



# **BUDGET SURVEY RESULTS**

MAPLE RIDGE - PITT MEADOWS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 42

April 10, 2013

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## OVERVIEW

School District No. 42 meets the learning needs of approximately 15,000 students of all ages in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, and is defined by its determination to keep student learning and growth at the heart of all its decisions.

All of the initiatives and resources in the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District are aligned to support the district's commitment to continuous improvement, excellence in pedagogy, the building and sustaining of community and partner group relationships, and the fostering and development of crucial 21st century skills.

## BACKGROUND

School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows) is estimating that, due to several cost pressures beyond its control, it will be facing an operating budget funding shortfall of \$5.66 million for 2013/2014.

In accordance with the School Act, school districts in the province must approve a balanced budget and submit it to the Ministry of Education by June 30, 2013. As SD42 began planning for 2013/14, it invited parents, staff, community members and partner groups to participate in the budget development process by sharing their thoughts on how the school district might achieve a balanced budget that addresses current priorities while remaining fiscally responsible. A Budget Survey was prepared for the purpose of collecting this feedback, which will be one of several important factors that will inform the development of the Proposed Preliminary Budget for 2013/14.

Results were obtained through an online survey completed by a total of 1,084 respondents. 536 respondents (or 49.5%) self-identified as elementary school parents, 235 respondents (or 21.7%) self-identified as employees, 222 respondents (or 20.5%) self-identified as secondary school parents, 40 (or 3.7%) self-identified as community members, 11 (or 1%) self-identified as students and 40 (or 3.7%) preferred not to say.

When changes to the status quo are contemplated, where should we start?

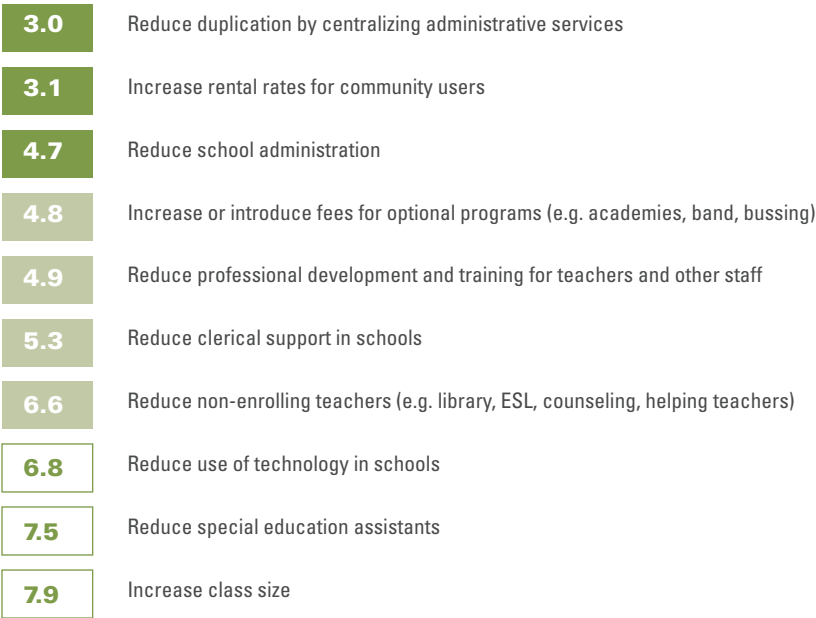
Of the options presented under this question, three emerged as the most preferred and three as the least preferred areas in which to make changes to the status quo. An increase in rental rates was an overwhelmingly preferred approach, while an increase in class size was the least desirable.

In general, as in the case of all the questions on this survey, the understandable preference was to search for cost saving opportunities that would have little or no impact on students.

