

CLARK COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

On the Table 2018

Abstract

This report provides an overview of feedback received from Clark County Community Foundation's 2018 On the Table initiative. The focus of the On the Table discussions was school safety and violence prevention. Clark County Community Foundation developed conversation prompts in partnership with Clark County Public Schools. The feedback in this report will help guide Clark County Community Foundation grantmaking.



Clark County Community Foundation

On the Table Data Summary

Overview

In late March and April 2018, Clark County Community Foundation, in partnership with Clark County Public Schools, hosted multiple *On the Table* conversations focused on school safety and violence prevention. More than 150 people from the community provided input during roundtable conversations across three different public venues (Winchester Rotary, Leeds Center for the Arts and Clark County Community Foundation at the Winchester Opera House). More than 350 public school students, from fifth through 12th grade, participated in the discussions. School counselors and administrators selected the students to provide a broad and diverse range of voices.

Clark County Community Foundation hosted these discussions in conjunction with Clark County Public Schools so that solutions could be presented to make our public schools safer and more welcoming environments for all students and faculty. This report will be made public so that all members of the Clark County community can review the findings. The board of advisors for Clark County Community Foundation will also present this report to the Clark County Public Schools superintendent with the intent of working together to fund some of the proposed solutions.

The data on pages 3-14 was aggregated by Clark County Community Foundation board and staff using all information written on the conversation notes pages and provided to Clark County Community Foundation following the three public community events.

The data aggregation identified nine overarching discussion themes. Sixty-four unique topics of discussion were identified and have been categorized within each of the appropriate overarching themes. Additional descriptions of the most discussed topics are provided, along with numerical indication of the number of mentions of each topic. Additional data collected from student feedback can be found in the student portion of this report, on pages 15-24.

This project was part of *On the Table*, a national civic engagement initiative supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; it was initially developed by The Chicago Community Trust.

Clark County Community Foundation would like to thank the Clark County Public Schools and the Winchester Opera House for partnering on this initiative.

Clark County Community Foundation was established in 1998 by local citizens as a permanent fund dedicated in perpetuity to the well-being of Clark County. Since its inception, the Fund has granted more than \$3 million to benefit charitable projects and causes in Clark County. Clark County Community Foundation is a geographic component fund of Blue Grass Community Foundation.

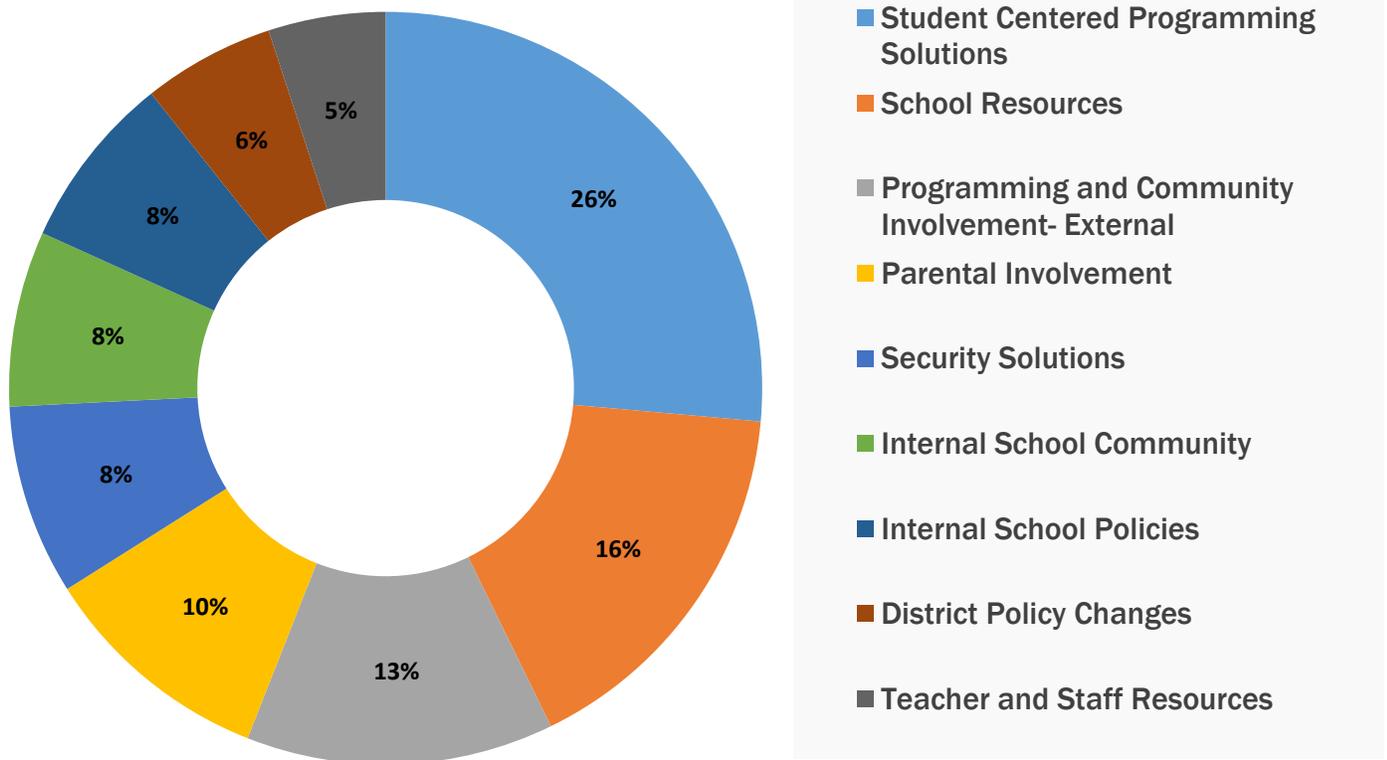
Questions, comments and concerns regarding this report or the *On the Table* initiative can be directed to Halee Cunningham, J.D., gift planning officer and deputy counsel, Blue Grass Community Foundation at halee@bgcf.org.



