



DATE: April 8, 2011

TO: Steve Cardwell, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Kabir Bhagaria, Health and Safety Support Advisory

RE: **Data Analysis of the Local School Calendar 2010/2011 Survey**

Introduction

To gauge the impact of The Local School Calendar 2010/2011 on various stakeholder groups throughout the district, the Vancouver School District Calendar Committee determined it beneficial to gather feedback to: 1). assist in the decision making process regarding the continuation of the Local School Calendar for the 2011/2012 school year; and 2). to provide an overall subjective account of stakeholders concerns and interests with the Local School Calendar 2010/2011. Based on a joint consensus from the Committee (excluding VESTA), a randomized survey was chosen as the appropriate method for obtaining information from stakeholder groups.

Survey Design/Method

A randomized survey was distributed to 25% of the population of each stakeholder group, namely, parents/guardians and employees. Students were also included as part of the survey, however, they were not limited to 25%. To provide a random cohort of each stakeholder group, an Excel formula was used to provide a random list of 25% of individuals from the entire population of each stakeholder group. For the parent/guardian group, 6473 individuals were randomly selected from a total population of 25,892 registered in the BCeSiS database. For the employee group, 1220 individuals were randomly selected from a total population of 4880 from the HRIS database and included members of VSTA, CUPE 15, CUPE 407, IUOE, VASSA, VEPVA, PASA and the Trades Union.

The survey method of delivery for both the parent/guardian and employee cohort groups was by an anonymous online link to the survey delivered to the recipients email address, which indicated that that they were randomly selected to complete the survey. Recipients were also made aware that the survey was completely voluntary and responses would be considered anonymous. Parents/guardians that were not part of the randomly selected cohort group were

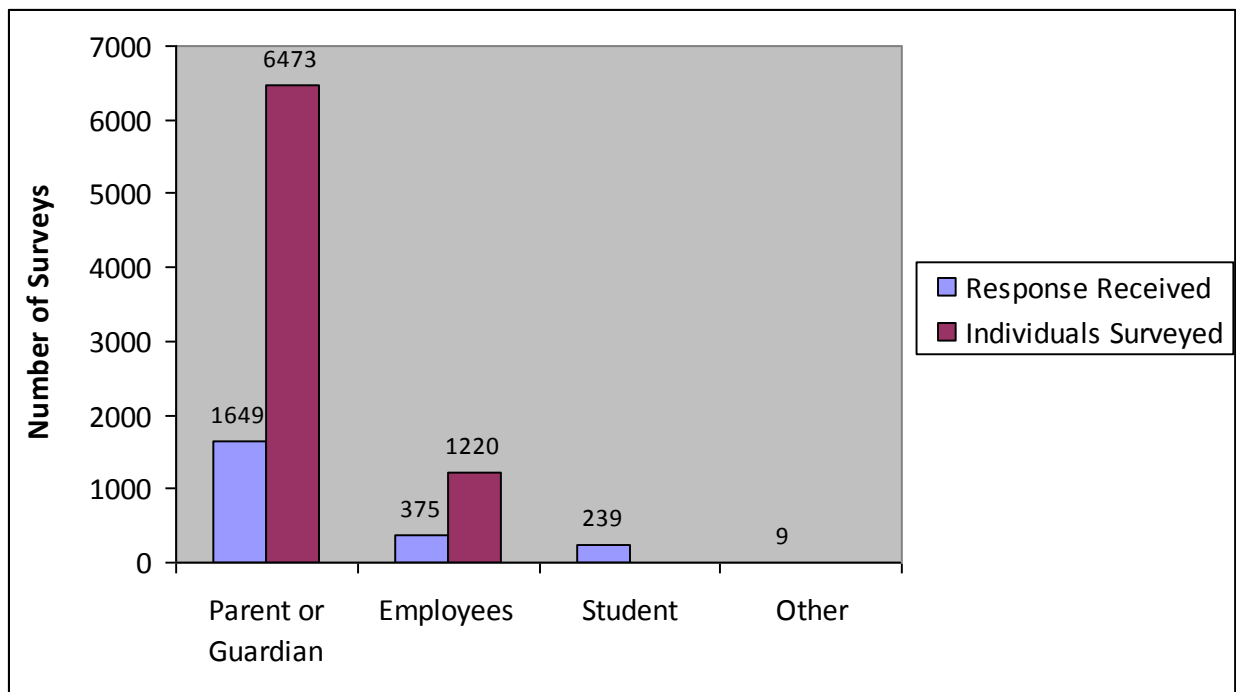
also provided with an opportunity to express their opinion regarding the Local School Calendar 2010/2011 through anonymous submission of a paper-copy survey available at schools throughout the district (results are provided in Appendix A). Students in Grades 8 to 12 at Kitsilano, Magee, David Thompson and Templeton, which represents the four quadrants of the district, were encouraged to provide feedback regarding the Local School Calendar through participation in an anonymous online link to the survey (results of have been included in the overall data).

Recipients of the survey were provided with a time period of 10 days to complete the survey (March 9, 2011 to March 18, 2011). Student and paper-copy responses were also included within this timeframe.

Data Results

To provide a concise analysis each survey question is analyzed separately. A graphical representation along with a brief synopsis of each question is also provided for further clarification; Questions 4 through 10 are not provided with an interpretation due to the results being self-explanatory. Of key importance to consider when reviewing the data is that it is largely based on feedback from the parent/guardian stakeholder group due to the large number of responses in relation to other stakeholder groups.

Question 1: Please identify yourself.