- Most preferred
- Reduce duplication by centralizing administrative services (28.5%; 309 respondents)
  - Increase rental rates for community users (31.4%; 340 respondents)
  - Reduce school administration (14.3% or 155 respondents)

- Least preferred
- Increase class size (41.4%; 449 respondents)
  - Reduce special education assistants (22.5%; 244 respondents)
  - Reduce use of technology in schools (19.7%; 214 respondents)

FIGURE 1 WHEN CHANGES TO STATUS QUO ARE CONTEMPLATED, WHERE SHOULD WE START?



## When changes to the status quo are contemplated, where should we start?

Of the options presented under this question, those below emerged as the most preferred and the least preferred areas in which to make changes to status quo.

Increasing the availability of school district facilities for rentals was a clear preference; this preference was also reiterated in suggestions for revenue generating opportunities. The promotion of a more “green” approach in schools and the promotion of public-private partnerships also received strong support, and this support was again reiterated in a subsequent section on cost saving opportunities.

School closures, the reduction of district support for students with unique needs, and the reduction of district support for technology were areas that received the least amount of support.

### Most preferred

Increase availability of school district facilities for rentals/community use (32.7%; 353)

Promote green (e.g. less paper, less electricity) (23.6%; 253)

Promote public private partnerships (20.2%; 218)

### Least preferred

Reduce district support for students with unique needs (34.7%; 373)

School closures (30.4%; 324)

Reduce district support for technology (17.1%; 183)

**FIGURE 2**

## WHEN CHANGES TO STATUS QUO ARE CONTEMPLATED, WHERE SHOULD WE START?

2.7	Increase the availability of school district facilities for rentals (community use)
3.4	Promote green (e.g. less paper, less electricity)
4.3	Promote public private-partnerships
4.5	Reduce school and district administration
5.9	Reduce supplies budgets
6.0	Reduce facilities maintenance (e.g. trades, supplies)
6.3	Reduce custodial staff
6.6	Reduce district support for technology
7.1	School closures
7.6	Reduce district support for students with unique needs

## CLASS SIZE

Provincial class size maximums and provincial class size averages for 2012/13 are as follows:

	Provincial Averages 2012/13	Provincial Maximums
Kindergarten	19	22
Primary	21.1	24
Intermediate	25.4	30
Secondary	23.3	30

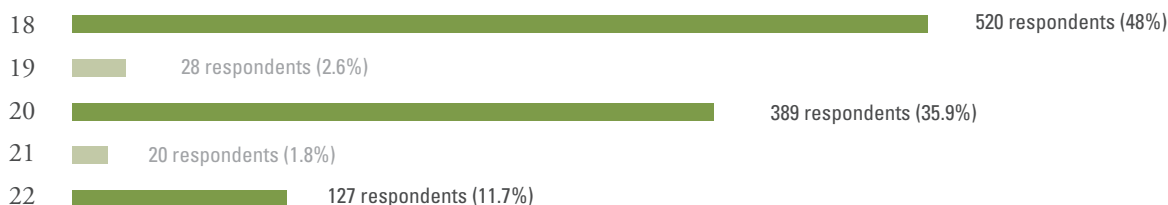
The Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows School District *2013 Budget Survey* invited respondents to select their preferred class size for Kindergarten, Primary (1-3), Intermediate (4-7) and Secondary (8-12) levels. In all cases except secondary, respondents indicated that the lowest class size was preferred. At secondary, the suggested class size of thirty emerged as an acceptable option (342 respondents), with a class size of twenty-six as a more distant second (234 respondents). Additional details on class size survey results are provided in figures 3 - 6 below.

### Kindergarten

At *Kindergarten* level, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 were the proposed class size options. 520 respondents (or 48%) marked a preference for 18 students per class; 389 respondents (or 35.9%) stated a preference for 20; 127 respondents (or 11.7%) preferred 22; 28 respondents (or 2.6%) preferred 19; and 20 respondents (or 1.8%) preferred 21.