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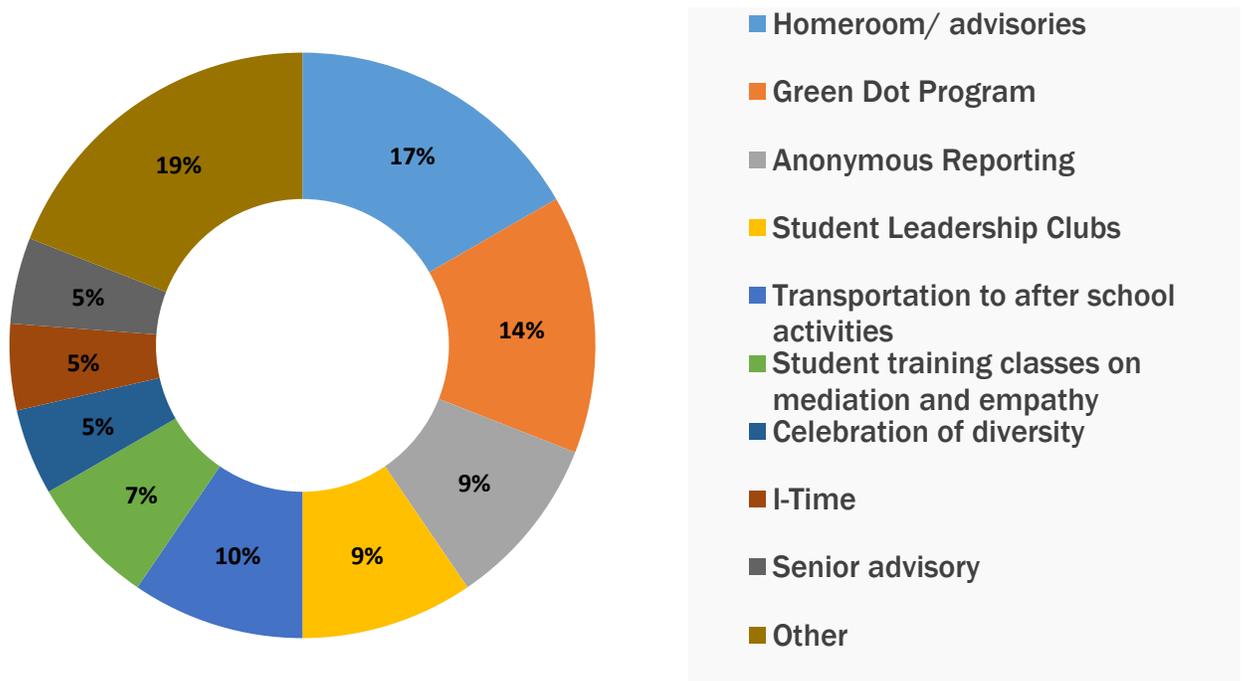
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Community-Identified Themes and Discussion Topics



Nine overarching themes were identified from discussion notes submitted by attendees at the three *On the Table* community events held in March 2018. Sixty-four unique discussion topics were identified and categorized within these themes. Each of the themes is broken down in the following pages with numerical indications of subtopic discussion frequency.

Student-Centered Programming Solutions (42)



Homeroom and/or multi-grade level advisories (7)

Seven discussions identified the importance of having a homeroom or mixed grade advisory where students would meet at least once weekly. The focus would be on providing students with updates and school announcements, as well as for social activities like voting on homecoming themes or school spirit days. Participants felt this would be a good way for a student to develop a relationship with a teacher that was not solely focused on academic achievement and test scores. Students also have the ability to intermingle with other grade levels and students they may not share academic classes with, improving issues with diversity and bullying.

Implement (and/or expand) the Green Dot Program (6)

Six discussions focused on the implementation and expansion of the Green Dot Program to train students on identifying and responding to behaviors that may lead to violence. See, <https://www.nsvrc.org/blogs/preventionista/new-study-released-highlights-green-dot-high-schools>.

Anonymous reporting options (4)

Four discussions focused on anonymous reporting options, including the idea of a “bully box” or a hotline to call and report behavioral issues to counseling staff.

Student leadership clubs (4)

Four discussions focused on the implementation of student-led leadership clubs and extracurricular activities, with a focus on students being able to clearly voice issues of concern or ideas for positive change in the school.

Transportation to after school activities (4)

Four discussions focused on access to after-school activities. Several of the discussions mentioned the availability of after-school programming, but many students who may be targeted for these programs cannot attend due to lack of parental involvement and/or parents who do not have the ability to provide transportation. If the district could provide transportation more students may have the opportunity to participate.

Student training classes on mediation and empathy (3)

Three discussions focused on providing mediation and conflict resolution classes to students, particularly starting with younger students to better equip them with the skills needed to resolve conflict without using violence before entering high school.

Celebration of diversity/focus on including diverse students (2)

Two discussions focused on the issues surrounding bullying and discrimination based on race, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic class. A proposed solution was to have more events and activities throughout all schools that celebrate diversity. For example, have “around the world” days with food, activities, speakers, etc.

‘I-Time’ or extracurricular period (2)

Two discussions focused on the need to have a period within the school day (perhaps monthly) where students can gather with others who have similar interests and interact during school. “I-time” and/or an extracurricular day/club day were two proposed ideas.

