

Issaquah School District Community Polling Study Results

Fall 2003 through Fall 2011

Prepared by:

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Background

- This study was launched in October 2003. The results encompass eight years (thirty-three quarters) of interviews.
- It is being conducted to obtain learning on the *overall* community's perceptions of the Issaquah School District on a variety of performance areas...
 - Education
 - Finance
 - Workplace environment
 - Management/leadership

Research Design

- This is a quantitative study with statistically significant findings.
- Interviews are conducted continuously among a random sample of adult residents (18 years old or older) in the Issaquah School District, with approximately 13 interviews conducted each week or 150 each quarter.
- By conducting interviews continuously, perceptions are measured throughout the quarter rather than at just one point in time when breaking news or an event could have a significant impact on the entire quarter's results.
- Ten-minute telephone interviews are conducted by trained interviewers who probe extensively when asking diagnostic questions, such as reasons for giving the District a specific grade for its overall performance.

Research Design Cont'd.

- The sample replicates the demographic profile of adults in the Issaquah School District with regard to age and sex, based upon the US Census.
- Respondents are asked if they are willing to provide further input to the District at the end of the interview. In each quarter a large number of respondents have answered yes. We have their names, phone numbers, and when available, e-mail addresses. This Fall about a third (36%) indicated that they are willing to be contacted again.
- This is a flexible survey. If an event occurs that might impact perceptions in the community, the sample can be increased for a short time to assess the impact.

Research Design Cont'd.

- Starting in Fall 2006, additional questions were added to this survey to gain understanding regarding...
 - The overall community's perception on...
 - *Communications from the school district are open and honest*
 - Parents' perceptions for...
 - *Your opinions are welcome and encouraged in this district*
 - *Your involvement in your child's education is welcome*
- The sample was augmented to include at least 50 parents for each school level—Elementary, Middle and High School. Some parents have children in more than one school level and, therefore, answer about more than one school level.

Research Analysis

Please note that:

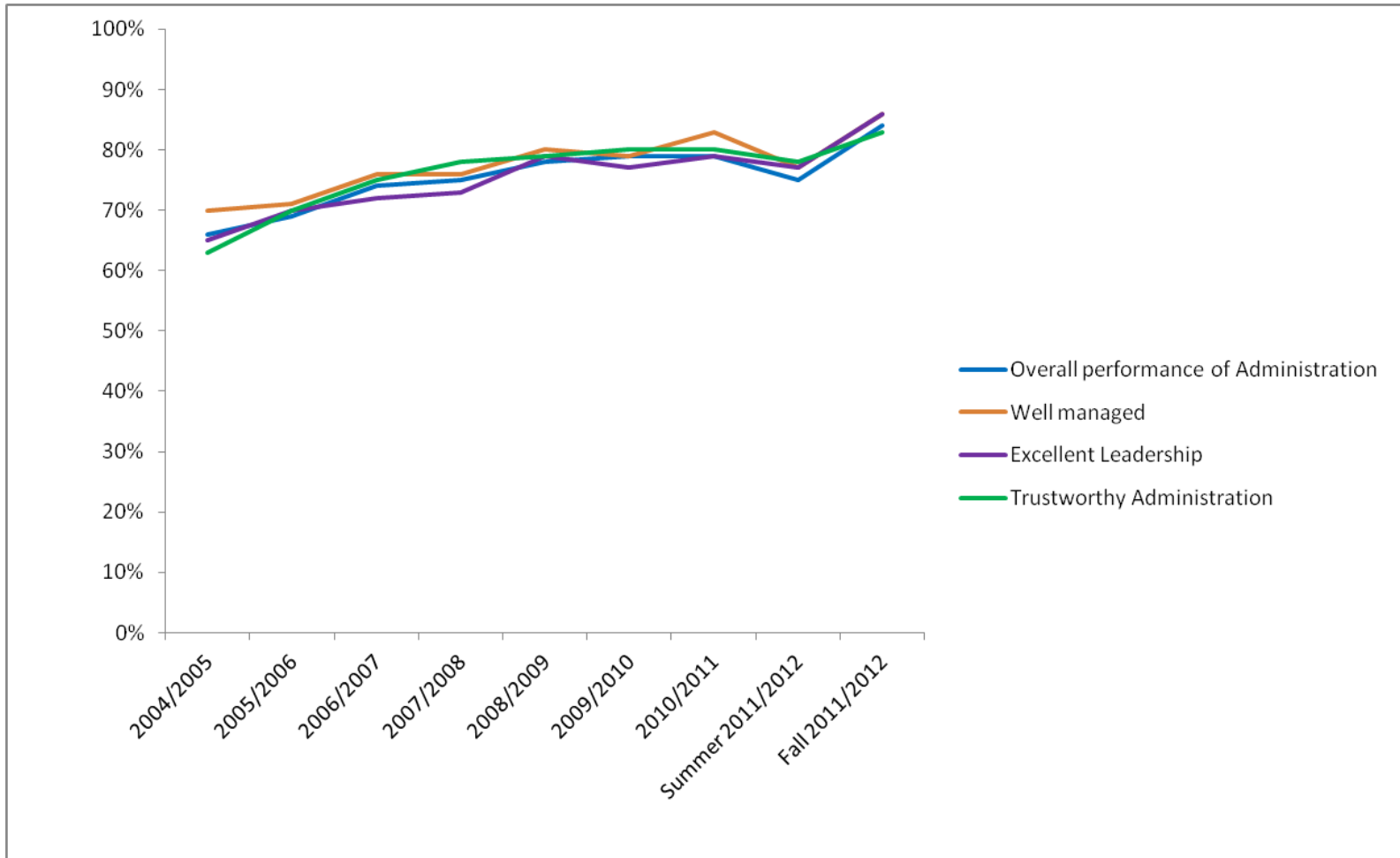
- The responses given in the current wave (Fall 2011) are compared to previous responses given.
 - When there are **statistically significant** differences in responses from one wave of interviews to another at the 90% confidence level it is noted.
 - When there are **directional** differences in responses (numerical differences that are not statistically significant), they are also mentioned.
- Responses do not always add up to 100% due to rounding. Instead at times they add up to 99% or 101%.

