

**Whatever Good Things We Build End Up Building Us.**



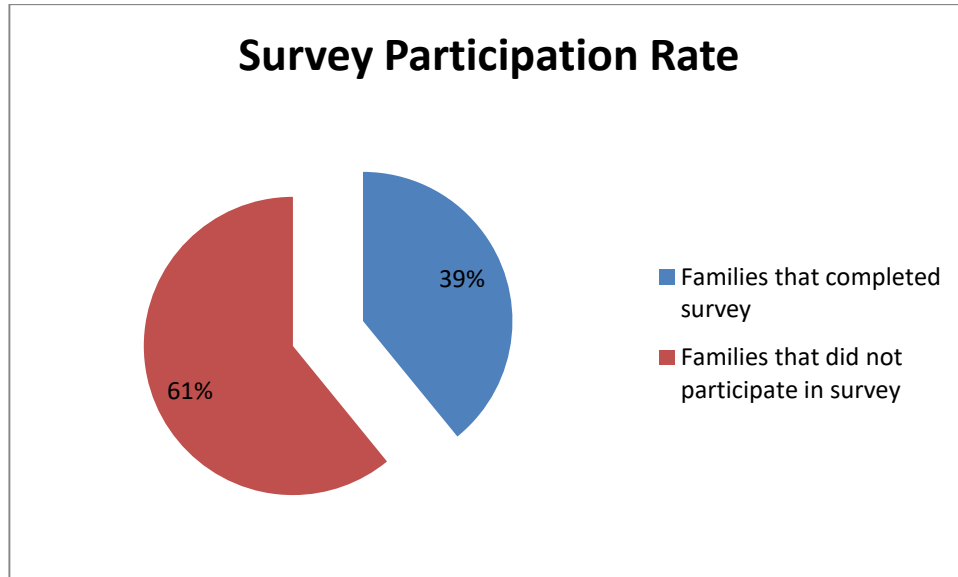
# School Climate Survey

**St. Martha Catholic School Parent Council**

**St. Martha Parent  
Council School Climate  
Committee**

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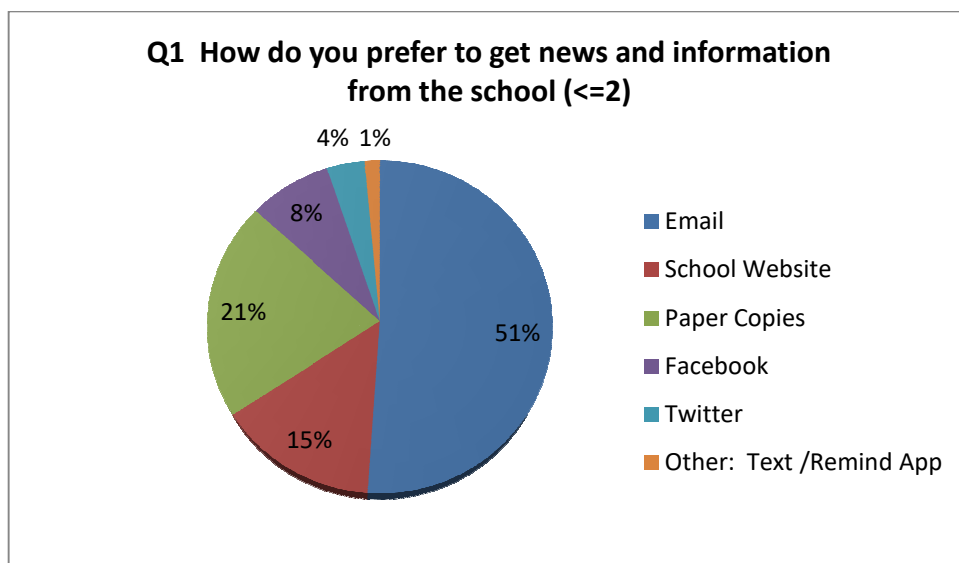
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**Data Summary:** Based on an estimate provided by school administration of 225 families, 39% of the families participated. This is a high response rate for a paper survey.