FIGURE 3

#### KINDERGARTEN LEVEL CLASS SIZE

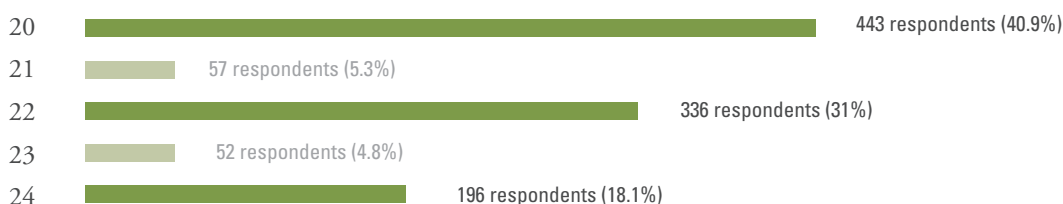


### Primary (1-3)

At *Primary (1-3)* level, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 were the proposed class size options. 443 respondents (or 40.9%) indicated their preference for 20 students per class; 336 respondents (or 31%) preferred 22; 196 respondents (18.1%) preferred 24; 57 respondents marked 21 as a preference; and 52 respondents (or 4.8%) felt 23 students per class was an acceptable number.

FIGURE 4

#### PRIMARY (1-3) LEVEL CLASS SIZE

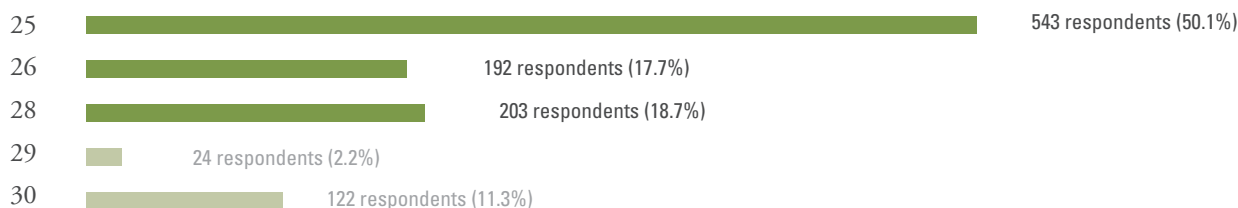


## Intermediate (4-7)

At *Intermediate (4-7)* level, 25, 26, 28, 29 and 30 were the proposed class size options. 543 respondents (or 50.1%) selected 25 as their preferred class size for Intermediate; 203 respondents (or 18.7%) selected 28; 192 respondents (or 17.7%) chose 26; 122 respondents (or 2.2%) selected 30; and 24 respondents (or 2.2%) selected 29.

**FIGURE 5**

### INTERMEDIATE (4-7) LEVEL CLASS SIZE

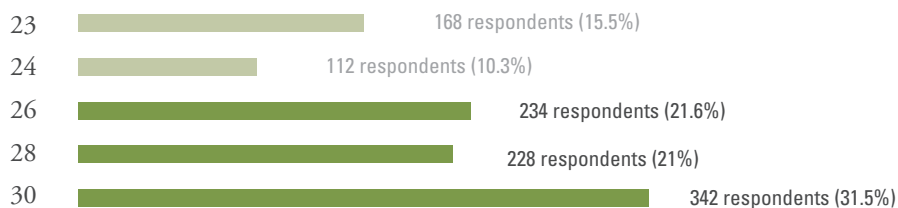


## Secondary (8-12)

At *Secondary (8-12)* level, 23, 24, 26, 28 and 30 were the proposed class size options. 342 respondents (or 31.5%) selected 30 students as their preferred class size option; 234 respondents (or 21.6%) selected 26; 228 (or 21%) selected 28; 168 respondents (or 15.5%) selected 23; and 112 respondents (or 10.3%) selected 24.

