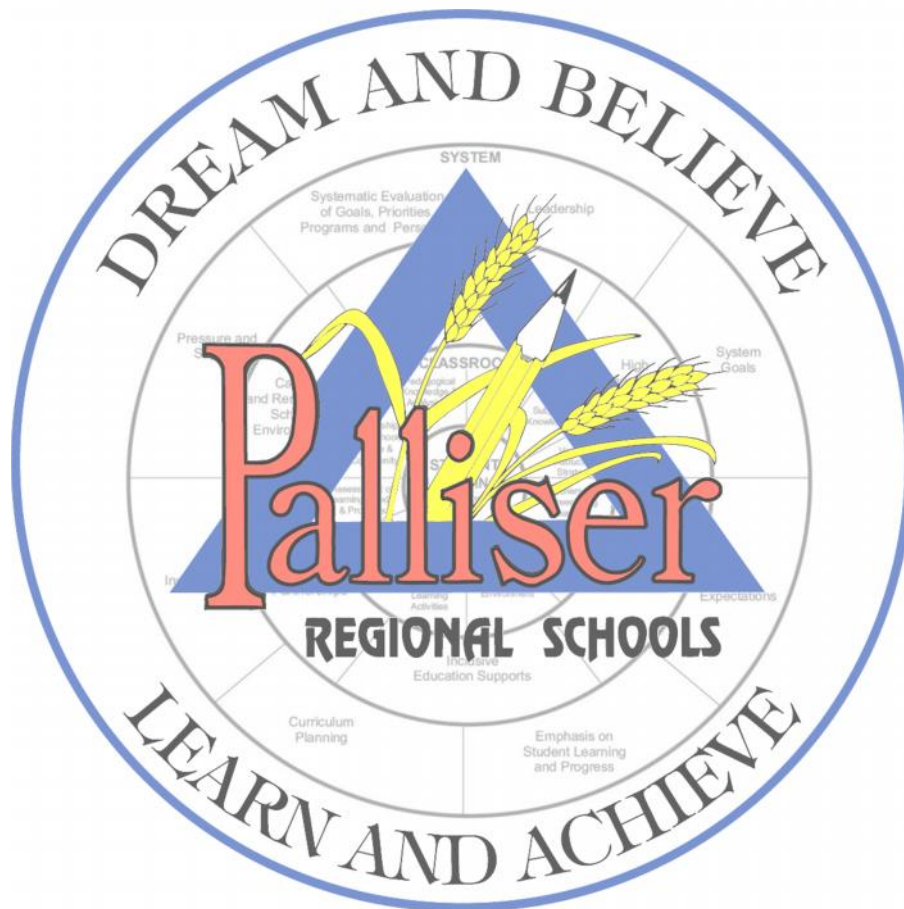


# Kate Andrews High School

## A School Effectiveness Review

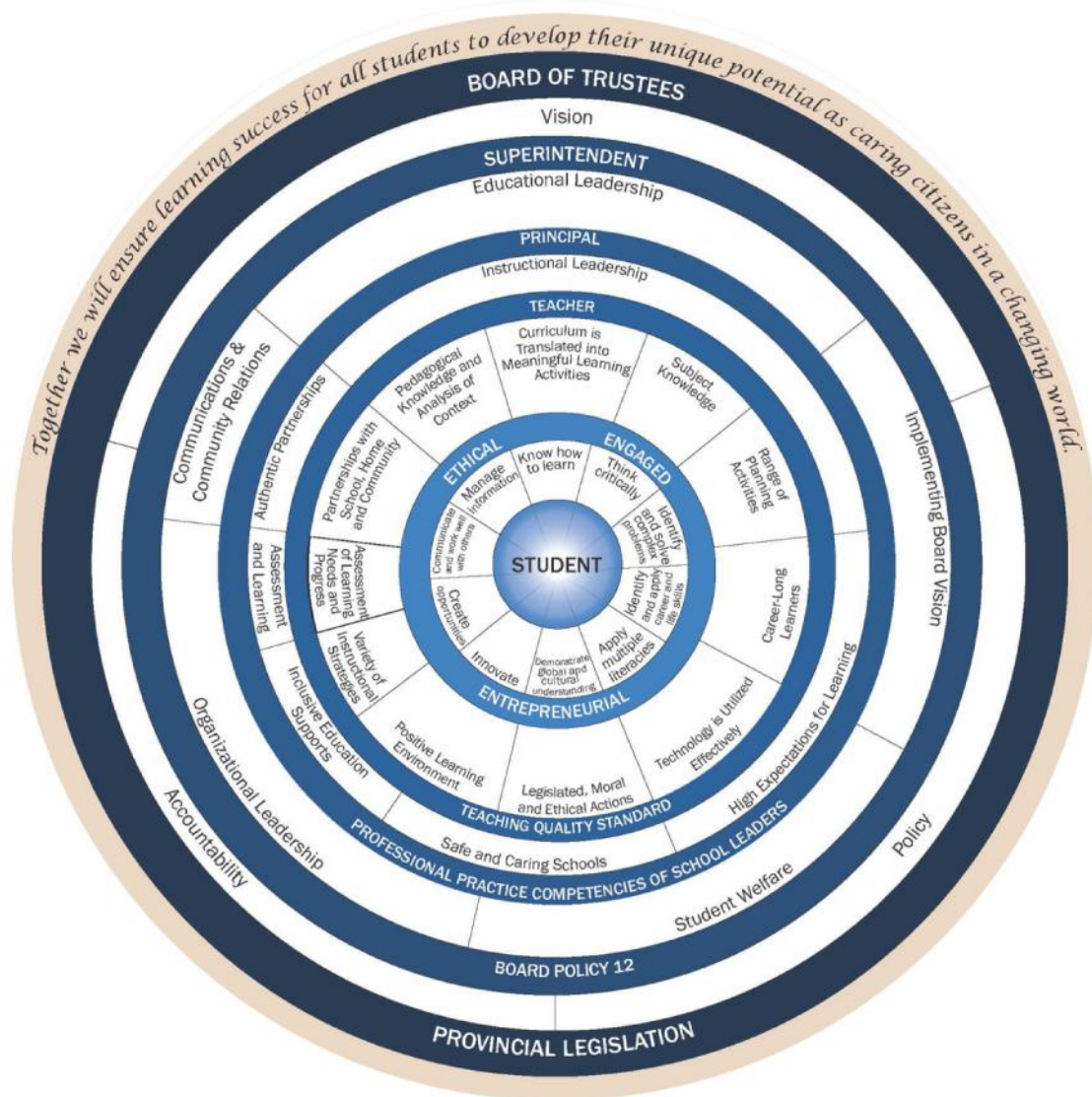


December 2, 2015

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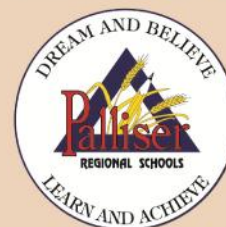
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# Palliser Regional School Effectiveness Model



# Palliser Regional Schools Effectiveness Model

This model for an effective, student-focused school system is based on research as well as principles described by Inspiring Education, professional standards of teachers and principals, and the understanding that alignment of goals and vision at all levels creates an environment for achieving those goals and attaining that vision.



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Elected every four years;  
Conducts annual evaluations to ensure it is meeting stakeholders' needs;  
Operates a centralized system of supports for all schools;  
and allocates resources based on student needs.

## SUPERINTENDENT

Honours the Board's vision and direction;  
Ensures a system-wide culture of high expectations and accountability;  
Ensures ongoing improvement through school goals, school reviews,  
and accountability processes;  
Literacy, assessment for learning and safe and caring school environments are  
long-term priorities for student success;  
Ensures support personnel and services are in place to support principals and teachers.

## PRINCIPALS

Must demonstrate professional practice competency in these areas:

- Fostering effective relationships;
- Embodying visionary leadership;
- Leading a learning committee;
- Providing instructional leadership;
- Developing and facilitating leadership;
- Managing school operations and resources;
- Understanding and responding to the larger societal context.

## TEACHERS

Acknowledged as the single most important person to the student's success in school;  
Is supported through mentorship, coaching, professional development  
and collaboration time;  
Fosters high expectations for each student's learning.

## STUDENTS

The system exists to support each student to achieve the highest level of success possible.

## Acknowledgements

Many Palliser Regional Schools professional staff assisted in the Kate Andrews High School Review. The Board of Trustees and Superintendent Kevin Gietz were key in authorizing the collection of data from parents/guardians, students and staff. The Review Team appreciated the commitment of the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent that the process was open and inclusive and that the review operated in an independent manner. The fact that Palliser Regional Schools initiates an in-house program for reviewing the effectiveness of schools as a support to school planning is exemplary.

Principal Harry Fritschy worked with the team, coordinated the school review process and provided school documents. The principal and vice-principal, Jen Nieboer, are to be commended for their support during the review process. They demonstrated professional regard and objectivity.

The staff of Kate Andrews High School contributed time and insight about school operations through individual interviews and survey completion. Their reflective thoughts and perceptions provided valuable information in understanding the school, its culture and operations.

Parents/guardians and students used the opportunity to provide their perceptions of the school. The approach was open, direct and balanced.

Much appreciation is extended to Tiffany Wald, Shawna Barat and Barb Eler for their efforts in compiling this report and the information contained therein.