**Recommendations:**

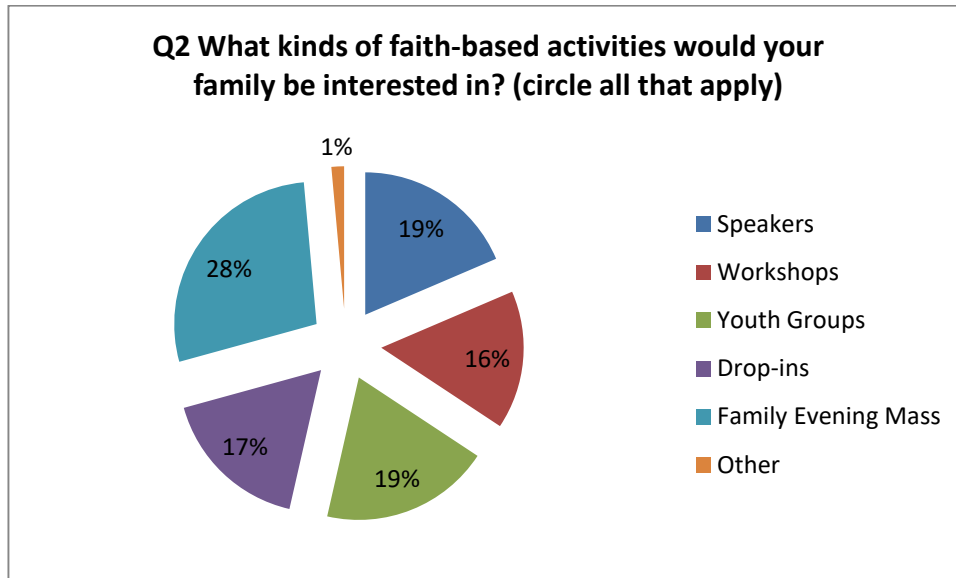
1. To achieve a higher response rate on future surveys, the committee recommends the following: advertise the survey a minimum of 2 weeks in advance and utilize a variety of survey methods, such as Stakeholder Interviews and Online Surveys.



**Data Summary:** 51% of participants indicated they would prefer email as a main method of communication from the school to parents. It is significant to note that based on the data, **email and paper** forms of communication account for nearly 3/4 of respondents. With respect to web-based communication formats, the **school website** ranked highest at 15%.

**Recommendations:**

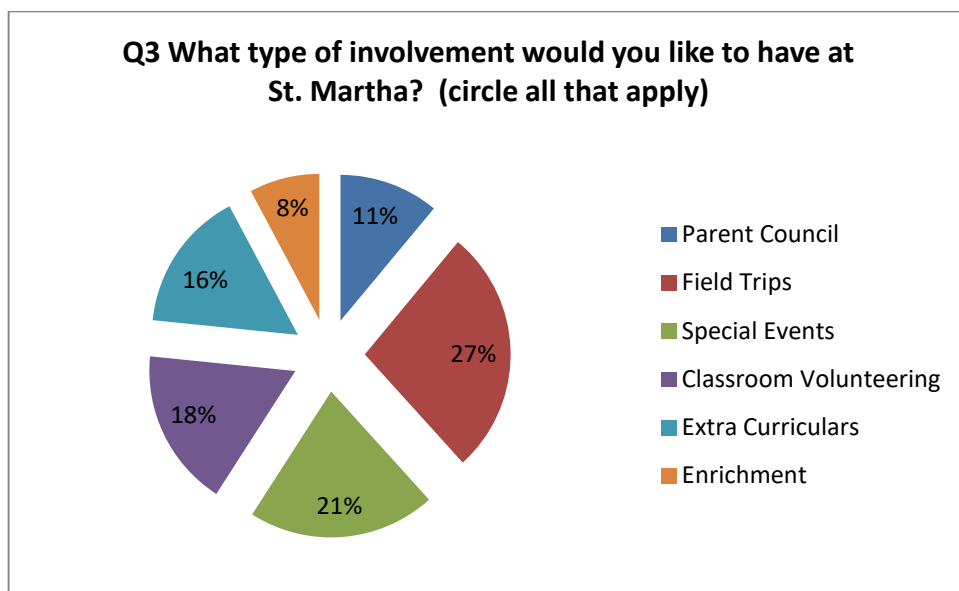
1. Given the data suggests half of respondents (51%) prefer email as a communication modality, it is recommended that further discussions take place to consider the possibility of this option.
2. The survey data obtained suggests that many families continue to prefer paper-based communications (21%). The committee, therefore, recommends that paper-based newsletters, calendars, permission forms, and notices continue to be used widely to get information into the hands of families, so as to strengthen the connectivity within our school community. However, the committee does acknowledge the environmental impact of paper-based communication. Therefore, we would strongly recommend conducting a feasibility study to find real solutions to reduce our environmental footprint while at the same time meeting our families needs for information. Options such as email, enhancing the school website, developing an app or portal, or using marketing platforms such as Mailchimp, could be investigated as part of a feasibility study. Please note, aspects related to *accessibility* must be considered prior to making final decisions.
3. In the meantime, and based on the data indicating that use of the school website ranked third, it is recommended that steps should be taken now to update and increase use of the school website. Any information that is sent home on paper, and some information that is currently being posted onto Facebook/Twitter, should be available to families by way of the website.
4. Based on a number of written comments provided by families, it is recommended that staff be asked to consider adopting a set of guidelines to further achieve consistency in how information is communicated to families. Some families are stating they feel overwhelmed with how many different sources they need to go to feel connected, especially when their children cross divisions.