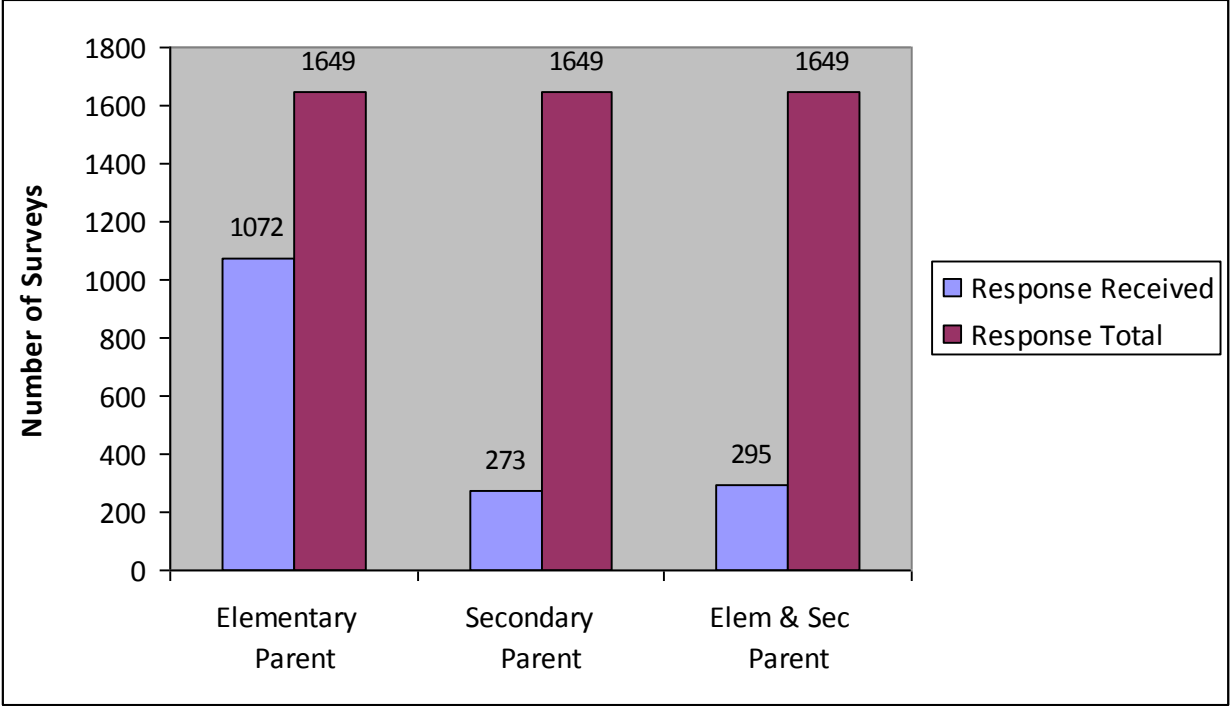


The graph above provides a snapshot of the response rate for both the parent/guardian and employee groups. Student feedback was also included in the graph, however, no comparison is identified since a cohort of students was not randomly surveyed.

The survey response rate for the parent/guardian group was **25.5%**, which represents approximately **6.4%** of the entire parent/guardian population.

The survey response rate for the employee group was **30.7%**, which represents approximately **7.7%** of the entire employee population (excluding VESTA members).

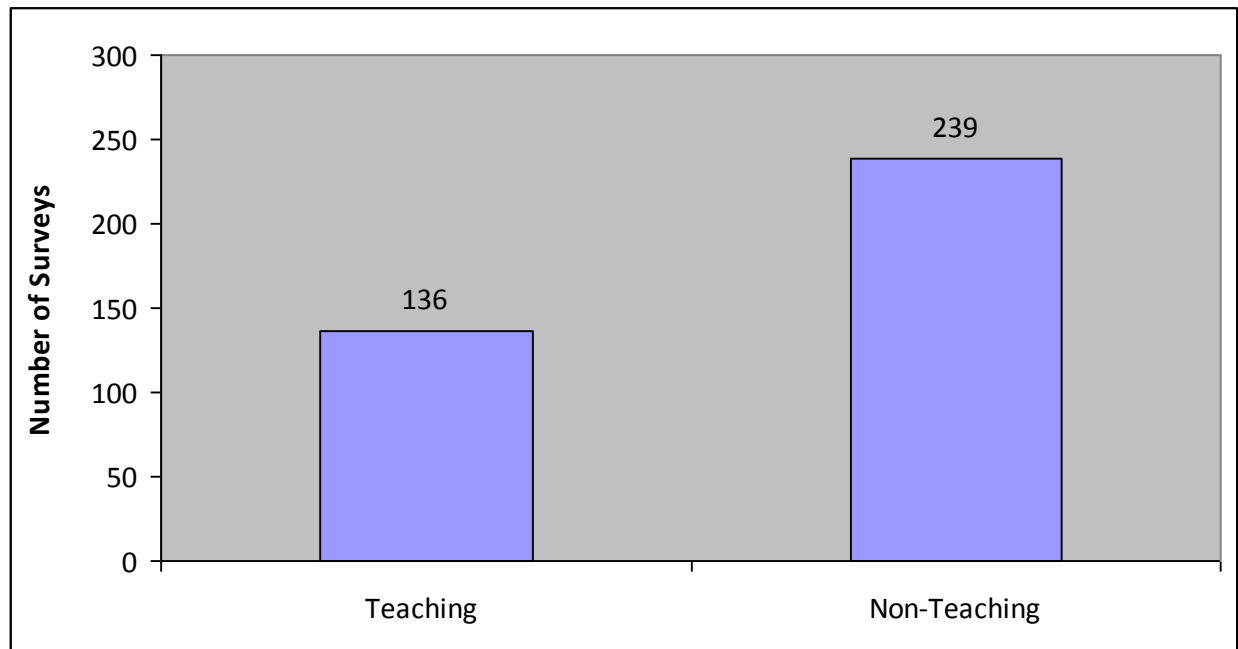
Question 2: If you are a Parent/Guardian, are you:



The graph above provides a breakdown of the responses received from the parent/guardian group. Of the **1649** parent/guardians that responded to the survey:

- **65.0%** were parents/guardians of an elementary student;
- **16.6%** were parents/guardians of a secondary student;
- **17.9%** were parents/guardians of both an elementary and secondary student.