Pat Rivard, Associate Superintendent (Education Services)

Cynthia Gietz, Director of Learning

### **Kate Andrews High School Review Team**

Kevin Gietz	Superintendent
Ken Garinger	Associate Superintendent (Human Resources)
Pat Rivard	Associate Superintendent (Education Services)
Stan Hielema	Associate Superintendent (Education Services)
Tom Hamer	Director of Learning
Mike Nightingale	Director of Human Resources
Cynthia Gietz	Director of Learning
Laurie Wilson	Director of Learning
Ryan Brennan	Principal, Heritage Christian Academy
Tracy Inaba	Principal, County Central High School
Chris McIntyre	Principal, Coalhurst High School
Ramy Elhamalawy	Vice Principal, Akram Jomaa Campus, Calgary Islamic School
Steven Colgan	Palliser Lead Teacher Cohort, Menno Simons Christian School

### **Kate Andrews High School Council**

Sharon Gurr	Chairperson
Debbie Tonin	Vice Chairperson
Deb Chaika	Parent Representative
Tanya Wurzer	Parent Representative

### **Kate Andrews High School Teachers**

Harry Fritschy	Principal
Jen Nieboer	Vice Principal
Kim Alexander	Teacher
Linda Andre	Teacher
Arlene Arroyo	Teacher
Robyn Baraniecki	Teacher
Mike Gibson	Teacher
Nicole Hanna	Teacher
Kade Hogg	Teacher
Kevin Holland	Teacher
Paige Hierath	Teacher
Rod Horlacher	Teacher
Scott Oikawa	Teacher
Angie Roelofs	Teacher
Chantel Dodgson	Teacher
Kelly Scott	Teacher

Ron Terakita	Teacher
Joel Wetmore	Teacher
Jason Schilling	Teacher
Nicole Swen	Teacher

### **Kate Andrews High School Support Staff**

Teresa Neufeld	Educational Assistant
Terri Erten	Educational Assistant
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Paul Deren-Reck	Educational Assistant
Susan Janzen	Educational Assistant
Diane Gallagher	Educational Assistant
Pjam Swen	Educational Assistant
Maxine Janzen	Administrative Assistant
Darby Bell	Administrative Assistant
Lavonn Mutch	Family School Liaison Counselor (FSLC)
Susan Schmidt	Career and Academic Counselor (CAC)
Ken Clossen	Head Custodian
Sharon Yanke	Custodian
Deb Rotj	Custodian



## CHAPTER 1

### TERMS OF REFERENCE AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

#### PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

This review was designed to provide a picture of Kate Andrews School as perceived by various stakeholder groups. The review provided opportunity for students, teachers, administrators, support staff and parents/guardians to become involved in thinking about the school and its future.

Specifically, this school effectiveness review was undertaken to:

1. Provide a picture of the school as perceived by the various stakeholders;
2. Identify those areas in which the school is performing well;
3. Suggest areas in which school life can be improved;
4. Suggest ways in which the various stakeholders can work more effectively together;
5. Celebrate the successes of the school; and
6. Provide information to be used in planning for the future.

At the onset, the staff of Kate Andrews High School was informed that the observations on school effectiveness received from parents/guardians, students and staff was to provide a database of perceptions and suggestions to extend collaborative planning for the future of the school. Such planning is to start in May 2016. The findings that follow are presented with that objective in mind.

It is important to note that the only reason for conducting the review of Kate Andrews High School is to provide the school community with school improvement information. There was no intention to evaluate any individual(s) associated with the school. The review was designed to look at the total operation of the school with the purpose of highlighting areas of strength and those areas requiring further attention by the school and its community.

#### CONCEPTUALIZATION

The conceptualization for the School Effectiveness Review is premised on the indicators of school effectiveness and the research relating to professional learning communities. During the past 30 years, researchers have identified numerous characteristics that depict successful schools. According to this research, effective schools are characterized by a culture or ethos that permeates the school and results in positive learning outcomes for students.

Palliser Regional Schools has refined and improved its research-based school review process. The correlates contained within the effectiveness model have been tested and used in numerous schools and school systems over the intervening years. Palliser's version of the model



incorporates mission and vision under instructional leadership to streamline the number of correlates from seven to six. The correlate tools used in this study were updated in January 2013.

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## PROCEDURES

A variety of procedures were used to gather information for the review. These included site visits, observations, surveys, individual and focus group interviews, and documentary analysis. These procedures were deemed appropriate methods for collecting data.

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## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Each of the data collection methods is briefly described.

**Site Visits:** In order to obtain a picture of how the school works, site visits were undertaken. These involved general observations of classrooms, the facility, and walkabouts of the entire school and grounds by the Review Team. On November 17, 2015, an initial meeting was held with the principal, Harry Fritschy, to discuss and develop specific survey tools that matched the school's philosophy and purpose. In addition, the methods for distributing the on-line surveys were discussed. Also on November 17, 2015, an after-school presentation was made to Kate Andrews High School staff about the philosophy of school reviews, the Palliser effective schools correlates, and the scope and focus of the Kate Andrews High School review. Methods for collecting data from students and parents were also discussed at this time. The Review Team members made an on-site visit in order to conduct the review on December 2, 2015. During the day, the Review Team members viewed the school facilities, interviewed staff and conducted focus groups. At this time, formal discussions were held with students, teachers, and other staff regarding school life. It should be noted that the Review Team was impressed by the warm reception provided by the students and all those who work at the school. It was apparent that the professionals were very proud of their work and were willing to share ideas and issues with Review Team members. Also, on the evening of December 2, 2015, members of the Review Team met with five parents to explain the rationale for the review and to conduct a focus group session.

**Classroom Climate Observations:** Part of the school review process includes classroom observations conducted by visiting principals/vice-principals and central office administrators. At times members of Palliser Regional Schools Lead Teacher Cohort are invited to participate in reviews and conduct observations. All teachers at Kate Andrews High School were made aware of the Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA) model. The TESA model collects evidence of three types of positive interactions between classroom teachers and their students: Response Opportunities, Feedback and Personal Regard. Each classroom was visited at least two times by different Review Team members. After each visit, the classroom teacher was provided with a copy of all data that was recorded during the observation. There was opportunity to discuss the observation either at the end of the class or at the end of the day.

**On-line Surveys:** The School Effectiveness Surveys were administered to all students, teachers, educational assistants/support staff and parents/guardians. The on-line surveys opened on December 3, 2015. Grade 9-10 student surveys closed on December 8, 2015, and Grade 11-12

student surveys closed on December 14, 2015. Educational Assistants and Support Staff surveys closed on December 14, 2015. Teacher surveys were closed on December 17, 2015. Parent surveys were closed on December 21, 2015. Parental participation in the surveys was high and is seen to be appropriate and representative of the families with children enrolled at Kate Andrews High School. The number of possible and actual respondents for each group of respondents is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Survey Returns for Each Responding Group**

Survey	Possible Respondents	Number of Returns	Percent Returns
Grade 9-10 Students	176	172	98%
Grade 11- 12 Students	168	155	92%
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>95%</b>
Parents/Guardians (families)	286	143	50%
Teachers	17	17	100%
Educational Assistants/Support Staff	16	15	94%
<b>Total Parents/Guardians, Teachers, &amp; Educational Assistants/Support Staff</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>76%</b>

From the information in **Table 1**, it is evident that students, teachers and staff were all adequately represented. Electronic surveys were used for all parents, teachers, support staff and students at Kate Andrews High School. The parent response was further supported by the focus group interview that was conducted on the evening of December 2, 2015.

**Interviews:** Individual Curriculum and Instruction interviews were held with teachers. Focus group interviews were also held with educational assistants and support staff, parents and students. In total, approximately 59 individuals participated in interviews and focus groups. The interviews were structured in such a way that the interview questions were common to all members of the sub-groups. Opportunity was afforded for individuals to elaborate as they wished concerning their own experiences and views about the school.

**Document Review:** Information pertaining to classroom and school populations, parents and staff, school programs, procedures and policies was derived from documents supplied by the administration and staff. These materials were valuable in supplementing and clarifying the picture of school life captured in the interviews, focus groups and surveys. Documents obtained for the review included: Kate Andrews High School Three Year Education Plan including school goals for 2015-2016; October 2015 Provincial Accountability Pillar; staff meeting agendas, site-based days notes and September to December 2015 School Council Minutes, September to December 2015 newsletters and the school website: [kateandrewshighschool.com](http://kateandrewshighschool.com)

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## DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Administered survey data was collected and analyzed electronically. The results were presented in the form of frequencies and percentages for each statement and category. Students were asked for responses to the survey questions using a five-point scale ranging from '1' for 'strongly disagree' to '4' for 'strongly agree' and 'Don't Know'. This scale was also used for parents/guardians, teachers and educational assistants/support staff. The 'agree' and 'strongly agree' rankings were aggregated for each statement, as were the 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' categories.

As a general guide to interpreting responses to each of the statements in the survey, when more than 70% of respondents indicated 'agree/strongly agree,' it was assumed that there was strong agreement with that statement. A percentage of less than 50% indicated a lack of agreement with that statement. 'Don't Know' percentages are indicated in brackets.

Information from the interviews, focus groups and observations was collated thematically and content analyzed to provide a review of the school according to each school effectiveness correlate. Other documents were subjected to content analysis. A number of verbatim comments from the respondents are included in this report. These comments, selected from the verbatim responses, interview and focus group data and feedback from observations were used to illustrate the perceptions of respondents and to provide additional perspectives on the survey data. Throughout this report, the term 'teacher' indicates data from members of the teaching staff; the term 'staff' refers to the total group of teachers and educational assistants/support staff.

The description of the school effectiveness attributes is generic and is represented in common format for every School Effectiveness Review. Palliser has attempted to standardize the reports as much as possible for ease of interpretation.

---

## ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This chapter has provided the background and terms of reference for the review and has outlined the research methods that the Review Team utilized to gather and report the data. Chapter 2 presents the perceptions of a variety of groups and individuals as to the work of Kate Andrews High School on each of the School Effectiveness Correlates. A summary of major themes, together with a description of possibilities and planning priorities for future action emerging from this study, is provided in Chapter 3.

## CHAPTER 2

### EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FRAMEWORK AND THE SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS ATTRIBUTES

Chapter 2 describes the School Effectiveness Attributes within the Effective Practices Framework. For nearly three decades, research on school effectiveness has emphasized that in effective schools, a number of specific characteristics are evidenced consistently and purposefully. More recently, Palliser Regional Schools has developed a framework for school effectiveness that uses similar research on the correlates of school effectiveness and expanded it to include new dimensions pertinent to the ever-broadening expectations of schools. The framework and its relationship to the school effectiveness characteristics are described below.