**Data Summary:** Data indicates that 28% of respondents are interested in having **Family Evening Mass**. Of the remaining faith-based activities listed on the survey, speakers and youth groups were each selected by nearly 20% of respondents.

**Recommendations:**

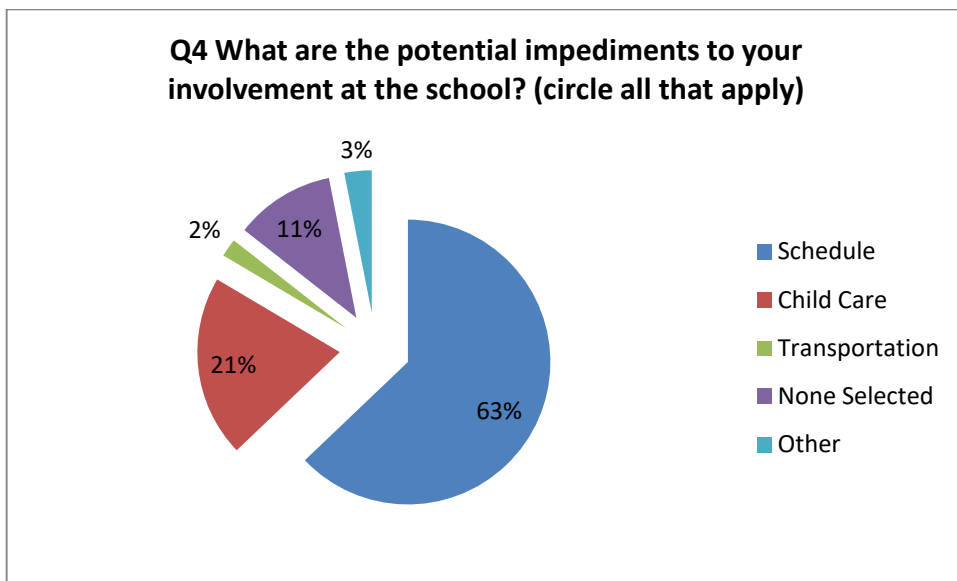
1. As with the results of any survey, it is important to exercise caution when interpreting data. Though 28% of respondents are interested in having family evening mass, this number reflects 28% of a total of 88 families. It is our hope that this sample is representative of all 225 families. That our Advent Mass is well attended speaks in support. Therefore, it is recommended that our school administration consider arranging an additional 1-2 family evening masses to the calendar for this academic year. This may serve as a pilot to determine whether it is appropriate to allocate resources to host additional faith-based activities.
  
2. In an effort to enhance the relationships between School, Home and Parish, it is recommended that Council consider selecting a **Parish Liaison**, an individual who will liaise with Father Wes and the Parish. Such an individual could, as an example, ask the Parish whether the Knights of Columbus or Catholic Women’s League would be willing to pilot a youth group for our students. Our Parish Liaison would be a reliable communication source between Council and Parish.