Key Findings

Fall 2003 Vs. Fall 2011

- As the following charts detail, perceptions have improved since this study began in 2003. The level of A/B scores has also improved since the previous (Summer) quarter. The vast majority of residents give the District an A or B grade across performance areas—ranging from 72% to 93%.
- In 2006, the attribute *communications from the school district are open and honest* was added to this survey. The vast majority of residents (85%) give the District an A or B grade for its performance in this area.

Results By School Year: Administration % Giving an A or B Grade



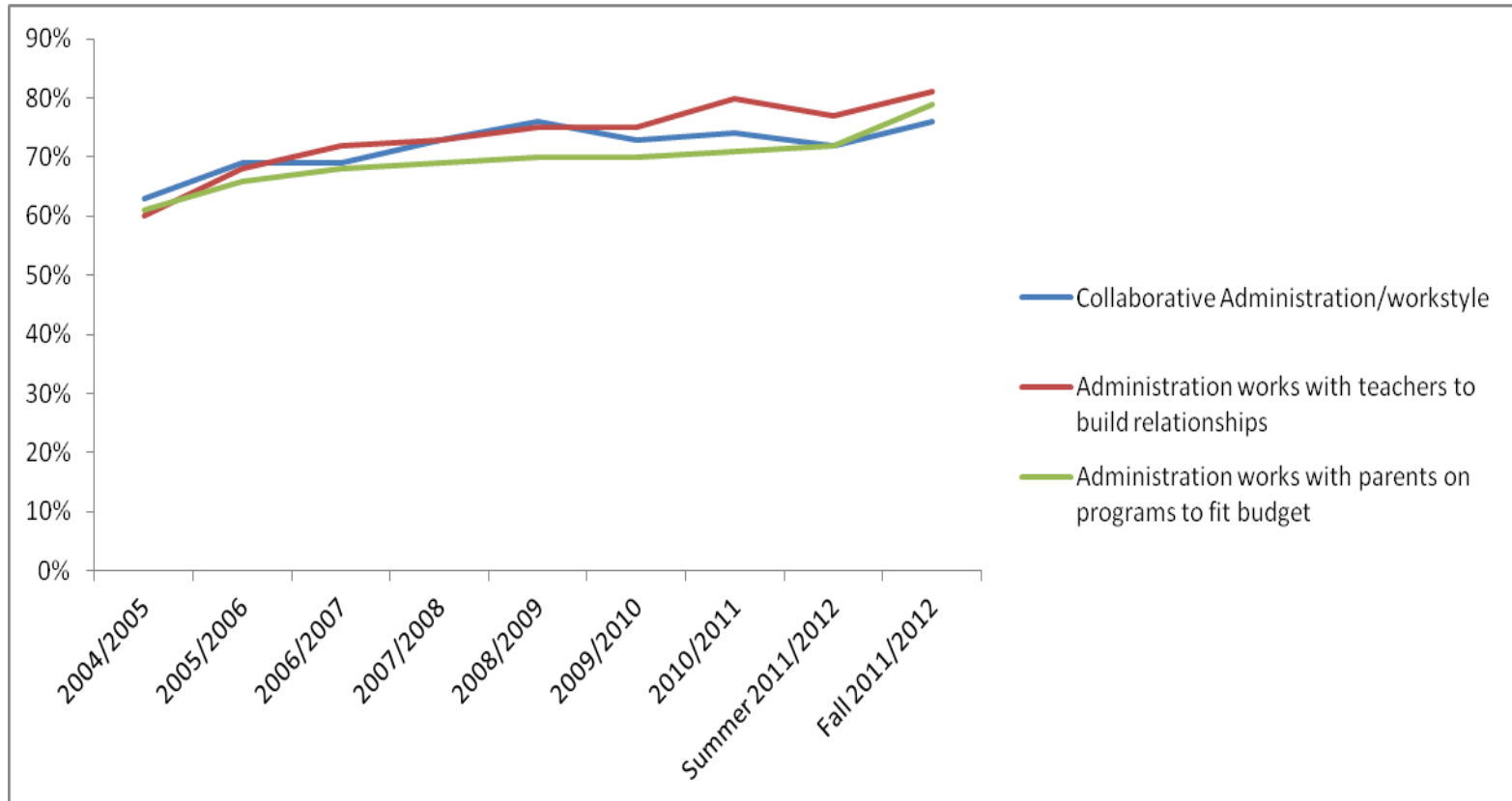
Note:

The 2011-2012 School year thus far includes the Summer Quarter (July/August/September 2011) and Fall Quarter (October/November/December).

The level of A/B grades is the same for *well managed* and *excellent leadership* for the Fall (86%) and Summer (77%). As a result, the lines overlap.

Based on your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give it a grade of A, B, C, D or F for its performance on...?