- Instructional Leadership
  - Role of the principal
  - Agent of change
  - Capacity building
  - Collaborative
  - Inspires others
  - Holder and communicator of school purpose (mission).
- High Expectations of Learning
  - High standards for student success
  - High levels of student engagement
  - Positive staff/student relationships
  - Positive staff/parent relationships
  - Curriculum competency
  - Creating challenging learning environments.
- Assessment and Learning
  - High quality feedback
  - On-going reporting/communication of student learning to parents
  - Effective assessment tools used in classrooms
  - Frequent monitoring of student learning
  - Parental awareness of student learning
  - Common assessment language is used in the school.
- Inclusive Education Supports
  - Variety of tools available enable staff to know students
  - Capacity of personnel to meet students' diverse learning needs
  - Awareness of preventive programs available for students
  - Learning materials available address student learning needs
  - A variety of teaching strategies and materials support student program needs
  - School/home teams support inclusive education.
- Authentic Partnerships
  - Effective school council
  - Student involvement in school programs

- Student accomplishments celebrated with parents
  - Parent volunteers in the school
  - Community involvement and support
  - Actively seeks out parental input
  - Actively seeks out community involvement to support student learning
  - Parental input on school policies
  - Parents are welcome at the school.
- Caring and Respectful School Environment
- Safe place that encourages student learning
  - Principal and teachers show that they care about students
  - Teachers available outside of class time to help students
  - Maintaining a safe, attractive physical environment
  - Students and teachers take pride in the appearance of their school
  - Clearly stated, consistently reinforced student behavioral expectations
  - Staff and students treat each other with mutual respect
  - Students respect each other: bullying is not a problem in this school
  - Infrequent disruption of learning
  - The school climate promotes learning
  - Student behavior contributes to a safe and respectful environment
  - Classroom discipline is applied equally to all students.

In this chapter, the information from various sources of data as they relate to the work of Kate Andrews High School is presented for each of the above dimensions.

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## INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP: VISION AND PURPOSE

Research has demonstrated that effective schools incorporate a shared philosophy and a sense of vision of what those involved wants to achieve. A school's mission and primary goals are widely shared by teachers, administrators, educational assistants and support staff, parents/guardians and students. Michael Fullan stated in his work, *The Six Secrets of Change*, (2008), "...you should stand for a high purpose, hire talented individuals ... create mechanisms for purposeful peer interaction." Those engaged in the day-to-day life of the school seek to build communities of parent/guardian and student support while keeping their common purpose paramount at all times. In essence, an effective school always keeps student learning as the focus of its work. Further, in Harvey Alvy and Pam Robbins research entitled, *Learning from Lincoln: Leadership Practices for School Success*, (2010) "the leader's task is to organize the school... to support collaborative work, create those conditions that will allow it to occur, and ensure that the collaboration is purposeful for those involved." Effective instructional leadership not only organizes collaborative efforts but continually monitors and champions those teacher efforts that result in improved student learning.

While parents/guardians and other key stakeholders have a role to play in the development and clarification of the school's mission, the staff play a pivotal role in assessing the school's performance, discussing priorities and developing collaborative ways of doing things that matter most in the school. Such a focus on mission is reflected in the following characteristics: shared norms and consistency throughout the school; agreed-upon ways of doing things; clearly stated

goals known to all; a high degree of acceptance of the importance of goals; joint planning initiatives and data-based decision making. Inherent in achieving the mission of the school is the belief that the professional staff has the potential to change the culture of the school.

Parents, teachers, educational assistants and support staff (EA/SS) and student perceptions of the extent to which these characteristics are represented at Kate Andrews School are summarized in **Table 2**.

**Table 2: Indicators of Instructional Leadership: School Vision and Purpose**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9-10	Grade 11-12
Continuous improvement is expected of all school personnel.		94/6	100/0		
The principal provides effective leadership at this school.	54/12 (34)	94/6	100/0	55/31 (14)	62/32 (6)
Administration works together to provide effective leadership in this school.	33/4 (63)	71/23 (6)	93/7	56/19 (25)	55/17 (28)
Staff members are encouraged to take on leadership roles.		71/17 (12)	100/0		
There is collaboration among staff and school council before setting school goals.	28/4 (68)	53/6 (41)	87/0 (13)		
Staff is adequately supported and trained to meet students' diverse learning needs.	66/16 (18)	53/47	66/27 (7)		
The staff is committed to the school's goals. (Parents: I am aware of the school's goals.)	48/23 (29)	65/12 (23)	93/7	78/9 (13)	84/13 (3)

Very strong support was registered for the item, 'Continuous improvement is expected of all school personnel' from all staff at Kate Andrews High School. EA/SS and all students registered good support for 'The staff is committed to the school's goals' while teachers recorded a higher degree of 'Unknowns' for this item. Both teachers and the EA/SS indicated higher percentage of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' for 'Staff is adequately supported and trained to meet students' diverse learning needs'. Overall, parents recorded higher percentage of 'Don't Knows' for items in this table. These could be examined further.

Vision and mission statements are vital tools intended to define criteria for decision-making. Each staff member must internalize and personalize these professional beliefs and resulting directions if consistency and effectiveness are to be maximized.

**Kate Andrews High School Vision statement:**

*In pursuit of excellence.*

**Kate Andrews Mission Statement:**

*Educating learners in a safe environment that challenges each to attain academic and personal success.*

The vision and mission was evident throughout the interactions with individuals and groups and through the observations made by the Review Team on its visits to the school. The school's mission was also reflected in many ways in the comments of students, parents and staff, and in the school newsletters and other communications. All of the above stakeholders strongly suggest that the mission of this school is highly dynamic, drives school life, and is an inherent part of the culture at Kate Andrews High School. This, of course, provides an important standard against which the points of distinction and continuing challenges of this school need to be gauged.

The following comments reflect the sense of vision at Kate Andrews High School:

*The amount of amazing teachers at our school is awesome. They always take time to connect with you when it comes to academic problems or life problems and they are really good at establishing trust and a connection very quickly with the students here. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*They have a very strong student council; our school is a welcoming school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Consistent expectations of student behavior (is an area of refinement). [EA/SS]*

*There are options in terms of classes and clubs. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*



*I feel that the teachers know my children and honestly care for them. I appreciate that. [Parent]*

*Effective qualities are things such as the numerous amounts of clubs available, and the ability to make new ones. This helps students feel more involved in school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Smaller size leads to a better communication between staff and students. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Kate Andrews is a wonderful environment to work in. Support from other staff is appreciated. [EA/SS]*

*I love the Brazilians and would give them another opportunity to come back to Canada. I love Brazil, and they have the lovely people. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*It's nice to get feedback on teaching performance. [Teacher]*

*Teacher's classroom procedures seem clear and well managed. (Teacher has) obvious strong relationships with students. They are engaged and respectful. [Observing Administrator]*

*The school has a lot of people who don't feel like they are a part of something, and as a school one of your top priorities should be to make people feel like they belong. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The punishments for others actions should more implemented. If the consequences were more severe, the students wouldn't be causing the problems as often. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*I'm always amazed that many students are very respectful towards high need students with disabilities. Students go out of their way to help those students when needed and are friendlier towards them. [Teacher]*

*More light on the kids who do fine arts. Promote it more. Make it even with sports. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*It's nice to have a second set of eyes in the classroom to identify things that are going well and areas to be aware of it. [Teacher]*

*[An area of improvement is] more consistency in classroom behavior expectations i.e. hats, food, cell phone use [EA/SS]*

*There is a warming sense of unity about the school. Everyone feels safe. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Clean, friendly, and small enough that kids are recognized individually by teachers and each other. [Parent]*

*Having appropriate discipline that actually makes sense and for it to be not too harsh or light (is an area of improvement). [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*I believe the school focuses on getting all students to a level of achievement. [Parent]*

*Staff is committed to helping students learn and directing them towards growing academically and personally. [Teacher]*

*Teachers are really friendly and take extra time to help if need be. Some teachers even come to activities specific to a couple students just to support them. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The good teachers are truly amazing. [Parent]*

*They need to give another opportunity to the Brazilian students to come back, because they are amazing and friendly! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The teachers all seem to know all the students names and behaviors and learning capabilities. [Parent]*

*I really commend the administration in our school. I always feel supported and heard whenever I have a concern. [Teacher]*

*We have pride in our school. We have lots of sports and programs. The teachers are amazing and very outgoing! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*My child loves learning and feels challenged to do better. Keep up the good work! [Parent]*

*Most teachers support students during after school activities such as sports. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I think the staff in this school is outstanding, particularly in the ways that they support each other and focus on the students first. [Teacher]*

*Kate Andrews continues to be an excellent school. [Parent]*

*This school exemplifies their school pride, and loves their sports and such. It is a good quality to encourage students to participate in these types of activities. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Teachers have fun with the students. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The Hockey Academy program is really helping me with being more active, and the kids in the program are also helping me improve and I am really grateful for it. I have improved a lot because of the help I receive. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Because the school is so small, everyone knows everyone! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Engaging and a good environment to be involved in. Enjoy coming to school! Actually learn. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Our development in relationships between our students could strongly be improved. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*We Create Change has been a huge success and one of the best ideas that has hit this school in the last few years! [Teacher]*

*Everyone knows everyone. So most everyone is just friends with everyone! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

---

#### CARING AND RESPECTFUL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: SCHOOL CLIMATE.

In effective schools, concerted attention is devoted to the creation and maintenance of a safe and caring environment that is conducive to learning. This includes the establishment of a climate in which students can enjoy school and the various relationships they experience within it. It relates, in turn, to the nature of school rules, school discipline, how people get along with each other, and the overall school spirit that prevails. In these contexts, very specific regulations and guidelines are laid down and they are clearly understood by everyone. **Table 3** contains a summary of the survey responses of parents, teachers, educational assistants/support staff and students regarding various aspects of school climate at this school.

**Table 3: Indicators of School Climate**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 -10	Grade 11-12
Staff demonstrates that they care about students.	74/18 (8)	94/6	100/0	79/19 (10)	78/18 (3)
Teachers are available to help students outside of class.	61/15 (24)	94/6		84/9 (7)	79/15 (6)
Staff treats students with respect.	75/15 (10)	100/0	100/0	69/23 (8)	79/18 (3)
Students treat staff with respect.	56/14 (30)	100/0	93/7	56/32 (12)	64/28 (8)
In this school there are clearly stated behavioral expectations.	72/12 (16)	71/29	73/27	92/5 (3)	92/5 (3)
School discipline is carried out in a consistent manner for all students.	40/15 (45)	58/30 (12)	67/26 (7)	50/40 (10)	57/29 (14)
Students feel safe at school.	89/10 (1)	88/0 (12)	93/7	77/13 (10)	85/11 (4)
In this school there are few disruptions to instructional time.	65/11 (24)	65/35	93/7	69/26 (5)	65/32 (3)
Students treat other students well. There have been few incidents of repeated threatening/teasing behaviors this year.	79/18 (3)	59/23 (18)	87/0 (13)	58/32 (10)	69/24 (7)

Data in **Table 3** indicates strong support for, 'Students feel safe at school'. Teachers and both student groups registered appreciative responses for 'Teachers are available to help students outside of class' save for 15% of Grade 11-12 students who noted a higher percentage of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree'. Both student groups were also in agreement that there are clearly stated behavioral expectations in Kate Andrews with lower percentages registered by parents,

teachers and EA/SS on this item. Lower percentages were also registered by all groups for the item, 'School discipline is carried out in a consistent manner for all students'. Both teachers and EA/SS noted strong support for the items, 'Staff demonstrates that they care about students', 'Staff treats students with respect' and 'Students treat staff with respect' whereas parents and both student groups registered higher percentages of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' to these items. These items could be examined further.

