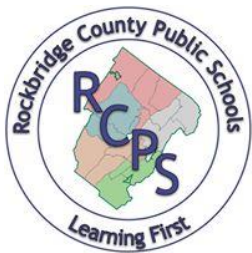


Comprehensive Plan and Priorities Survey

Results and Analysis

Rockbridge County Public Schools

School Year 2017-2018



Purpose and Details of the Study

Identifying the priorities of a school district requires input from several stakeholders. Rockbridge County Public Schools (RCPS) asked parents, community members, business owners, employees, and high school students for feedback on the mission statement, whether the division is meeting its mission and goals, whether the division's goals are the right ones, the level of support for current (and proposed) division programs and initiatives, what in RCPS makes them most proud, proposed priorities and goals, and areas of strength and improvement.

Results will inform the school board and division committees in the creation of the new comprehensive plan.

To ensure content validity, K12 *Insight* partnered with Superintendent Phillip Thompson and division representatives to develop the Comprehensive Plan and Priorities Survey.

The survey was open from Nov. 28 to Dec. 22.

Email invitations with unique survey links were sent to advisory council members, community members, parents/guardians, and staff. High school students used their student IDs to access the survey in school. A public link was available on the division's website, and paper surveys were also available upon request.

Pre-survey communications included a letters to principals, community members, staff members, and parents/guardians; social media posts; news brief; newsletter item; website news item, phone script, text messages, and an email/letter to literacy tutors and a program ad with a QR code.

Reminders were sent Dec. 5, 12, 19, and 21.

The survey was available in English and Spanish.

Understanding the Results

This report summarizes survey results and breaks them down by parents, employees, students, and other (business owners/representatives of nonprofit organizations, community members who do not have children in RCPS, and advisory council members).

Results do not reflect random sampling; therefore, they should not be generalized to all division stakeholders. Rather, results reflect only the perceptions and opinions of participants.

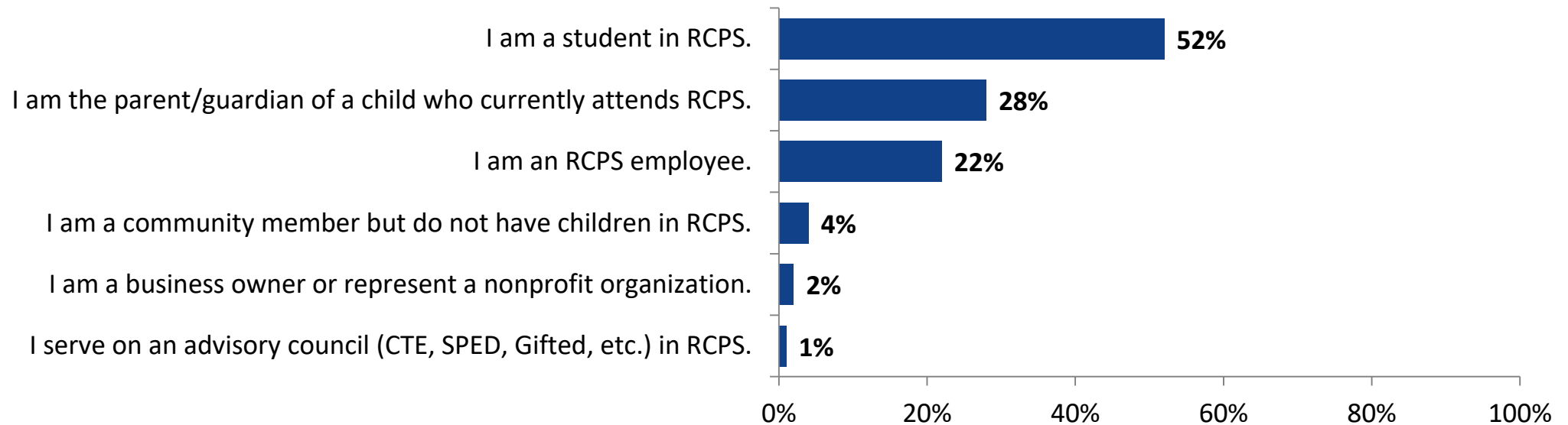
Findings for each item in the report exclude participants who did not answer. In graphs, data labels less than 5 percent are not shown. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Thematic analysis was conducted for the open-ended question on slide 32. K12 *Insight* researchers used the constant comparative analysis (CCA) technique to analyze the feedback and identify common themes. CCA is an analytical approach where all units of data are compared with all other units to discover common properties and dimensions in the data (O'Connor et. al, 2008). This technique allows researchers to develop categories and themes.