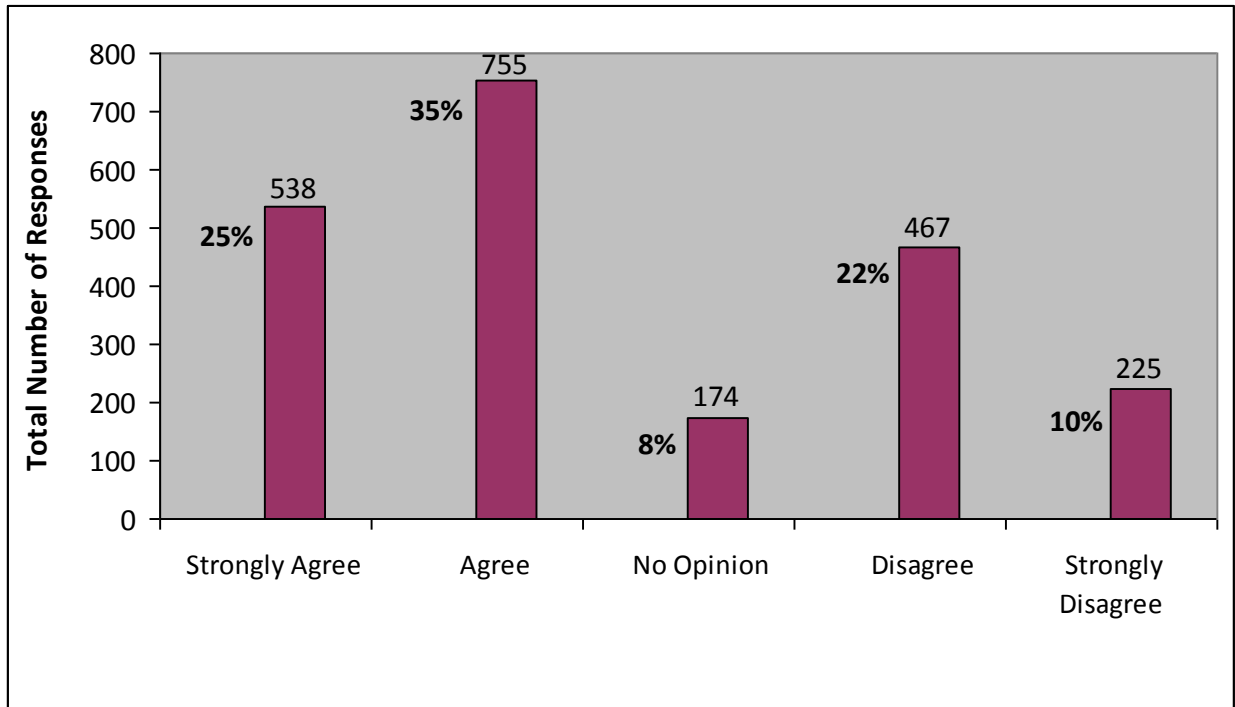
Question 3: If you are an employee, are you a:



The graph above provides a breakdown of the responses received from the employee group. Of the **375** employees that responded to the survey:

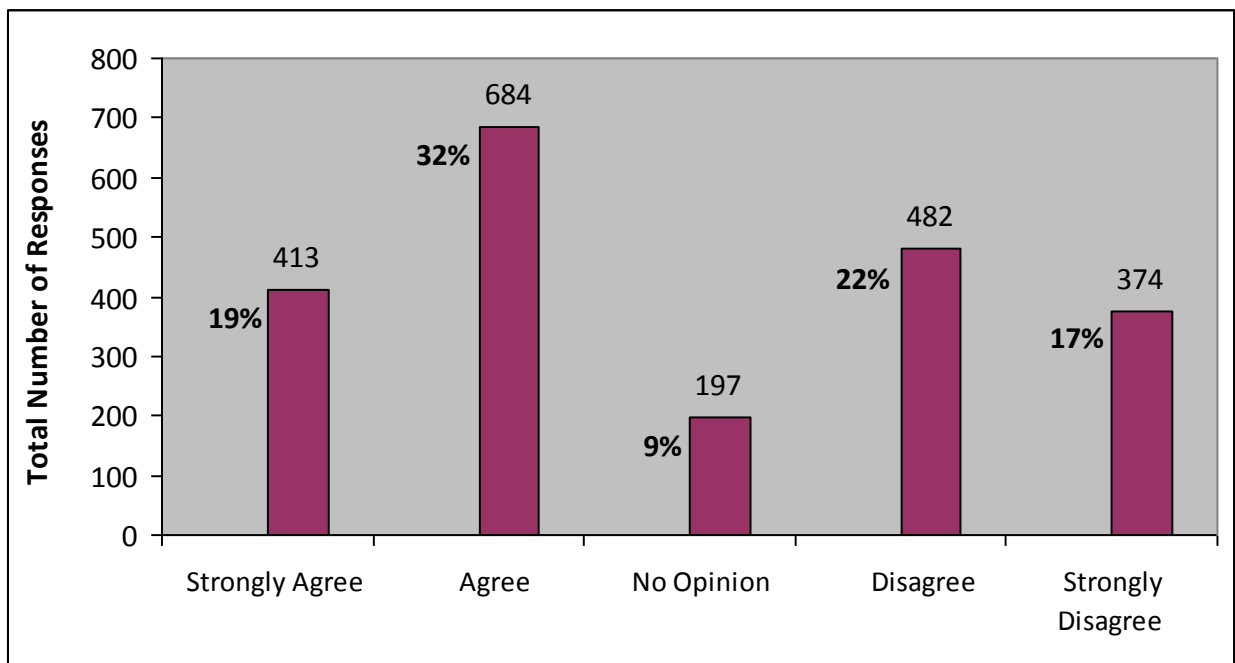
- **63.7%** were non-teaching employees;
- **36.3%** were teaching employees.

Question 4: I support the idea of continuing the model of the current (2010 – 2011) Local School Calendar.



