

OUR VSB



Communication and Engagement with Families

What We Heard Report

Presented by Spur Communication

Summer 2024



Acknowledgement

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the ʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliwətał (Tseil-Waututh Nation).

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Executive summary

Survey and workshop findings

The Vancouver School Board (VSB or the District) is evaluating how it communicates and engages families within the District. As part of this process, the District organized a workshop and conducted a survey to hear directly from families about current strengths and issues for improvement in these areas. This executive summary shares the findings from these efforts, noting areas of alignment as well as differences in the feedback collected.

Participants in the workshop expressed a strong preference for centralized communication platforms, highlighting frustrations with the dispersal of District information across multiple channels. They pointed out specific challenges with current tools like Microsoft Teams, noting limitations such as device restrictions and the inability to archive old content. Despite these concerns, there was a notable appreciation for communications that were personalized and visually engaging, which contributed to a sense of community and connection. A recurring theme from the workshop was the issue of communication overload, with requests for more streamlined and targeted messaging from the District (and other partners who frequently communicate with families of students).

The survey data corroborated some of these workshop insights, revealing a strong preference for receiving communications well in advance, especially concerning changes in school processes or schedules. Although a large majority (92.5 per cent) of respondents are comfortable with materials in English only, a smaller percentage indicated that having translations available in their native languages would enhance their engagement. The survey results also showed a clear preference for receiving most types of information via emails from schools and VSB.

Regarding engagement, the survey responses were mixed. Some respondents felt safe and valued during engagement opportunities with VSB, while others felt that their input was not effectively utilized or that the activities were not accessible to their families. Common themes in the survey responses included the need for improvements in the clarity of language, the timing of communications and the enhancement of digital platforms.

While there is broad agreement on issues such as the benefits of centralized communication and the effectiveness of personalized and visual communication, differences emerge in the extent of communication overload and technology challenges, which were more pronounced in the workshop feedback than in the survey data.

How findings will be used and next steps

The District is developing an updated Communication & Engagement Framework to guide how it can share information and gather input moving forward, emphasizing equitable approaches that enable the District to reach and hear from as many diverse families as possible. The findings of this What We Heard report will be combined with research into established and emergent best practices in these areas, particularly in the public elementary and secondary school context, along with critical resourcing considerations.

VSB will pilot recommendations from this framework beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, documenting wins and lessons learned, and refining these approaches in the years that follow.

Project background

VSB is committed to enhancing its communication and engagement with students, families, and the wider community. Recognizing the evolving needs of its diverse population, VSB initiated a comprehensive project to assess and improve its communication and engagement strategies. Through this initiative, VSB aims to:

- Enhance communication with families: VSB aims to improve the clarity, accessibility, and effectiveness of its communication channels so families can access relevant information that is easy to understand and apply.
- Improve engagement experiences, improving outcomes: VSB wants to refine how it gathers formal feedback, fostering more meaningful interactions between VSB and the families of students attending VSB schools.
- Gather detailed data: To support the two objectives above, VSB needs to collect selective and relevant data on demographics, communication preferences, and interests of families within the VSB community. The data will be macro-aggregate data that can be used only for the purposes of communication and engagement planning; it will not be identifiable to any individual or specific family.

Engagement

As part of its efforts to hear from families and individuals within the District, VSB conducted a journey mapping workshop and an online survey to evaluate and enhance its communication and engagement strategies. The workshop invited participants to visually map and discuss their daily interactions with VSB communications, identifying effective practices and areas needing improvement. Simultaneously, the survey gathered quantitative data from a broader section of the community, assessing preferences and experiences related to VSB's communication methods. Together, these efforts provided valuable insights into how information is received and processed by the community, guiding VSB in refining its approaches to better meet the diverse needs of students and families.

Pre-engagement

On May 30, 2024, VSB and its consulting partner held a virtual pre-engagement meeting to gather insights from a diverse group of family representatives across the District. The session included a broad mix of participants, with two out of nine attendees representing the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC). The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the initiative and gather feedback to inform the engagement approach.

During the meeting, attendees discussed the structure and content of the survey, emphasizing the need for them to be concise yet comprehensive enough to capture a wide range of feedback. Participants highlighted the importance of addressing language barriers and enhancing accessibility to ensure all community members could participate effectively. Feedback from the session led to several key adjustments in the approach, including:

- Incorporating open-ended questions in the surveys to allow for detailed feedback.
- Adding a preliminary question about language needs, translated into 10 languages, to inform VSB's understanding of translation needs beyond this survey specifically.
- Bolstering information about how the feedback would be considered, including how data provided by respondents would be used.

While two participants raised concerns about the timing of the engagement and requested that it be delayed, VSB determined the potential negative impacts of delaying the work to be greater than the risk of low participation during this time of the school year. The survey generated participation from 5,547 people—approximately 10 per cent of the student population in the District—a significant response rate.

Promotion

To promote the workshop to families, VSB reached out to vice principals and principals across the District with a description of the workshop and a request for these administrators to invite families from their schools. This outreach took place seven to ten days prior to the workshop on June 19, 2024.

To promote the survey, VSB emailed every parent and caregiver for whom they have a valid email address, twice; first on June 13, 2024, the day the survey launched, and again on June 19, 2024. VSB also posted about the survey on its social media channels.

Workshop

The journey mapping workshop was designed to collect detailed experiences from parents and guardians regarding the variety of communications they receive from VSB, teachers, their school administrators, and their school PAC or DPAC, in a typical week. The workshop allowed participants to visually map out and discuss their daily interactions with the education system, highlighting what works well and identifying areas for improvement. The workshop was attended by nine parents or guardians of 13 children total; eight of whom were in elementary school, four of whom were in secondary and one of whom is an elementary home-schooled student. Participants shared that three of the students in their families are on the autism spectrum. We have summarized the key takeaways and high-level themes from the workshop below, differentiating between the communication and engagement touchpoints led and delivered by VSB, and the feedback that pertains more to individual schools or classrooms.

General context for families' day-to-day lives

Parent/guardian involvement

- **Involved parents/guardians** Many parents and guardians are deeply committed to students' education, actively participating in PACs and volunteering for school events. This high level of involvement is a strength that can be leveraged for more effective communication and engagement.
- **Challenges for working parents/guardians:** Parents and guardians with significant time constraints, such as those working multiple jobs or managing household responsibilities, find it difficult to engage regularly. They prefer concise and accessible communication.

Feedback specific to communication and engagement from VSB

Communication channels and preferences

- **Email:** Parents and guardians appreciate receiving updates via email but feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume. Some parents and guardians find the emails informative and prefer being over-informed rather than under-informed.
- **Microsoft Teams:** This platform has mixed feedback. While some find it useful, others find it cumbersome, particularly for managing multiple student profiles on one device. High school parents and guardians specifically noted that they lack access, which limits their ability to stay informed.
- **Website and podcast:** Noted as underutilized channels, this indicates potential areas for increasing engagement.
- **VSB tool or App:** There is a frequent request for a centralized app that consolidates all school, class, and district information, making it easier for parents and guardians to stay updated and engaged.
- **Overwhelming volume:** Parents and guardians report feeling overwhelmed by the frequency and volume of communications. There is a need for more streamlined and prioritized messaging to ensure important information is not lost.

Inclusivity and accessibility

- **Language barriers:** Some parents and guardians indicate a need for better language support. This includes translations of key materials and communications in languages other than English.
- **Special needs:** Parents and guardians of children on the autism spectrum report significant challenges in communication and support. They highlight the need for more proactive engagement and tailored communication from the district.

Feedback mechanisms

- **Lack of acknowledgment:** Many participants feel that their feedback is not acknowledged or acted upon. This lack of follow-through diminishes trust and discourages future participation.
- **Survey participation:** There are concerns about the representativeness of survey responses generally, noting that those who respond are often already engaged. Multiple reminders and diverse outreach methods were suggested to improve participation.

Engagement practices

- **In-person engagement:** There is a strong preference for in-person interactions, with many parents and guardians expressing a sense of fatigue with virtual meetings. They believe face-to-face engagements build stronger relationships and provide more comprehensive information.
- **Workshops and focus groups:** These formats are effective for deep engagement and understanding of parent concerns. Smaller group settings are preferred for discussing complex or sensitive issues.
- **Town hall meetings:** These are less effective for contentious issues. Smaller, more focused groups or workshops are suggested to better address specific concerns and foster meaningful dialogue.
- **Informal gatherings:** Elementary school drop-offs are highlighted as effective times for gathering feedback and information from families who are able to accompany their children to school. These informal settings seem to facilitate more candid and frequent communication (though this tactic should be balanced and approached through an equity lens).

Content of communication

- **Clarity and relevance:** While some communications are clear and concise, others need improvement. A recurring theme is that parents/guardians expressed a need for more academic updates.

Trust and support

- **Lack of trust:** Persistent issues with communication practices have led to a lack of trust in the District's responsiveness and support. Ensuring consistent follow-up and transparency could help rebuild trust.

Feedback specific to communication from schools, teachers & PACs

Communication preferences

- **WhatsApp groups:** These groups are appreciated for quick updates and reminders about school events and deadlines. Parents and guardians find them very handy for day-to-day information.

- **Social media:** Instagram is the preferred platform for visual content, with parents and guardians and students enjoying seeing photos and videos of school activities.
- **Text messaging:** Texts are valued for urgent or immediate updates, providing a quick and direct line of communication.

Technology use

- **Blog updates:** Teachers who maintain blogs for daily updates are appreciated, but there is a need for better archival functions to keep past information accessible.
- **Technical barriers:** Parents and guardians report issues with managing multiple profiles on Teams and frustrations with password resets. These technical barriers need addressing to improve overall user experience.

Academic and administrative communication

- **Academic updates:** Parents and guardians express a desire for more consistent academic updates and progress reports. They want to stay informed about their children's learning and development.
- **Administrative efficiency:** There are complaints about redundant information required on forms and a lack of synchronization between different communication channels. Streamlining these processes could improve efficiency and reduce frustration.

Survey

VSB conducted a survey to hear directly from parents, guardians and families to understand their preferences and experiences regarding communication and engagement. The insights gathered are essential for identifying potential obstacles to effective communication and meaningful engagement and for developing strategies that are both inclusive and adaptive. The survey was available from June 13 to June 20, 2024, and was completed by 5,547 individuals.