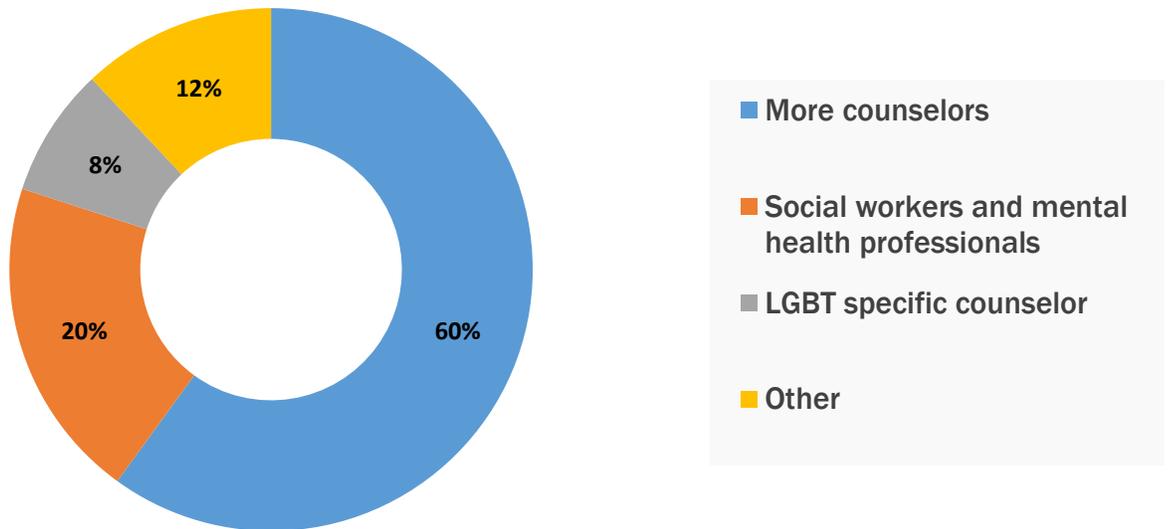
Senior advisory (grade-level clubs) (2)

Two discussions proposed having senior advisory and/or grade-level advisory clubs where students from one particular grade can join together and have a voice about what is happening in their particular grade level. Topics would range from prom and homecoming to class trips and schedules.

Additional Discussion Topics: Student-Centered Programming

- Expand vo-tech
- Mobile events/summer programming
- More arts programming
- More diverse opportunities/extracurricular activities
- On The Table conversations with elementary students
- Recess
- School garden/life skills classes
- Student groups focused on withdrawn students

School Resources (26)



More counselors (16)

Sixteen discussions focused on the need to bring in additional counselors to improve the student: counselor ratio. Discussions also focused on making sure counselors are free to be working with students rather than just working on scheduling. An additional idea was to bring in a separate person to work with students on college scholarships and applications rather than having one counselor focus on too many tasks.

Social workers and mental health professionals (5)

Five discussions focused on the need to have additional social workers and mental health professionals to act alongside counselors in the school system. Participants felt more highly skilled and specifically trained professionals should be present in all schools to work with students identified as having challenges or mental illness.

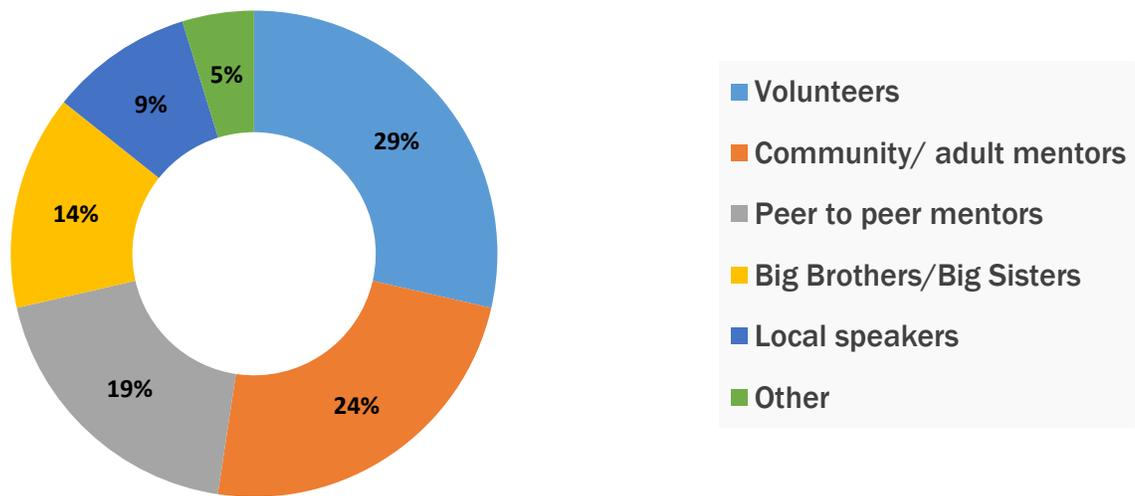
LGBT specific counselor/professional (2)

Two conversations focused on the need to have a counselor or some other faculty professional who is available to talk to students who are specifically dealing with LGBT issues. Participants felt students struggling with these issues may feel more comfortable speaking to someone who they know will be supportive and will not hold a religious or other bias against them.

Additional Discussion Topics: School Resources

- 24/7 hotline
- Additional mental health services
- More/improved wellness care and food services (improved family resources)

Programming and Community Involvement (External) (21)



Volunteers (6)

Six discussions focused on the need for additional volunteers in the school system. The idea behind the majority of the discussions being that teachers are already at maximum capacity dealing solely with academic and in-classroom issues, making them less available to host extracurricular or non-academic activities. Issues with this included the need for proper security and vetting of volunteers. Additional work is needed with local organizations and nonprofits that may have the capacity and systems already in place to provide volunteers. Volunteers are needed in the high school, too, not just to read to students in the elementary schools.

Community/adult mentors (5)

Five discussions expanded on the volunteer idea to focus solely on the idea that additional adult and community members are needed to help mentor students across all grade levels. Discussions focused on bringing in local officials as well as volunteers, perhaps retired individuals, who could be assigned one or more students to mentor – with a focus on those students who have been identified as having a poor home life.