Participation

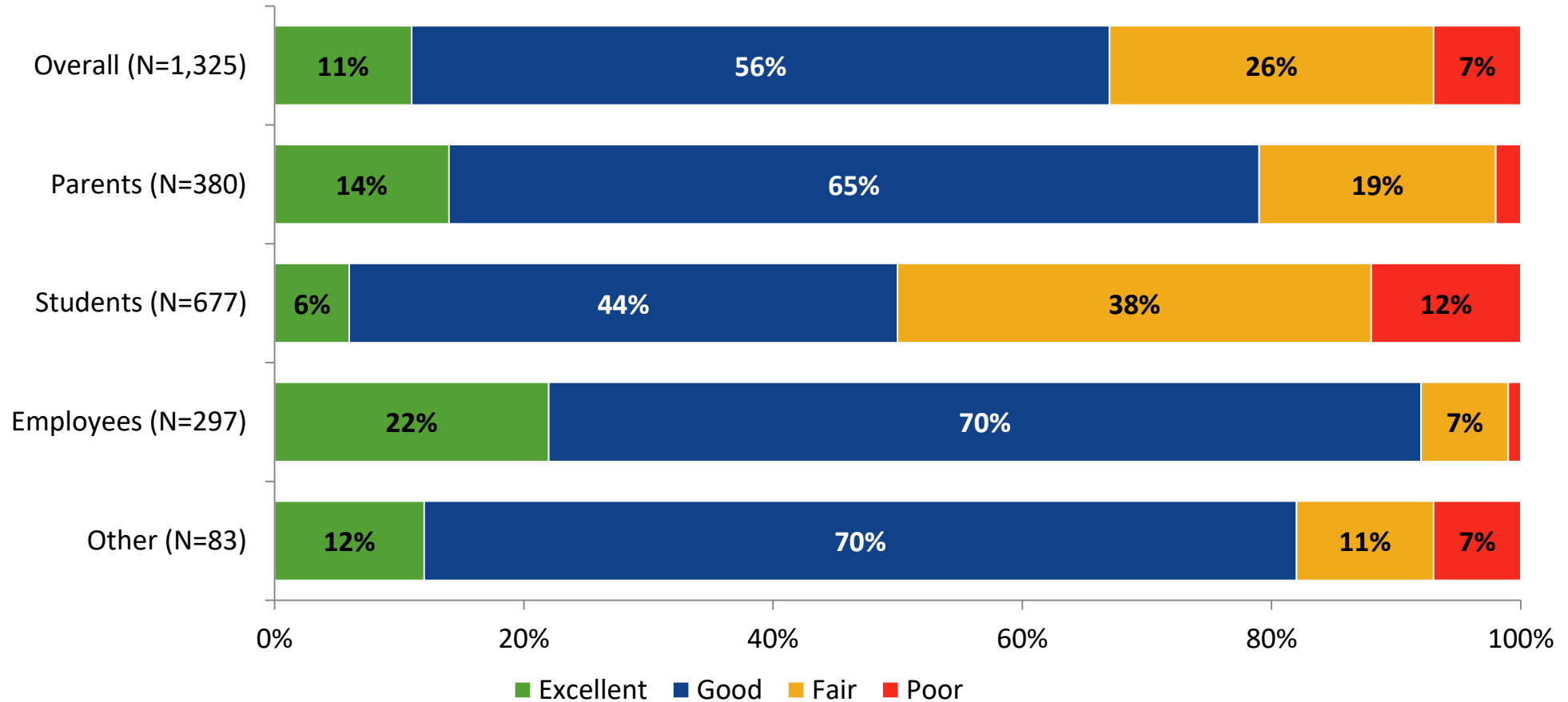
Responding Group	Number of Invitations Delivered	Number of Responses	Public Access Link Responses	Paper Surveys	Total Responses
Participants	2,609	574	800	0	1,374

Which of the following describes you? (N=1,374)