1. This survey is available in English only. Which of these apply to you?

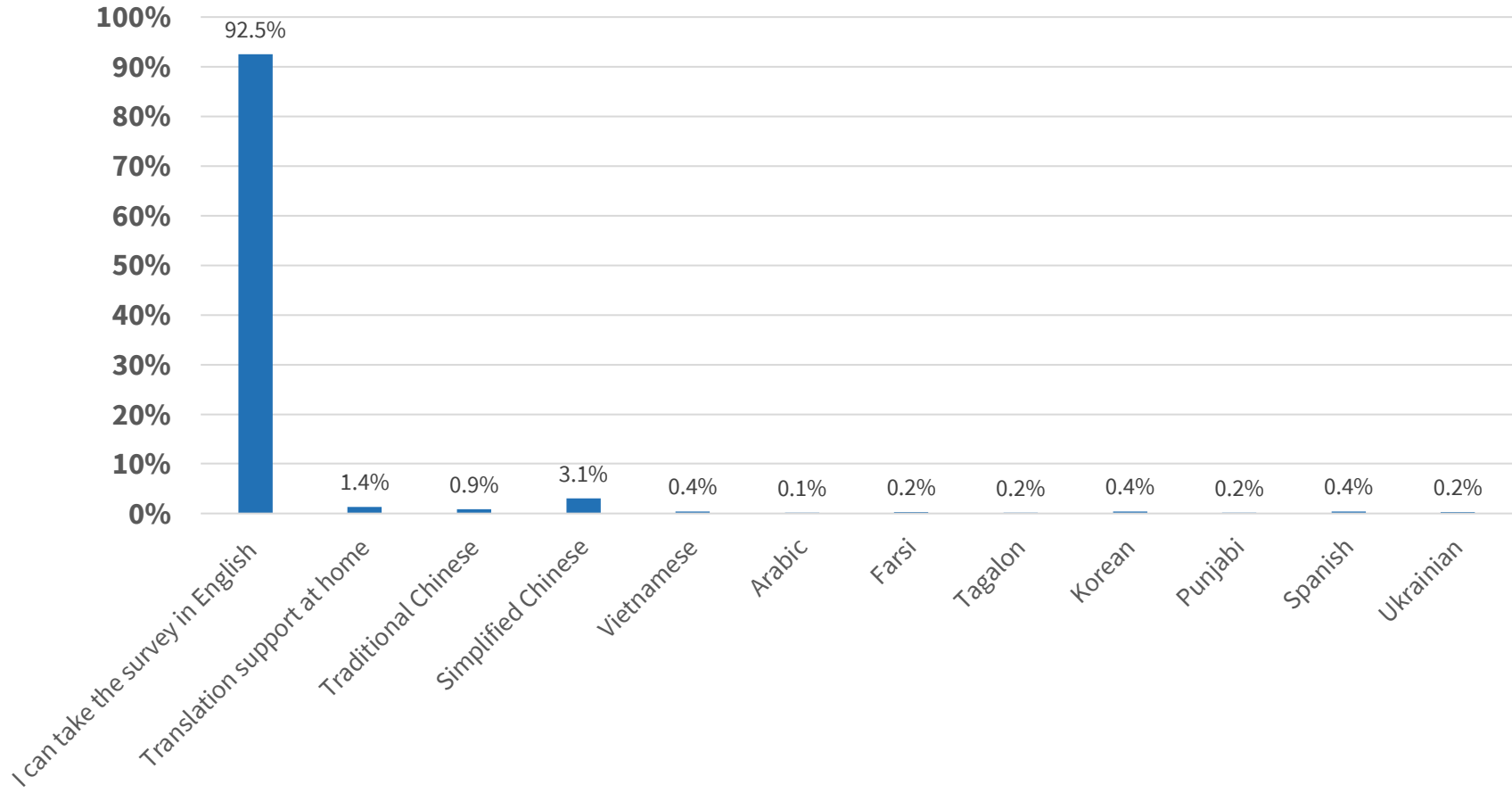
- 5,547 people answered this question
- The languages included were based on the top 10 languages used by families in the District
- The majority of respondents (92.5 per cent) reported that they can take the survey in English
- A small fraction of participants (1.36 per cent) indicated they have translation support available to them
- Multiple non-English speaking respondents expressed a desire to participate in future surveys if they were available in their native languages, with by far the most significant segment of this population being those who require content in Simplified Chinese

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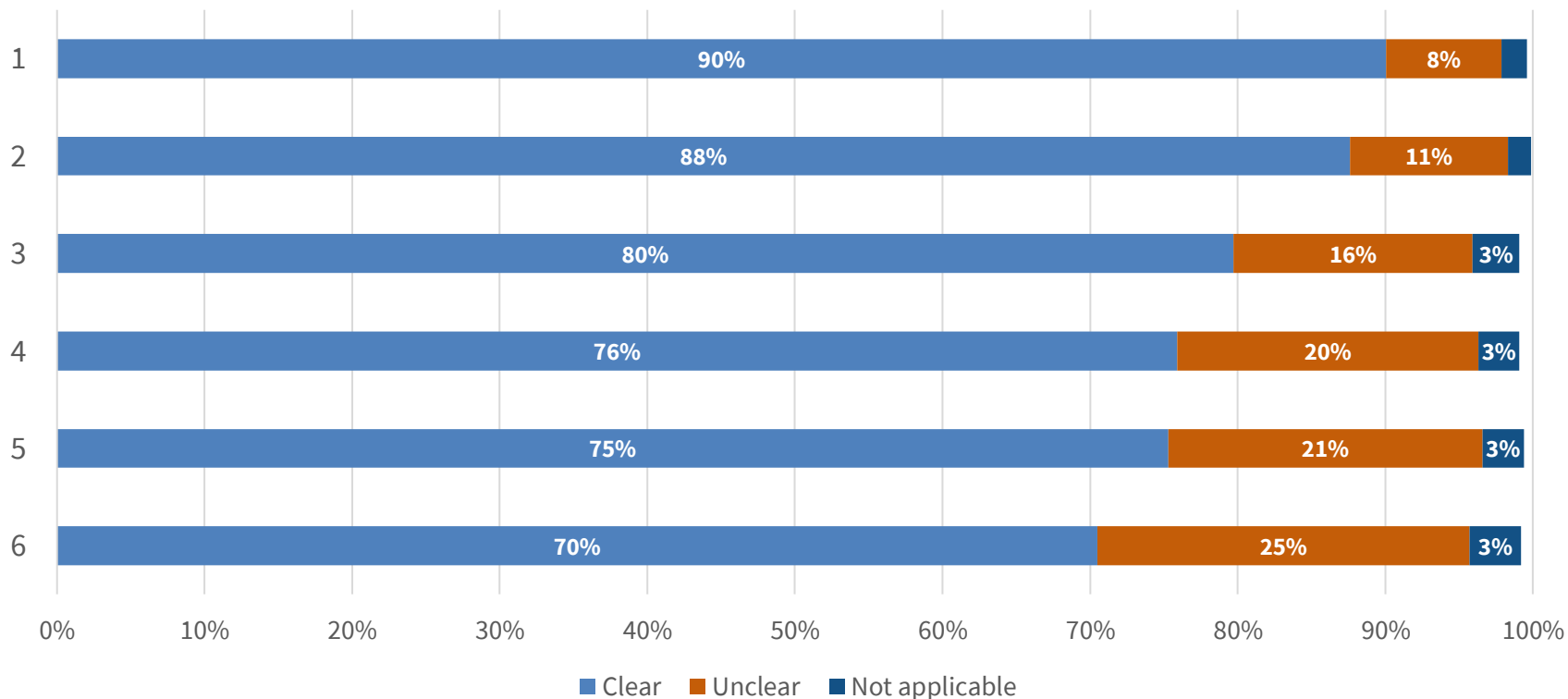
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Communication questions

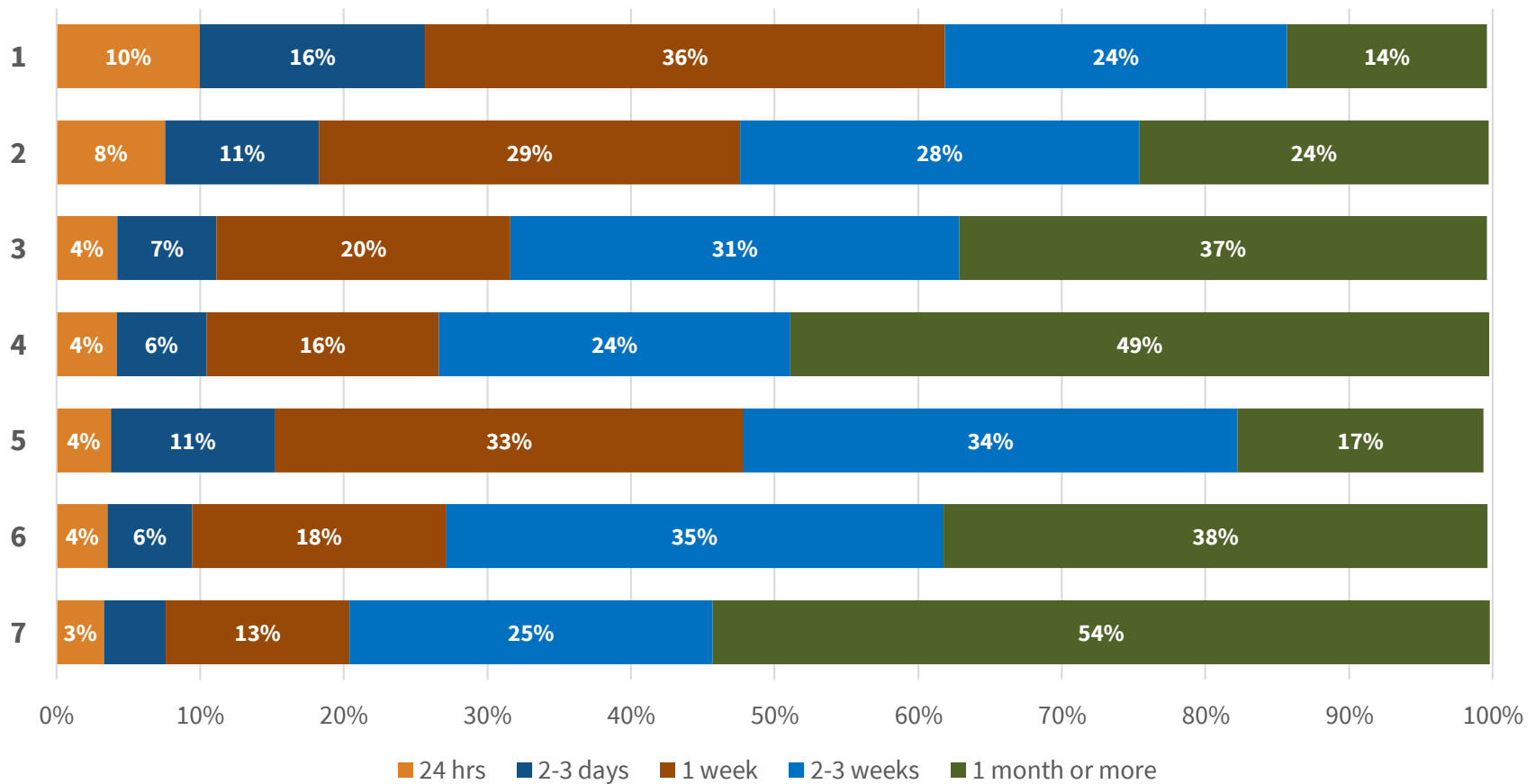
2. Clarity of communication: Which of the following describes your experience receiving communication from the District, most of the time?

