is very hard to help students when the parents don't know how to operate the chromebook or are hovered around a tiny screen flipping back and forth between the information and answer sheets.
- Quarantine for non-sick kids really messed up my daughters in-person time at school and her grades suffered terribly. Having to do things on chromebook or the computer instead of using text books was too much of a distraction away from school work and I couldn't tell if she was doing home work or just playing on her computer. I think text books are better!

Scheduling/Distance Fridays

- In person full classroom days for ALL students on Fridays is necessary!!
- Students need to attend school in person all week for the full day!! While we were understanding the purpose of Fridays during the 2nd trimester, it did not seem to be necessary to continue for the rest of the year. We were thankful our district could attend in person classes mostly, but also felt that the school didn't exactly understand what no school on Fridays meant for parents that actually work Monday thru Friday. It meant a lot of PTO time taken and strain on work schedules so that our kids that are successful students only had 4 days of school a week.
- Support staff, mainly MS and HS and ALL STUDENTS NEED TO BE IN SCHOOL EVERYDAY! I found it extremely ridiculous that 5th-12th grade were "distance" on Fridays. They were not required to do anything. Basically a day off. I know this first hand as I have middle school kids. We cannot have struggling students not in school. This very much was unexceptionable in my opinion. However I know I am not the only person who feels this way. When 5th-12th grade students came back in person, that needed to include Friday's. I know who made that decision and it was a poor one. I was very disappointed when that was made. I don't ever want to see kids not in school when they don't have to be. I feel Panther time was not effective as kids didn't come or refused to work when they were there. Teacher cleaned cupboards and their rooms with students there because they refused to work and they were not encouraged/made to work. I am grateful that the elementary were in person all year. That was huge for their learning! We saw many setbacks from the prior year, so them being in school was best for them. We had a lot of catch up to do, and new things to learn, but we managed. I don't ever want to see kids at home when they don't have to be. We ALL NEED to be in school everyday we are scheduled to be.
- I prefer going back to full days on Friday. I do not feel half days were effective.
- The Friday early outs for "prep time" were pointless. I would pick up at 2pm and the staff parking lot was half empty. Seemed like this "prep time" turned into an early out for staff as well. In-person learning and social interaction is IMPORTANT - please return to field trips, lunch with friends, etc. In-person conferences are important - my husband didn't even know what my child's classroom even looked like or where it was. Regarding pickups and dropoffs, please do not use terms like "old parent pickup loop".... parents of new students have no idea what this term is relative to. "North lot" or "south lot" would be better. Also, pickups were supposed to be staggered at 3 or 310, and those students started coming out to wait for pickup at 250pm. Parents were parked in that lot starting at 230pm. It's hard to control traffic when students are out so early and the staggering never happens.

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Transportation

- My children need 2 busses. 1 from home, and 1 to daycare. Because it really hurt my work, needing to be 1 hour late everyday.
- Bring back full bussing
- Get the busses back to at least 3/4 capacity - the pickup/drop off zone was a nightmare.

Pickup/Dropoff Locations

- Is there anyway at drop off in the back of the school to just create a road to continue driving around the school to leave to reduce congestion?
- More support at pick up and drop off at Century (This comment was repeated several times.)
- I think the pickup and drop off would run smoother and safer on the south side if more kids rode the busses with less or no social distancing, and cars could pull up directly to the curb.
- My biggest issue this year was drop off and pick up- it NEVER really went smoothly for us. Literally a handful of parents followed the "rules" for pick up- kids constantly ran ALL the way cross the bus loop because their parents were parked in the grass and parents didn't get out of their cars to retrieve their child/children. I truly feel if they are fine with that then the parent should be parking on the street and let their kids walk to them using the sidewalk rather than running across the bus loop. Also I'm pretty confident no one followed the alphabet pick up system which would have allowed for parents to not have to park on the grass- there would have been more than enough room for parents to have a spot. While I don't have any solutions other than parents following the rules but even that is rather hard to enforce.
- My main concern is developing a better system for picking up and dropping off students. I feel it would be beneficial to have a police officer directing traffic when tuning into or leaving the former bus loop to avoid long waits to get in or back onto the city street. Some drivers were also less attentive and more aggressive than they should have been given the presence of children when leaving after picking up or dropping off.
- The Century pick up and drop off was a nightmare. The idea of using that space is great, execution not so great. I'd suggest a "fast lane" for those who are simply dropping off (not getting out of their car).
- The pickup/dropoff in the bus loop is even more dangerous than the drop off in the front of the school. Some very close calls, I have seen. Please, please allow kids to use their lockers. Apparently Pod 1 in the MS weren't able to use their lockers all year.
- Even though pick up/drop off was changed, I still feel this new way is just as dangerous as before.

Extra-curricular Activities:

- Actions taken were appropriate but extracurricular activities need to be managed better
- Don't make kids wear masks in sports