Peer-to-peer mentors (4)

Four discussions focused on peer-to-peer mentorship programs, particularly those where upper level students partner with lower classmen, or high school partnerships with the middle school. Participants discussed the idea that this could help introduce students to others they may not otherwise interact with, as well as decrease bullying.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters (3)

Three discussions focused very specifically on the mentorship program offered by Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

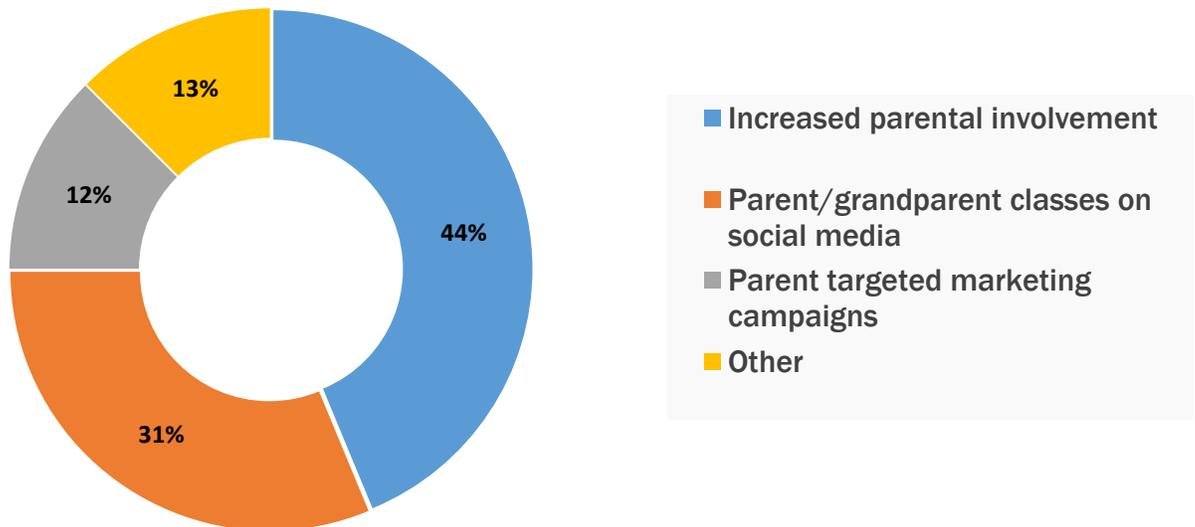
Local speakers (2)

Two discussions focused on bringing in local community members to provide motivational speaking to classes as opposed to bringing in a national speaker who students may not be able to relate to.

Additional Discussion Topics: Programming and Community Involvement (External)

- Elected officials in the schools

Parental Involvement (16)



Increase parental involvement (7)

Seven discussions focused on the need to increase parental involvement, including increasing communication among teachers/parents/students and providing organizations in which parents can participate.

Parent/grandparent classes on social media and cyber bullying (5)

Five discussions focused on the need to provide educational training to parents and guardians about the dangers/usage of social media, particularly for cyber bullying. Many parents and grandparents do not understand how their children are using social media and are not aware of the many parental tools available for implementation to curb usage.

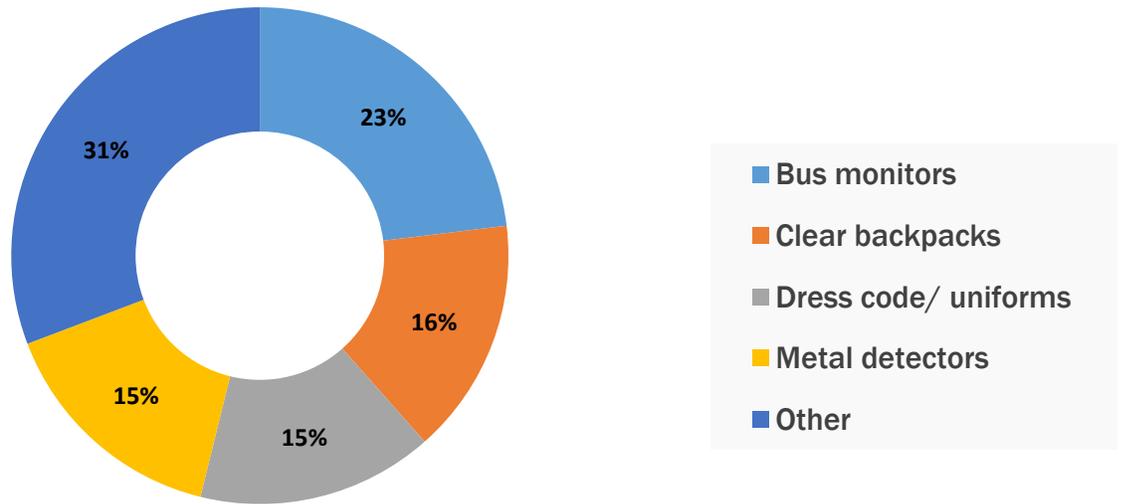
Parent targeted marketing campaign re: gun safety, drugs, bullying (2)

Two discussions focused on the idea of presenting a marketing campaign geared toward parents to provide education on issues in the school system. The campaign could be run by parents (or a nonprofit) who already work on similar issues. There could be educational materials disseminated via mail, email, social media, classes, etc., to try to cross all mediums.

Additional Discussion Topics: Parental Involvement

- Free gun-safety classes for the community, but targeted at parents (with trigger locks provided for free to attendees)
- “Parent Involvement Coordinator”

Security Solutions (13)



Bus monitors (3)

Three discussions focused on the issues of bullying and fighting that occurs on the school bus. Many participants felt additional monitors placed on school buses could prevent or quickly resolve these behavioral issues.

Clear backpacks (2)

Two discussions focused on the requirement that students have only clear backpacks to help with security and identifying students who may have weapons or other contraband items.

Dress code/uniforms (2)

Two discussions focused on the need for dress code or uniforms, particularly at the middle and high school levels. The thought was that students would recognize anyone out of place based on their non-dress code clothing, but also that bullying based on clothing and appearance may dissipate if all students are required to wear the same outfit.