Of the 3,903 people who answered this question, the majority of respondents found communications regarding the sender and the subject clear. More than 90 per cent of respondents clearly understand who is sending the information and the topic discussed. However, clarity drops when it comes to understanding how this information affects them and who to reach out to for more details, with less than 75 per cent feeling informed in these aspects.



3. Timeliness of communication: How much notice would you like for the following?

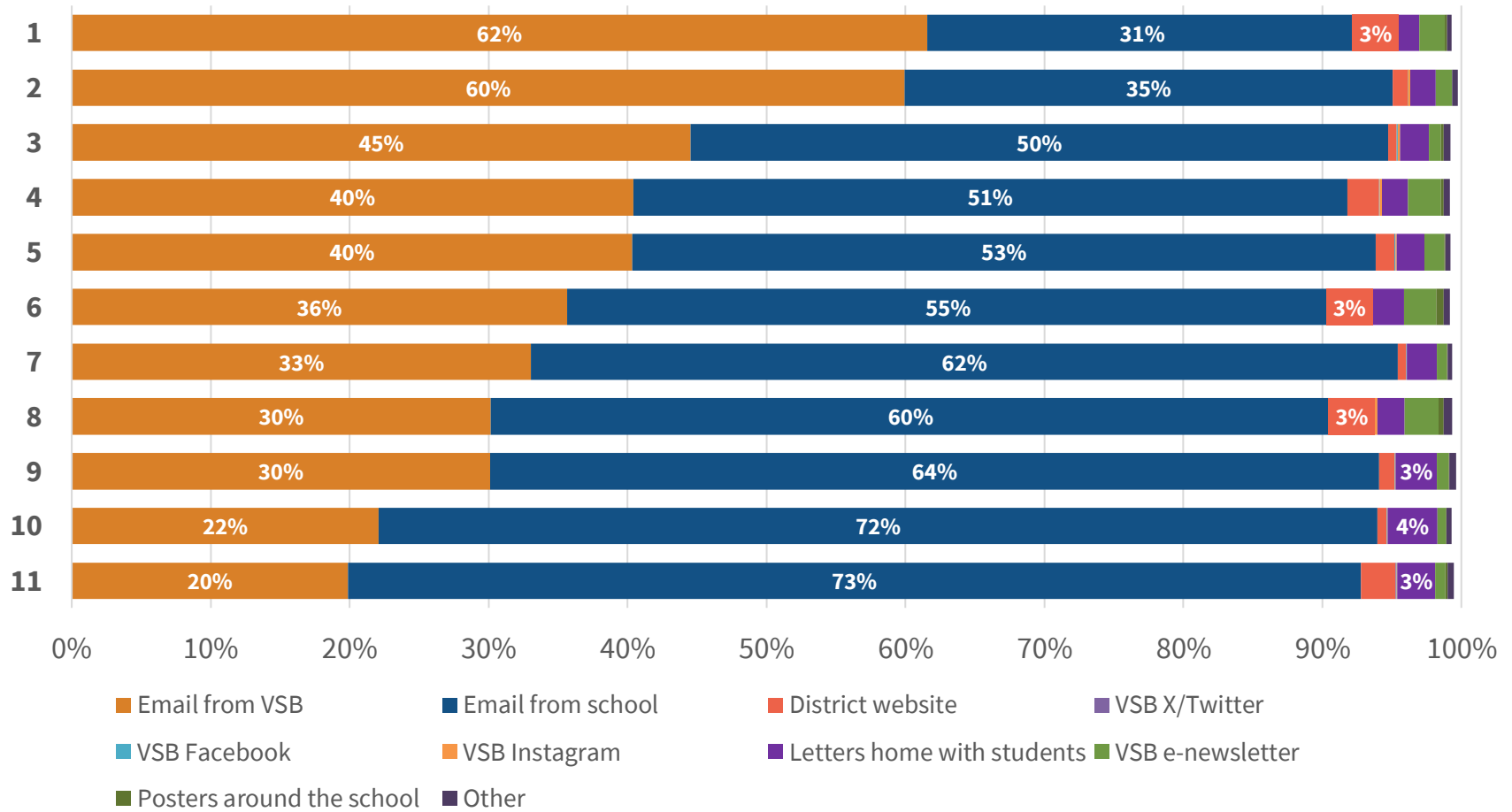
3,519 people answered this question. For district-wide informational meetings, registration details about special programs, and changes to the school year schedules, respondents prefer a longer lead time with a significant portion (51 per cent and 79 per cent) requesting notices of 2-3 weeks to a month or more. On the other hand, for more immediate concerns such as health and safety updates, a quicker turnaround is preferred, with the majority of participants (62 per cent) favouring a notice period of about one week. Notifications about new educational resources or tools and updates about school processes also see a preference for a 1-week to 2-3 weeks notice period (57 per cent and 68 per cent), reflecting a need for timely yet manageable information flow.



6	Registration or information about standardized assessments	4%	6%	18%	35%	38%
7	Registration or information about special programs, such as district choice programs, summer learning, etc	3%	4%	13%	25%	54%

4. Preferred channels of communication: For each type of communication listed below, please indicate your preferred channel for receiving this information.

Based on the 3,378 responses, there is a strong preference for email as the primary method of receiving information, with emails from individual schools particularly favoured for detailed and student-specific communications like school assessments (72 per cent) and curriculum updates (64 per cent). Meanwhile, emails from VSB dominate preferences for broad announcements such as district-wide events (62 per cent) and policy changes (45 per cent). Although the District website serves as a secondary resource (with up to 3 per cent preference for specific categories like volunteer opportunities and mental health supports), social media platforms (up to 0.2 per cent) and physical postings like posters (up to 0.5 per cent) are less favoured. Traditional letters home with students also retain a notable preference (up to 4 per cent), especially for direct communications that need to reach families reliably.



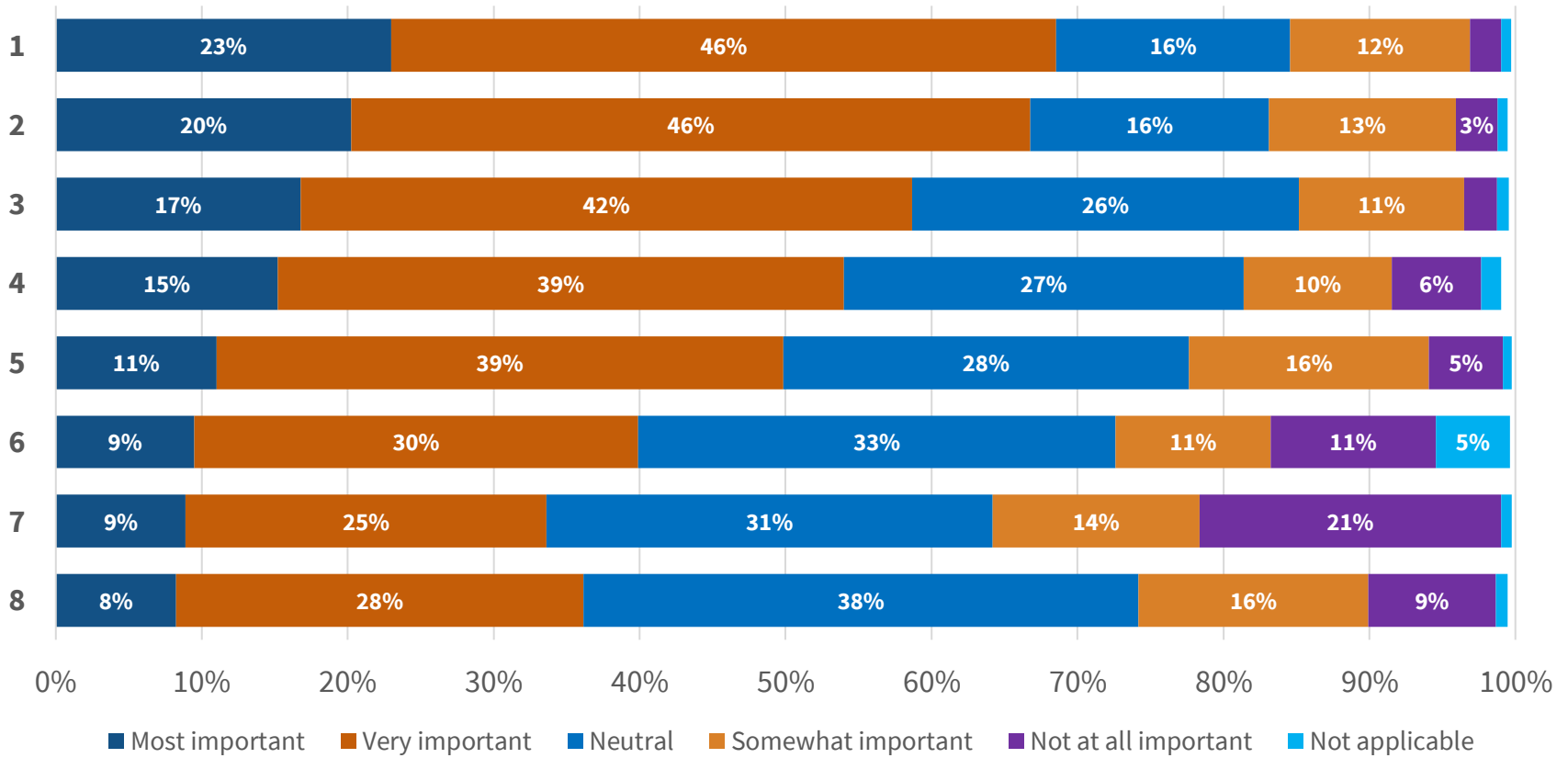
Preferred channels of communication	Email from VSB	Email from school	District website	VSB X/Twitter	VSB Facebook	VSB Instagram	Letters home with students	VSB e-newsletter	Posters around the school	Other
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1	District-wide informational meeting	60%	35%	1%	0%	0%	0.1%	2%	1%	0%	0.4%
2	School year calendar	20%	73%	3%	0.1%	0%	0.1%	3%	0.7%	0.1%	0.4%
3	Program or process changes	33%	62%	0.6%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0.7%	0%	0.3%
4	District events	62%	31%	3%	0%	0.1%	0.2%	2%	2%	0.2%	0.3%
5	Health and safety updates	40 %	53%	1%	0%	0.1%	0.1%	2%	1%	0.1%	0.4%
6	Volunteer opportunities	30%	60%	3%	0%	0.1%	0.2%	2%	3%	0.4%	1%
7	New educational resources	40%	51%	2%	0%	0.1%	0.2%	2%	2%	0.2%	1%
8	School assessments	22%	72%	0.6%	0%	0.1%	0%	4%	1%	0%	0.4%
9	Policy changes (e.g. cell phone use)	45%	50%	0.6%	0%	0.1%	0.1%	2%	1%	0.2%	1%
10	Curriculum and/or program offerings	30%	64%	1%	0%	0.1%	0.1%	3%	1%	0%	1%