Summary of Results of by School Year: Collaboration % Giving an A or B Grade

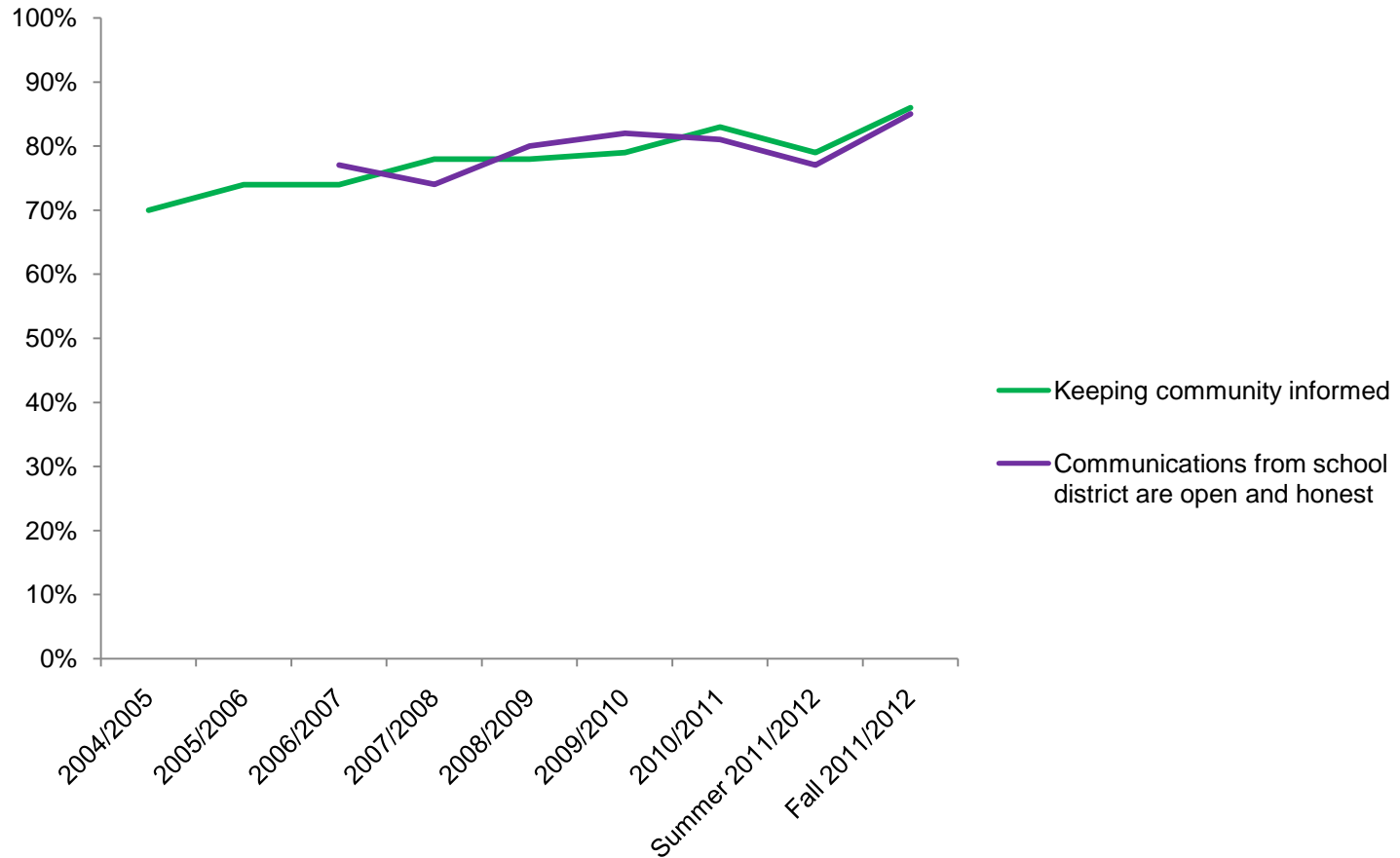


Note:

The 2011/2012 school year thus far includes the Summer quarter (July/August/September) and Fall Quarter (October/November/December)

Q. Based on your impressions if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give a grade of A, B, C, D or F for its performance on....?

Summary of Results By School Year: Communications % Giving an A or B Grade



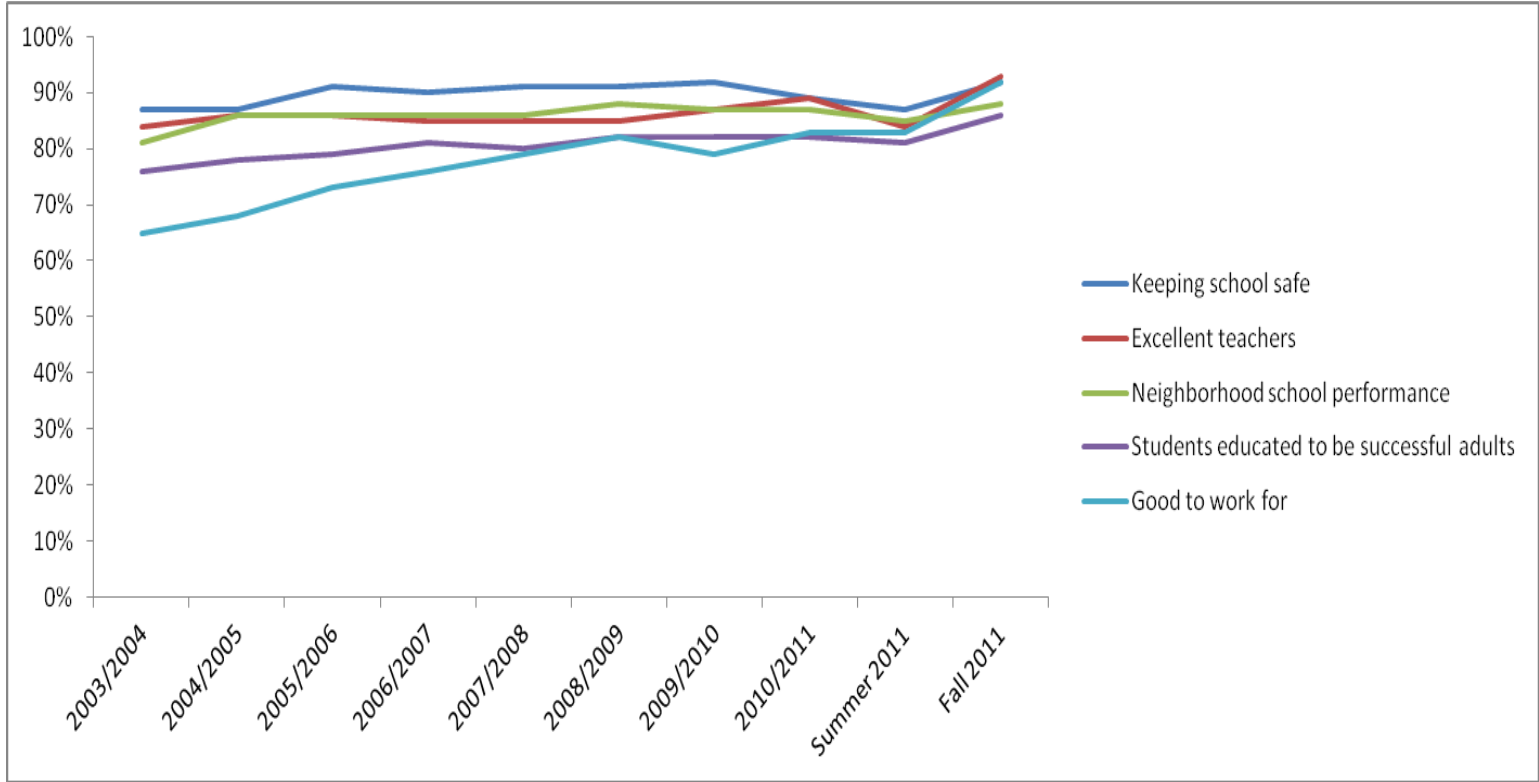
Note:

The 2011/2012 school year thus far includes the Summer quarter (July/August/September) 2011 and Fall Quarter (October/November/December).