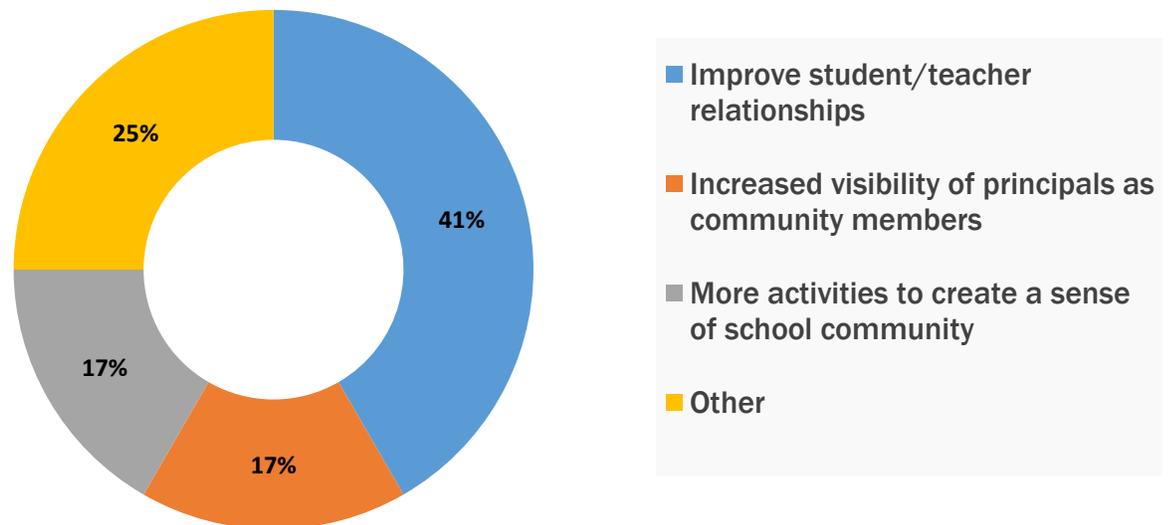
Metal detectors (2)

Two discussions felt that metal detectors were needed at the schools, along with monitors for the detectors to both identify contraband as well as prevent/deter students from bringing weapons.

Additional Discussion Topics: Security Solutions

- Additional supervision (cameras, hallways, bathrooms, cafeteria, etc.)
- DOGS (Dads of Great Students) program
- Police
- Student Resource Officers (SROs)

Internal School Community (12)



Improve student/teacher/-admin relationships; more time with teachers not focused on test scores (5)

Five discussions centered on the importance of student-teacher relationships and the need to improve said relationships. Participants felt it was important for students to be able to speak openly to their teachers about issues in school/home that affect them, but many students do not because they cannot develop a relationship with the teachers.

Increased visibility of principals as community members/leaders (2)

Two discussions focused on the need for the school principals to be seen not only as leaders within the school but also as active members of the community. This was particularly focused on the high school level. Discussions focused on the need for the principals and administrators to not only have a greater presence in the school but also at after-school functions.

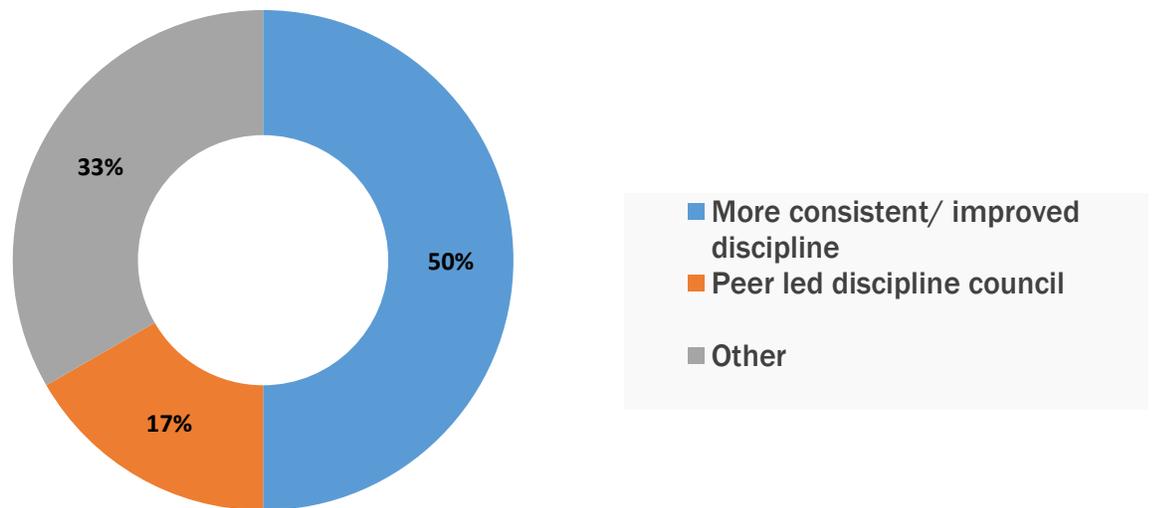
More activities to create a sense of school community (2)

Two discussions focused on the idea that there is no sense of a unified community within the schools themselves, particularly the high school. Ideas about building school spirit such as pep rallies and pep club were discussed. The need for one central space where all students and faculty could join together is vital to creating a sense of belonging to the school community.

Additional Discussion Topics: Internal School Community

- Greeting by principals/administrators at drop off
- Improving school leadership (principals/admin)
- Teacher-student lunches

Internal School Policies (12)



More consistent/improved disciplinary measures (6)

Six discussions centered on discipline and the need to implement more internal school policies for teachers to have specific outlined measures for disciplinary procedures. Many participants discussed the need for more disciplinary options other than “ISAP” or in-school suspension. The need for additional presence by school leaders and the emphasis on known behavioral consequences was a focus. One discussion identified the problem with associating positive behaviors such as walking with disciplinary consequences.