11	Mental health and well-being supports	36%	55%	3%	0%	0.1%	0.1%	2%	3%	1%	1%
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5. Importance of improvements: Please indicate how important the following actions are, to improve communication from VSB.

3,271 participants completed this question. Based on the responses, there is a strong desire for more timely and transparent communication, with 59 per cent of respondents emphasizing the importance of improving the timeliness of communication and 69% highlighting the need to provide detailed explanations of decisions and processes. Additionally, 54 per cent of respondents view the use of clearer and simpler language as crucial, underscoring a demand for more accessible communication. Enhancing VSB’s website with updated information emerged as another significant priority for 66 per cent of respondents, reflecting a broader trend toward digital engagement. While there is moderate support for increasing the use of digital communication and holding more virtual meetings, the interest in offering communication in multiple languages displayed a mixed response, with 39 per cent considering it most or very important. Providing more frequent updates is important for 50 per cent of respondents.



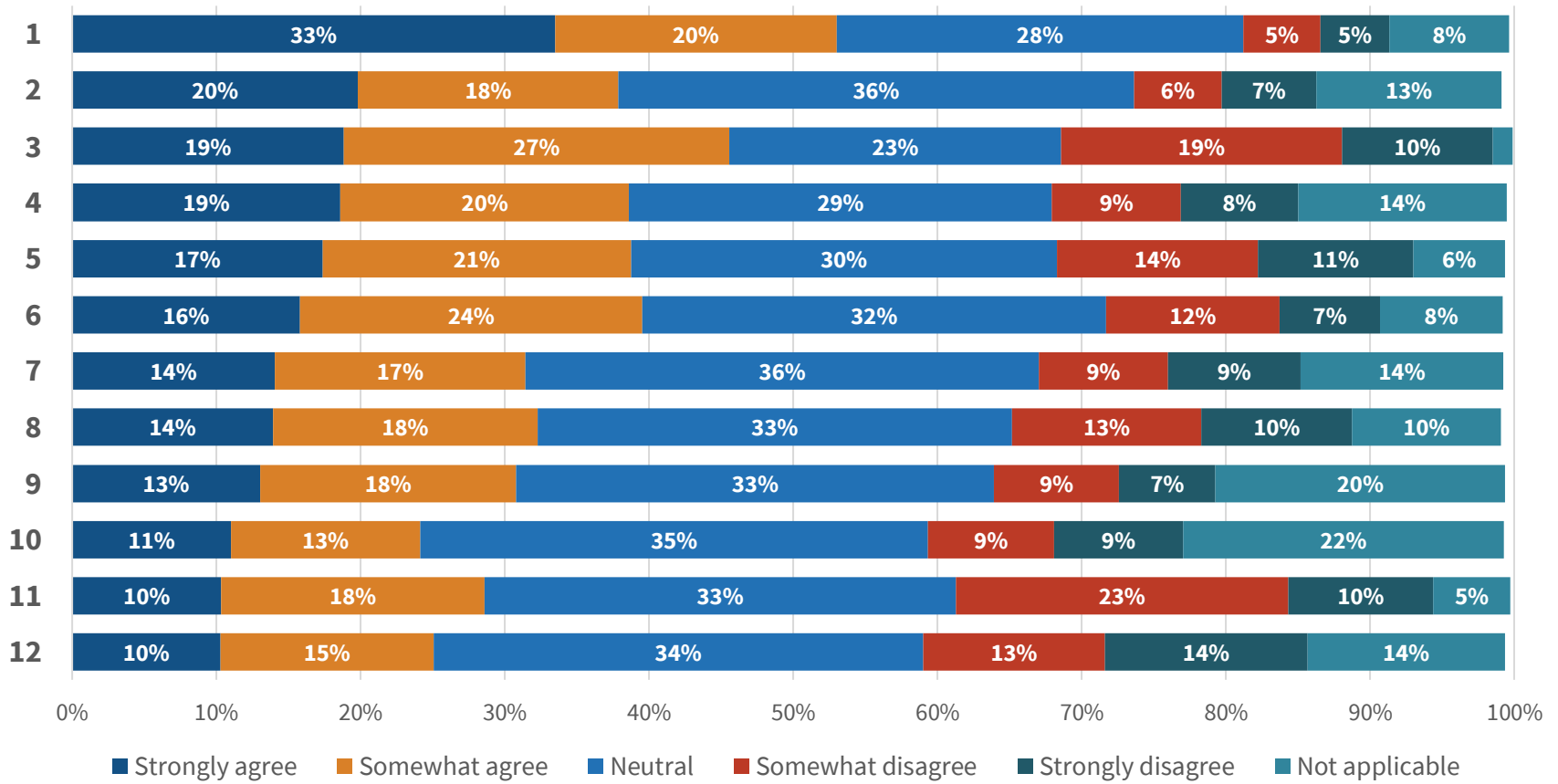
Please indicate how important the following actions are, to improve communication from VSB.		Most important	Very important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Not at all important	N/A
1	Provide detailed explanations of decisions and processes	23%	46%	16%	12%	2%	1%
2	Enhance VSB's website with up-to-date information	20%	46%	16%	13%	3%	1%

3	Improve the timeliness of communication	17%	42%	26%	11%	2%	1%
4	Use clearer and simpler language	15%	39%	27%	10%	6%	1%
5	Provide more frequent updates	11%	39%	28%	16%	5%	1%
6	Offer communication in multiple languages	9%	30%	33%	11%	11%	5%
7	Increase the use of digital communication platforms (e.g., text messages, apps, etc.)	9%	25%	31%	14%	21%	1%
8	Hold more virtual meetings and information sessions	8%	28%	38%	16%	9%	1%

Engagement questions

6. Engagement experiences: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements based on your past and current experiences engaging with the VSB.

Based on the 3,135 responses, the majority of respondents (53 per cent) reported feeling safe and expressing diverse views (39 per cent) during VSB engagement opportunities. Many respondents are neutral or disagree about VSB's effectiveness in making them aware of these opportunities, with 46 per cent agreeing and 23 per cent remaining neutral. Additionally, 34 per cent doubt that their feedback leads to actionable changes, and a significant portion (33 per cent) feel that their involvement in engagement activities has a positive impact. Concerns were expressed about their ability to attend these events, with only 28 per cent agreeing that they can attend/participate in most opportunities provided, and about the extent to which they feel heard and can provide meaningful feedback, with only 31 per cent feeling heard and 31 per cent feeling they can provide meaningful feedback.