The attribute *communications from school district are open and honest* was added to this study in Fall 2006.

Q. Based on your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give it a grade of A,B,C,D or F for its performance on...?

Summary of Results by School Year: School Performance % Giving an A or B Grade

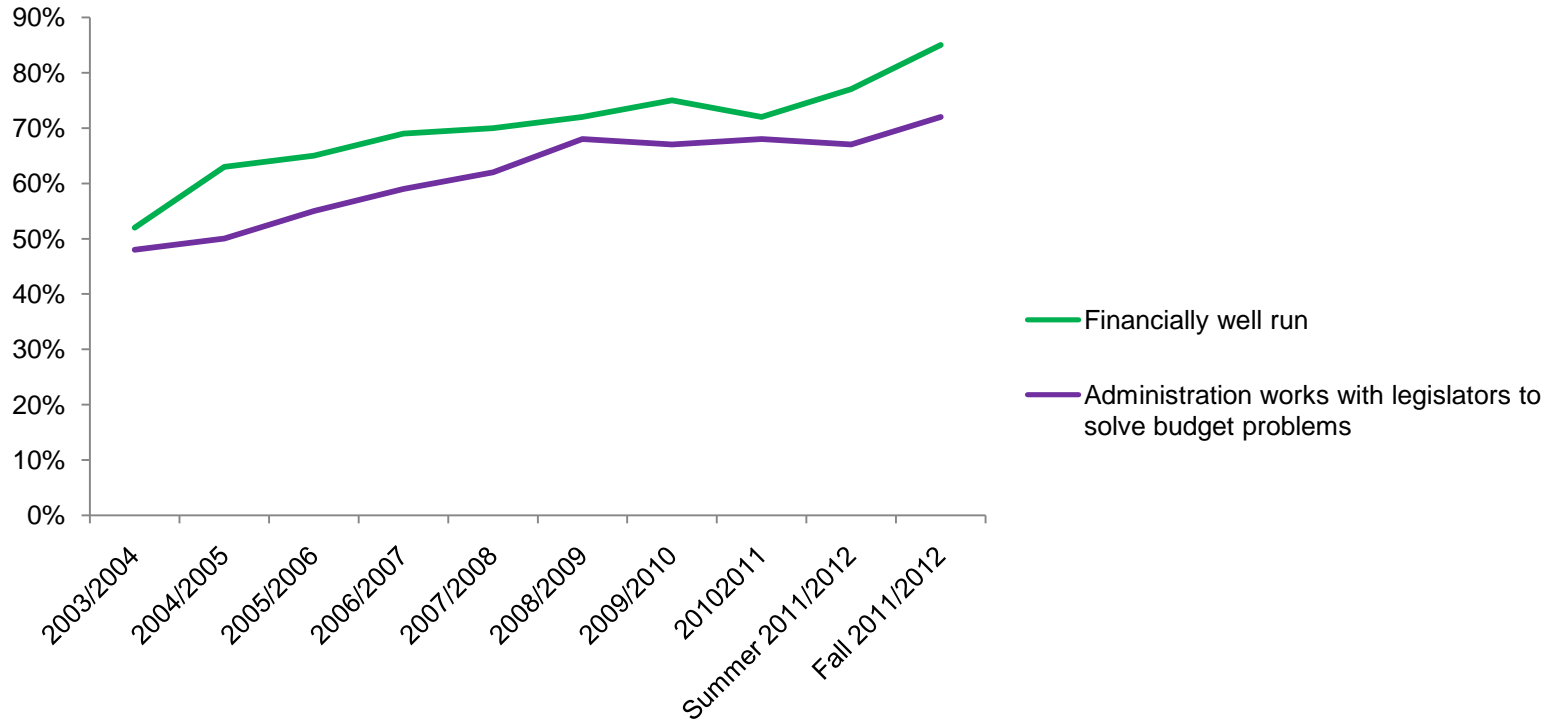


Note:

The 2011/12 school year thus far includes the Summer quarter (July/August/September) and Fall quarter (October/November/December).

Q. Based on your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give a grade of A, B, C, D or F for its performance on...?

Summary of Results By School Year: Finance % Giving an A or B Grade



Note:

The 2011/2012 school year thus far includes the Summer quarter (July/August/September) and Fall quarter (October/November/December).

Q. Based on your impressions if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give a grade of A, B, C, D or F for its performance on....?

Ratings During Past Quarter

- The number of residents giving the District high grades continues to be high—with 72% to 93% giving an A or B rating across performance areas.
- During the Fall quarter there were significant or directional improvements in A or B grades across the board. Improvements were **significant** for:
 - *Excellent teachers* (from 84% giving an A or B grade in the Summer to 93% in the Fall).
 - *Good to work for* (from 83% giving an A or B grade to 92%)
 - *Well managed* (from 77% to 86%)
 - *Excellent leadership* (from 77% to 86%)
 - *Communications from school district are open and honest* (from 77% to 85%)
 - *Overall performance of Administration* (from 75% to 84%)