**FIGURE 6**

### SECONDARY (8-12) LEVEL CLASS SIZE



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING MODEL

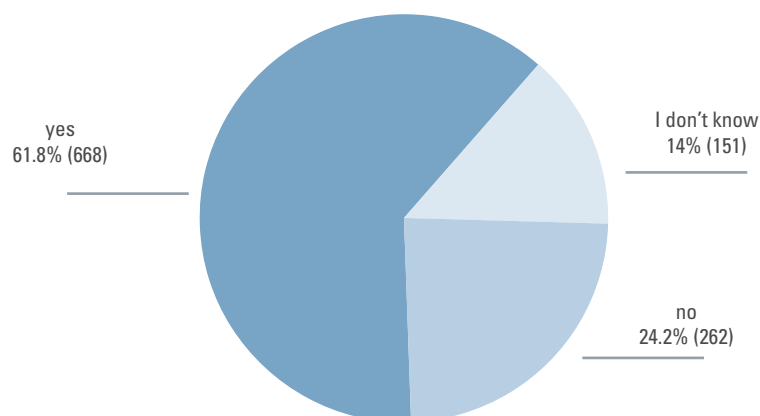
The Budget Survey posed three questions concerning the current professional development and training model. Respondents were asked to consider if the school district should change the model by offering professional development and training outside of instructional time; if the model should be changed to ensure that all professional development and training offered is aligned with the district's strategic direction; and/or if the model should be changed to ensure that all professional development and training is aligned with individuals' personal/professional growth plans.

A majority of respondents answered "yes" to all three questions. The results are detailed in figures 7-9 on the following page.

## Should we consider changing our professional development and training model by...

**FIGURE 7**

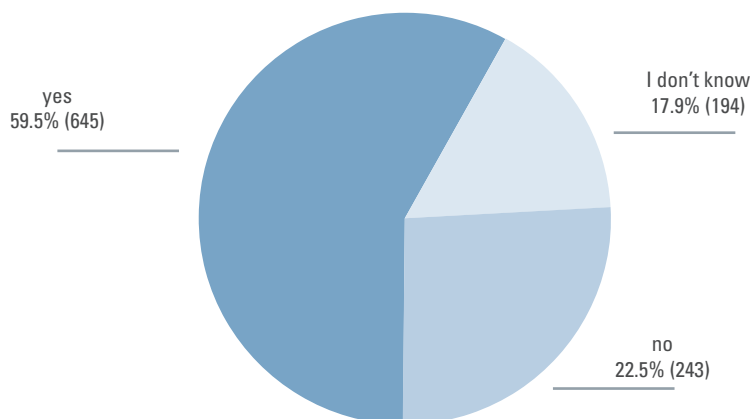
### OFFERING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OUTSIDE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME?



When asked if the school district should change the model by offering professional development and training outside of instructional time, 668 respondents (or 61.88%) answered “yes,” 262 respondents (or 24.2%) answered “no,” while 151 respondents (or 14%) said they didn’t know. See fig.7.

**FIGURE 8**

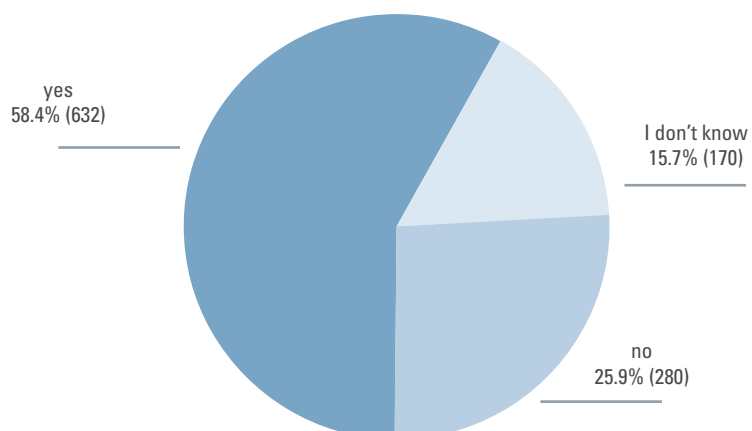
### ENSURING THAT ALL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING IS ALIGNED WITH DISTRICT’S STRATEGIC DIRECTION?