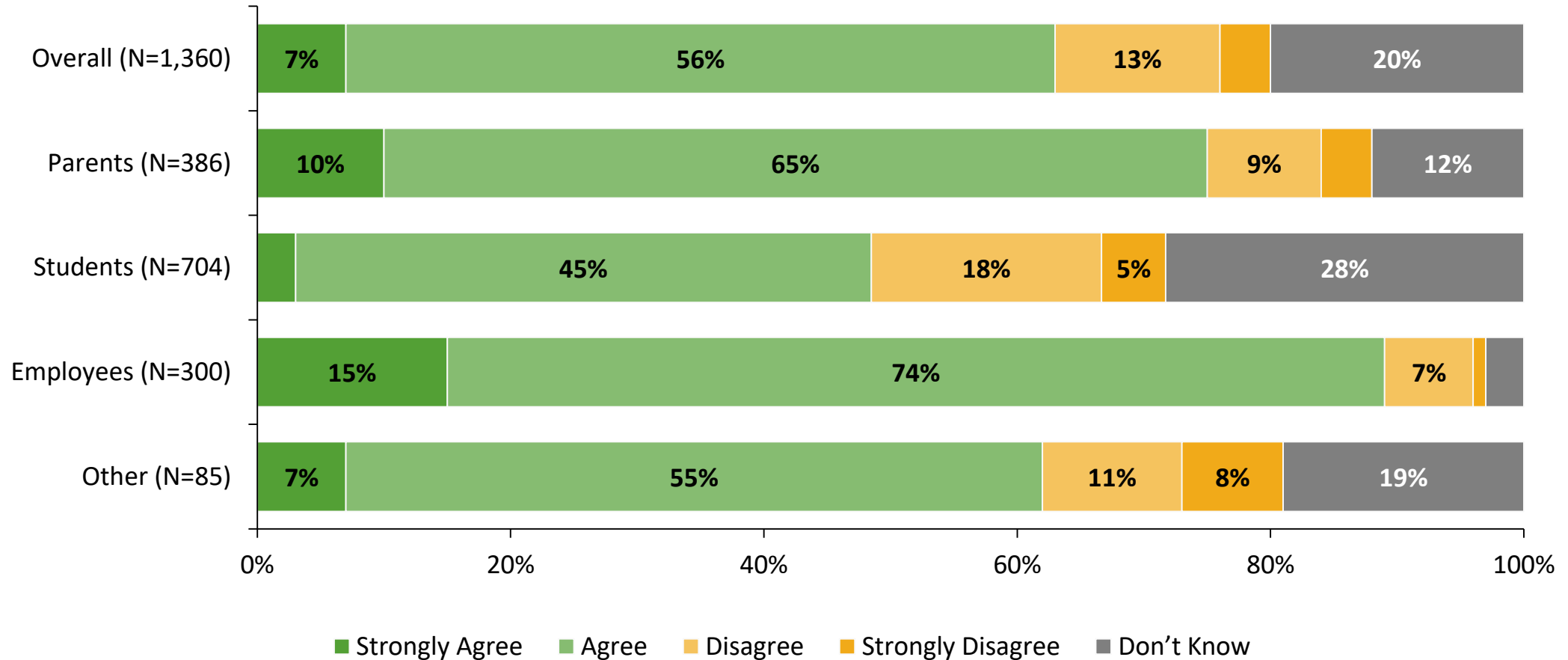
Overall Quality of Education

How would you rate the overall quality of an RCPS education?