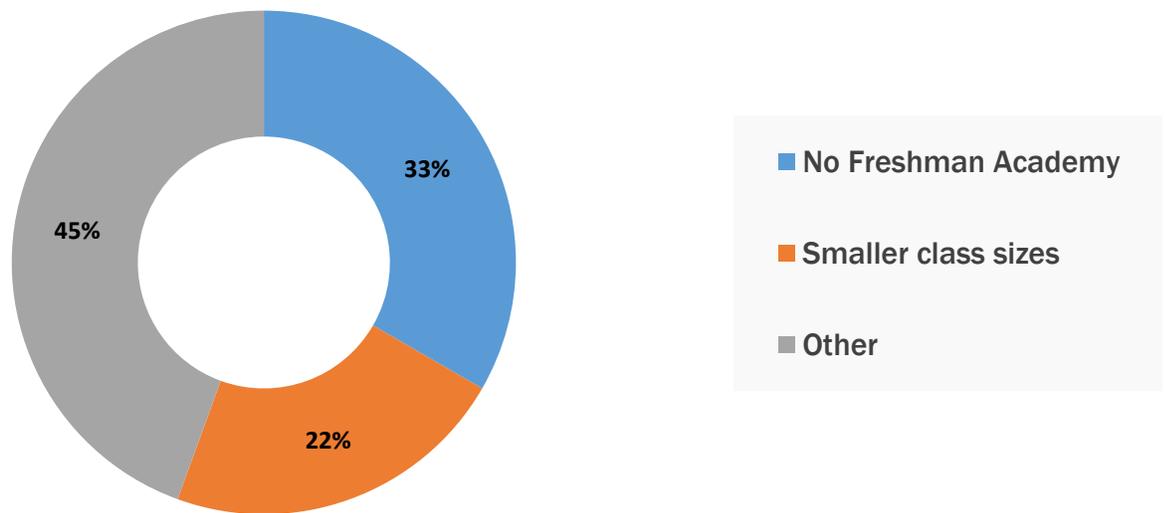
Peer-led discipline council (2)

Two discussions focused on the need to allow students to take part in the disciplinary process via a student court or discipline council. The idea behind this focused on peers being able to develop the best disciplinary consequences based on behavior.

Additional Discussion Topics: Internal School Policies

- Corporal punishment
- Mindfulness: “Be Project”
- Positive recognition
- Student responsibility

District Policy Changes (9)



No Freshman Academy (3)

Three discussions focused on integrating all classes at the high school rather than having a separate freshman academy. Discussions focused on bullying targeted at grade levels and the idea that when in freshman academy and then again as sophomores, students could be targeted because they were previously separated.

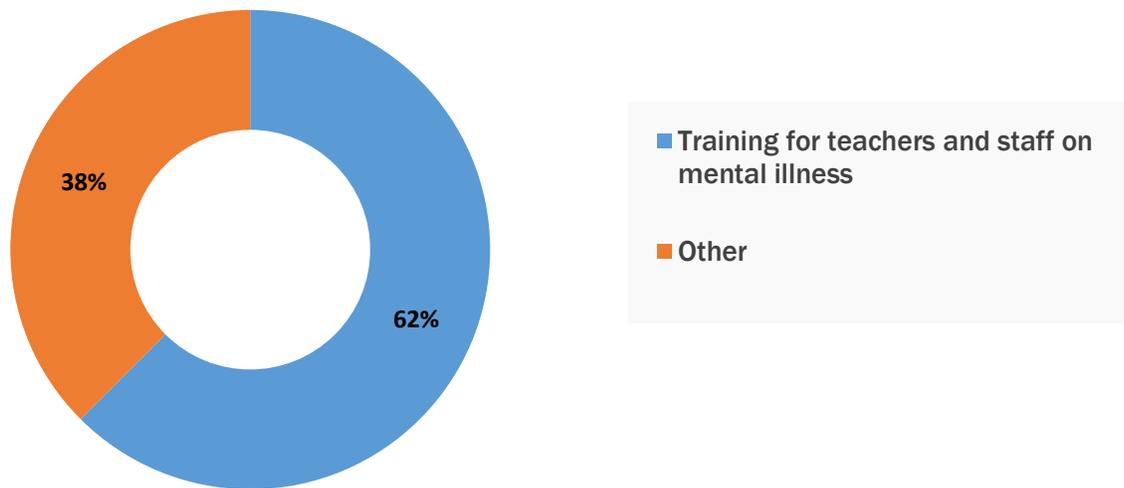
Smaller class sizes (2)

Two discussions focused on the need to have smaller class sizes with the idea that teacher-student relationships can be improved with fewer students in each class.

Additional Discussion Topics: District Policy Changes

- Designated safe space at every school
- Hire teachers who are more highly trained/educated
- No cell phone policy
- Smaller schools

Teacher and Staff Resources (8)



Training for teachers and staff on recognizing mental illness (5)