When asked if the school district should ensure that all professional development and training offered is aligned with the district’s strategic vision, 645 (or 59.5%) were in favour, 243 (or 22.5%) were opposed, and 194 respondents (or 17.9%) indicated they didn’t know. See fig. 8.

**FIGURE 9**

### ENSURING THAT ALL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING IS ALIGNED WITH INDIVIDUALS’ PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLANS?



When asked if the school district should ensure that all professional development and training is aligned with individuals’ personal/professional growth plans, 632 respondents (or 58.4%) answered “yes,” 280 respondents (or 25.9%) answered “no,” and 170 respondents (or 15.7%) indicated they didn’t know. See fig. 9.



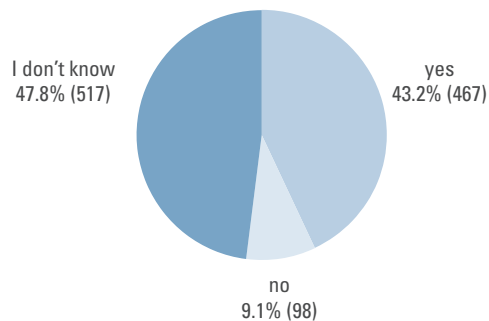
## In your view, is streamlining needed in any of the following areas?

When asked if streamlining was needed in accounting services, attendance management, purchasing services, office administration, building maintenance, building operations, and student transportation respectively, respondents commonly selected either “yes” or “I don’t know.”

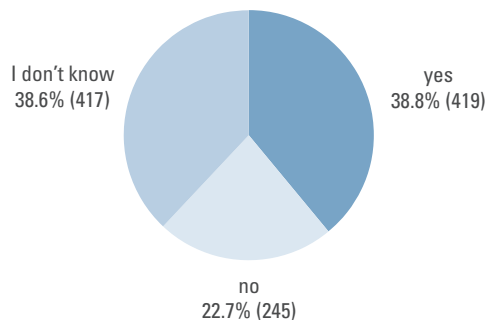
Attendance management, office administration, building maintenance, and student transportation were also highlighted as areas in need of review in a subsequent open-ended question about possible cost-saving opportunities.

■ most selected  
■ least selected

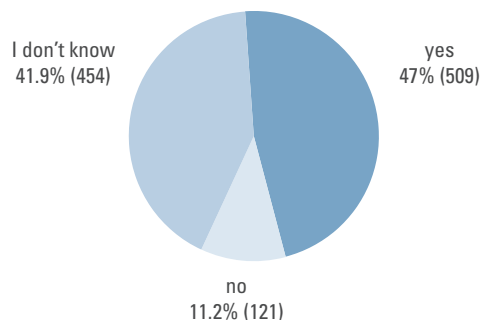
**FIGURE 10 ACCOUNTING SERVICES**



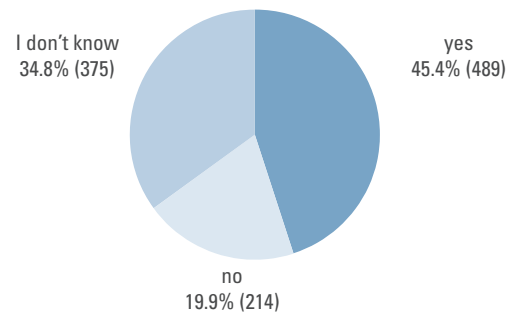
**FIGURE 11 ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT**



