

REGULAR LISTENING SESSION RESULTS



Blueprint 181

Investing. Growing. Leading.

BAXTER ELEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

MARCH 1, 2017



“Regular” Listening Session with Non-Certified Staff

There are typically several common themes that emerge regarding the needs within the district.

- The common themes are identified and agreed upon by the group.
- Themes are written on paper and placed on the wall. Each person is given sticky dots.
- The quantity of dots is typically about 70% of the number of themes.
- Participants are then asked to place the dots on what they feel is their highest priorities and not allowed to place more than one dot on a single theme.

This process (STEP 2) enables participants to efficiently outline and prioritize needs.



“Regular” Listening Session with Non-Certified Staff

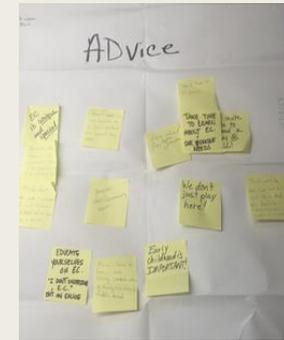
Example Questions...

What great things are happening in the Brainerd Schools?

How has education changed in the last 20 years?

What are our biggest challenges facing the Brainerd Schools?

If you won the lottery and were required to spend it on your school, how would you spend it?



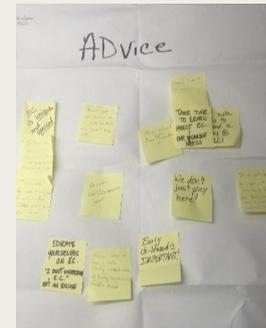
What would you like the Headlines to be of the newspaper 10 years from now about the Brainerd Schools?

What are our greatest facility needs?

What advice would you give to the decision makers?

Regular Listening Sessions (Non-Certified Staff)

- Developing Common Topics / Themes.....



- & Prioritizing Topics (placing dots).....



Outline of Needs

-Questions and Results-



What great things are happening in the Brainerd Schools? (#) = Quantity of Similar Type Responses

- Staff cares about the students (2)
- Growing area (2)
- Growth of commercial businesses (2)
- Family activities/programs (2)
- Variety of opportunities
- Small town feel for a large school district
- School pride
- Great place to raise kids
- Community and school district working together
- New development
- Great faith in community
- Staff supporting staff
- Great Baxter school teachers
- Great support for a variety of sports



What great things are happening in the Brainerd Schools?

- Supportive community
- Family involvement in schools



What are our biggest challenges facing the Brainerd Schools? (#) = Quantity of Similar Type Responses

- Low wages (9)
- Understaffed (4)
- Class sizes too big (3)
- Old school buildings (3)
- Sports fees are too high (2)
- Drugs (2)
- Lack of leadership in school (2)
- Technology (2)
- Not enough one-on-one time with students
- Not passing referendums and levies
- Horrible roads – potholes
- Need adult bathrooms
- Morale going down at Baxter
- Kindergarten E.A.'s don't get a replacement when they are gone.



What are our biggest challenges facing the Brainerd schools?

- Job insecurity - always making staff cuts
- One of the poorest cities in Minnesota
- Homelessness
- Handicapped bathroom facilities
- Crime
- Safe environment
- A divide of certified and non-certified staff
- Some voting community members don't support schools
- Lack of confidentiality



What are our biggest challenges facing the Brainerd schools?

- Larger rooms
- No room in school for growth
- Lack of communication
- Cultural diversity/challenges
- Disconnect from school board to those working in the classrooms
- Too many administrators



How have the needs in education changed over the past 20 years? (#) = Quantity of Similar Type Responses

- More special education and mental health needs (3)
- Technology (3)
- Bigger class sizes – too many students (2)
- Less family support and help with homework
- Greater student needs
- More students with behavioral problems
- More kids on the spectrum or from problem homes
- No respect
- Parents not working with teachers (My kid does no wrong!)
- Older curriculum taught to younger students
- Safety needs
- Lack of teachers
- Inadequate training to meet student needs
- Loss of the basic life skills taught to all students



How have the needs in education changed over the past 20 years?

- Too much homework at an early age
- Amount of paperwork to record data in excess
- Too many assessments = less teaching time
- More testing demands
- Pressure testing



If you won the lottery and were required to spend it on your school, how would you spend it? (#) = Quantity of Similar Type Responses

- More teachers/staff to accommodate needs of students (2)
- More natural light (2)
- Larger recess/outdoor space
- Lower sports fees
- Healthy food
- More lunch choices
- Arts facility
- Auditorium in high school for musical/theater productions and concerts
- More bathrooms
- More space for SPED kids
- New high school building
- New staff lounge



What would you like the headlines to be of the newspaper 10 years from now about the Brainerd Schools?

- High GPA's At Graduation
- We Value Education
- Low Drop Out Rates
- Community Passed Referendums To Better Serve The Needs Of Our Students
- Community That Cares!
- Meeting The Needs Of All Students – SPED, Gifted And Every Student In Between
- Academic Success And Extra Curricular Opportunities
- Youth Programs Make National Honors
- Low Class Sizes
- Outstanding Leadership In Brainerd District
- Brainerd Schools Care About Their Students



What would you like the headlines to be of the newspaper 10 years from now about the Brainerd schools?

- Happy Enthusiastic Staff And Students
- Beautiful, Comfortable Facilities
- Best School In Minnesota



What advice would you give to the decision makers? (#) = *Quantity of Similar Type Responses*

- Listen to all staff about problems and good things working. (3)
- Need adequate space for challenged students.
- Don't just look at figures to decide to cut E.A.'s continually.
- Visit the facilities.
- Follow a class throughout the day as they move through the building.
- Be positive about we do have going for us.
- Ask the kids what they would want or change.
- Reach out to summer people.
- Reach out to the snowbirds.
- Reach out to area retirees.
- Listen to teachers regarding how to teach.



What advice would you give to the decision makers?

- Ask staff but also ask parents.
- Need time in the day for social skills.



STEP 2: Prioritized Needs



Greatest needs (Prioritized)

- Lack of communication (7)
- Understaffed (7)
- Old buildings (7)
- Improve technology (7)
- Lack of space (6)
- Security (5)
- Class sizes are too big (5)
- Accessibility (4)
- Poverty (4)
- Staff retainage and attracting (4)