Additional comments about Kate Andrews High School's Safe and Caring Climate are outlined below. These provide interesting confirmation, elaboration and viewpoints on the data described above.

*The staff are willing to help with work that students do not understand, even if that means staying after school or coming in early. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*There is an atmosphere built in this class where students feel free to express themselves. [Observing Administrator]*

*It is a very friendly school. [Parent]*

*The friendship is amazing between us here. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Safe learning environment. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Some of the best qualities of the school are the assemblies and how the whole school gets together and plays games. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Overall I think that the school is doing great work with helping the students become independent, socially conscious adults. [EA/SS]*

*Most teachers are really positive in helping my learning and help in giving extra when needed. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Looking at the whole child and supporting their wins in and out of school (is an area of improvement). [Parent]*

*Most of our kids' experiences have been very positive. Happy to have them attend. [Parent]*

*Some teachers do genuinely care about their students and teach their students as well as they possibly can. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I really like this school. It allows me to do my best academically, athletically, and socially. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*I have hardly, if ever, seen anything relating to bullying in this school. It all seems like one big family, even if I am not attending regular classes. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*[An area of improvement would be] that some of the students should be nicer and more kind to the people around them, so that we have a kinder environment. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The school's pride is a good quality that makes me feel like I'm a part of something. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*It is a welcoming school. [EA/SS]*

*Some teachers really do show that they care for you, and want to see you get better, and want to know more about you. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*I find that students are actually very caring towards those with disabilities, language barriers, or just others in general. Overall I would say bullying is not a huge problem in this school. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Some of the teachers have great personalities and I enjoy having them as my teachers. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*This school does not have a whole lot of school spirit. For school events such as concerts or sports games, people don't ever show up to support the group or the teams. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*All the teachers respect me, and I respect them. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Since Kate Andrews High School is in a small community, mostly everyone in the school knows each other. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*It is effective at making sure everyone gets the same opportunities every day. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The relationship that exists between each grade and within its own grade is very positive. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The school helps the students to have interest about sports, and this is awesome. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*This school has friendly staff that helps me advance in my learning. Also there are many extracurricular activities that students are encouraged to get involved in. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The most effective qualities of this school are the kindness and feeling at home. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Celebrate students in more areas as opposed to just academics and athletics. Staff could be more open/receptive to change (I understand that something we have been doing for a long time works, but something new might work better!) [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The teachers are the most effective quality of this school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The staff tries to stay engaged in their students' lives, asking how they are, smiling, or joking around with them. This creates a happy environment and allows students to want to be here, or make it less of a boring environment. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The school has the best education, and you can learn a lot of things in different classes and in different ways. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*I believe that Kate Andrews is a good institution for learning. But in regards to student appreciation it could really pick up its socks. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Some teachers really bond with the students and care about us. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I like how the teachers encourage the students to get involved in the school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The staff and students have created a safe feeling environment, where everyone is generally positive towards others. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Teachers are friendly! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Classes are small enough that the teacher can go to each individual student and help them out when they need it. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Lots of teachers care about the students, beyond just learning. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Most staff are fairly nice! [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teachers are very welcoming and helpful when I have troubles. Or they know when I don't perform at my best and they wonder if there is something wrong outside of school. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*This school is fun and accepts any person into its social groups. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

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## CARING AND RESPECTFUL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment is an important supporting condition by which the key qualities of school life can be enhanced. Basic standards of appearance, attractiveness and cleanliness relate to the upkeep of the facility and speak eloquently to the priorities and attitudes of those who work in the school, as well as those who are responsible for its maintenance. The extent to which the physical environment contributes to safety and the teaching and learning process is a critical consideration. Parent, teacher, educational assistant/support staff and student responses to survey questions about the physical environment at Kate Andrews High School are summarized in the next table.



**Table 4: Indicators of Physical Environment**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Students take pride in the appearance of their school.	64/12 (24)	76/18 (6)	93/0 (7)	54/33 (13)	46/44 (10)
The school building is clean.	94/1 (5)	100/0	100/0	84/15 (1)	91/8 (1)
The school building is safe.	86/3 (11)	94/0 (6)	100/0	85/8 (7)	77/15 (8)
The drop-off and pick-up area is safe.	60/3 (37)	88/0 (12)	86/7 (7)	47/9 (44)	46/15 (39)
Students are safe when riding the bus to and from school. (Don't know or does not ride the bus)	32/4 (64)	47/0 (53)		33/6 (61)	34/6 (60)

All stakeholders registered a high degree of support for 'The school building is clean'. Strong support was also noted for 'The school building is safe' save for the Grade 11-12 student group who noted a higher percentage of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' on this item. Teachers and both student groups registered lower support for 'Students take pride in the appearance of their school'. This could be a point of further discussion.

The following comments are a sample of the many comments received regarding the physical environment, particularly relating to safety and facility features of the school.

*Friendliness of teachers and the custodians are the most effective qualities of this school*  
[Gr. 9-10 Student]

*The 1960's want their washrooms back!* [Gr. 11-12 Student]

*[An area of improvement is] more access for children with physical disabilities.* [EA/SS]

*This school is always clean!* [Gr. 11-12 Student]

*We need a full time canteen as it would provide some people who have no lunch with a lunch. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Please fix up the school. It looks like it's has not been cared for or updated in decades. [Parent]*

*All of our students sit on the ground to eat lunch which is disgusting and unsanitary. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*It is starting to look pretty shabby, especially the bathrooms. I think it's the same color and bathroom floor tiles that were in it when (a family member) graduated 45 years ago. [Parent]*

*Cafeteria and table and chairs instead of students sitting on the dirty wet floors to eat lunch. [Parent]*

*The building is quite dated. And there seems to be issues with space in hallways and locker space. As well, a number of rooms have windows (which is great) but the blinds are broken (and have been for years) so if the sun is blasting in kids' eyes, the blinds cannot be drawn. [Parent]*

*[Parent]*

*It's a safe environment, and teachers are usually always willing to help after class. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Cafeteria that you could use. [Parent]*

*Students shouldn't be forced to eat their lunches in the hallways and boot rooms. [Parent]*

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#### HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR LEARNING: ACADEMIC EMPHASIS

A primary concern for any school is its emphasis on academic work as a continuing priority. Effective schools are distinguished by a marked focus on high student achievement, and this is reflected in the amount of school time and professional energy devoted to it. Time-on-task is maximized and homework expectations are appropriate. Effective schools provide programs that meet the learning needs of their students. Adequate attention is devoted to the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. Students are taught to think critically, to communicate competently, to solve problems and to use technology to enhance their learning. Of course, a school's student attendance rate is also an indicator of the concerted effort placed upon academic learning.

**Table 5** gives data pertaining to the academic emphasis and its priority for continued school improvement efforts at Kate Andrews High School.

**Table 5: Indicators of Academic Emphasis**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
This school promotes an academic learning climate by establishing high expectations for <b>ALL</b> students.	76/12 (12)	82/12 (6)	100/0	90/6 (4)	93/6 (1)
Teachers communicate the belief that all students can learn.	66/12 (22)	100/0	100/0	77/17 (6)	76/20 (4)
Homework, when assigned, supports student learning.	80/8 (12)	100/0		54/38 (8)	55/43 (2)
The positive relationships between staff and students enhance learning in this school.	66/16 (18)	100/0	100/0	68/18 (14)	85/10 (5)
Students are given the opportunity to work on collaborative learning projects.	71/4 (25)	82/12 (6)		66/28 (6)	75/22 (3)
Expectations for student achievement are communicated clearly to students.	73/10 (17)	100/0		92/4 (4)	90/8 (2)
Teachers create challenging learning environments for their students.	72/10 (18)	82/6 (12)		77/16 (7)	87/12 (1)
This school has sufficient instructional materials to help students learn. (Books, hands-on math equipment or materials, science equipment, etc.)	66/9 (25)	77/17 (6)	78/15 (7)	79/15 (6)	80/16 (4)
During class time, students have the opportunity to read material of their choice.	29/16 (55)	65/23 (12)		63/35 (4)	45/44 (10)
During class time, students have opportunities to discuss what they are reading with other students and the teacher.	26/12 (62)	71/6 (23)		46/45 (9)	53/35 (12)
A variety of vocabulary strategies are used to support students with their reading.	62/9 (29)	100/0	86/0 (14)	63/25 (12)	62/32 (6)

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* % Indicating 'Don't Know')				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Students use technology to enhance their learning.	79/9 (12)	94/6	93/0 (7)	84/11 (5)	83/16 (1)

Data in **Table 5** indicates strong support for 'The school promotes an academic learning climate by establishing high expectations for all students', 'Expectations for student achievement are communicated clearly to students' and 'Teachers create challenging learning environments for their students'. These should be a point of celebration for Kate Andrews High School. Lower support was registered by students for 'Homework, when assigned, supports student learning'. Teachers and both student groups noted lower support for the items 'During class time, students have the opportunity to read material of their choice' and 'During class time, students have opportunities to discuss what they are reading with other students and the teacher'. These items could be examined further.