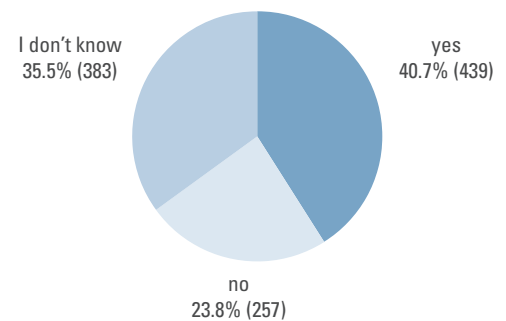
**FIGURE 12 PURCHASING SERVICES**



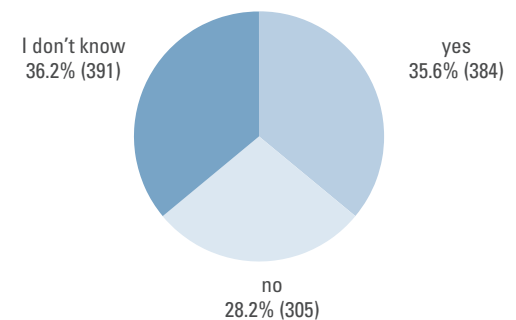
**FIGURE 13 OFFICE ADMINISTRATION**



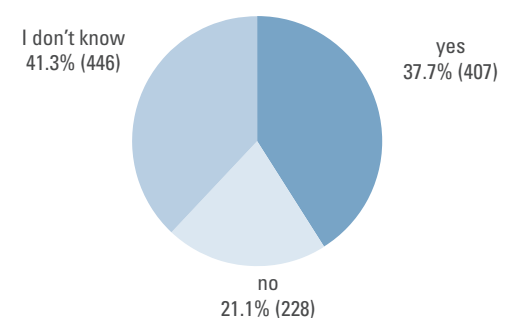
**FIGURE 14 BUILDING MAINTENANCE**



**FIGURE 15 BUILDING OPERATIONS (custodial)**



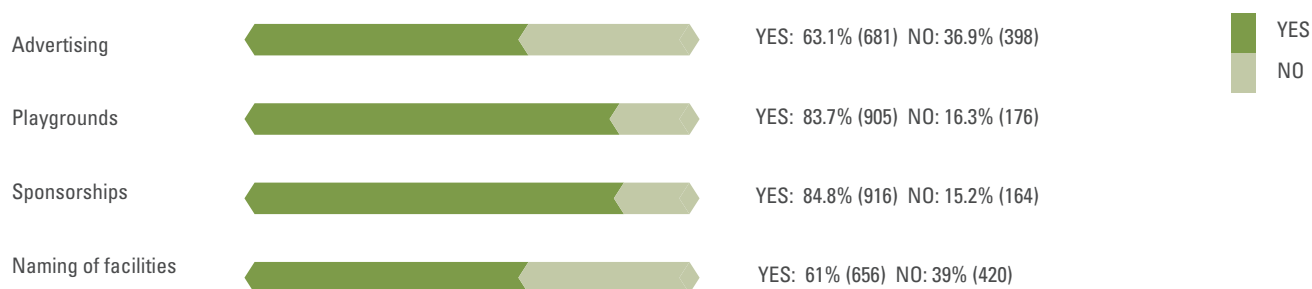
**FIGURE 16 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**



## Should the school district pursue public-private partnership opportunities in any of the following areas (advertising, playgrounds, sponsorships, naming of facilities)?

When asked if the school district should pursue public-private partnerships opportunities in advertising, playgrounds, sponsorships and/or the naming of facilities, respondents showed overwhelming support for opportunities in all four of these areas. The pursuit of sponsorships received the greatest support, with 916 respondents (or 84.8%) voting in favour. Public-private partnerships opportunities in playgrounds were also well supported, with 905 respondents (or 83.7%) voting in favour.

While advertising and the naming of facilities did receive majority support (681 respondents or 63.1% voting in favour of advertising; 656 respondents or 61% voting in favour of facilities naming), many respondents qualified this support by stressing the need for a careful monitoring of the kind of advertising the school district approves. Any advertising allowed in schools should be undertaken, as one respondent stressed, “in a responsible, respectful manner, benefiting students and [being] conducive to learning.”