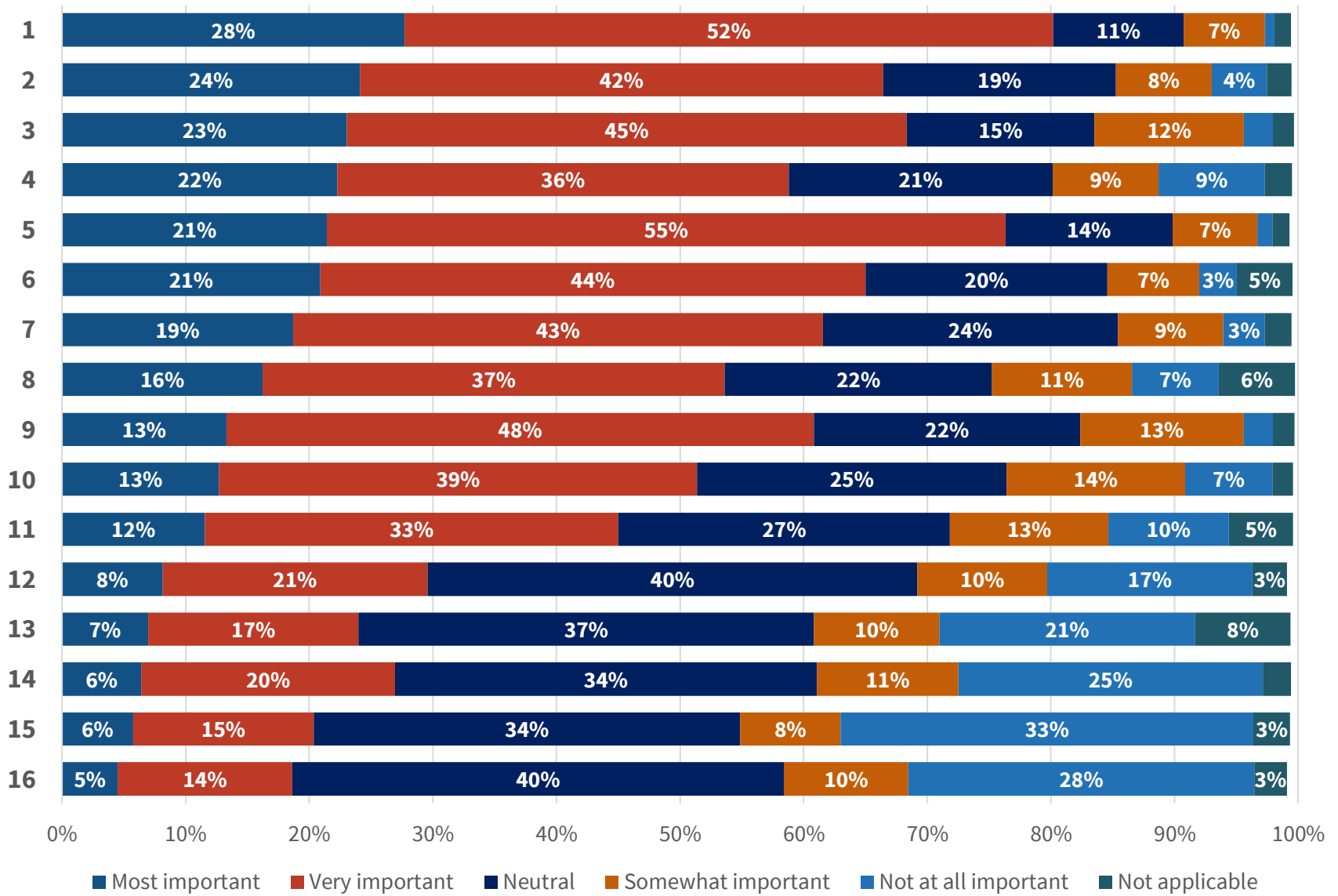


Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements based on your past and current experiences engaging with the VSB.		Most important	Very important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Not at all important	N/A
1	I feel safe to attend/participate in VSB engagement opportunities	33%	20%	28%	5%	5%	8%
2	The engagement activities respect and value my culture and identity	20%	18%	36%	6%	7%	13%
3	VSB does a good job of making families aware of engagement opportunities	19%	27%	23%	19%	10%	1%
4	I feel safe to offer views that seem different from other participants, during VSB engagement opportunities	19%	20%	29%	9%	8%	14%
5	I am satisfied with the overall engagement efforts of VSB	17%	21%	30%	14%	11%	6%
6	VSB engagement opportunities are accessible to my family	16%	24%	32%	12%	7%	8%
7	I feel that my involvement in engagement activities has a positive impact	14%	17%	36%	9%	9%	14%
8	VSB provides clear information on how my feedback will be used	14%	18%	33%	13%	10%	10%
9	I am able to provide meaningful feedback during engagement activities	13%	18%	33%	9%	7%	20%
10	I feel heard during VSB engagement opportunities	11%	13%	35%	9%	9%	22%

11	I'm able to attend/participate in most of the engagement opportunities provided by VSB	10%	18%	33%	23%	10%	5%
12	VSB takes action based on the feedback provided	10%	15%	34%	13%	14%	14%

7. Importance of improvements: Please indicate how important the following actions are, to make engagement more accessible.

There were 2,927 responses to this question. There is significant support for flexible scheduling of engagement opportunities, with 61 per cent favouring various times and weekends to accommodate diverse family schedules. Providing childcare during events is highly valued by 53 per cent, and ensuring physical accessibility for those with disabilities is highly valued by 65 per cent. The need for multilingual engagement materials is emphasized by 45 per cent, and 58 per cent support facilitators trained in cultural safety and inclusion. Additionally, there is a notable preference for using various digital platforms for virtual engagement, with 52 per cent supporting this, and 68 per cent for providing recordings of events for those who cannot attend live. Advance communication about engagement opportunities is seen as crucial by 80%, and simplifying the language in engagement materials is important for 62 per cent.

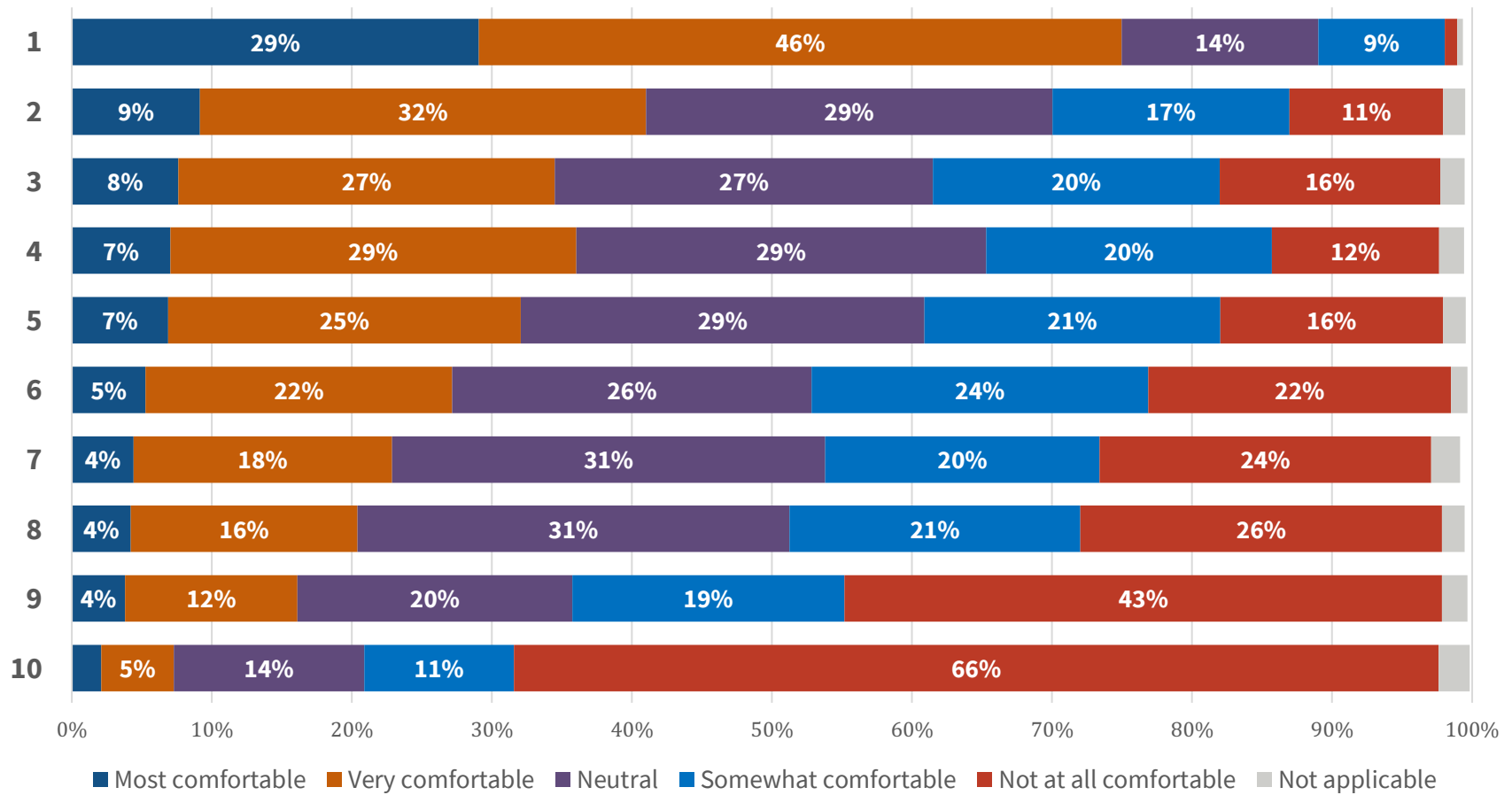


Please indicate how important the following actions are, to make engagement more accessible.		Most important	Very important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Not at all important	N/A
1	Communicate engagement opportunities well in advance	28%	52%	11%	7%	1%	1%
2	Follow VSB's "Respectful, Inclusion Participation Guidelines" to ensure all voices will be heard	24%	42%	19%	8%	4%	2%
3	Provide recordings of meetings and events for those who cannot attend live	23%	45%	15%	12%	2%	2%
4	Ensure all facilitators have Indigenous cultural safety, anti-racism, equity and inclusion training	22%	36%	21%	9%	9%	2%
5	Provide clear instructions on how to participate in engagement activities	21%	55%	14%	7%	1%	1%
6	Make sure venues for in-person events are accessible to individuals with disabilities	21%	44%	20%	7%	3%	5%
7	Simplify the language used in engagement materials to make them easier to understand	19%	43%	24%	9%	3%	2%
8	Provide child care during in-person engagement events	16%	37%	22%	11%	7%	6%
9	Offer engagement opportunities at various times (mornings, afternoons, evenings, weekends)	13%	48%	22%	13%	2%	2%

10	Use a variety of digital platforms for virtual engagement	13%	39%	25%	14%	7%	2%
11	Ensure all engagement materials are available in multiple languages	12%	33%	27%	13%	10%	5%
12	Host engagements in a meeting in a space that is familiar to me	8%	21%	40%	10%	17%	3%
13	Offer transportation assistance for attending in-person meetings	7%	17%	37%	10%	21%	8%
14	Include cultural elements in a session through food, music, etc.	6%	20%	34%	11%	25%	2%
15	Offer prizes for participating in surveys or other engagement activities	6%	15%	34%	8%	33%	3%
16	Use facilitators who are familiar to me	5%	14%	40%	10%	28%	3%

8. Engagement formats: What engagement formats would you be most comfortable participating in?

Of the 2,849 responses, short online surveys lasting 10 minutes or less were highly favoured, with 75 per cent of respondents feeling very comfortable with this quick and accessible method. On the other hand, more extended engagements, such as longer online surveys and telephone interviews, were less popular, with a considerable number of respondents expressing discomfort with these more time-consuming formats. In-person interactions, like open houses on weekday evenings (36%) and informal outdoor events (41 per cent), were generally well-received, suggesting a preference for face-to-face engagements that allow for flexible participation. Conversely, formats requiring public speaking, such as at school board meetings (20 per cent), and longer workshops (22 per cent) were viewed less favourably.