Many comments were made in surveys and interviews concerning the programming offered at Kate Andrews High School. These provide valuable insight on the data described above:

*The best quality of Kate Andrews High School is the teachers because they know how to teach. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Consistent use of technology amongst teachers/courses (is an area of improvement). [Parent]*

*Teacher has great energy and passion! You obviously have really strong relationships with your students. [Observing Administrator]*

*I think that it would help for teachers to know what learning style certain kids are and form their lessons around this so that everyone's needs are met. Personal evaluation is key in learning where to improve, or strengths and weaknesses, so that would help if we had more of that. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Good movement around room to check students. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Teacher connects vocabulary to what they know from other subject areas. [Observing Administrator]*

*Some of the technology is becoming outdated and damaged. [EA/SS]*

*The school needs to try to help students that do not learn best through lecture style lessons. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Lots of good conversations with students. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Please cut down on the homework and give us more class time to study for tests. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Students had choice for assignment. [Observing Administrator]*

*I think the school should focus on ALL students, not just teach to the bright kids. All kids are going to someday contribute to society and the way they are treated in public school has lasting effects that will go into their adulthood. [Parent]*

*My child appreciates that teachers don't seem to mind a quick email when she has a question with something, and they seem to respond quite quickly. I really don't have an expectation that they will give a 'same day/evening' answer, but they often do! [Parent]*

*Taking time to listen how the kids learn; everyone learns differently. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The teachers are okay. Most times they feel concerned about you and your learning. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teacher provided friendly prompts to students for participation. Great sense of humor! [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*As for people who do not have the drive to work to succeed academically on their own; teachers do not try to help them. [Gr.11-12 Student]*

*There are great opportunities for learning, and encouragement for individuals to do their best. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teachers are always available to help. [Parent]*

*Students were blogging their responses to the assignment. [Observing Administrator]*

*The atmosphere was very open and student friendly. [Observing Administrator]*

*Some of the teachers are great and use good effective measures when teaching. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Teacher is positive and energetic. [Observing Administrator]*

*Students like this class! [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Students felt comfortable to share with one another and was open to the teacher and visitors. [Observing Administrator]*

*Always great to see students doing labs! They learn so much when the activity is hands on! [Observing Administrator]*

*The teachers are all good, and most classes are effective. Most of the time the work is in class which helps. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Attentive to student answers. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Greater time that is provincially mandated is allotted to Math and Language in Grade 9 (is an effective quality of this school). [Parent]*

*Some of the best and effective qualities of this school are that the teachers are friendly and kind to students but hard on them when they need to be. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The teachers are super nice and do their jobs well. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teacher moves throughout the room, this is a great way to gain understanding of how students are progressing. [Observing Administrator]*

*Very clear instructions with key points emphasized. [Observing Administrator]*

*I will miss these teachers when I graduate. I believe they are some of the best aspects of Kate Andrews. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I love your energy and passion. [Observing Administrator]*

*Very positive classroom! [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Teachers motivate you and try to help you pass. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Students put vocabulary into their own words. [Teacher]*

*There are only a small amount of effective teachers at this school offered to improve our learning. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Bell work this is a good demonstration of what they know. All students are involved in the activity. [Observing Administrator]*

*After instruction teacher reviewed outcomes. [Observing Administrator]*

*The school offers challenging curriculum and allows us to be responsible for our learning. Some of the staff are friendly and offer extra help if needed. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Kate Andrews has a strong support for people who wish to succeed academically. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Students are very engaged in the activity, even when you are working with a specific group. [Observing Administrator]*

*You provide reinforcing affirmation to students when they're providing answers. When they don't quite hit the target, you provide positive feedback to elicit further/deeper responses. "Keep going!" Keep talking it through". [Observing Administrator]*

*Shows great relationship to students. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Teachers will always do their best to answer your questions. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Certain teachers are very effective in helping their students understand concepts and curriculum. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*After demonstration teacher complimented students and told them what else he/she is looking for. [Observing Administrator]*

*There is a lot of learning going on in the classroom. [Observing Administrator]*

*You obviously have great relationships with your kids. You share your personal stories to exemplify things allow them to share too. All on task. [Observing Administrator]*

*[The best and most effective qualities of this school are] how we can have the use of computers, and how the teachers can stay after school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The best quality of this school is how much the teachers want to help you during class when you're stuck on a problem or question and don't know what to do. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Great teachers! [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teacher brought reading and writing into a (non-English) classroom. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Very nice progression of skills. [Observing Administrator]*

*I love the inquisitive and reflective questions your kids ask. [Observing Administrator]*

*Students were engaged and well informed about the procedures for class. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Classroom environment is very comfortable with students talking and interacting in a positive way with each other and the teacher. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teacher questioned to help students make connections to their prior learning and understanding the concepts. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Students are working well and looking to each other if they have questions. [Observing Administrator]*

*Students encouraged sharing answers to questions based on reading. Equitable distributions of responses is very evident. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Teacher circulates around the room to ensure students understand the process. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teacher proximity to students during their work time is effective and reassuring to students. [Observing Administrator]*

*Flexible grouping, one on one, small group, large group. [Teacher]*

*Grade 9 students adjusting to high school can be difficult. It would help if they could get support from a teacher that teaches them the subject they are cramming into one semester. [Parent]*

*Teacher asking probing questions and gives examples of what it should be like. [Observing Administrator]*

*There is a very safe and caring atmosphere in this classroom. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*The school needs more opportunities for those people who have higher academic success. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The class is well organized; students are working in table groups, waited for the teacher to give instructions. [Observing Administrator]*



*The classroom atmosphere is generally too social. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Our extra classes like band are great! The teachers who teach them are great! [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

**ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING:**

In Susan Huff’s research, *The Principal as Assessment Leader*, edited by Thomas Guskey (2009), she emphasizes that assessment work supports the fundamental purpose of schools – student learning. An integral part of assessment is the role that feedback plays as a core activity deserving of substantial time and effort (Jackson 2009). Davies (2007) emphasizes the importance of specific, quality feedback and its connection to motivating student learning. In addition, Medina (2008) points out those instructional activities, including feedback, need to be constructed in interesting, engaging ways for students. This allows for new information to be connected to rich student experiences. Further, student learning needs to be reviewed on multiple occasions and in different ways to be retained in long-term memory. Reliable and timely feedback on academic performance means that teachers are constructive, consistent, continuous and fair when assessing student work. Increasingly, teachers in effective schools are providing a tighter focus on student assessment through linkages with curriculum and attention to clarity and validity of assessment procedures. Effective teachers recognize good work, acknowledge students for their efforts, evaluate fairly, regularly talk to students about their work, and provide feedback on assignments in a reasonable amount of time. Moreover, effective teachers use evaluation for the purposes of remediation and encouragement of student effort. Teachers in effective schools are conscious of the linkage between instruction and assessment and use strategies that are appropriate in assessing learning. As well, teachers in these schools are familiar with a variety of assessment strategies and use them regularly. Furthermore, effective schools keep parents/guardians informed of student progress and work with them to ensure learning success. Data on feedback is presented in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: Indicators of Feedback**

Item	% Indicating ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ / % Indicating ‘Disagree’ and ‘Strongly Disagree’ (* ) % Indicating ‘Don’t Know’				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Parent/teacher communication about student learning occurs between reporting periods.	76/23 (1)	94/0 (6)		58/29 (13)	62/28 (10)

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* % Indicating 'Don't Know')				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Learner outcomes are communicated to students prior to instruction.	48/11 (41)	94/6		72/23 (5)	76/24
Students receive frequent feedback on their learning from teachers.	63/20 (17)	100/0		58/35 (7)	66/33 (1)
Students know how their learning will be assessed when assignments are given.	58/14 (28)	100/0		72/19 (9)	67/25 (8)
Parent/teacher conferences focus on student learning.	69/5 (26)	82/12 (6)			
Common assessment language (formative, summative) is used by teachers when communicating with students and parents.	69/8 (23)	88/6 (6)	72/7 (21)	75/16 (9)	84/11 (5)

Data in **Table 6** indicates support for 'Common assessment language (formative/summative) is used by teachers when communicating with students and parents'. Both student groups indicated lower percentages for 'Students receive frequent feedback on their learning from teachers'. Parents and both student groups registered lower percentages for 'Parent/teacher communication about student learning occurs between reporting periods'. These items could be examined further.

The following comments about the indicators of feedback further illustrate the correlate relating to feedback:

*Feedback given to students is very purposeful and led to action by the students.  
[Observing Administrator]*

*More feedback from staff when it comes to assessments [would be an area of improvement]. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The instructor's feedback was regular and precise. Students used the feedback for their projects. [Observing Administrator]*

*You circulate around the room engaging with kids “Oh I really like this”. You provide feedback ask probing questions to extend their thinking. [Observing Administrator]*

*We (parent) do appreciate the evaluations of our child being given electronically via email. [Parent]*

*Distinctions between summative and formative assignments: Some classes do this well, others not so much. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Students have plenty of examples to view. The room is full of student work. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teachers need to adjust to students that are struggling. When grades are dropping what does the teacher do to stop the trend? [Parent]*

*I would love the students to receive the progressive reports before the parents so they can take personal responsibility when an assignment is missing. [Parent]*

*If and when students are not reaching passing grades, there should be immediate communication on the issue to the parents. [Parent]*

*I make it clear what’s formative and summative so students know how they can do better. [Teacher]*

*Sometimes my child does not communicate the best. I wish the school could have contacted me so we could have a meeting to get him/her started in a (different) program. [Parent]*

*Teachers go through tests after they are written instead of just giving them back. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Address some of the teachers marking methods that are inconsistent. Fair grading for every student. [Parent]*

*Teacher provides feedback and positive reinforcement to students as they check in with you. [Observing Administrator]*

*Multiple chances on assignments, students have chance to revise edit and resubmit. [Teacher]*

*The choice that students have for their modules creates strong and high engagement. [Observing Administrator]*

*I think that certain teachers need to be clearer with their expectations of the class or assignments and outcomes. Feedback could definitely be improved upon. If we don’t know what to change for next time, then don’t expect us to change it. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Feedback given to students was helpful and led to further learning. Speaks nicely to the students. [Observing Administrator]*

*Student-teacher conferencing on grades are ways to improve. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teacher constantly checking students for understanding. [Observing Administrator]*

*You continuously and effectively encourage your students. Safety is being monitored and reinforced. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teachers are friendly, give us lots of chances to learn and improve on our grade. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Expectation of students is clear and repeated as they worked independently [Observing Administrator]*

*Teacher feedback is very positive and constructive. [Observing Administrator]*

*An area of improvement would be feedback from teachers (i.e. seeing how we did on a certain project and know how we can improve for next time) – Clarity of expectations. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

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#### AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In Davies (2012) work, *Transforming Schools and Systems Using Assessment: A Practical Guide*, she emphasizes the role of involving parents in assessment. It is not sufficient to inform parents, they must be invited into the thinking and visioning that will provide the foundation for all that comes. Davies concludes that when home and school work together, the school becomes a community cornerstone where the work of the school is better understood and supported. Recent studies have also found that parent/guardian involvement is related to decreased absenteeism and to improved perceptions of school and classroom climate. As well, a few studies (Glasgow and Whitney, 2009) have noted that student behavior tends to improve as parents/guardians become more involved in their child(ren)'s schooling. Consequently, parents/guardians have an important role to play in encouraging, monitoring and supporting their child(ren)'s educational efforts. Numerous studies have documented how children from dysfunctional homes may have a difficult time being successful in school. School staff and parents/guardians need to work together to ensure the child(ren)'s success with academic and social learning. Details of perceptions regarding parental involvement at Kate Andrews High School are summarized in **Table 7**.