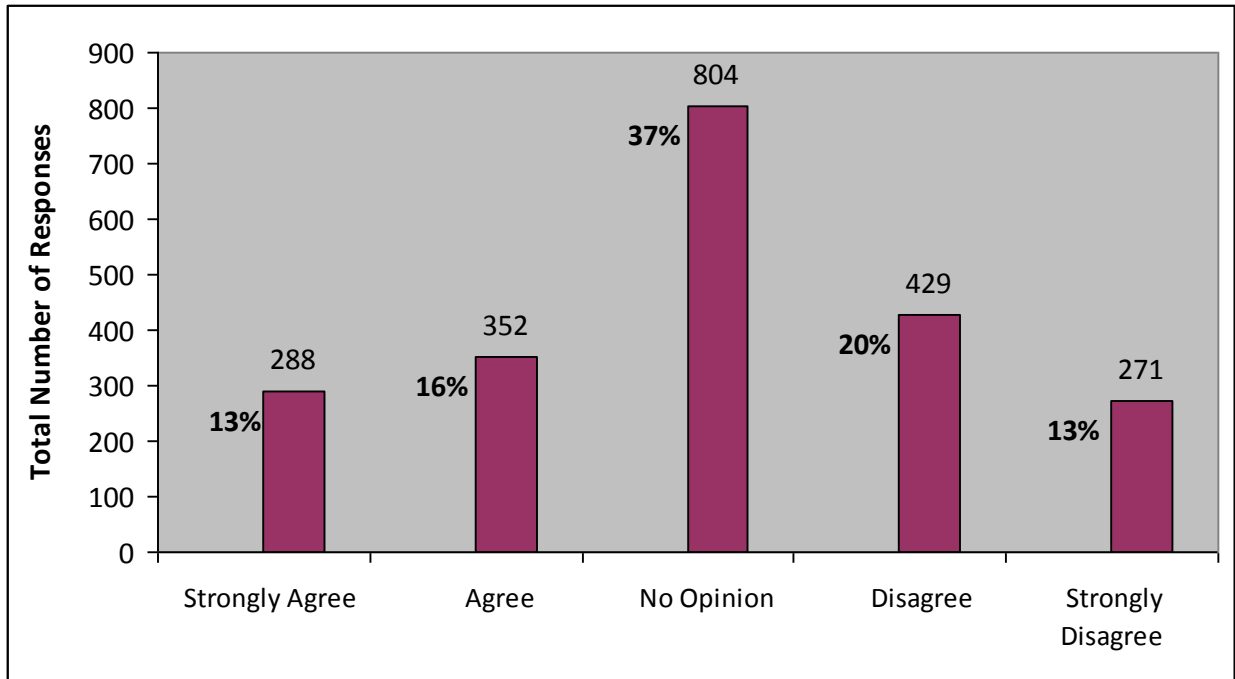
** The above graph is based on a total survey response rate of 2159 from parent, student and employee stakeholder groups.

Question 5: The addition of extra minutes of instruction each day (16 minutes for elementary, 17 for secondary) compensates for 10 fewer days in sessions.



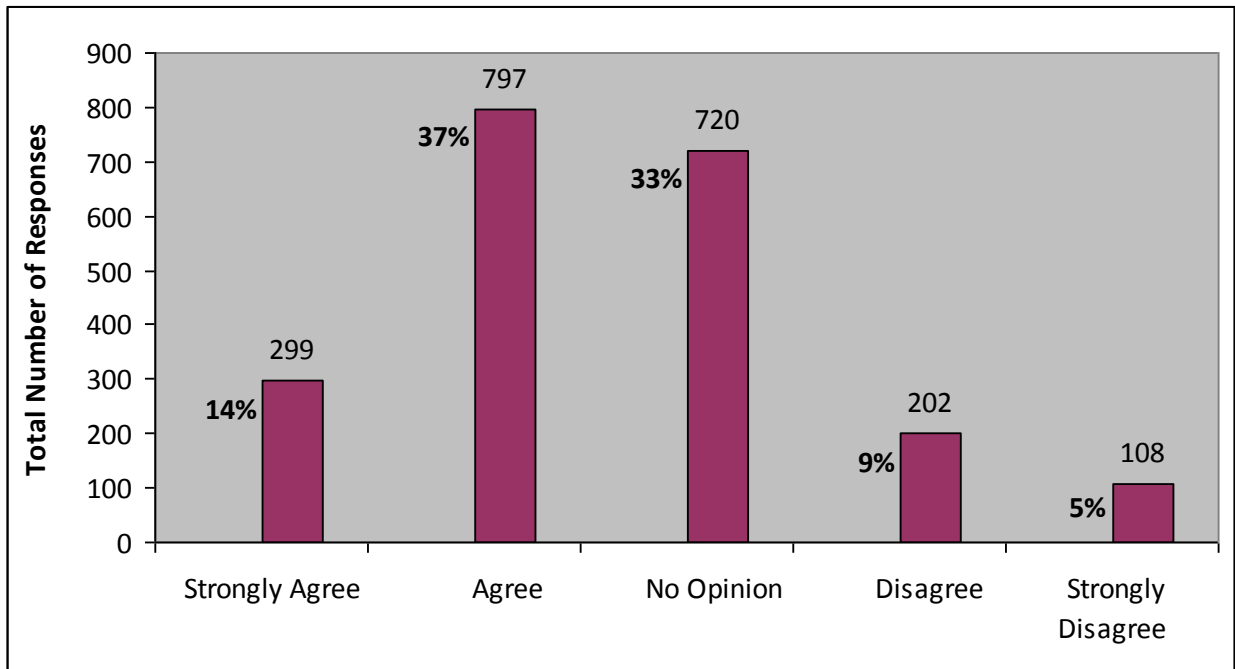
** The above graph is based on a total survey response rate of 2159 from parent, student and employee stakeholder groups.

Question 6: Currently secondary school classes begin at 8:35am and end at 3:07. Classes at secondary schools should start later and classes end later.



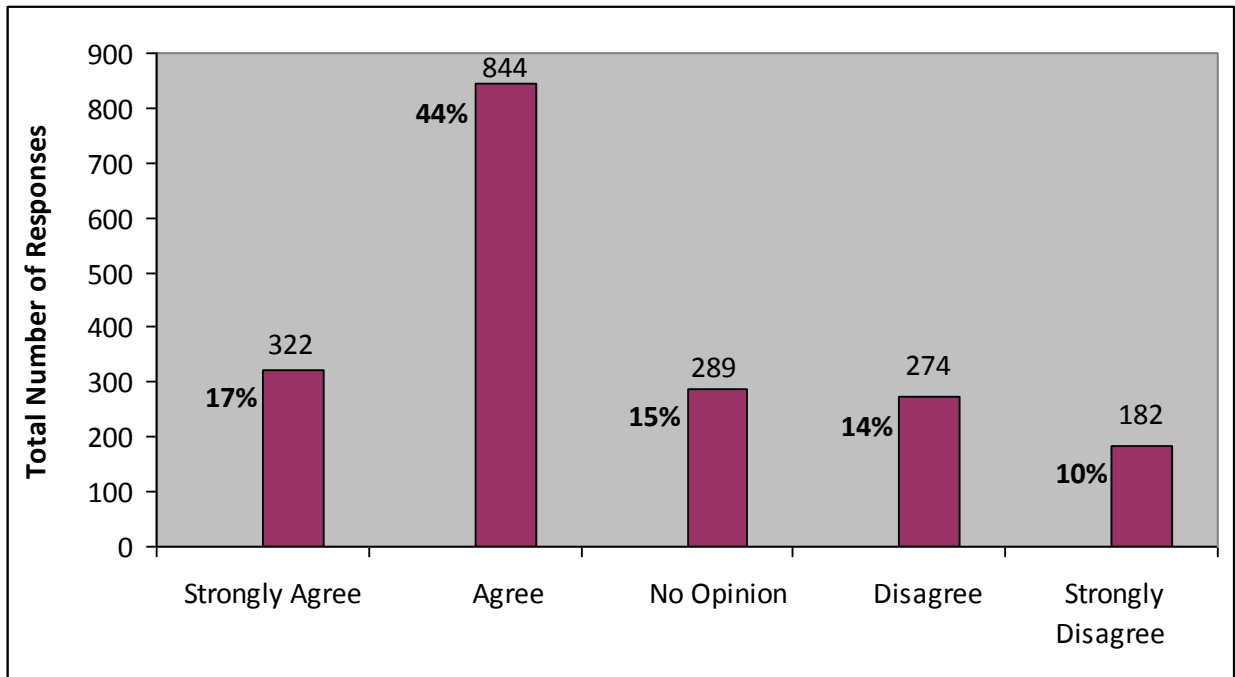
** The above graph is based on a total survey response rate of 2159 from parent, student and employee stakeholder groups.