Summary of Results of Community Polling Study Summer 2011 Vs. Fall 2011

	Summer 2011 (July, Aug., Sept.)					Fall 2011 (Oct., Nov., Dec.)				
	A or B	A	B	C	D or F	A or B	A	B	C	D or F
Excellent teachers	84%	44	41	11	5	93%*	41	52*	7	0
Good to work for	83%	35	48	12	5	92%*	43	49	7	1*
Keeping schools safe	87%	60	27	10	3	92%	61	31	6	2
Neighborhood school performance	85%	44	41	11	4	87%	49	39	12	1
Well managed	77%	35	42	15	8	86%*	39	47	13	1
Excellent leadership	77%	32	45	13	10	86%*	37	49	9	5
Students educated to be successful adults	81%	40	41	13	6	86%	46	40	9	5
Keeps community informed	79%	48	31	16	5	86%	58*	28	9	5
Communications from school district are open and honest	77%	46	30	15	9	85%*	53	32	12	3
Financially well run	77%	32	46	12	10	85%	37	48	9	6
Overall performance of Administration	75%	31	43	18	7	84%*	35	49	13	3
Trustworthy Administration	78%	39	40	14	7	83%	46	37	15	2*
Administration working with teachers to build relationships	77%	35	42	17	6	81%	36	45	16	3
Administration works with parents on programs that fit budget	72%	31	41	16	12	79%	32	48	16	4*
Collaborative Administration	72%	33	39	18	9	76%	28	48	21	3
Administration working with legislators to solve budget problems	67%	23	44	22	11	72%	30	42	23	4

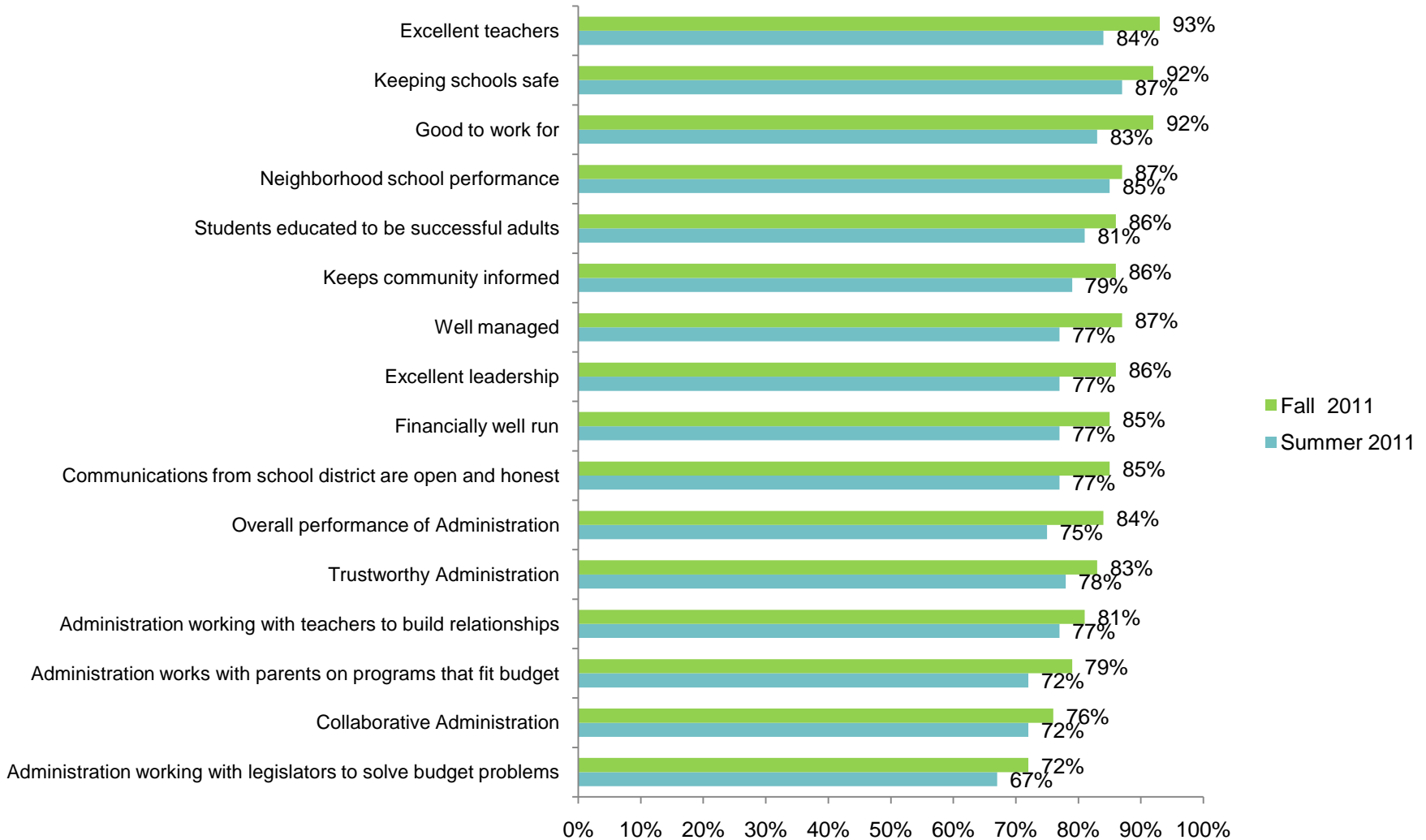
Note:

* = Significant difference vs. Summer 2011 at the 90% confidence level.

The attribute *communications from school district are open and honest* was added to this study in Fall 2006.

Q. Based on your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give it a grade of A,B,C,D or F for its performance on...?

Summary of Results of Community Polling Study— Summer 2011 Vs. Fall 2011 % Giving an A or B Grade



Note:

The attribute *Communications from school district are open and honest* was added to this study in Fall 2006.

Q. Based on your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give it a grade of A,B,C,D or F for its performance on...?

Grades Given by Parents Regarding How the Issaquah School District Treats Them

- Approximately nine in ten parents give the District a high grade for *encouraging their opinions and welcoming their involvement*.
 - Nine in ten parents overall (91%) give the District an A or B grade for *your involvement in your child's education is welcome* (89% the previous quarter). Two thirds of parents (68%) give the District an A grade.
 - Parents of Elementary School students (81%) are significantly more likely to give an A grade than parents of High School students (56%) and parents of Middle School students (64%).
 - Approximately nine in ten (87%) parents give the District an A or B grade for *your opinions are welcome and encouraged in this District*, which is significantly more than the previous quarter (76%). One half of parents (51%) give the District an A grade.
 - Parents of Elementary School students (58%) are significantly more likely to give the District an A grade for its performance in this area than parents of High School students (39%).