## Community use of facilities

Respondents showed overwhelming support for increasing the availability of school district facilities, with 989 (or 91.5%) indicating they were in favour. Respondents also supported increasing rental rates to reflect full cost recovery, with 930 (or 86.2%) answering in the affirmative. In the open feedback section, however, a number of respondents did caution that rates should remain affordable for smaller non-profit groups.



## Revenue Generating Opportunities

Of the 1,084 respondents who completed the Budget Survey, 256 took time to offer suggestions for revenue generation. The suggestions fell into 7 broader categories, documented in figure 8.

Suggestions related to better utilization of school district facilities were by far the most common. In this vein, many respondents encouraged the school district to explore the possibility of providing paid before and after school care within its schools, and to be generally more strategic in its approach to facilities rentals.

43 respondents suggested sponsorships and business partnerships as potentially solid revenue generating opportunities, though many respondents cautioned that the district must maintain careful oversight in such ventures.

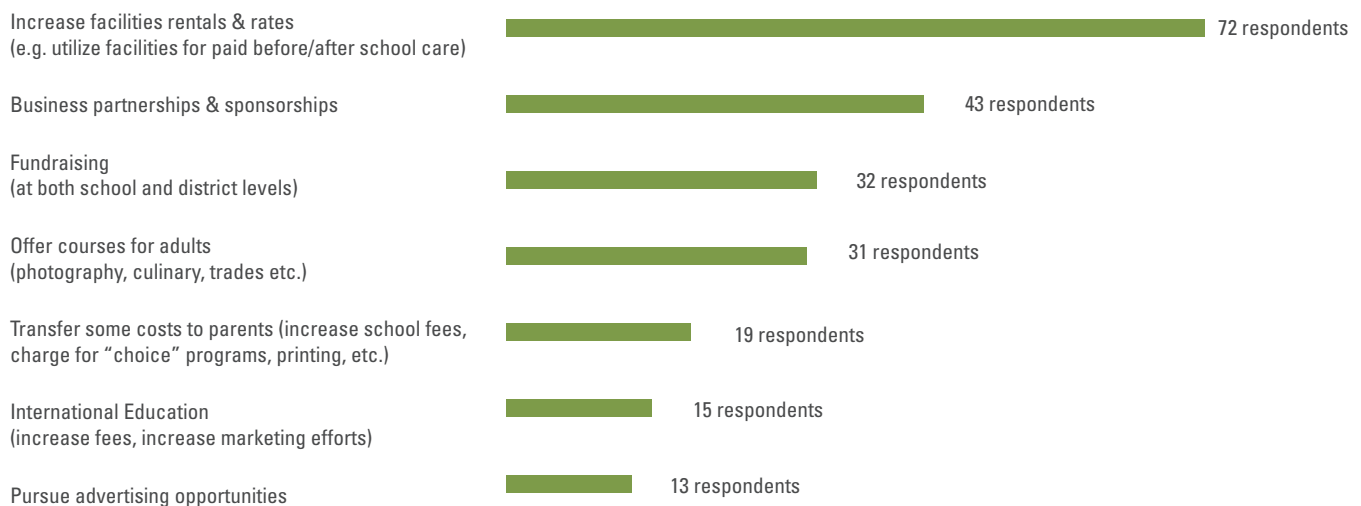
Fundraising was suggested by 32 respondents, while 31 respondents recommended that the school district give serious consideration to offering paid evening or weekend courses (in photography, culinary arts, etc.) to the general public.

While some respondents suggested increasing school fees, others noted that an increase in school fees would be unaffordable for some low-income families. Finally, finding ways to increase profits from International Education was suggested, as was the cautious pursuit advertising opportunities.



**FIGURE 8**

### SUGGEST OTHER REVENUE GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES



## Cost Saving Opportunities

Out of the 1,084 respondents who completed the Budget Survey, 327 took time to offer suggestions for cost saving opportunities. The suggestions fell into 8 broader categories, documented in figure 9.