Question 7: The length of lunch time at secondary schools (45 minutes) is satisfactory.



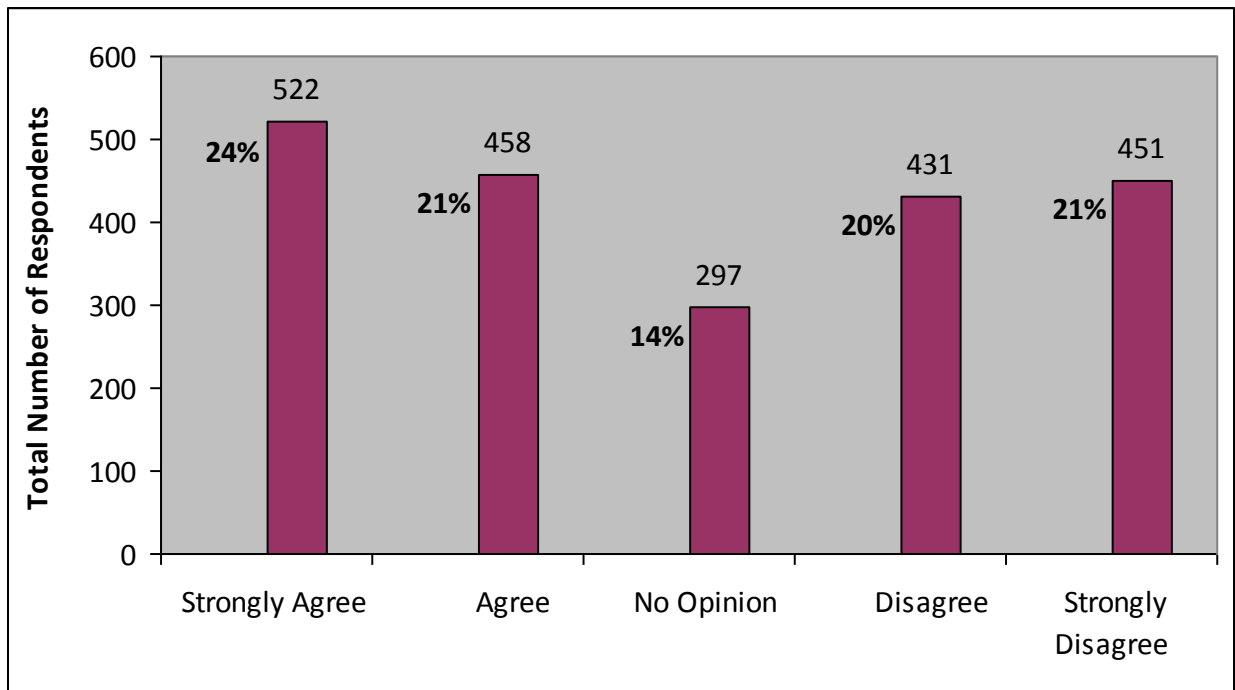
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Question 8: The length of lunch time at elementary schools (45 minutes) is satisfactory.



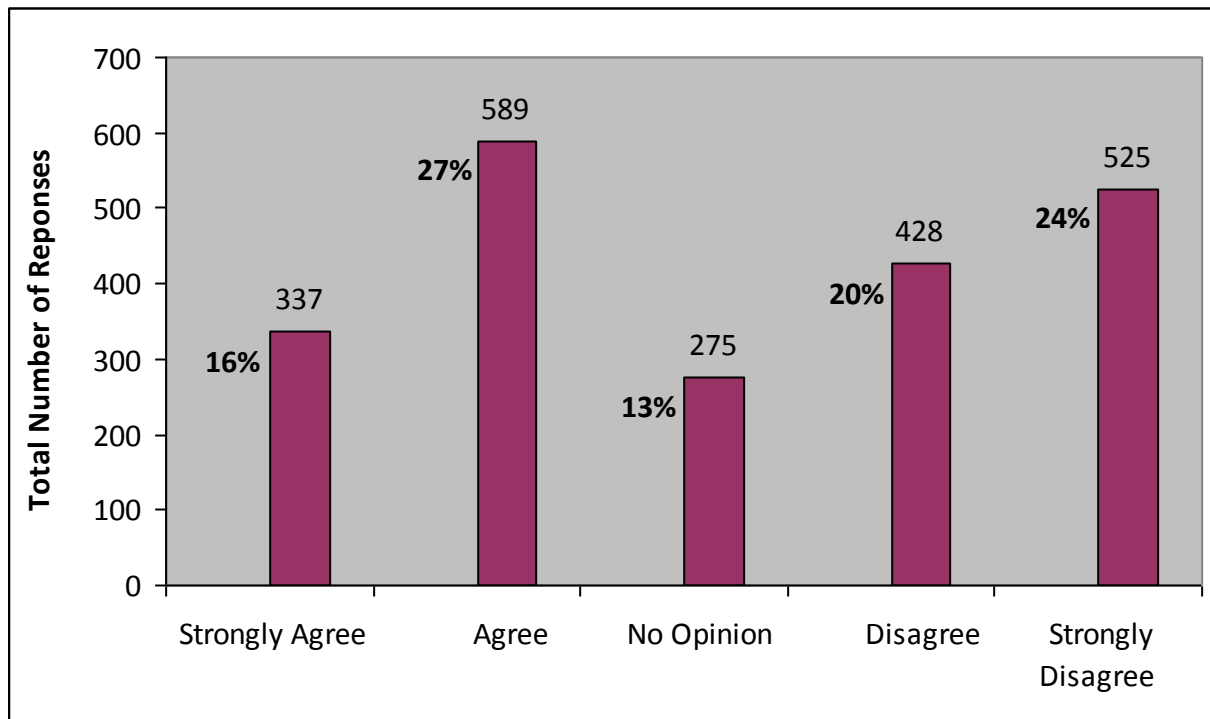
** The above graph is based on a total survey response rate of 2159 from parent, student and employee stakeholder groups.