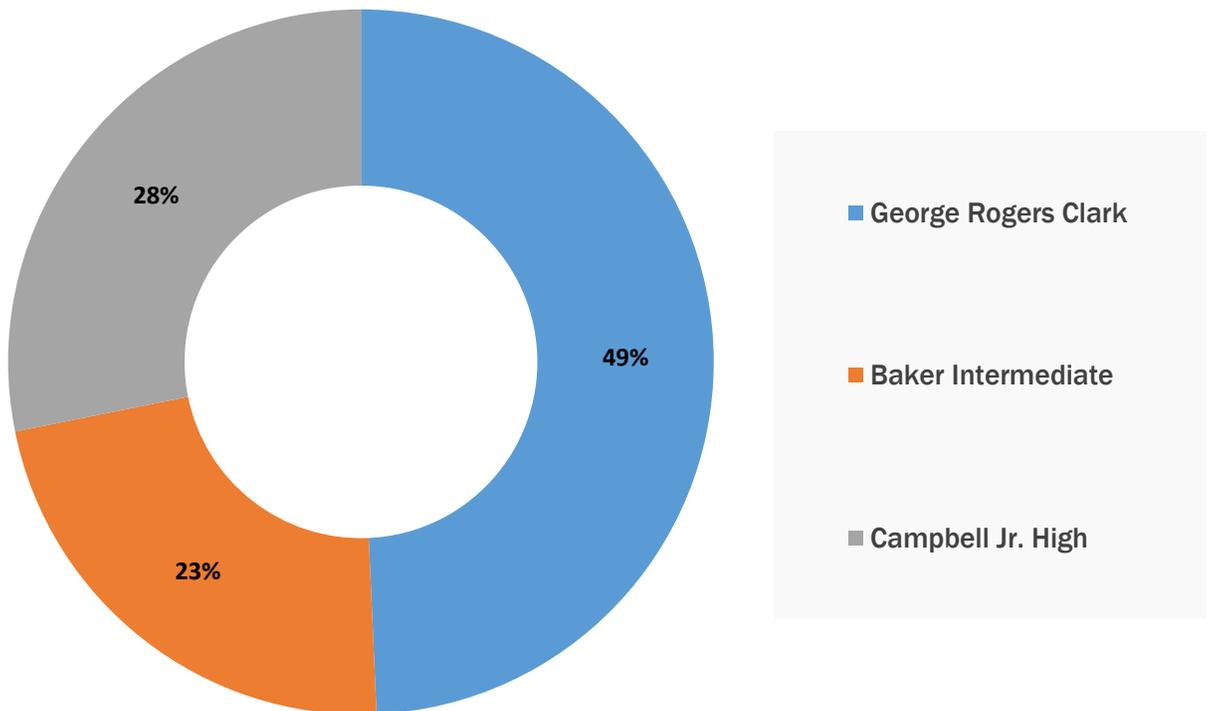
Five discussions focused on the need for teachers and para-educators to be trained on recognizing signs of mental illness in students and given the skills and procedures on how to deal with/report such students. The discussions did not propose the teachers themselves work with the students and provide mental illness services, but rather, identify the students and work with counselors and mental health professionals within the school who can provide the necessary medical attention. Additional discussions focused on the need to train educators on working through coping mechanisms with identified students.

Additional Discussion Topics: Teacher and Staff Resources

- Safe shooter situation training for all staff, i.e., teachers, administrators, after-school workers, cafeteria workers etc.
- Support for administrators
- Support for teachers

School and Youth Issues and Solutions

Student Participants



Three hundred and fifty-five students from fifth through 12th grades participated in *On the Table* events held in March and April 2018. Students identified the top issues facing their school and proposed solutions to resolve these issues. Identified issues and solutions from each of the participating schools are broken down in the following pages. Ranking of issues and solutions is based on the frequency of discussion. Students also participated in a “show of hands” survey regarding their hope for the community and their belief they can enact change.

George Rogers Clark High School-Identified Issues and Solutions

GRCHS Mission: to create a safe learning environment where excellence is rooted in skills, knowledge, self-expression and personal responsibility.

GRCHS Vision: All students, college and career ready

GRCHS Principal: David Bolen

George Rogers Clark High School was founded in 1963 after the consolidation of Clark County High School and Winchester High School. It currently serves as the only high school for Winchester/Clark County. The school currently houses in excess of 1,500 students in ninth through 12th grades. 51% of students are male and 49% are female. 84.5% of students are Caucasian, 6.6% African American, 5.6% Hispanic, 2.7% of two or more races, and 0.6% Asian, American Indian and/or Pacific Islander.

George Rogers Clark also houses a vocational and technical school on its campus and partners with the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children to serve significantly at-risk youth between 12 and 18 years old.

On March 26, 2017, a total of 175 students were selected from GRCHS and the Phoenix Academy to participate in the On the Table event. Students were selected to represent diversity in race, religion and socio-economic status. Students were provided pre-set discussion prompts and asked to identify the greatest issues facing their school and possible solutions. The following data outlines their aggregated responses.

George Rogers Clark Student Identified Issues*:

*Ranked in order of importance by students

1. Bullying/racism/religious intolerance
2. Disrespect (student-student; student-teacher; teacher-student)
3. No consistent discipline; need harsher discipline than ISAP
4. Counselors are never available
5. No relationships or empathy from teachers and administrators
6. Lack of school leadership
7. Lack of parental involvement
8. No sense of community/school spirit
9. Drugs, vaping, tobacco

Top Ten George Rogers Clark Student-Identified Solutions:

1. More counselors/professionals (social workers/therapists)
2. Better discipline (specifically not just ISAP – need after-school detention)
3. More training for teachers focused on identifying and dealing with students with mental illness, and more teacher training for shooter situations
4. Anonymous reporting (via a drop box in the counselor's office)
5. Less separation between grades, no more freshman academy
6. Metal detectors
7. Greater SRO/staff/admin presence in the hallways and cafeteria (students mentioned never seeing the SROs; some didn't know there were two SROs in the building)
8. Principals should be present more
9. Better/more open communication with students and parents
10. Homeroom or free period just to talk about issues (even if only once per nine weeks)

Additional Identified Solutions – GRC

- Open office hours for counselors
- Positive reinforcement for good behavior (ex., field trips)
- Non-office space to talk (a “lounge”-type area more conducive to free conversation rather than an office)
- In-school service dog/therapy dog
- Teaching anger-management skills to students
- More information on how to access available resources
- Parent classes/groups to get parents more involved
- More student clubs/opportunities to hear student voices
- Mentor program between upper classmen and lower classmen

Survey Poll Results: GRC participants

Q1. Thinking about what the future holds for your community over the next five years, would you say you are

A. More hopeful and confident?

OR

B. More worried and concerned?

31% of students answered A

69% of students answered B

Q2. Which statement comes closer to how you feel about the ability that you and your fellow youth have to bring about change on issues and challenges facing your community?