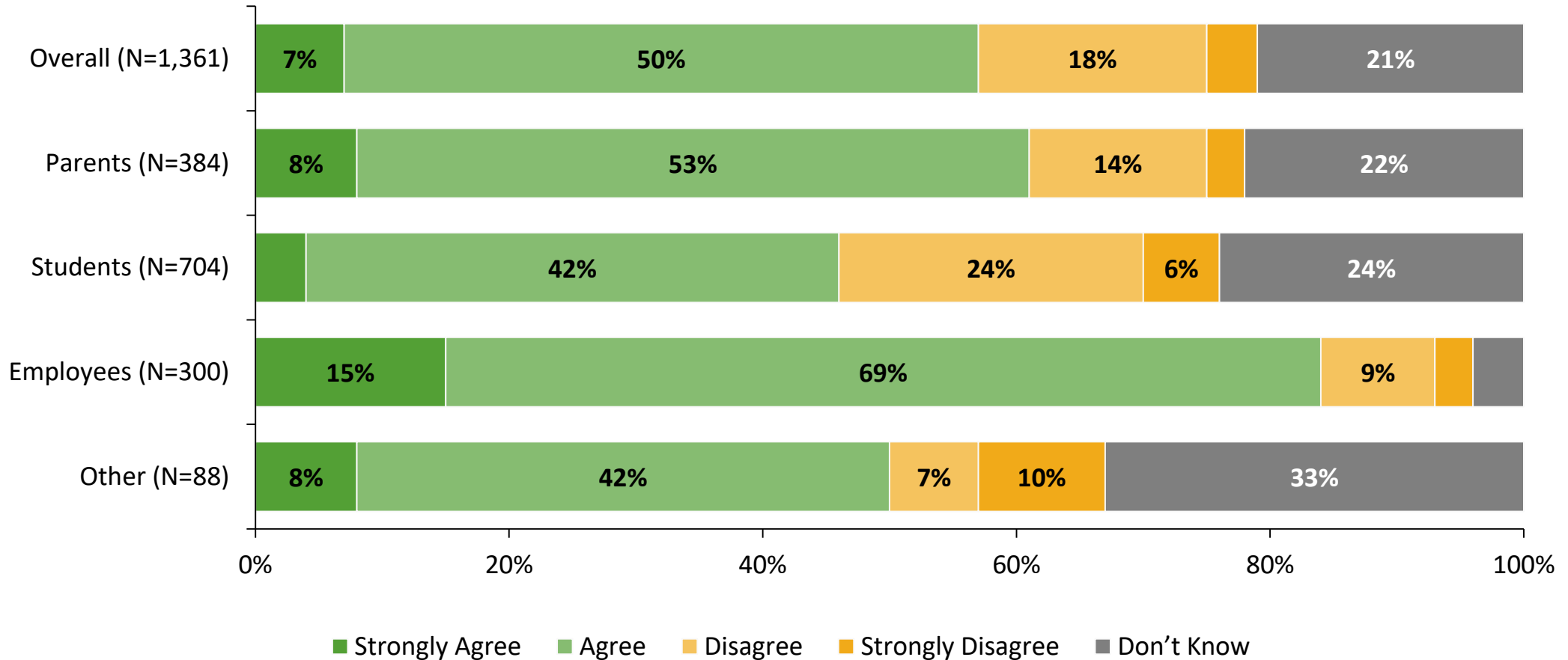
Mission

How strongly do you agree or disagree that RCPS is fulfilling its mission?