Question 9: The 10 district closure days are beneficial/helpful for me.



** The above graph is based on a total survey response rate of 2159 from parent, student and employee stakeholder groups.

Question 10: Many school districts (including three schools in the Lower Mainland) have adopted a balanced school calendar. In a balanced school calendar students attend school throughout the year with regular holiday breaks between terms. For example, students might go to school for four ten week terms with three or four weeks of holidays between each term. I support the idea of the Vancouver School Board exploring a balanced school calendar.



** The above graph is based on a total survey response rate of 2159 from parent, student and employee stakeholder groups.

Conclusion

Based on the overall results of the survey, it appears that the general consensus is supportive of the Local School Calendar 2010/2011. Results of the survey indicate that **35%** of individuals are supportive of continuing the models of the current (2010 – 2011) Local School Calendar; see Question 4 in the Results section. In addition, **24%** of individuals surveyed ‘strongly agree’ that the 10 district closure days are beneficial/helpful for me; see Question 9 in the Results section. Interestingly, **27%** of individuals surveyed also ‘agreed’ to support the idea of the Vancouver School Board exploring a balanced school calendar; see Question 10 in the Results section.

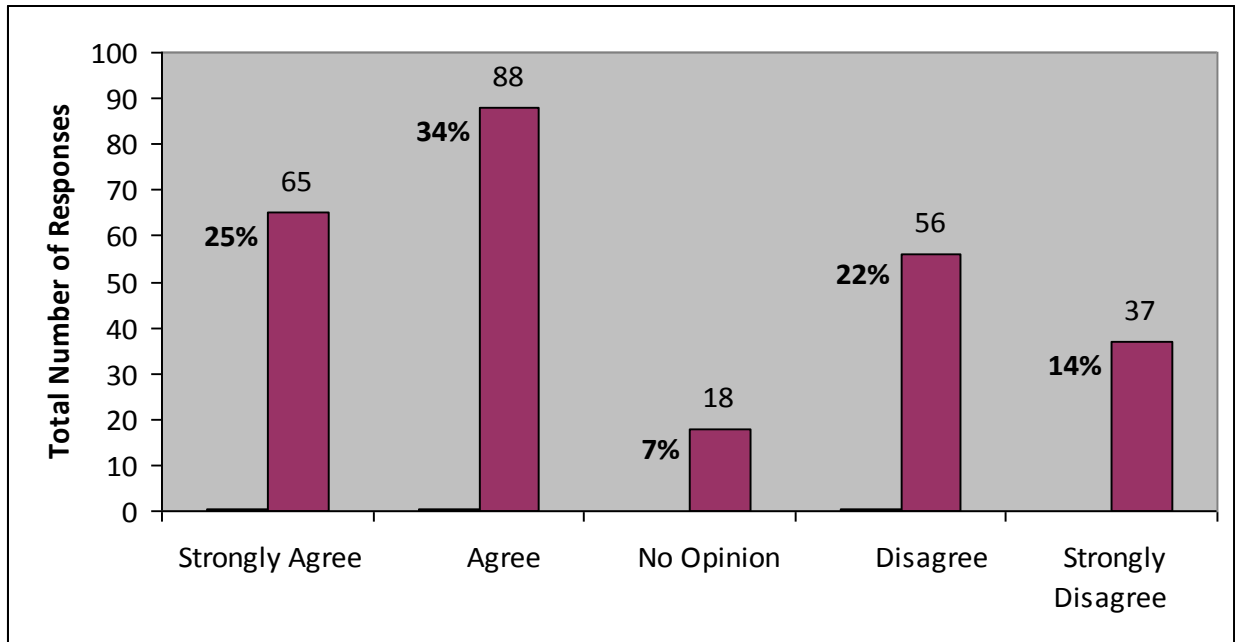
Although the general consensus is supportive, it is important to take into account that the individuals surveyed represent 6.4% of the entire parent/guardian population and 7.7% of the entire employee population (excluding VESTA members). Due to a high attrition rate, a benchmark of 10% of each stakeholder group was unattainable even with a high cohort selection of 25%.

Note: Interpretation of the data results is solely based on the author’s analysis and is not representative of any stakeholder group.