A. I believe that youth in my community can bring about real change on the issues that are important to us.

OR

B. I do not think youth in my community can bring about real change on the issues that are important to us.

90% of students answered A

10% of students answered B

Reverend Henry E. Baker Sr. Intermediate School-Identified Issues and Solutions

Baker Intermediate Vision: Together we stand to believe, inspire and succeed.

Baker Intermediate Mission: The mission of Baker Intermediate is to provide a safe environment that nurtures the potential of all students, inspires academic excellence and strives for student success.

Baker Intermediate Principal: Josh Mounts

Baker Intermediate School was founded in 2014 after the redistricting of Clark County Public Schools. It currently serves as the only intermediate school for Winchester/Clark County. The school currently houses all fifth- and sixth-grade students with an enrollment in excess of 850. 52% of students are male and 48% are female. 83.7% of students are Caucasian, 5.6% African American, 6.1% Hispanic, 3.7% of two or more races, and 0.9% Asian, American Indian and/or Pacific Islander.

In 2015, Baker Intermediate School was the recipient of a \$100,000 grant from Clark County Community Foundation to provide laptop access to every fifth- and sixth-grade student.

On March 26, 2017, a total of 80 students were selected from Baker Intermediate to participate in the On the Table event. Students were selected to represent diversity in race, religion and socio-economic status. Students were provided pre-set discussion prompts and asked to identify the greatest issues facing their school and possible solutions. The following data outlines their aggregated responses.

Baker Intermediate Student Identified Themes and Discussion Topics*:

**Ranked in order of importance by students*

1. School safety
2. Bullying
3. Teacher-student relationships
4. Disrespect

Top Ten Baker Intermediate Student-Identified Solutions:

1. Metal detectors
2. More cameras
3. Police in the school
4. Better security outside -- gates at the drop-off loop when not in use; better security to keep people from the playground
5. "Bully box" for anonymous reporting
6. Better/more consequences (change in current disciplinary procedures)
7. School therapists/more counselors
8. Bus monitors
9. Locker checks
10. Watch DOGS program (Dads of Great Students)

Additional Identified Solutions: Baker

- Smaller class sizes
- Room to decompress
- More community partners
- More town hall meetings
- More volunteers
- More cooperation between teachers and administrators

Survey Poll Results: Baker Intermediate Participants

Q1. Thinking about what the future holds for your community over the next five years, would you say you are

A. More hopeful and confident?

OR

B. More worried and concerned?

25% of students answered A

75% of students answered B

Q2. Which statement comes closer to how you feel about the ability that you and your fellow youth have to bring about change on issues and challenges facing your community?

A. I believe that youth in my community can bring about real change on the issues that are important to us.

OR

B. I do not think youth in my community can bring about real change on the issues that are important to us.

87% of students answered A

13% of students answered B

Robert D. Campbell Junior High School Identified Issues and Solutions

Campbell Jr. High Vision: Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Leaders!

Campbell Jr. High Mission: Creating an environment that fosters learning, independence, respect and compassion.

Campbell Jr. High Principal: Dustin Howard

Campbell Jr. High School was founded in 2014 after redistricting of Clark County Public Schools. It currently serves as the only junior high school for Winchester/Clark County. The school currently houses all seventh- and eighth-grade students with an enrollment in excess of 800. 52% of students are male and 48% are female. 84.5% of students are Caucasian, 5.9% African American, 6.1% Hispanic, 2.4% of two or more races, and 1.1% Asian and/or Pacific Islander.

Campbell Jr. High School operates under three core belief statements: 1. All students deserve a safe and clean learning environment that promotes high expectations and student success; 2. Communication between students, teachers, parents, administration and community is essential for growth and success; 3. A clear set of behavioral expectations, consistency in discipline and acknowledgement will enable all students to be successful today and in the future.

On April 12, 2017, a total of 100 students were selected from Campbell Jr. High to participate in the On the Table event. Students were selected to represent diversity in race, religion and socio-economic status. Students were provided pre-set discussion prompts and asked to identify the greatest issues facing their school and possible solutions. The following data outlines their aggregated responses.

Campbell Junior High Student Identified Themes and Discussion Topics*:

***Ranked in order of importance by students**

1. Bullying/fighting/cyber bullying
2. Vaping
3. Students do not report issues to teachers (out of fear)
4. Drugs
5. Disrespect
6. Racism

Top Ten Campbell Junior High Student Identified Solutions:

1. Metal detectors
2. More police/guards
3. More discipline/consequences that fit the behavioral issues
4. More bathroom and hall monitors
5. Student support groups/mentorship program
6. More time with counselors; bring counselors into the classrooms more so students feel more comfortable going to them with issues
7. More bus drop-off/pick-up monitors because of issues with high school students
8. Guest speakers and/or community members in the school to talk to classes
9. Talk to students more about reporting issues; reporting is not bad/“snitching”
10. Get student input more; allow students to pick their top advisory teachers

Additional Identified Solutions - Campbell

- Backpack checks
- Badges for students/teachers to get in the building
- Better communication about available resources
- Gates/fence outside parking lot
- Improve/buy new items for athletics and extracurricular groups like new band instruments and new uniforms
- More activities for kids/families in Winchester
- More cameras
- More career classes
- More drills (lockdown)
- Teach conflict-resolution skills
- Transportation for after-school activities

Survey Poll Results: Campbell Jr. High Participants

Q1. Thinking about what the future holds for your community over the next five years, would you say you are

A. More hopeful and confident?

OR

B. More worried and concerned?

32% of students answered A

68% of students answered B

Q2. Which statement comes closer to how you feel about the ability that you and your fellow youth have to bring about change on issues and challenges facing your community?

A. I believe that youth in my community can bring about real change on the issues that are important to us.

OR

B. I do not think youth in my community can bring about real change on the issues that are important to us.

57% of students answered A

43% of students answered B