**Data Summary:** From the 88 completed surveys, 27% of respondents indicated they would most like to be involved with field trips, followed by special events at 21% and classroom volunteering at 18%.

**Recommendations:**

1. The committee recommends the creation of a standing **Volunteer Coordinator (VC)** position on the St Martha School Council, to assist in the recruitment of volunteers. The VC would build a list of people interested in volunteering in certain areas or for specific events. The VC would be required to converse with Office Staff to ensure that volunteers have a valid CPIC. Teachers, staff and groups needing volunteers could then reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator directly. The Volunteering section on the school website could be utilized to support the work of the VC. Over time, parents and others who are interested in volunteering will experience clarity around who exactly to reach out to when they find they have time to donate.
2. Many years, a number of individuals attend the first School Council Meeting of the year, and do not return. The committee recommends preparing a short questionnaire and asking all who attend the first meeting to complete the questionnaire prior to leaving at the end of the evening. This is an active way to gain insights into why individuals may be choosing not to return, and may assist in bolstering the 11% interest parents expressed in being involved with School Council.

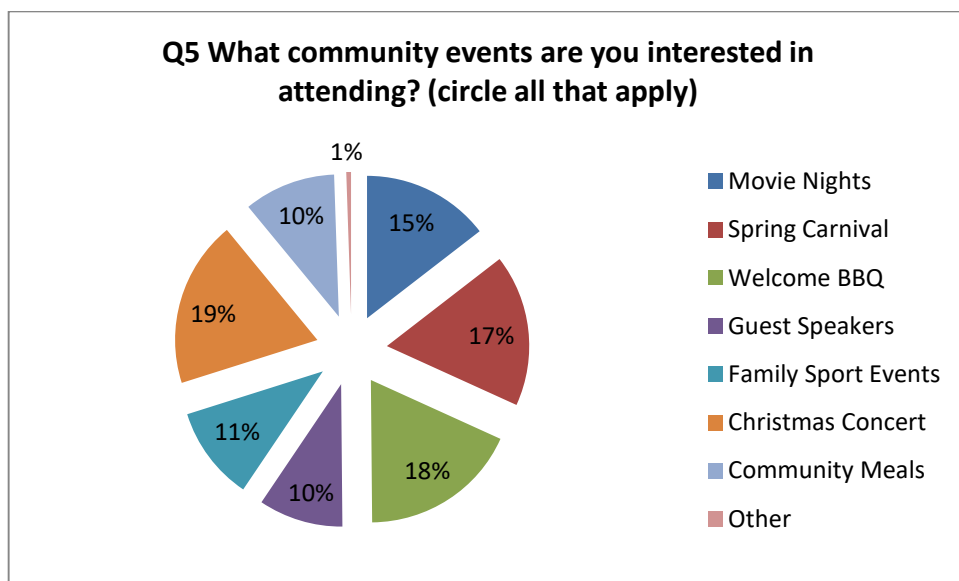


**Data Summary:** Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (63%) indicated that **scheduling** is a main factor impacting their involvement with our school. Though child care ranked second, the data suggests that less than a quarter of families (21%) see this factor as limiting their involvement.\*