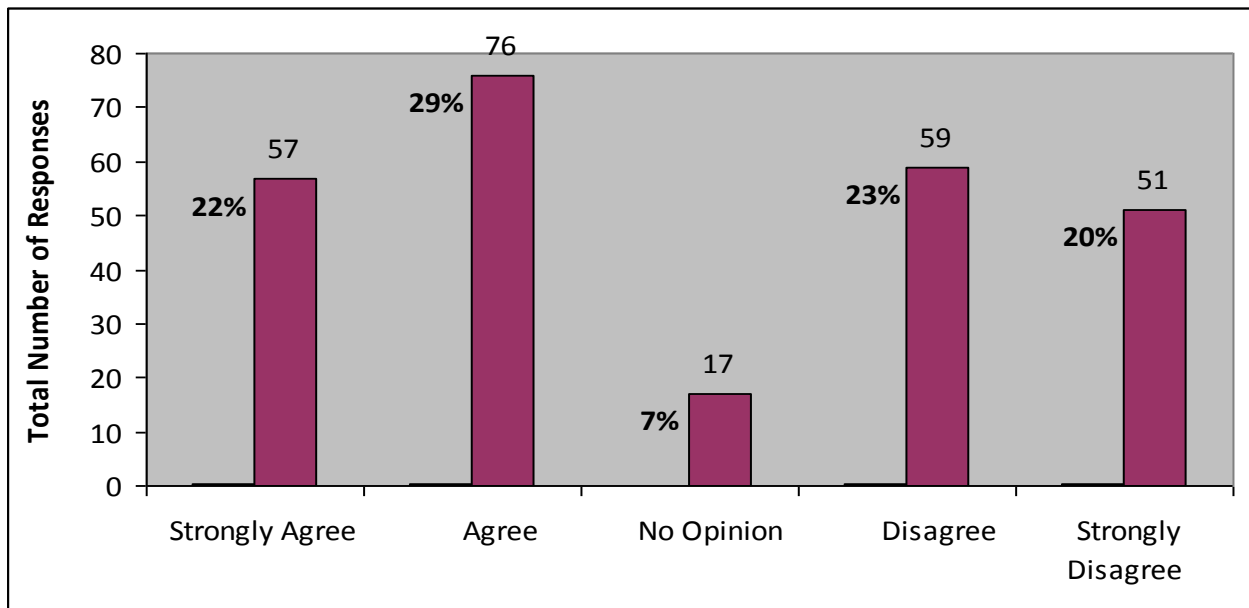
Appendix A

The following represents results of the paper-copy surveys available in schools throughout the district. A total of **260** parents/guardians responded of which **237** were elementary parents and **23** were secondary parents.

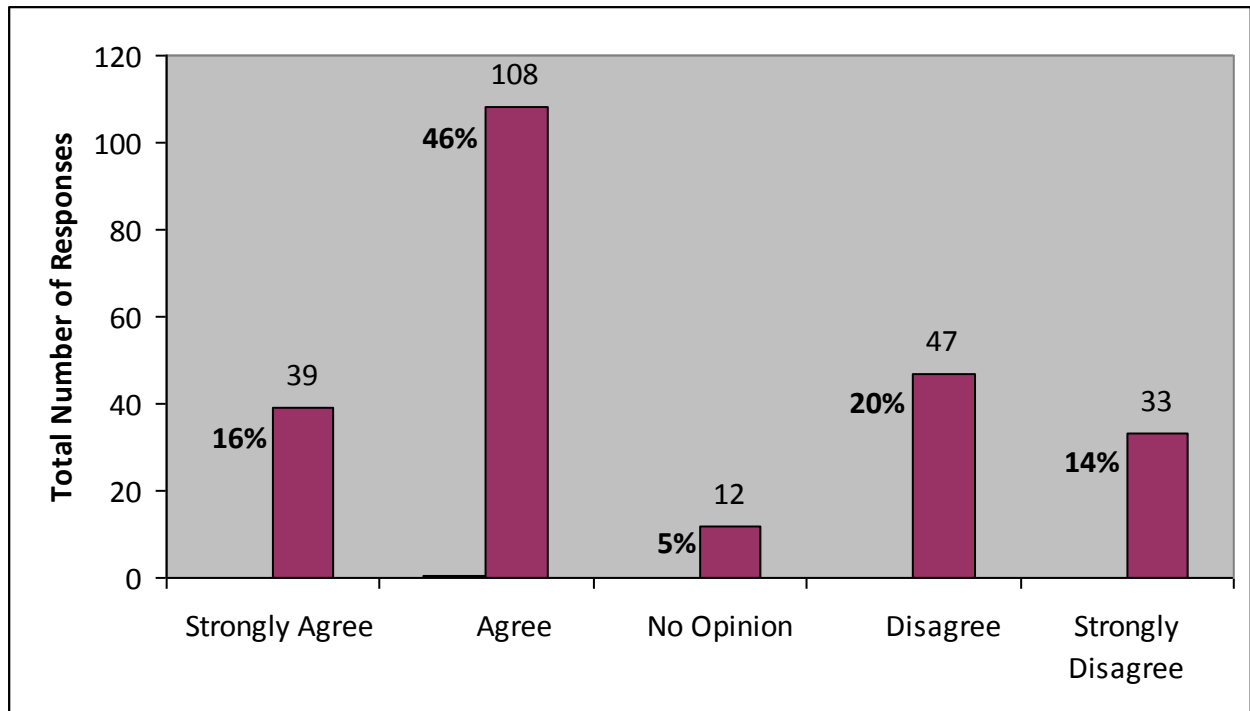
Question 1: I support the idea of continuing the model of the current (2010 – 2011) Local School Calendar.



Question 2: The addition of extra minutes of instruction each day (16 minutes for elementary, 17 minutes for secondary) compensates for 10 fewer days of instruction.

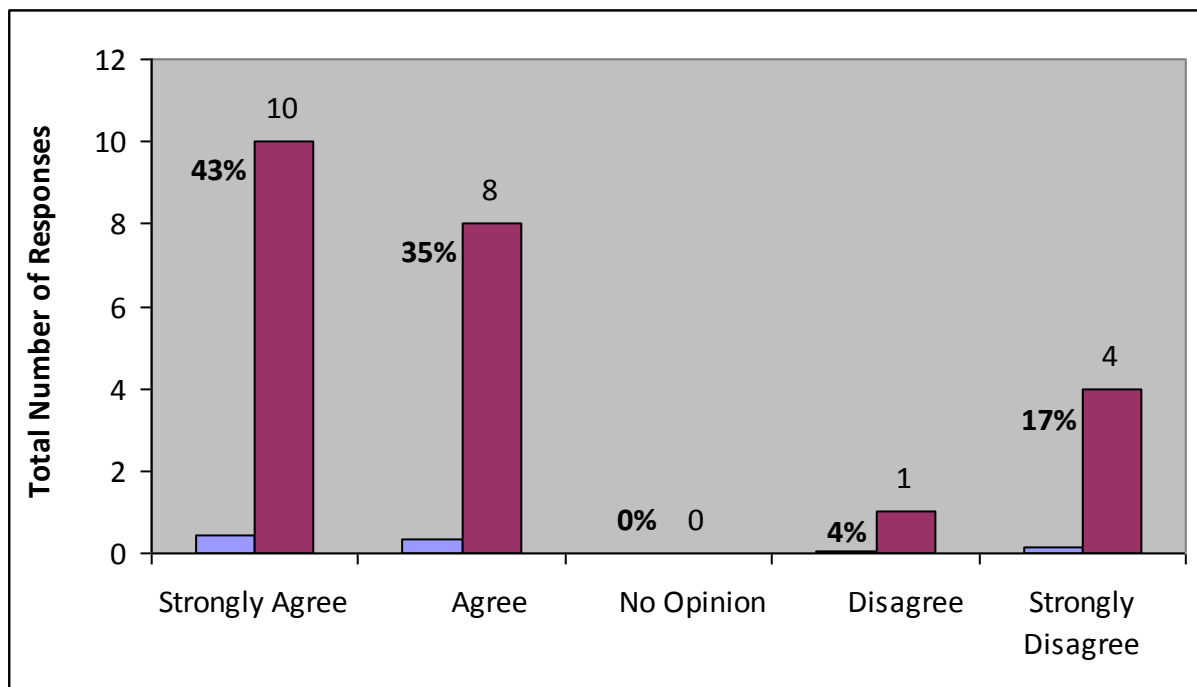


Question 3: The length of the lunch time at elementary schools (45 minutes) is satisfactory.