What engagement formats would you be most comfortable participating in?		Most comfortable	Very comfortable	Neutral	Somewhat comfortable	Not at all comfortable	N/A
1	Short online surveys (10 minutes or less)	29%	46%	14%	9%	1%	0%

2	An informal outdoor event (such as a picnic) where information is shared and questions can be asked	9%	32%	29%	17%	11%	2%
3	An online virtual focus group or video conference for about one to two hours	8%	27%	27%	20%	16%	2%
4	Open house on a weekday evening for about two hours (drop-in)	7%	29%	29%	20%	12%	2%
5	An in-person small-group meeting or workshop for about one to two hours	7%	25%	29%	21%	16%	2%
6	Longer, more comprehensive online surveys with in-depth background reading (up to 20 minutes)	5%	22%	26%	24%	22%	1%
7	A half-day in-person workshop	4%	18%	31%	20%	24%	2%
8	Speaking at a school board meeting	4%	16%	31%	21%	26%	2%
9	Short telephone survey (10 minutes or less)	4%	12%	20%	19%	43%	2%
10	Longer telephone surveys or in-depth interviews (up to 45 minutes)	2%	5%	14%	11%	66%	2%

9. Strengths: What do you currently like about how VSB communicates and engages with you? *This was an open-ended question. Responses have been summarized into the following high-level themes.*

- Email communication - 200+ comments
 - Respondents express a strong preference for email because it allows them to access information at their convenience.

- Many participants note that emails provide a record that can be saved and revisited to recall important details about school events, policies, or updates.
- Many participants find email less intrusive compared to other forms of communication like phone calls or texts
- Emails provide information without disrupting daily routines, and they can be accessed from various devices, enhancing accessibility.
- Clarity and effectiveness - 169 comments
 - Participants appreciated when messages are straightforward and devoid of unnecessary complexity, which helps them quickly understand the key points and actions required.
 - There is occasional uncertainty regarding whether communications are coming directly from their child's school, from individual teachers, or from the district office, which can affect how the information is perceived and acted upon.
 - While some communications are well-received, others are perceived as not effectively addressing the needs or concerns of parents and guardians, sometimes seen as generic or not informative.
- Engagement and responsiveness - 87 comments
 - Surveys are seen as a positive way to involve participants in decision-making processes, allowing them to express opinions and feedback on various topics concerning their children's education.
 - Some responses indicate that engagement activities sometimes feel tokenistic or superficial, lacking deep interaction or meaningful consideration of parent input.
 - Responses express a desire for more transparent and impactful outcomes from their engagement, wanting clear evidence that their feedback is being seriously considered and acted upon.
- Timeliness of communications - 68 comments
 - Effective communication practices were noted when parents and guardians receive timely information about events or changes, which helped them prepare or adjust accordingly.
 - Delays in sending out information can lead to missed opportunities for involvement or insufficient time to make necessary arrangements, causing frustration.
 - Advance notices are particularly valued as they allow families to organize their schedules better and participate more fully in school-related activities.
- Multilingual communication - 23 comments

- Efforts to accommodate non-English-speaking families by providing translations are highly valued and seen as a step towards greater inclusivity.
- Such practices are acknowledged as a proactive approach to recognizing and respecting the cultural and linguistic diversity within the school community.
- Frequency and volume of communication - 22 comments
 - Participants have varying preferences for how often they receive communications, with some appreciating regular updates and others feeling overwhelmed by too many emails.
 - Conversely, a lower frequency of updates leaves some parents and guardians feeling disconnected or out of the loop.
- Technical and format issues - 20 comments
 - Some respondents shared that they have experienced challenges with survey formats, especially on mobile devices.
 - Comments include frustrations with technical issues that hinder the reading and participation process.
 - Ensuring that digital communications are accessible to all, including those with disabilities or those less tech-savvy, is critical for effective engagement.
- Desire for more interactive methods - 18 comments
 - Some participants crave face-to-face interactions, which they feel could foster better relationships and more meaningful communication.
 - Respondents express a desire for more comprehensive discussions possibly through meetings or special sessions for more complex or sensitive issues.
 - There are requests for the use of interactive platforms that could facilitate real-time dialogue and richer forms of engagement between the school and the parent community.

10. Other improvements: Aside from the topics outlined in the questions above, what other changes could VSB consider to improve communication and engagement with families? *This was an open-ended question. Responses have been summarized into the following high level themes.*

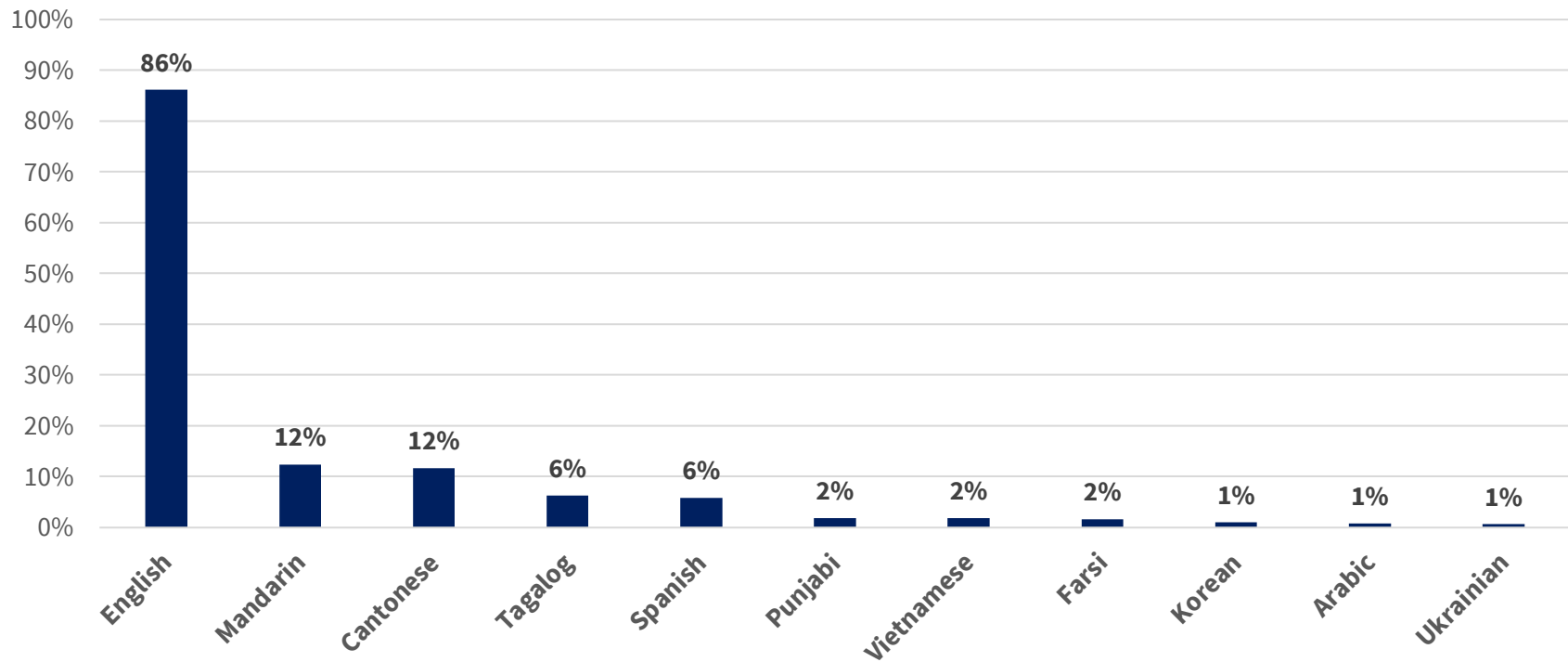
- Enhanced communication tools and methods - 142 comments
 - Respondents seek diversified communication methods including SMS, emails, and social media for better accessibility and convenience.
 - Requests for communications to be clearer and more concise, emphasizing essential information prominently.

- The need for timely and responsive communication from VSB staff to ensure effective two-way communication.
- Inclusive and diverse engagement - 86 comments
 - Calls for broader inclusion in VSB activities, ensuring that diverse voices, particularly from non-English speaking and minority backgrounds, are heard.
 - Suggestions for enhancing physical and informational accessibility, including multiple language supports and accessible event planning.
 - Demand for more interactive engagement opportunities such as workshops and direct meetings.
- Transparency and accountability - 55 comments
 - There is a desire for greater transparency in VSB decision-making processes with clear communication of the rationale behind decisions.
 - Respondents want confirmation that their feedback impacts decisions, with follow-ups on how their input has been integrated.
 - Requests for straightforward, honest communication that avoids bureaucratic jargon.
- Technological improvements and integration - 29 comments
 - Comments suggest a need for an efficient and user-friendly digital platform to centralize information access.
 - Integration of modern technology tools to facilitate interactive participation and feedback analysis.
 - Improvement of existing systems, like MyEd, to enhance user experience and reliability.
- Enhanced support for diverse learning needs - 21 comments
 - Calls for increased resources and support for students with diverse learning needs, including disabilities and gifted programs.
 - Emphasis on cultural and linguistic inclusivity in educational programs.
 - Advocacy for accessible and affordable educational activities.
- Curriculum and program transparency - 17 comments
 - Requests for detailed information about curriculum changes and educational programs to ensure parents and guardians understand the impacts on their children.
 - Desire for open discussions about curriculum development and program offerings.
 - Need for clarity on educational standards and assessment methods.