Grades Given by Parents Regarding Involvement in Their Child's Education Fall 2006 vs. Fall 2011

Fall 2006 (October, November, December)					Fall 2011 (October, November, December)			
<i>Your opinions are welcome and encouraged in this District</i>								
	All Parents of Students Attending Issaquah Schools	Parents of Elementary School Students	Parents of Middle School Students	Parents of High School Students	All Parents of Students Attending Issaquah Schools	Parents of Elementary School Students	Parents of Middle School Students	Parents of High School Students
A or B	81%	90%	83%	72%	87%	90%	80%	84%
A	34	41**	34**	19	51*	58*	52*	39*, ****
B	47	49	49	53	36	32*	28*, ****	45****
C	14	6**	14	22	12	8	19****	16
D or F	6	4	4	6	1*	2	2	0*
<i>Your involvement in your child's education is welcome</i>								
A or B	92%	97%	93%	87%	91%	99%	90%	85%****
A	63	77**	69**	47	68	81	64****	56****
B	29	20**	24**	40	23	18	26	29****
C	7	3**	7	11	7	1	9****	13****
D or F	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	3

Note:

These attributes were added to the study in Fall 2006.

* = Significant difference vs. Fall 2006.

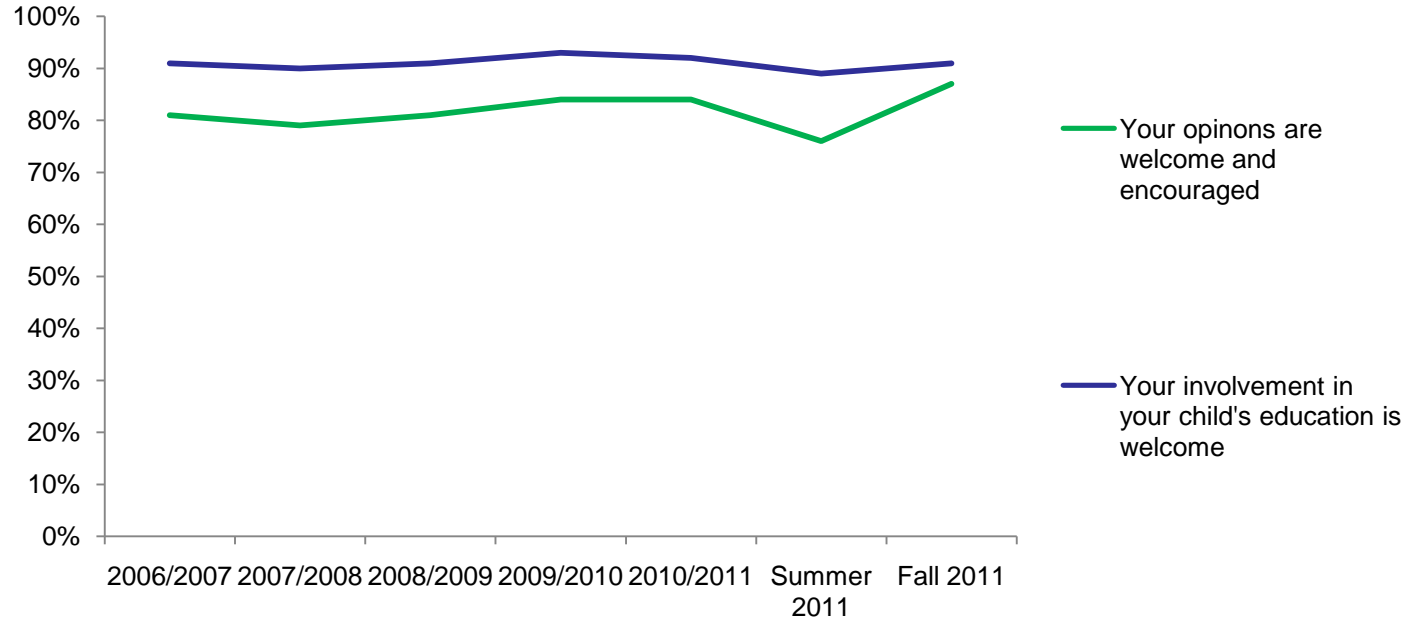
** = Significant difference vs. parents of High School students.

*** = Significant difference vs. parents of Middle School students.

**** = Significant difference vs. parents of Elementary School students.

Q. Based upon your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give it a grade of A, B, C, D or F for its performance on...?

A/B Grades Given by Parents Regarding How the Issaquah School District Treats Them



Note: These performance attributes were added to this study in Fall 2006.

Q. Based in your impressions, if you were to give a grade to the Issaquah School District, would you give it a grade of A, B, C, D or F for its performance on...?

Reasons for Grade Given to Administration for Its Performance Overall

- Respondents are probed regarding their reasons for the grade they gave the Administration for its overall performance.
- Residents' perceptions of the Administration have improved overall since the first wave of measurements were taken in Fall 2003. Furthermore, overall perceptions have been stable vs. the previous quarter with small directional improvements.
 - Approximately four in ten (42%) mention that something needs improvement, which is significantly fewer than in the 2003/04 school year (64%) and directionally fewer than the previous (Summer) quarter (44%).
 - At the same time, approximately half (48%) mention a positive reason for the grade they gave, which is significantly more than in the 2003/2004 school year (26%), and directionally more than in the Summer (44%).
- The reasons given continue to be diverse with no specific reason mentioned by more than a small number of respondents.
- The most frequently given positive reasons are:
 - Doing a good job (21%)
 - Good parental involvement/support (12%)
 - Satisfied/happy with school experience (10%)

All other positive reasons were mentioned by less than 5% of respondents.

Q. Why did you give the overall performance of the Administration a grade of...?

Reasons Given for Grade Given to Administration for Its Performance Overall Cont'd.

- Negative reasons for the grade given to the Administration continue to be varied with no specific reason mentioned by more than a small number of residents. The most frequently given reasons are...
 - Increase funding/school support/work with State for funding/better use of funds (7%)
 - Communications overall (7%), which was mentioned by significantly more residents in the 2003/2004 school year (12%) but by the same level of residents the previous (Summer) quarter (7%).
 - Improve communication to parents from teachers/administration/provide more/timely information (6%)
 - Room for improvement (7%)
 - Average/OK performance (5%)
 - Better administration/leadership/community relations/decision making (5%)
- Very few (less than 5%) mention any other specific negative reason.