**Table 7: Indicators of Parental Involvement**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Parents are actively involved in this school through volunteerism.	31/17 (52)	24/41 (35)	20/33 (47)	31/41 (28)	38/39 (23)
Parents are kept informed about school activities and programs.	76/23 (1)	88/6 (6)	87/0 (13)	51/36 (13)	53/35 (12)
Parents' opinions are valued in this school.	43/14 (43)	59/6 (35)			
Parents have opportunity to provide input into school policies.	36/18 (46)	41/6 (53)			
Teachers celebrate student accomplishments with parents.	53/24 (23)	94/6			
Parents feel welcome in this school.	85/10 (5)	59/6 (35)	93/0 (7)	57/14 (29)	70/10 (20)
The school council has meaningful involvement.	26/8 (66)	32/12 (53)			

Parents and EA/SS indicated strong support for 'Parents feel welcome in this school'. Parents indicated higher percentages of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' for 'Parents are kept informed about school activities and programs' and 'Teachers celebrating student accomplishments with parents'. Generally respondents registered higher percentages of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' and 'Don't Know' for many of the items on this table. This could be examined further.

The following comments illustrate more fully how respondents felt about parental involvement at Kate Andrews High School:

*The website has been a great communicating tool about what is going on. Some teachers are using ways in communicating better with parents and students. [Parent]*

*Meet the teacher was a good idea! [Parent]*

*Communication – I'd like more updated/comprehensive website so we can know what is going on at KA. Quite often info is missing especially after school activities – athletic events, fine arts events etc. [Parent]*

*Parents are informed on how child is doing in class. [Parent]*

*Students have lots of opportunities to participate. They are always trying to communicate this to our parents. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Parent and school communication needs to greatly improve. Respect of parents' ideas and comments needs to also improve to get more parents to support the school. [Parent]*

*Meet the teacher night was very positive as well as parent teacher interviews. [Parent]*

*Generally I feel communication from the school is great. [Parent]*

*More parents involved and more communication between teachers and parents. Not enough information from the staff. [Parent]*

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#### AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS: STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Effective schools recognize the importance of high levels of student involvement in various aspects of school life. Student participation in school life is measured by the extent to which: (1) students are encouraged to make the school an attractive place to be; (2) students have a say in the decisions affecting them; (3) students are actively encouraged to become involved; and (4) students want to become involved. Recent school effectiveness research indicates that as student leadership increases, student behavior and learning outcomes improve. Student involvement develops student leadership skills and this leads them to positively identifying with their school, which, in turn, results in a more democratic school environment. Further, student engagement (cognitive, emotional and behavioral) is a requisite element for student growth. Fullan (1993) posed the question, "What would happen if we treated the student as someone whose opinion mattered?" It is striking how enthusiastically students can engage and flourish in their school lives when assumed to be partners in their own learning. Effective schools do this well. Details of responses to items related to student involvement are contained below.

**Table 8: Indicators of Student Involvement**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* % Indicating 'Don't Know')				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
There are sufficient opportunities for students to be involved in athletic (intramural) activities.	71/14 (15)	76/18 (6)	80/13 (7)	72/17 (11)	74/21 (5)
There are sufficient opportunities for students to be involved in non-athletic/club activities.	68/8 (24)	94/6	100/0	79/11 (11)	69/24 (7)
Students are encouraged to become involved in school life.	70/10 (20)	94/6	100/0	64/27 (9)	64/28 (8)
This school is committed to developing student leadership.	66/7 (27)	88/12	100/0	74/13 (13)	73/21 (6)
Students have adequate input into school decisions affecting them.	32/15 (53)	70/12 (18)		47/44 (9)	42/48 (10)

Teachers, EA/SS, and both student groups registered strong support for 'This school is committed to developing student leadership' with parents indicating a higher percentage of 'Don't Know'. Teachers, EA/SS and the Grade 9-10 student group indicated strong support for opportunities to be involved in non-athletic/club activities with the Grade 11-12 student group indicated a higher percentage of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree'. Lower support was offered by students for the items 'Students are encouraged to become involved in school life' and 'Students have adequate input into school decisions affecting them'. These could be a point of further discussion.

The following comments were made regarding student involvement at Kate Andrews High School:

*Some of the best and effective qualities of this school are the frequent opportunities to join different groups such as band, choir, sports teams, and after school clubs. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*My child enjoys his/her teachers and the opportunity to play sports at Kate Andrews. [Parent]*

*I would like to see us find a way to get the Mechanics course back. We have many students who found this a valuable course. [EA/SS]*

*There are assemblies which combine all grades to take part in. Options are all different grades so we are pushed and inspired by older grades. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Maybe allow the students to be more involved in school events and decisions so that we have a say in what happens in our school, and remove the distractions. It's unfair to other students. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*There is a great Student Council and there are many chances to get involved in athletic opportunities. There are also many clubs such as board game club, and the art club. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Our fine arts program is also very strong! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Lots of extracurricular activities promoted. [Parent]*

*An area that can be improved is to have everyone involved; all the students. Make the events more fun and attractive so more students will join. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I feel involved in lots of school activities and feel like I have a mostly positive learning experience. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*We are allowed to go where we choose for lunch. Students are really involved in leadership. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*There needs to be more space for students to chill during spares, longer lunches, more after school programs such as movie and book clubs, art club, drama, and IT clubs. Also, there needs to be more support for kids seeking a life without post-secondary. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The academics and encouragement of student leadership are the most effective qualities of this school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*With extracurricular activities, most children are put on teams due to lower numbers of children attending school. [Parent]*

*I feel that the athletic program is well run and coaches seem to care about the students. [Parent]*

*We have many different clubs for a variety of different interest such as art, board games, or We Create Change. We offer students opportunities to attend events outside of the school, such as We Day and the Palliser Student Leadership Conference. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The Student Council is pretty good. They organize things that are usually very fun. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Our band and choir rock! [EA/SS]*



*We are strongly advised to join school clubs and sports teams; and to be leaders. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*There are a lot of different groups students can get involved in like We Create Change, mentorship, student council, and even a board games club. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I think the extracurricular activities are always well planned and we have lot of people very dedicated to making the programs better. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*This school has a pretty good athletic program, and there are plenty of clubs in the school. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Parents should know more about what's going on in sports. Mine doesn't even know! [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*I think we should stop catering to the people who are involved in clubs (like We Create Change). Not everyone has the time to be involved in that, but they are treated as though they are of less value to the school since they are not contributing to this area of the school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*We have an overly dedicated Student Council. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Our We Create Change group is very successful and is a great place for students to share their ideas and plans for future improvement within our group. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I like the fabrication shop, and the wide range of classes we can take. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Students have many extracurricular options to be a part of. [Teacher]*

*I believe Student Council is a good quality of this school. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*We have a We Create Change thing, and it helps out. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*We need a Mechanics class. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*We have several clubs to be involved in and that makes everyone feel special and a part of something. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The chance to be in sports or other things like band, the drama production in spring (are some of the best qualities of this school. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*This school needs more competitions with other sports like soccer or handball. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Given the size of our school, there are a lot of programs, activities, and teams offered. [Teacher]*

*The school has multiple clubs/groups for any kids that want to join. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*There needs to be more activities school wide to connect the students. Maybe more assemblies to inform everyone of what's happening in our school and recognize the students for more than just sports! [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Participation in school activities could definitely be better, but student council has made every effort to try and get people excited about events at the school but nothing has changed. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I think that they should put more fun activities for students to do more things after school. Baseball etc... more sports! [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

## AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS: SUPPORTS TO LEARNING

Effective schools have a collaborative culture that extends the learning community beyond the school. These schools are active in pursuing partnerships and agreements with agencies, community organizations, and individuals who have skills that support the school's learning program. These relationships provide opportunities for students and staff to reach outside their facility for support and provide enhanced learning opportunities.

**Table 9** provides data on perceptions as to how effectively Kate Andrews High School is linking with the greater school community.

**Table 9: Indicators of Supports to Learning**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
This school has meaningful involvement in the larger community. For example: the skating/hockey rink, the library, community events etc.	50/20 (30)	70/12 (18)	93/0 (7)	60/20 (20)	54/35 (11)
This school provides effective programs to ensure learning success for all students.	55/16 (29)	47/41 (12)	71/29		
There are sufficient resources available to meet the needs of "gifted", "at-risk" and "special learning needs" students.	40/16 (44)	47/41 (12)	53/40 (7)		
The school encourages students to take more responsibility for their learning.	84/6 (11)	94/6		88/6 (6)	83/13 (4)
The school is effective in early identification of student needs that affect learning.	52/16 (32)	53/41 (6)	78/15 (7)		
Teachers know their students' learning needs.	67/15 (18)	100/0		40/41 (19)	52/41 (7)
The school library supports student learning needs	54/4 (42)	94/6		52/23 (25)	66/18 (16)

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Classroom libraries support student learning needs	41/5 (54)	82/6 (12)		50/26 (24)	49/29 (22)

Kate Andrews High School encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning as reflected by the strong support from the survey groups. The discrepancy between teachers and students responses to 'Teachers know their students' learning needs is an area of further examination. Teachers also indicated higher percentages of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' for some of the items on this table and this could be examined further. Results from both student groups were consistent in terms of the 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' responses for 'The school library supports student learning needs' and 'Classroom libraries support students learning needs'.