*\*assumes our survey sample is representative*

**Recommendations:**

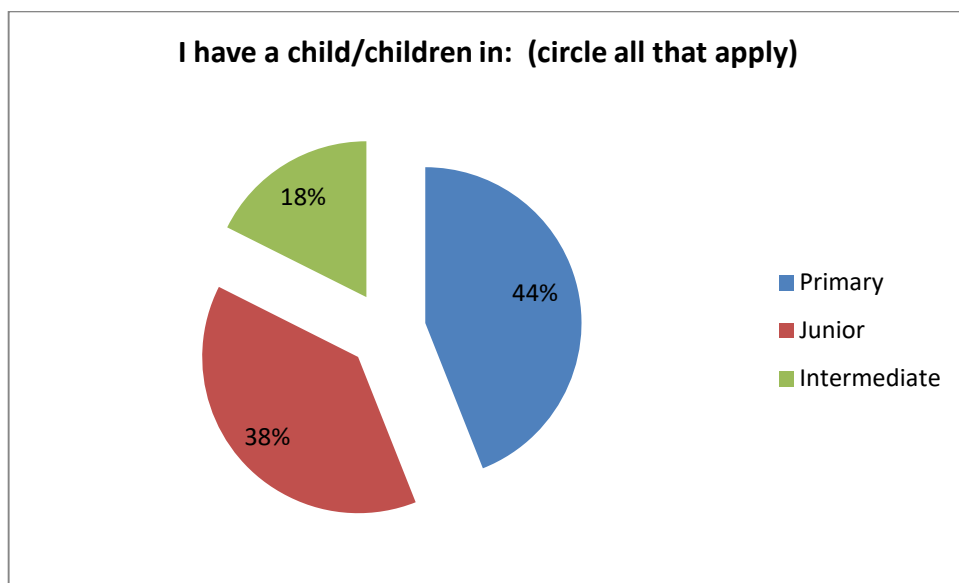
1. The committee would like to action forward, as a next step, developing a Stakeholder Survey to provide to staff asking them to consider *innovative* ways in which our parents and caregivers can participate in school and classroom activities that work around families' busy schedules. For example, technology might allow parents to pre-record themselves reading storybooks or access FaceTime to provide a guest talk about their career or special interest. A parent may not be in a position to take a half day off work, but they may have a half hour to record themselves reading The Giving Tree or providing a virtual tour of their solar energy lab.
2. The committee recommends that a small School Forms Task Force, consisting of 2-3 individuals, be developed to examine current forms used from the perspective of how they may be enhanced to promote family engagement and involvement. For example, the current Permission Form C does not include a specific line for teachers to indicate whether caregiver volunteers would be appreciated, and how many. Having such a line may prompt parents to take a moment to consider their options. Similarly, the current monthly calendar could support a Family Involvement Message to link participation directly to scheduled events.
3. The creation of a standing Volunteer Coordinator (VC) position on the St Martha School Council would assist with looking at parent/caregiver engagement and involvement in a long-term manner.



**Data Summary:** The four community events that ranked highest for families were the Christmas Concert (19%), Welcome Back BBQ (18%), Spring Carnival (17%) and Movie Nights (15%). These four items account for 69% of the responses.

**Recommendations:**

1. The committee would like to acknowledge the fact that, due to the nature of the question, it is possible that these survey data are skewed by unequal distribution across divisions (see graph below). As an example, it is a reasonable assertion that Family Sport Events may have ranked higher if more intermediate-based families had participated in the survey. What is therefore more appropriate is to reflect on how well attended some of these events have been in the past.
  
2. The committee would like to recommend that, given the fundamental objective of our community events is to foster connectedness and a sense of community; it would be beneficial to send out feedback requests to families immediately following some events. Let us be sure that our families are experiencing a sense of community, of belonging. Let us also demonstrate, through action, that we are open to hearing suggestions if an event fell short. For example, a 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament will be enjoyed by many. A 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament with Half-Time Trivia and a Lemonade Stand will be enjoyed by many more. And as one final point, actively requesting feedback should help to ensure that if there are affordability or accessibility concerns surrounding our organized events, we should learn of it promptly.



**Data Summary:** The data from this survey question allows us to get a sense for level of representation across the divisions. However, a brief question asking respondents to indicate the number of children they have attending St Martha would have allowed for more accurate metrics.

**Next Steps:**

1. Present the survey results obtained by the School Climate Committee to the broader School Council members.
2. As a collective, and in a fair yet practical manner, determine which recommendations represent key priorities for this year.
3. With this, the School Climate Committee can then develop an Action Plan. The action plan will specify the steps which will be undertaken, who will be responsible for the step, and within what timeline.
4. An early step within the Action Plan must address communicating key findings and recommendations to families and staff.
5. The Action Plan will be reviewed with School Council, and council members will be identified, as needed, to help support and implement the action plan.

The School Climate Committee would like to thank the St. Martha community, Principal, Mark Sonnemann and St. Martha staff in their joint efforts in distribution and support of the School Climate Survey. Thank you to the parents and guardians for your valuable feedback. Thank you for your continued interest in our school.