Suggestions for District

- Respondents are also asked to suggest improvements that would cause them to give the District a higher grade. The majority of residents continue to make at least one suggestion (67%), which is directionally fewer than in the Summer quarter (77%).
- The suggestions continue to be diverse. The most frequently given suggestion continues to be to improve communications. One in five residents (20%) make this type of suggestion, which is directionally fewer than in the Summer (28%).
- Specific communication suggestions include:
 - Improve communication to parents from teachers/Administration/provide more/timely information (15%), which was also mentioned by 15% in the Summer.
 - Need to listen to parents/community, solicit input/involvement (4%), which was mentioned by significantly more residents in the Summer (14%).

Suggestions for District Cont'd.

- Other suggestions include...
 - Increase funding/school support/work with State for funding (12%), which was also mentioned by 11% in the Summer.
 - Better teachers needed/better teacher-student relations (6%) .
 - Better administration/leadership/community relations/better decision making (5%)
- All other suggestions were made by less than 5% of respondents.

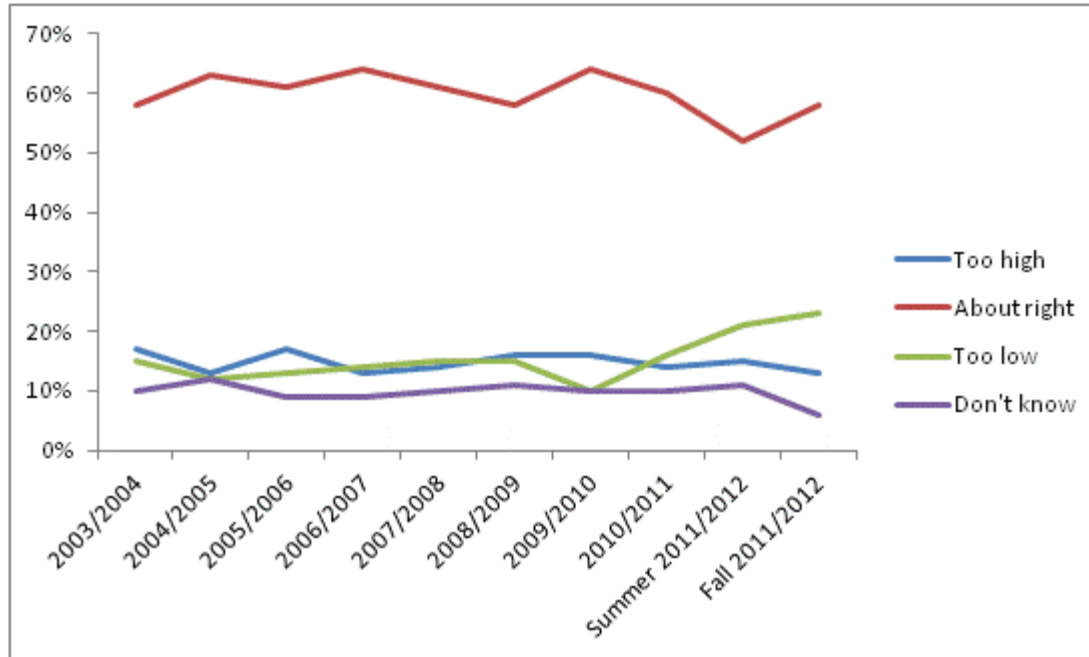
How Voters Feel About the Tax Dollars They Pay for Local Public Education

- Approximately four out of five residents (81%) feel that the amount of taxes that they pay for local public education is about right or too low. This is significantly more than the previous (Summer) quarter when 73% felt this way.
- Residents feel that the taxes they pay for local public education are...

Too high	13%	
About right	58%	} 81%
Too low	23%	
Don't know	6%	

Q. Do you feel that the current share of tax dollars that you pay for local public education is...?

How Voters Feel about the Tax Dollars They Pay for Local Public Education (2003/2004 School Year – Fall 2011)



Do you feel that the current share of dollars that you pay for local public education is...?

Primary Source of Information About Issaquah Schools

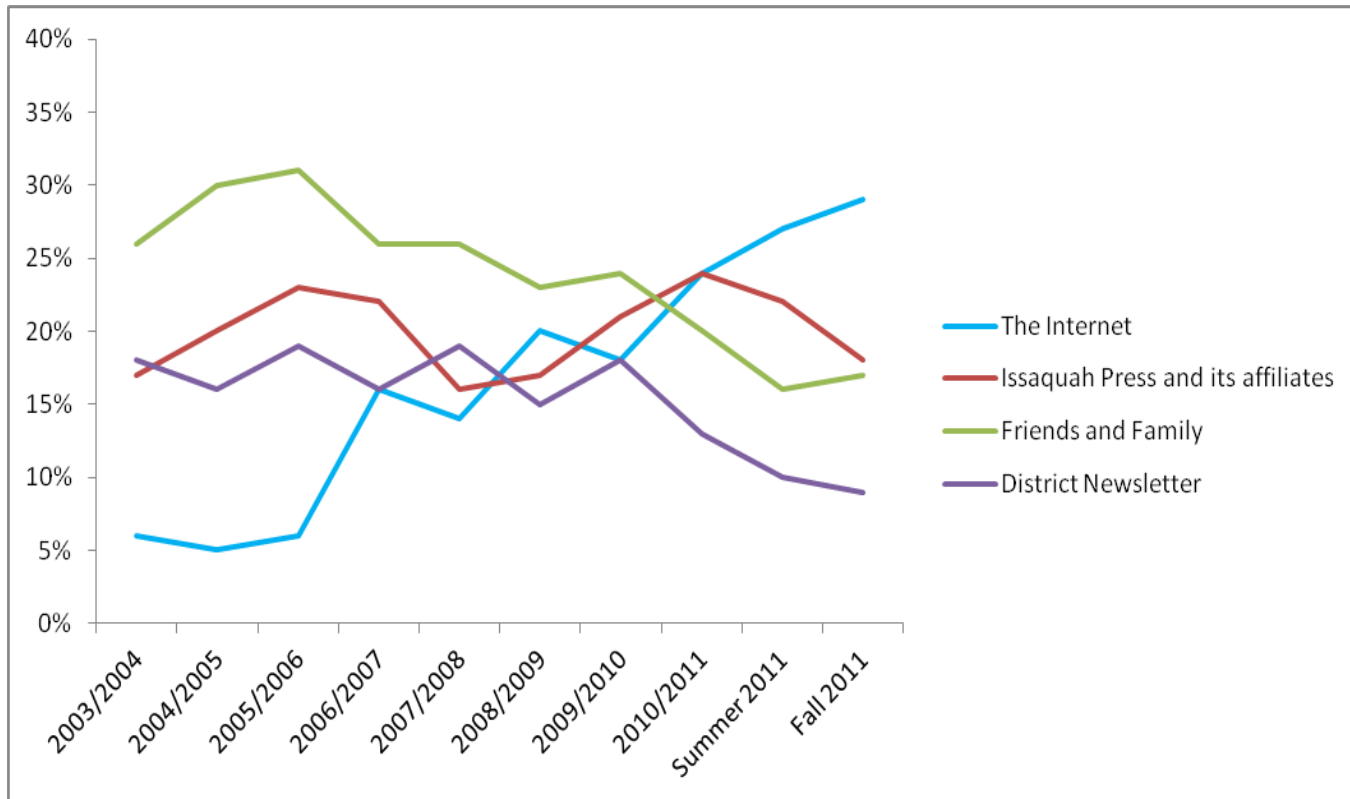
- The Internet, the Issaquah Press/its affiliates, Friends and Family, and the District Newsletter continue to be the primary source of information about Issaquah schools. Almost three out of four (73%) of residents mention one of these sources as their primary source.
- As the chart that follows shows, since this study began in Fall 2003, significantly more residents are using the Internet as their primary source of information (4% vs. 29%).
- Usage of the Issaquah Press/its affiliates as a primary source of information has also grown significantly since Fall 2003 (from 10% to 18%).

