WCS Accreditation Process – FHMS Parent & Student Stakeholder Feedback

Overview

Forest Hills Middle School (FHMS) had approximately 590 students at the time the survey was administered; 197 students were 6th graders; 203 students were 7th graders; and 190 students were 8th graders. The surveys were administered during the 2nd-4th weeks of school and all students were provided with the opportunity to participate (with the focus on 7th & 8th grade students) and were provided with the technology in which to take the survey digitally. Students absent or unable to take the survey on the dates their classes participated were offered additional dates and times to participate. Approximately 407 or 69% of our students participated in the survey process.

Multiple methods of communication were utilized for the parents and guardians of our students to make them aware of, and remind them of, the need for their participation:

- Automated parent calls through Blackboard Connect mass notification service were distributed on multiple occasions.
- A letter from the Principal was distributed to all students outlining the details of the parent survey process.
- The FHMS school webpage was utilized for the placement of all paper communications to parents and the parent survey link was accessible at this site. The school webpage offers a translate function which provides parents the opportunity to translate all documents and communications to over 80 languages.
- A second letter from the Principal was distributed approximately three weeks after the first letter to encourage parents to participate and to provide multiple avenues for survey completion.
- The Wilson County Schools (WCS) Public Relations Department distributed multiple mass calls to all WCS families to make them aware of the survey process and to encourage their participation and information; the parent survey link was placed on the WCS website.

Forest Hills parents were provided with multiple avenues for participating in the AdvancEd survey process. Approximately 30% of surveys were completed by our parents and guardians through the following avenues:

- Back to School Open House, 8/20/15: two computer labs were made available for parents to access and complete the survey; school staff were available to assist.
- FHMS school website hosted a link for the parent survey which was strategically placed in the top center of the website.
- A letter to parents provided them with a QR code, which could be used by any personal device, and digitally directed parents to the survey.
• FHMS Facebook page provided a link to the parent survey and was indicated in the parent letter.
• Paper surveys/envelopes (English/Spanish) were made available in the front office of our school and were distributed in car rider pick-up line. Parents were able to complete the survey and submit through a sealed envelope through their child’s homeroom teacher or to a staff member in the car rider pick-up line.

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest level of satisfaction or approval:

Students

• Purpose & Direction: In four of the five categories, or questions, listed within this standard, students indicated with a 79% overall average they feel positive about their education, the expectations, and programs/services made available to them.
• Governance & Leadership: Students indicated with an 81% agreement that their principal and teachers have high expectations of them. Additionally almost 70% of students responded positively that rules are applied equally to all students.
• Teaching & Assessing for Learning: In ten of fourteen categories, or questions, listed within this standard, students indicated with a 77% overall average they feel positive about the learning opportunities and academic expectations established by their teachers.

Parents

• Purpose & Direction: Across all three categories, or questions, listed within this standard, parents indicated with a 79% overall average they feel positive about the mission of our school and the academic goals put in place for their students.
• Governance & Leadership: Parents indicated with an 82% agreement that FHMS has high expectations for their students and communicates effectively about school goals and activities. Additionally, the remaining three questions resulted in a 75% average indicating our school is receptive and open to stakeholder involvement.
• Teaching & Assessing for Learning: In nine of fourteen categories, or questions, listed within this standard, parents indicated with an 80% overall average they feel positive about the learning opportunities and academic expectations established by their child’s teachers. The highest average of 90% indicates that parents are confident their child has a clear understanding of learning expectations in all classes.
• Resources & Support Systems: Our parents responded with an average of 80% in agreement that their student is provided with the resources and facilities to be successful at FHMS.
Focus on Continuous Improvement: Overall for this standard, our parents reported with 80% in agreement that the staff of FHMS keep them abreast of student and school progress; 85% of parents are confident their child is prepared for future success.

Areas with trends towards increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval:

Across all surveys completed by students and parents, the higher overall percentages of survey participants in agreement, or indicating positive perceptions, consistently came within the standards of Purpose & Direction and Governance & Leadership. Parents and students also indicated overall satisfaction with the teaching and assessment practices at Forest Hills.

Findings consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources:

Students

The Likert Scale averages for Forest Hills Middle School are consistently in line, or above, the Likert Scale averages for the collective student surveys across Wilson County Schools. This holds true for the areas students hold positive perceptions and those areas of opportunity.

Parents

The Likert Scale averages for Forest Hills Middle School are consistently in line, or above, the Likert Scale averages for the collective parent surveys across Wilson County Schools. The range of discrepancy between the two different survey responses is -0.06 to -0.30. The Likert averages holds true for the both the areas parents indicate a positive perception to those areas of opportunity.

Areas In Need of Improvement

Areas with overall lowest level of satisfaction or approval:

Students

- Purpose & Direction, Governance & Leadership: In both of these standards the theme of respect indicates an area of opportunity for both how students perceive they are treated and how students treat adults; both areas show 39% and 33% respectively, in which students agree.
- Resources & Support Systems - within this standard, students indicate four areas of opportunity:
  - In my school, the building and grounds are safe, clean, and provide a healthy place for learning; only 44% of students agree.
  - In my school, students respect the property of others; only 27% of students agree.
In my school, students help each other even if they are not friends; only 33% of students agree.
In my school, I have access to counseling, career planning, and other programs to help me in school; only 67% of students agree.

- Teaching for Assessing & Learning:
  - All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs; only 54% of students agree.
  - My school makes sure there is at least one adult who knows me well and shows interest in my education and future; only 62% of students agree.

- Using Results for Continuous Improvement:
  - My school considers students' opinions when planning ways to improve the school; only 58% of students agree.

- Overall: 68% of students participating in this survey either strongly agreed or agreed to the questionnaire items across all five AdvancEd Standards. This percentage represents significant areas of opportunity for our school to increase student engagement.

Parents

- Teaching for Assessing & Learning – three distinct areas show a much lower average of parents in agreement:
  - Instruction being individualized to meet students learning needs, 62%
  - Parents feeling a disconnect to how a student is being graded, 65%
  - Students seeing a relationship to what they are learning and everyday life, 67%

Which area(s) show a trend toward decreasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

Students have strongly indicated the opportunity to improve interpersonal skills, interactions, and relationships between students. Additionally, students perceive there is opportunity to improve how they are treated by adults when it comes to respect and individualized or differentiated learning to improve their overall school experiences. Our parents have indicated they would like their student(s) to experience learning that is more relevant to life outside of the educational setting and more individualized learning that will enhance and increase their student(s) learning opportunities.

What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

Students have indicated their need for a higher level of positive and authentic connections to their peers and teachers. Our students want to feel valued through the unique learning experiences their teachers provide them, the resources available for their learning, and they want to feel safe and secure every time they step foot on our campus. A direct outcome of not addressing these areas could be a decrease in student engagement and overall learning &
achievement. Additionally, our students’ perception of what a public school education provides them may decline and may impact their future learning experiences.

**Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?**

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