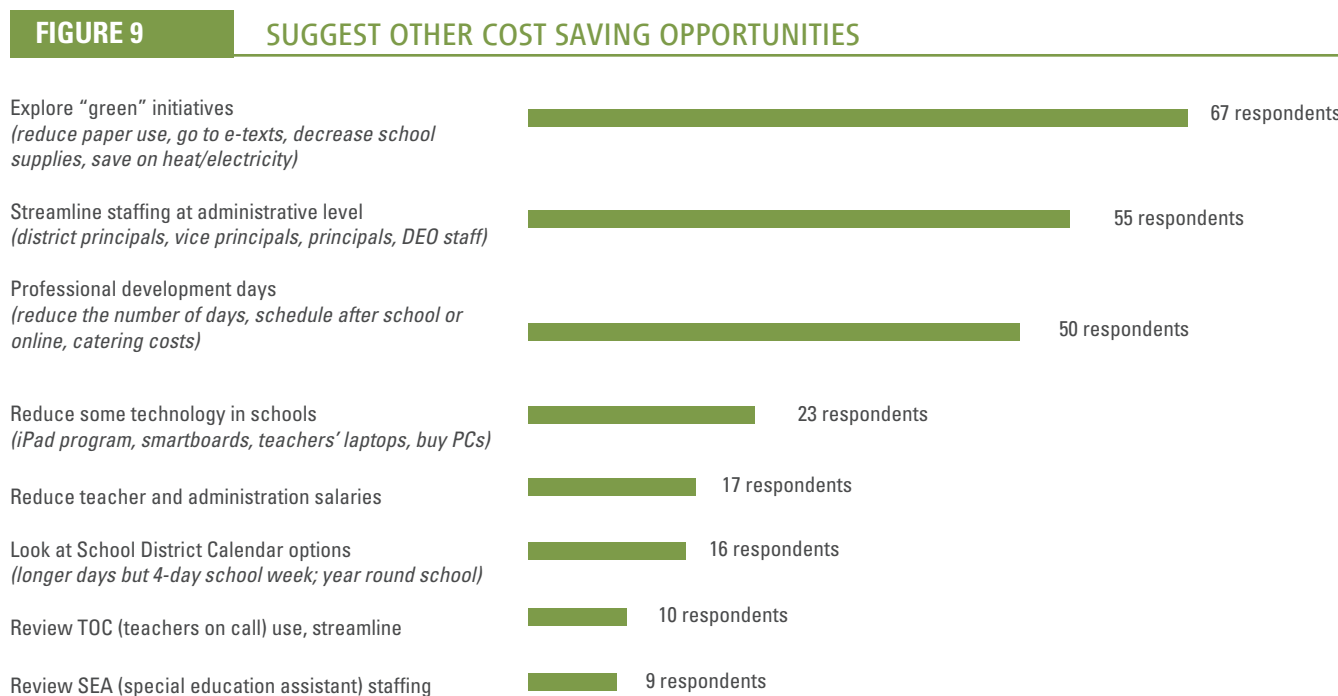
When asked to suggest other cost saving opportunities, 67 of 327 respondents favoured the streamlining of staff at the administrative level through a reduction in the number of district principals, school administrators and/or district office staff.

55 respondents suggested the district explore “green” initiatives such as a reduction in paper use and associated printing costs, or a shift to the use of eBooks in the classroom. Exploring ways in which the school district might save on heat and electricity in schools was also a common suggestion.

50 respondents suggested that the district reconsider the manner in which it offers professional development opportunities. Online learning was suggested as a cost-saving alternative, as was the reduction in the number of professional development days. Catering costs accrued by the school district was a related area of concern, with a number of respondents noting that professional development days in particular do not need to be catered.

A smaller number of respondents indicated their willingness to see a reduction of technology to schools as a cost-saving measure; a possible reduction in teacher and administration salaries was also proposed.

A complete list of common suggestions for cost saving opportunities is listed in figure 9 below.





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