Primary source of information about Issaquah Schools

The Internet	29%
Issaquah Press and its affiliates	18
Friends and Family	17
District Newsletter	9
Seattle Times	6
The School	5
Work there/personal experience	4
School Employees	4
Television	2
Other	2
Don't Know	4

Q. Where do you get most of your information about Issaquah Schools? (Do not read list.)

Top Four Primary Sources of Information About Issaquah Schools (2003/2004 School Year – Fall 2011)



Q. Where do you get most of your information about Issaquah schools?

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Overall, the number of residents giving the District high grades has improved since 2003. Furthermore, during the Fall quarter there were significant or directional improvements in the levels of A/B grades across the board.
- With regard to the new attributes that were added to this study in Fall 2006, the District's performance continues to be extremely strong with almost all parents giving it high grades.
 - Over four out of five residents (85%) give the District an A or B grade for *communications from the school district are open and honest*, which is significantly more than in the Summer (77%).
 - Nine in ten parents (91%) give the District an A or B grade for *your involvement in your child's education is welcome* which is comparable to the level achieved in the Summer (89%).
 - Two out of three (68%) continue to give the District an A grade.
 - Almost nine in ten parents (87%) give Issaquah an A or B grade for *your opinions are welcome and encouraged in this District*, which is significantly more than in the Summer (76%).

Conclusions And Recommendations Cont'd.

- With regard to reasons for the grade given to the District for its overall performance...
 - Approximately half (48%) mention a positive reason, which is **significantly** more than in the 2003/2004 school year (26%) and directionally more than in the Summer (44%).
 - Approximately four in ten (42%) mention something that needs improvement, which is **significantly** fewer than in 2003/2004 (64%) and directionally fewer than in the Summer (44%).
 - The reasons continue to be diverse with no specific reason mentioned by more than a small minority of residents.
- Respondents are also asked to suggest improvements that the District could make, and the vast majority of residents continue to suggest at least one improvement. This Fall, approximately two in three residents (67%) of residents made a suggestion, which is directionally fewer than in the Summer (77%).
- The most frequently given suggestions are:
 - Improve in the area of communications (20%) which is mentioned by directionally fewer residents than in the Summer (28%). Specific requests include:
 - Improve communications to parents from teachers/Administration/provide more timely information (15%) which was mentioned by the same number of parents in the Summer.
 - Need to listen to parents/community/solicit input/involvement (4%), which was mentioned by significantly more parents in the Summer (14%).
 - Increase funding/school support/work with State for funding (12%)
 - Better teachers needed/better teacher-students relations (6%)
 - Better administration/leadership/community relations/better decision making (5%)

Conclusions And Recommendations Cont'd.

- The vast majority of residents continue to be satisfied with the amount of taxes they are paying for local education. Approximately four out of five (81%) feel that the taxes they are paying for local education are about right (58%) or too low (23%).
- The most frequently mentioned primary sources of information about the District continue to be the Internet (29%), the Issaquah Press (18%), Friends and Family (17%), and the District Newsletter (9%). Approximately three out of four (73%) residents mention one of these sources as their primary source of information about the District.
- This Fall approximately one in three respondents (36%) indicated that they are willing to give further input. If additional in-depth learning is desired, it is possible to contact these respondents...
 - with additional questions on these findings, such as the underlying reasons for a grade or suggested improvements
 - regarding new issues that the District would like their input on, such as program or budget changes under consideration
 - to invite them to join an advisory group

Dorothy Geraghty, Education Market Research Consultant

- Dorothy Geraghty has over 25 years of experience in Market Research and over 5 years of experience in Education as a teacher/head teacher in the Lake Washington and Bellevue School Districts. She has a B.S. in Marketing and M. A. in Education.
- Prior to becoming a consultant, Dorothy was the Market Research Analyst for Evergreen Healthcare, where she conducted *all* the quantitative and qualitative market research for the hospital, its medical offices and offsite facilities. While at Evergreen, Dorothy developed a Community Polling Study, which is used to assess and track its performance as a public entity in a variety of areas.
- Dorothy has consulted for other educational institutions and also for major businesses, such as Bank of America, US West, Bristol Meyers Squibb, Seagram's, Wells, Rich Green Advertising, Porter Novelli Public Relations and various consulting companies.