When asked what external partnerships enhance support for Kate Andrews High School, the principal identified the following:

- Alberta Health Services (Addictions and Mental Health and Addictions Counselling)
- Barons Eureka Warner Health Unit Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)
- Lethbridge Family Services (LFS)
- LSAA Lethbridge Schools Athletic Association
- SAIAC Southern Alberta Intercollegiate Administrative Council
- 4A Girls Basketball
- Deep South basketball
- SAHSV L - Southern Alberta High Schools Volley-ball League
- LRBL - Lethbridge Regional Baseball League
- SAG - Slow Pitch League
- ASAA - Alberta Schools Athletic Association
- Town of Coaldale

These relationships were seen as invaluable support to the work of the school, respondents offered the following verbatim comments:

*They get into the community a lot with their students, and help a lot of the less fortunate. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The library contains materials related to what we are learning in class. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*It's in a small town with great support from the town and rural communities. [Parent]*

*Teachers should get to know their students more. Sometimes we just don't understand what you're teaching and need more help. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*ESL support and education – we are having more international students come to Kate Andrews on their own outside of the Palliser International student program. We need to be better prepared for the challenges. These students have some specialized needs that can be better met by our staff that are eager to learn and help. [EA/SS]*

*More students are becoming better caring citizens as they try to change the lives of others in their communities and school. [Teacher]*

*Teacher provides practical examples from real life to connect to their learning then they understand better. You also ask more probing questions if they don't quite hit the mark. [Observing Administrator]*

*You have a strong connection to students and their lives outside of school. [Observing Administrator]*

*I feel that teachers don't accommodate for different learning styles and tactics. They just teach us material and expect us to memorize everything rather than actually absorbing the information. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*There are a wide variety of classes you can take depending on what you like (Foods, Cosmetology, Band, Fabrication, etc.) [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Teacher knows students very well. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Teachers who teach the students so that they actually understand and grasp the concepts of the curriculum, rather than handing out a textbook and telling the students to read it. [Parent]*

*It's organized; the teachers seem to care about students and I have all the help that I need. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Teachers are open to helping students. Safe environment, learning is comprehensive. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I think that the teachers, for the most part, show that they care about their students and help assist with their learning. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*I think we should try learning in different ways rather than just notes and lectures. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

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## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SUPPORTS

When the needs of children are anticipated, supports can be activated before the effects of risk factors escalate. Effective schools are proactive in implementing programs that strengthen the resiliency of children and youth. Schools, families and communities collectively create and promote learning environments that contribute to the well-being of all children and youth

**Table 10** presents perceptions concerning aspects of Inclusive Education Supports at Kate Andrews High School

**Table 10: Indicators of Inclusive Education Supports**

Item	% Indicating 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' / % Indicating 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (* ) % Indicating 'Don't Know'				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Grade 9 - 10	Grade 11 - 12
Students are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning.	64/13 (23)	100/0		66/24 (10)	70/24 (6)
Students are given choice in how they demonstrate their learning.	45/18 (37)	82/12 (6)		49/43 (8)	57/37 (6)
Students get help when they have learning difficulties.	55/20 (25)	100/0		78/17 (5)	84/15 (1)
A variety of strategies and assessments are used that enable teachers to get to know their students.	46/17 (37)	100/0			
A variety of teaching strategies are used to support individual student learning needs.	43/23 (34)	88/6 (6)	100	56/38 (6)	57/38 (5)
Home/school partnerships are developed to support individual student learning needs.	44/17 (39)	82/6 (12)			

'Students get help when they have learning difficulties' received strong support from teachers and both student groups. This should be a point of celebration for the staff at Kate Andrews High School. Parents registered higher percentages of 'Don't Know' while both students groups registered higher percentages of 'Disagree/Strongly Disagree' for the item 'A variety of teaching strategies are used to support individual student learning needs'. This could be examined further.

Comments related to this correlate are:

*There is extra help in this school. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Some teachers need to communicate better with the kids who are struggling, and if they don't understand perhaps the teacher can come up with a different strategy. [Parent]*

*The students are treated in a manner in which they are motivated to be successful. [Teacher]*

*Lots of ideas in IPP (Individual Program Plan) get brought up but nothing gets implemented. [Parent]*

*The IPP's are designed to create a personal plan for each student to help them reaching their potential. [Teacher]*

*Teacher gives individuals assistance to each student during work time. [Observing Administrator]*

*I love the special needs program! My child has thrived! It is easy to talk to the teachers and aids. They have taken my goals for my child and thrived! [Parent]*

*Teacher class was inclusive to students. She/ he has developed a structure where students are comfortable and cared for. [Observing Administrator]*

*It seems easy for the teachers to teach the bright students but it takes a really good teacher to explain and help the kids who have trouble understanding. I think KAHS has always had the attitude of pushing the kids who excel and leave the average kids behind. [Parent]*

*The teacher spent time with students who needed extra help. [Observing Administrator]*

*(Teacher) works with each student as she/he circulates. [Observing Administrator]*

*Our child has some fantastic teachers, but no after school or lunch time help has ever been offered if needed. [Parent]*

*Teacher was very aware of what is happening in the classroom. Teacher checked in with students who all are asking for help, but you also checked with students who aren't asking for help. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teaching students how to study in different ways so they can figure out how they learn best. Read student files, find out what their needs are and accommodate. [Parent]*

*The classroom, atmosphere could be described as "helpful" where students seem to feel comfortable supporting one another. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teachers help you out when you ask. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*The class is really positive and I'm sure students enjoy having you as their teacher. [Observing Administrator]*

*Very low student to teacher ratio which helps a lot when I don't understand something. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*Students were all at different levels and the class was structured to allow for self- pacing. [Observing Administrator]*

*There are many different options for learning in classes. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Teacher should have a basic understanding of how their students learn individually in order to help them succeed. [Gr. 11-12 Student]*

*The atmosphere of the class is very relaxed and safe. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teacher spends as much time with students as they need to understand, even sat down next to a student. [Observing Administrator]*

*Teacher checked with students who aren't asking for help, this prevents students from slipping through the cracks. [Observing Administrator]*

*The teachers are really good about helping students out of class time. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*Asked a specific student if he/ she was able to catch up. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*The teachers at this school can explain things more instead of doing it once and giving you a handout thinking you know what you're doing. [Gr. 9-10 Student]*

*A couple of students get off task; you simply looked at them and waited. They get back on track. [Observing Administrator]*

*Students are encouraged to ask for help and received it even before and after class hours. [Parent]*

*Classroom is neat and organized. [Lead Teacher Cohort]*

*Really nice flow to the class, great work! [Observing Administrator]*



## CHAPTER 3

### MAJOR THEMES AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The purpose of this review was to provide all those interested in the quality of schooling at Kate Andrews High School with a picture of the school as perceived by its various partners. An important part of the school review process was the provision of clear information that can be used in planning for the future.

**Chapter 3** includes a summary of major themes derived from the data presented in terms of an overall rating of the school and a summary of the major strengths and areas for enhancement identified in the comments and the survey data. As well, considerations for action resulting from the data, interviews and survey comments are presented.

#### OVERALL RATING OF KATE ANDREWS HIGH SCHOOL

Students, parents and staff were asked to rate Kate Andrews High School by giving it an overall rating 'Very Effective' to 'Not Effective'. The ratings are summarized in **Table 11**.

**Table 11: Overall Ratings of Kate Andrews High School:**

With respect to student learning, this school is:

Rating	% of each Group				
	Parent/ Guardian	Teachers	EA/SS	Gr. 9 - 10 Students	Gr. 11 – 12 Students
Very Effective	13	18	22	14	21
Effective	54	59	71	45	48
Somewhat Effective	31	23	7	32	23
Not Effective	2	0	0	9	8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

There was affirmation that this is an effective school. 67% of parents, 77% of teachers, 93% of EA/SS, 59% of Grade 9-10 students and 69% of grade 10-12 students found the school to be 'Very Effective' or 'Effective'. No teachers or EA/SS rated the school below 'Somewhat Effective' however 2% of parents, 9% of Grade 9-10 students and 8% of grade 11-12 students rated the school 'Not Effective'.

A summary of the comments from the surveys, offering a more specific view and some explanation of these ratings is provided in the following section

## Summary of Verbatim Responses

Each respondent was given the opportunity to provide written elaboration on a number of issues. Two questions were related to the perceived overall strengths of the school and aspects that individuals believed could be improved. **Table 12** represents the categories that emerged from the responses, in order of frequency of mention per group.

**Table 12: Most Frequent Comments: Strengths and Areas of Refinement**

Strengths of Kate Andrews High School					
	Parents	Teachers	EA/SS	Gr. 9 – 10 Students	Gr. 11-12 Students
1	Caring dedicated staff who strive for student success	Staff dedicated to teaching students to their potential	Relationship between students and staff	Athletic opportunities	Effective and supportive teachers
2	Small school atmosphere	Student leadership and community involvement	Opportunities for student involvement in the community	Teachers support my learning	Staff bond and care for students
3	Athletic Program	Extra-curr and fine arts opportunities	Staff strives to meet student learning needs	Extra-curricular opportunities	Opportunities for athletics and fine arts
4	Fine Arts/ Extracurricular opportunities			Friendly, good teachers	Student leadership and student council
5					Option classes
					Clubs and extra-curricular

Areas of Refinement for Kate Andrews High School					
	Parents	Teachers	EA/SS	Gr. 9 - 10 Students	Gr. 11-12 Students
1	Facilities	PD and time for IPP development	Communication about students	Facilities	Facilities and technology
2	Communication of school events	More support and pd for English language learners	More support and pd for English language learners	Teach me in ways that help me learn	Teach me in ways that help me learn
3	Teach in ways that supports my child	Continue to develop a team focused culture	Accessibility issues for students	More attention to and consistent response of student behavior	Increase student involvement
4	Recognize students for working to their potential	Communication from administration and central office	Consistent expectations of student behavior	Athletics	Develop more positive student teacher relationships
5		Increased accountability for student behavior	Outdated technology		Increase options and non- athletic opportunities

The following themes summed up some of the many strengths of Kate Andrews High School:

1. Effective teaching was a theme identified by all survey groups in their verbatim comments. Grade 9-10 student comments related to this theme included, "Classes are small enough that the teachers can go to each individual student and help them out when they need it" and "The teachers help students the best they can with their school work if they don't get a question". Grade 11-12 students added, "The best quality of Kate Andrews High School is the teachers because they know how to teach", and "Some teachers do genuinely care about their students and teach their students as well as they possibly can". Parents added, "Teachers go out of their way to help the students succeed", "Staff seems very focused on student's needs, genuine desire for them to succeed" and "I believe the school focuses on getting all student to a high level of achievement". EA/SS offered, "All staff seem very accommodating and are working

towards effective learning for all students”, and “We want our students to excel and push them to be better”. Finally, teachers’ comments in support of theme of effective learning include, “Staff are committed to helping students learn and directing them toward growing academically and personally” and “Staff are passionate about what they do and do their best to help students achieve their full potential”.