Demographic questions

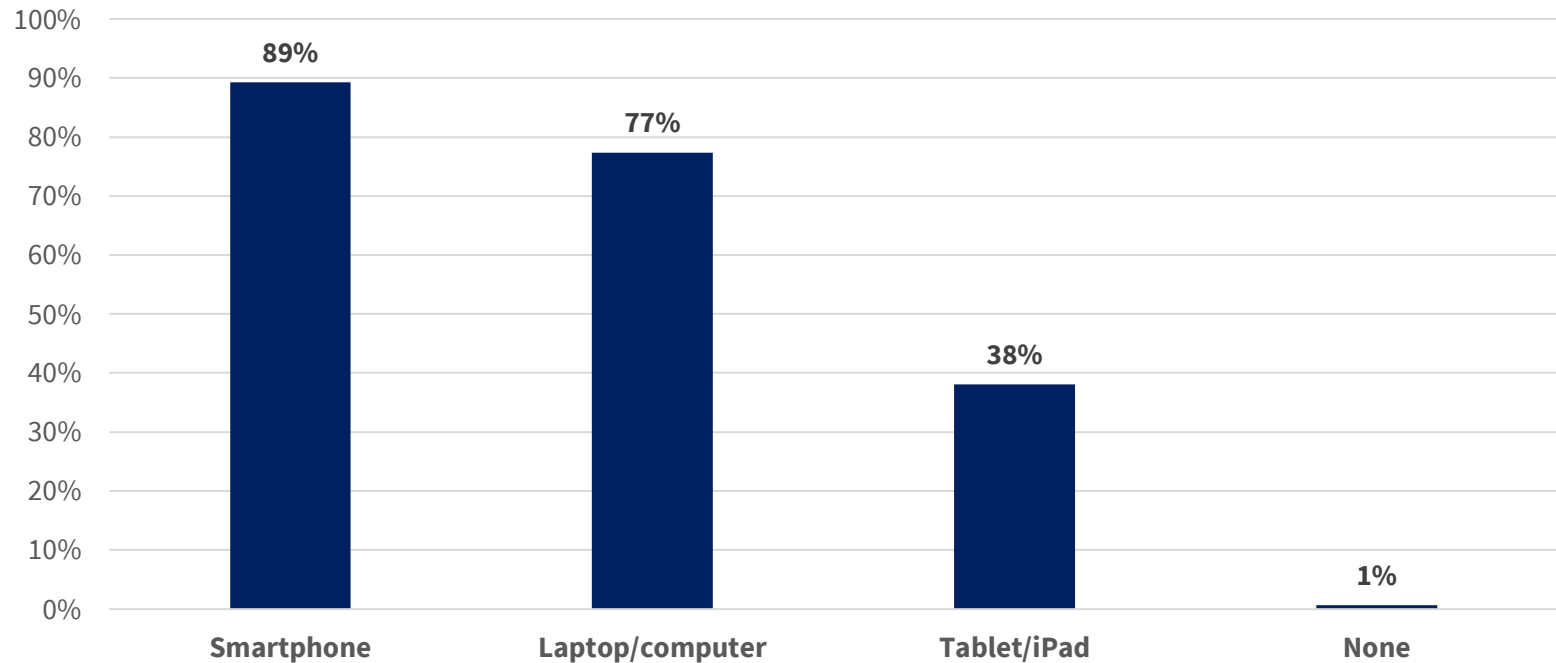
11. Languages spoken at home

Of the 2664 responses, the majority of respondents (86%) speak English at home. Mandarin and Cantonese are each preferred by 12% of respondents. Tagalog and Spanish are each preferred by 6% of respondents. Other languages such as Punjabi, Vietnamese, and Farsi are each preferred by 2% of respondents. Korean, Arabic, and Ukrainian are each preferred by 1% of respondents.



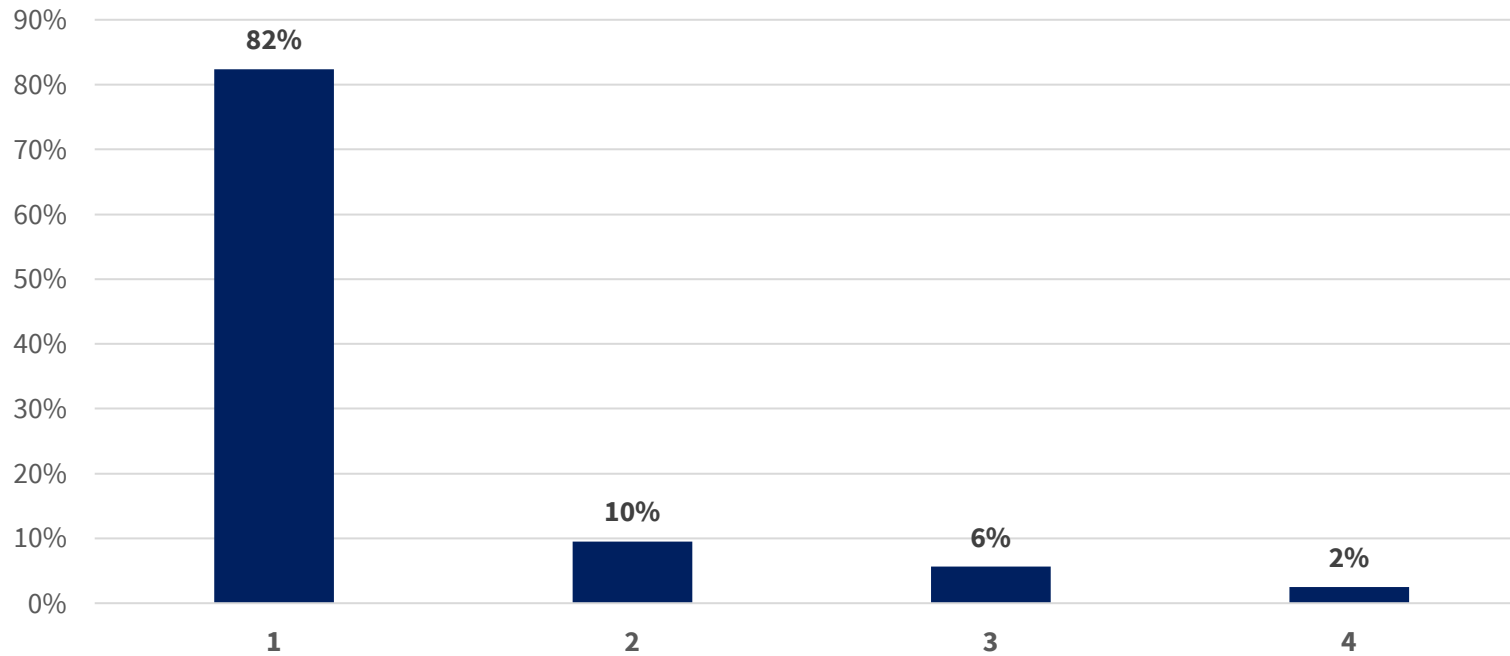
12. Which devices do you use to access communication from the District? (Select all that apply)

Of the 2,721 responses, 89 per cent of respondents use a smartphone to access communication from the District. Additionally, 77 per cent use a laptop/computer, and 38 per cent use a tablet/iPad. Only 1 per cent of respondents do not use any devices to access communication from the District.



13. Family make-up: How would you describe your family composition?

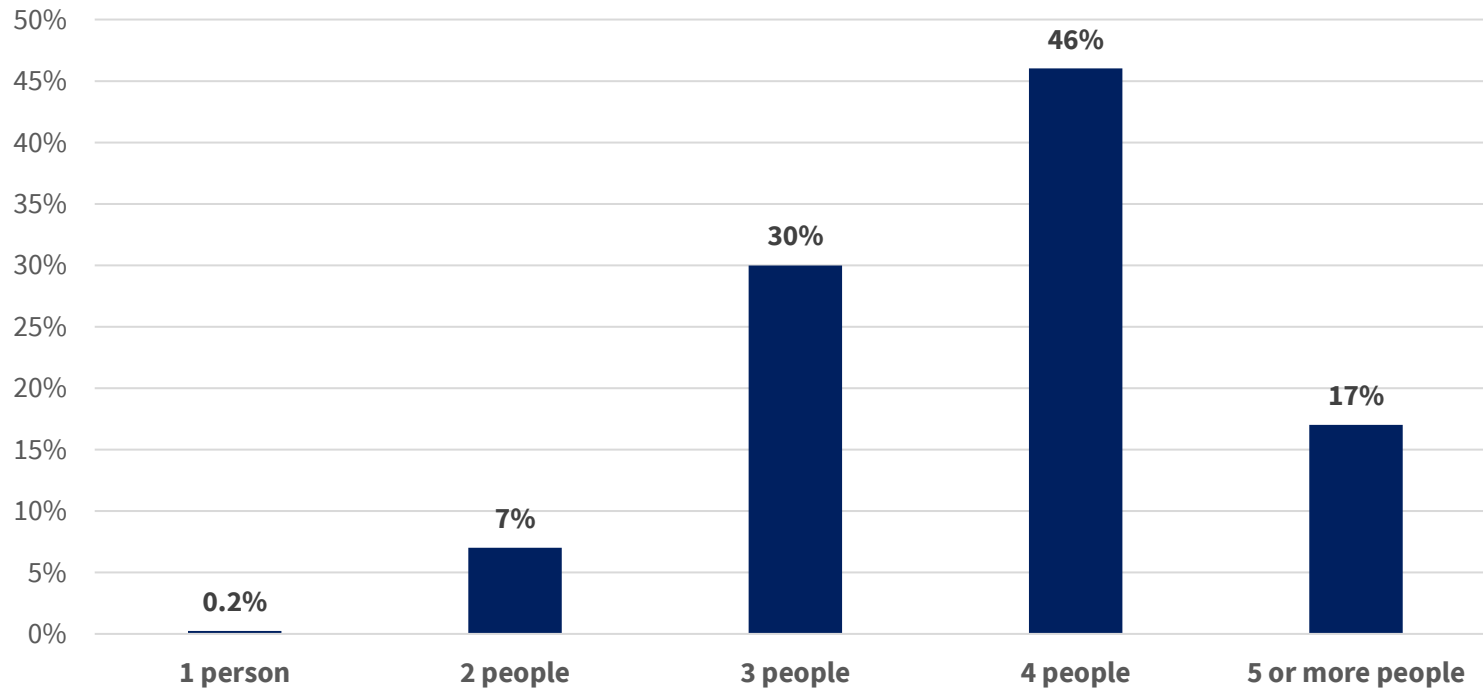
Of the 2,709 responses, the majority (82 per cent) describe their family composition as a two-parent household. Additionally, 10 per cent are single parents, 6 per cent are co-parenting with someone who lives in another household, and 2 per cent are guardians of a VSB student(s).