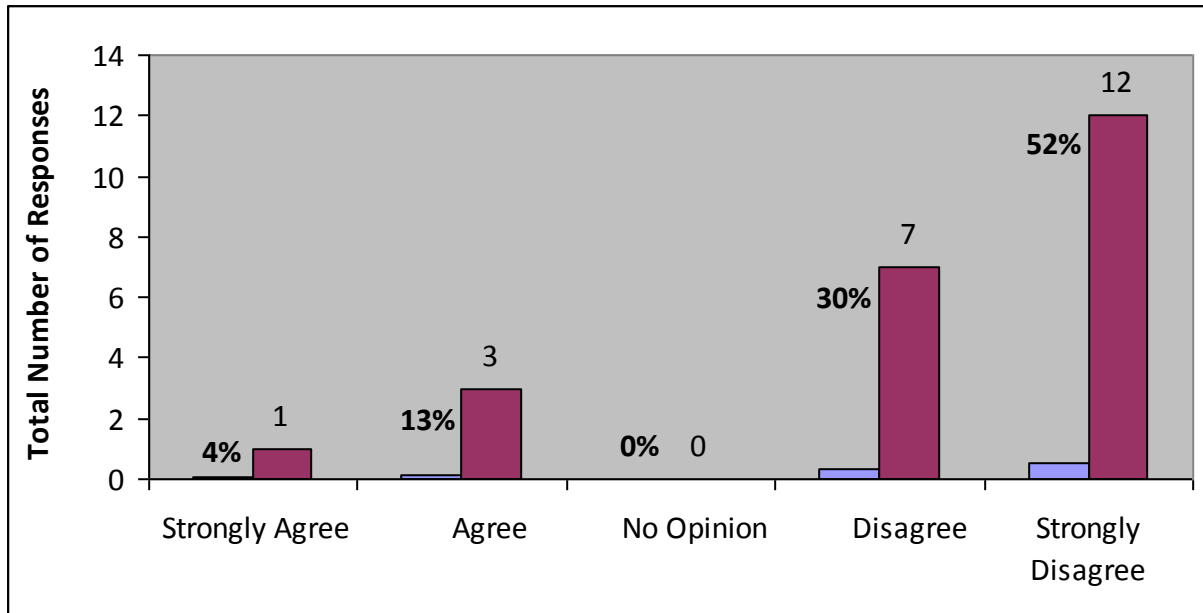
**Responses are based on elementary parents/guardians only.

Question 4: The length of the lunch time at secondary schools (45 minutes) is satisfactory.



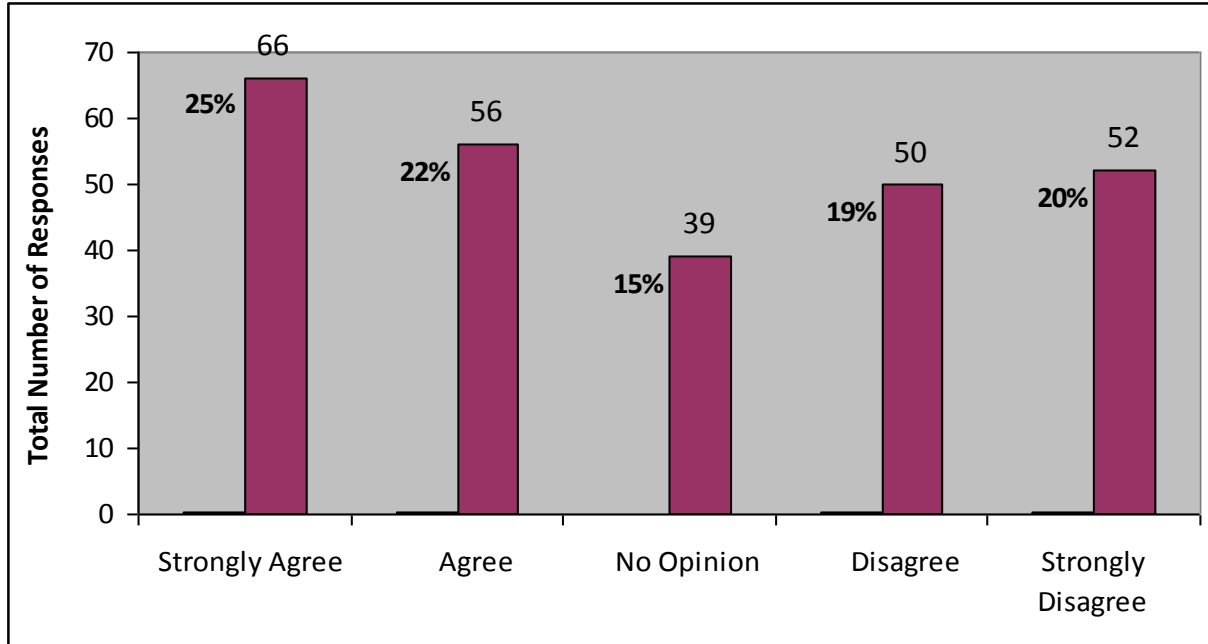
**Responses are based on secondary parents/guardians only.

Question 5: Currently secondary school classes begin at 8:35 a.m. and end at 3:07. Classes at secondary schools should start later and classes end later.



**Responses are based on secondary parents/guardians only.

Question 6: The 10 district closure days are beneficial/helpful for me.



Question 7: Many school districts (including three schools in the Lower Mainland) have adopted a balanced school calendar. In a balanced school calendar students attend school throughout the year with regular holiday breaks between terms. For example, students might go to school for four ten week terms with three or four weeks of breaks between each term. I support the idea of the Vancouver School Board exploring a balanced school calendar.