2. A second theme relates to the positive relationship between staff and students. Grade 11-12 student comments in support of this theme include, “The teachers are really kind and care about their students” and “The teachers are very welcoming and helpful when I have troubles”. From a Grade 9-10 student, “Teachers get involved in student’s well-being”. A teacher added, “The staff care about kids” and EA/SS added “The personal relationships teachers and staff attempt to make with each other and students are the best and most effective qualities of this school”. A parent comment in support of this theme included, “Teacher relationships with their students and families are very good”.
3. The opportunities for student to be involved with athletics, fine arts, extra-curricular, student leadership and clubs was the third strength identified by all survey groups. A comment from an EA/SS was, “We are able to provide a range of options in terms of courses. There are many opportunities to become a positive contributor to our community inside and outside the school”. “Many opportunities to participate in a number of extra-curricular and leadership programs” was a comment offered from a teacher. “There are assemblies which combine all grades to take part in. Options are all different grades so we are pushed and inspired by the older grades” and “We have several clubs to be involved with and that makes everyone feel special and a part of something” were comments offered by Grade 9-10 students. Grade 11-12 students added, “The chance to be in sports or other things, like band and the drama production in spring” and “The best part of our school is all the non-sport activities after school” in support of this theme.

With regard to areas of refinement, the following themes emerged:

1. Teach me in ways that help me learn was the first theme identified as an area of refinement from verbatim comments from all survey groups. Comments from Grade 11-12 students which supported this theme include, “I feel that teachers don’t accommodate for different learning styles and tactics. They just teach us material and expect us to memorize everything rather than actually absorbing the information”, “Not enough extra help for students that struggle” and “Teachers need to be more willing to help the students and not expect them to know and understand a concept 5 minutes after we learn it”. Grade 9-10 students offered, “I might be getting use to the change but sitting down in a classroom watching videos and listening to notes for an hour and half straight is too much for me”, and “Some of the teachers need to try and make their classes more engaging for students”. Parents added, “Individual help when a child is struggling in a subject”, and “Teachers who teach students so that they actually understand and grasp the concepts of the curriculum, rather than handing out a textbook and telling the students to read it”. Teachers identified more professional

- development for developing IPP'S to address needs of struggling learners with comments such as "Staff needs to have more time to build IPP'S and meet with other teacher and to be trained better", "Meaningful IPP teacher involvement for mild/moderate students in the classroom" and "There appears to be need for a greater support for those who struggle academically. ESL instructions or help is challenge for those who need it".
2. Grade 9-10 students, teachers and EA/SS identified consistent expectations and accountability regarding student behavior as a second area of refinement. Teachers' comments included, "Some students need stricter limits and more serve penalties given for their behavior", and "A greater emphasis on respect amongst students would go a long way and an enforcement of zero tolerance for name calling and disrespect would contribute to an overall greater culture throughout the school". "Teachers need to take disciplinary action more regularly. Students get off to easy when they jack around in class" and "Teachers need to remove distractions from class if they don't want to learn why should that affect my learning" were comments offered from students. An EA/SS comment was, "Consistent expectations of student behavior".
  3. Parents, teachers and EA/SS identified communication as a third area of refinement. Parent comments included, "Communication – I'd like more updated/comprehensive website so we can know what is going on at KA. Quite often info is missing especially after school activities – athletic events, fine arts events, etc." and "More communication between teachers and parents. Not enough information from the staff". Teacher comments included, "Communication between administration (central and school based)" and "Communication from administration to staff on overall expectations and vision for the school". An EA/SS comment included, "Communication could be improved in many aspects".
  4. Teachers identified developing a culture of team at Kate Andrews High School. Comments related to this item include, "Increased teacher involvement in extracurricular athletics", "We need to focus more on academics and student success in the core courses", "Identifying what classes would best fit students strengths so that they are successful in their academic classes" and "Timetabling and schedules need to be looked at".
  5. Grade 11-12 students identified the development of more positive student teacher relationships as an area of refinement. Comments included, "Teachers need to have relationships with students and engage", "Teachers need improvement on encouraging students and to motivate their learning", and "I think student involvement is definitely a huge thing to improve on. The teachers often say that the kids have a say, but once we vote or talk about things, none of the students' ideas or opinions are actually put into place".

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## PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Kate Andrews High School is doing well in its efforts to provide the students with a quality education while at the same time meeting the needs of the families it serves. In reviewing the correlates of Effective Schools, this school has strengths in the areas of 'Instructional Leadership' 'Caring and Respectful School Environment,' 'High Expectations for Learning' and 'Authentic Partnerships'.

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## COMMENDATIONS

Commendations are established from the data where all survey groups demonstrated significant agreement. These reveal the many appreciative trends at Kate Andrews High School.

### **CONTINUE TO:**

1. Sustain an environment where continuous improvement is expected of all school personnel. (Instructional Leadership)
2. Foster a safe environment. (Caring and Respectful School Environment)
3. Maintain an environment which is clean. (Caring and Respectful School Environment)
4. Maintain a school building which is safe. (Caring and Respectful School Environment)
5. Promote a school environment which promotes an academic learning climate by establishing high expectations for all students. (High Expectations for Learning)
6. Facilitate an environment where students use technology to enhance their learning. (High Expectations for Learning)
7. Foster a school environment which encourages students to take more responsibility for their learning. (Authentic Partnerships)

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## CONSIDERATIONS

### **CONSIDER:**

1. Sharing this report with staff, parents, and central office personnel at the earliest convenient time in order to solicit feedback as to how the data can be used to inform future planning.
2. Implementing review information when planning facility, technology and resource improvements.
3. Making the main points of the report available to other community groups and inviting responses from the public at large.

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## KATE ANDREWS HIGH SCHOOL'S GOALS 2015-2016:

**Goal 1:** Learners will improve their academic achievement.

**Goal 2:** Students will improve their literacy skills.

**Goal 3:** Effective learning and teaching within caring, respectful, safe and healthy environments.

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## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This review of the effectiveness of Kate Andrews High School was initiated to support the planning process at the school. In addition, the various activities of the review were conducted under the assumptions that:

- Every school can improve.
- Individuals on staff have the strong desire to grow professionally.
- All groups associated with the school support improvement and growth.
- The staff should be key leaders of the school planning and enhancement process.
- It is always better to proceed from an appreciative, “possibilities-based” orientation than from a “deficit” one.

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- All groups associated with the school support improvement and growth.
- The staff should be key leaders of the school planning and enhancement process.
- It is always better to proceed from an appreciative, “possibilities-based” orientation than from a “deficit” one.

Data from the Kate Andrews High School review provides evidence that Kate Andrews is an effective school. Growth as an effective school will continue as they maintain their focus on their mission:

*Educating learners in a safe environment that challenges each to attain academic and personal success.*

The mission is experienced by all stakeholders in the school. Student comments in support of the mission of statement included,

“Kate Andrews High School is a great place to learn important skills to help them in the work force, the teachers are dedicated and provide ways to remember when work is due and additional help and work to help study for tests and assignments.” [Grade 9-10]

From Grade 11-12 students:

“I really enjoy my time attending Kate Andrews and I believe that this is a great place to be enrolled at. With high expectations set upon us it is a huge priority moving forwards”.

“This school is welcoming, and seems like a big family which is hard to capture in a large school. You’re all doing great, thank you for welcoming me into this school, and giving me a chance at making my education better. I have nothing negative to say about this school, and will always recommend that students go here”.

Parents also recognize the efforts of school staff who strive to achieve the mission by offering the following:

“We are happy with the educational support you are giving our child.”

“Any child who goes to Kate Andrews High School will have good opportunities for their education and any extra-curricular activities that they will take part in”.

“Staff seems very focused on student needs, a genuine desire for them to succeed”.

Key to the effectiveness of Kate Andrews includes the relationship many students feel between the staff and themselves, leadership opportunities and extra-curricular opportunities.

Comments from a teacher include,

“Teachers build very positive and professional relationships with students. Students feel they are cared for in our school. Teachers work hard at their subjects and demonstrate growth and knowledge. Students have many extra-curricular options to be a part of”.

Comments from education assistant/support staff included,

“I want this school to be great and I’ll help make it that way.”

“Overall I think that the school is doing great work with helping students become independent, socially conscious adults.”

“We want our students to excel and push them to be better.”



From *Getting by or Getting Better: Applying Effective Schools Research to Today's Issues*  
Wayne Hulley identified collaboration as one of the essential characteristics of effective schools. The collaborative team internalizes the mission of the school and focuses its work around it. Hulley states,

*Creating a school culture that is characterized by authentic collaboration is an adaptive challenge that requires that the people involved accept the need to change and be willing to learn new ways. To achieve this, the existing equilibrium must be disturbed – but only at a rate that people can absorb. A safe and orderly environment and effective leadership are critical. (pg. 90)*

Collaboration around being solution focused on the challenge of meeting ever increasing student needs will develop capacity in all teachers so as to better meet those needs. Recognizing that the needs of students are ever more challenging and diverse: Hulley states,

*Teachers must expand their knowledge base as well as their repertoire of instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of their students; however, schools must also respond by revamping existing structures and practices to assure that teachers have access to the tools and supports they need in their efforts to do so. (p. 91)*

Kate Andrews' mission statement addresses both the academic and personal success of the whole child and reflects Palliser Regional School's Effectiveness Model with the student being the center. As the school continues to develop in the areas of meeting student learning needs, student leadership, the opportunities for athletic and extra-curricular activities Kate Andrews will continue in their journey of becoming an effective school as outlined in their mission, 'challenging each student to attain academic and personal success'.