How would you describe your family composition?		
1	I am in a two-parent household	82%
2	I am a single parent	10%
3	I am co-parenting with someone who lives in another household	6%
4	I am a guardian of a VSB student(s)	2%

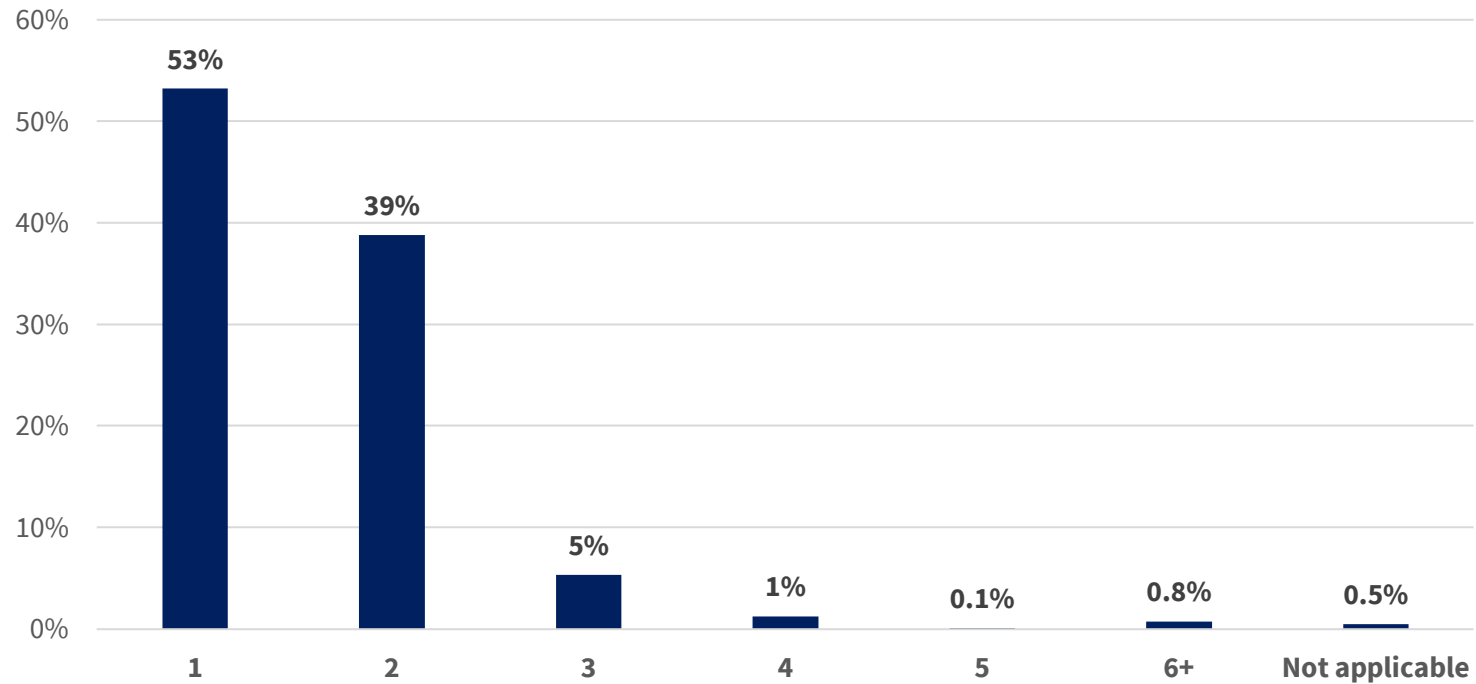
14. Household: What is your household size?

There were 2,720 responses to this question. The majority of respondents (46 per cent) reported a household size of 4 people. Additionally, 30 per cent have a household size of 3 people, 17 per cent have 5 or more people, 7 per cent have 2 people, and only 0.2 per cent have a household size of 1 person.



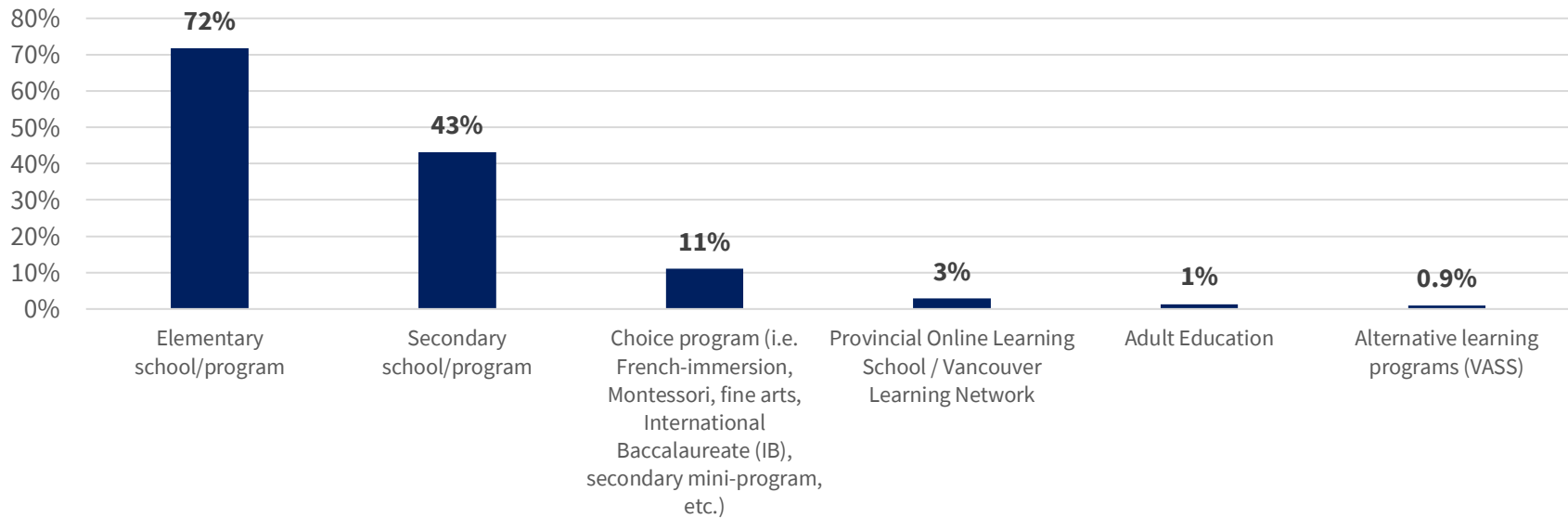
15. Students: How many school-age children in your household attend a school/program within VSB?

Of the 2,734 responses, the majority of respondents (53 per cent) reported having 1 school-age child in their household attending a school/program within VSB. Additionally, 39 per cent have 2 school-age children, 5 per cent have 3 school-age children, 1 per cent have 4 school-age children, 0.1 per cent have 5 school-age children, and 0.8 per cent have 6 or more school-age children.



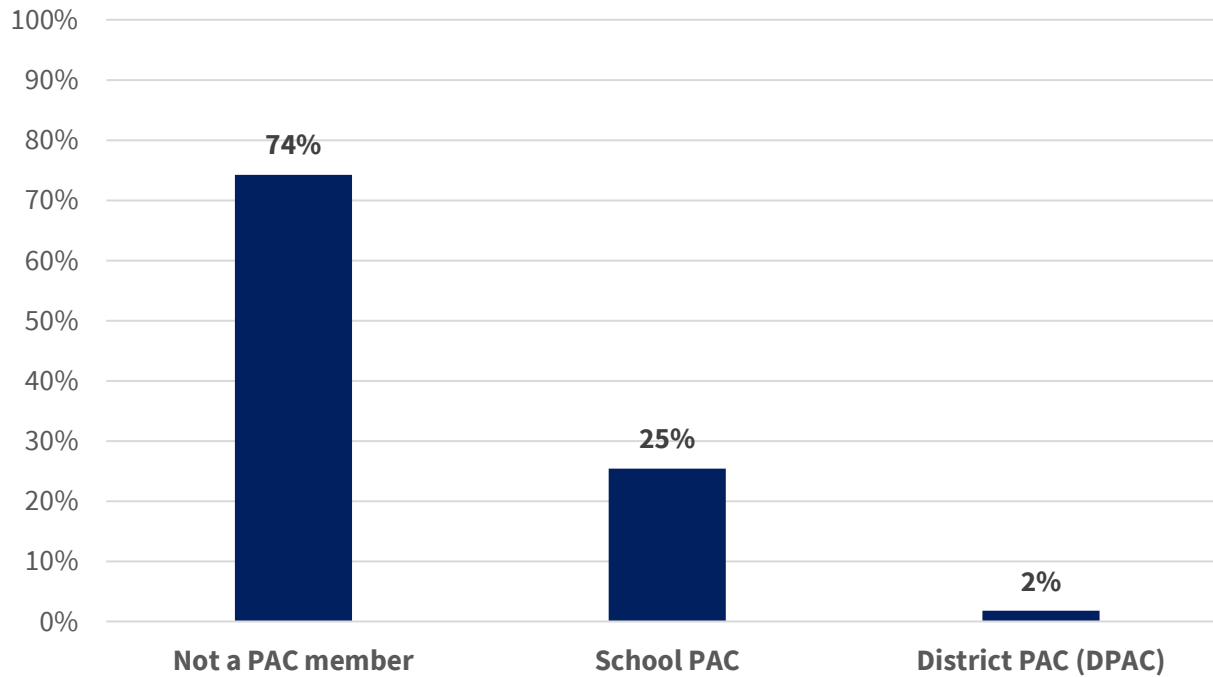
16. Learning type: What type of learning environment do they attend? *Participants could select all that apply.*

Of the 2,732 responses, 72 per cent of respondents indicated that their school-age children attend an elementary school/program. Secondary school/program attendance was reported by 43 per cent of respondents. Choice programs, such as French immersion, Montessori, fine arts and International Baccalaureate (IB), are attended by 11 per cent of respondents' children. Provincial Online Learning School or Vancouver Learning Network is attended by 3 per cent of respondents' children. Adult Education is utilized by 1 per cent of respondents, and 0.9 per cent of respondents' children are in alternative learning programs (VASS).



17. PAC Involvement: Are you currently a member of a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)? *Participants could select all that apply.*

Of the 2,705 responses, 74% of respondents indicated that they are not a member of a PAC. Additionally, 25 per cent are members of a school PAC, and 2 per cent are members of DPAC.



18. Neighbourhood: What neighbourhood do you live in?

Neighbourhood					
Kitsilano	6%	Victoria-Fraserview	2%	South Hill	1%
Hastings-Sunrise	5%	Champlain Heights	2%	Hillcrest	1%
Renfrew-Collingwood	5%	Oakridge	2%	Southlands	1%

Marpole	5%	Riley Park	2%	Hastings East	0.4%
Mount Pleasant	5%	Yaletown	2%	South Granville	0.4%
Other	4%	Commercial Drive	2%	Chinatown	0.3%
Kerrisdale	4%	Arbutus Ridge	2%	Downtown Eastside	0.3%
Killarney	4%	Sunset	2%	MacKenzie Heights	0.3%
Kensington-Cedar Cottage	4%	Downtown	1%	Creekside	0.3%
West Point Grey	4%	Knight	1%	Quilchena	0.3%
Collingwood	4%	Little Mountain	1%	Southwest Marine	0.2%
Dunbar-Southlands	3%	Langara	1%	West Broadway	0.2%
Fairview	3%	Main	1%	Gastown	0.2%
Grandview-Woodland	3%	South Cambie	1%	Musqueam	0.2%
South Vancouver	3%	False Creek South	1%	Sunrise	0.2%

Fraser	3%	Shaughnessy	1%	Granville Island	0.1%
West End	3%	Coal Harbour	1%		
Cedar Cottage	2%	Strathcona	1%		