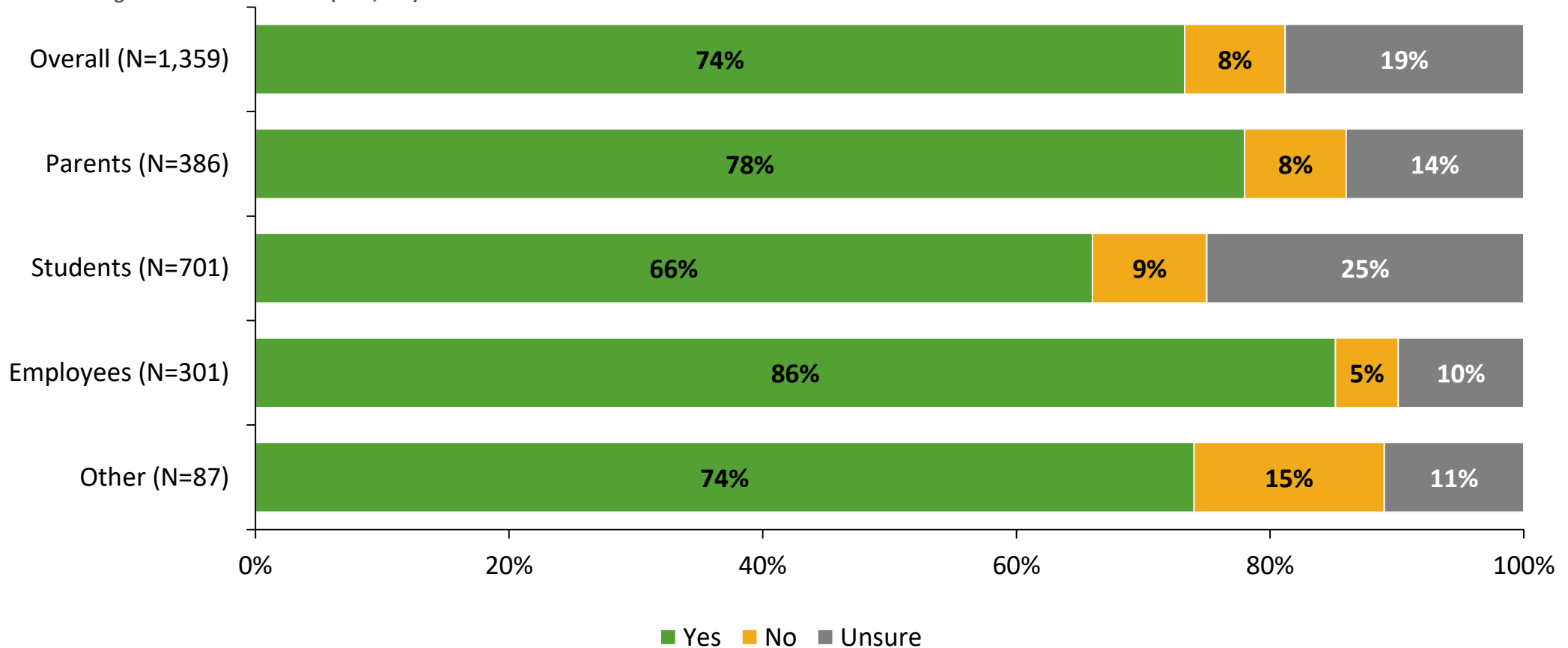
Clear Goals to Measure Success

How strongly do you agree or disagree that RCPS has clear goals to measure success?



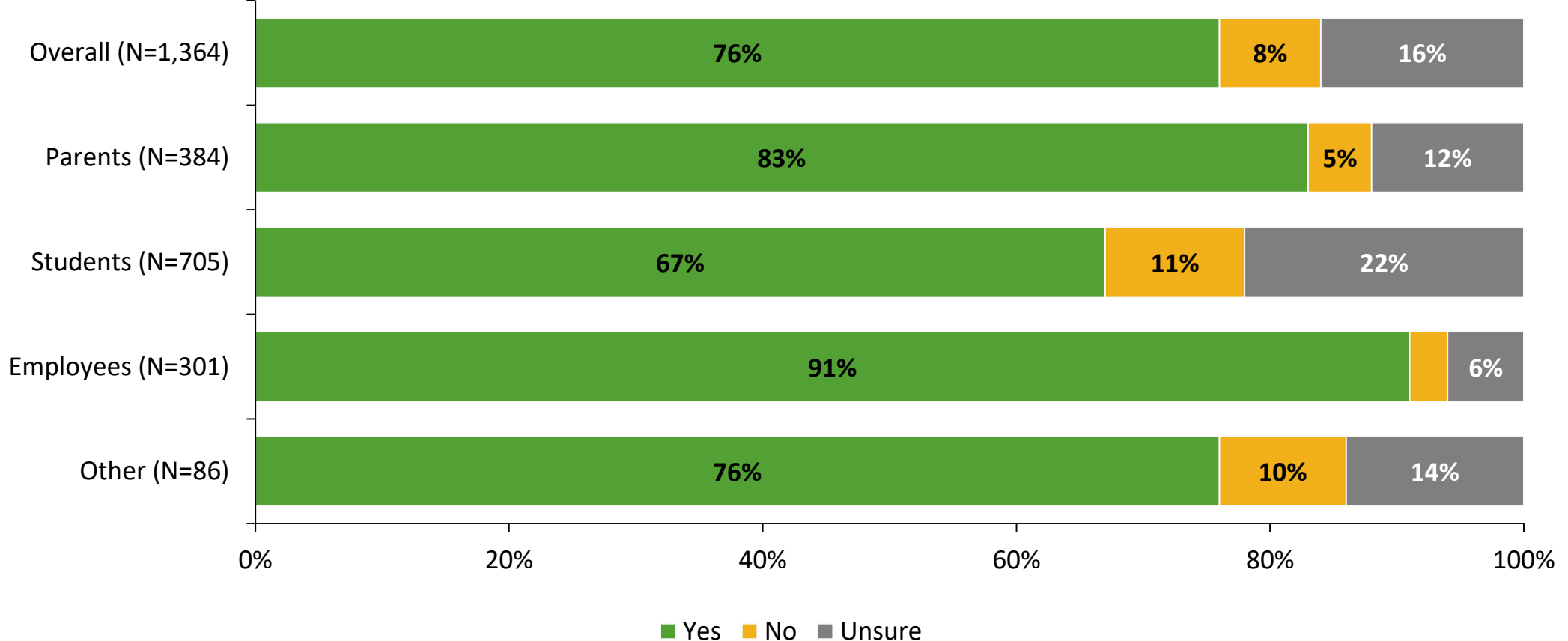
Revised Mission Statement by Participant Group

The school board recently adopted the following revised mission statement: *Rockbridge County Public Schools provides instruction to meet the needs of all students in schools that are fully accredited by the Virginia Department of Education. We provide all elementary students with balanced instruction in the core subject areas of math, English, science, and social studies, enhanced by opportunities for enrichment and exploration through music, the arts, physical education, and a variety of other areas. We provide diverse educational opportunities for middle and high school students to prepare them for higher education or skilled workforce entry.* Thinking about the next five years, does this mission statement represent the right direction for RCPS? (N=1,359)



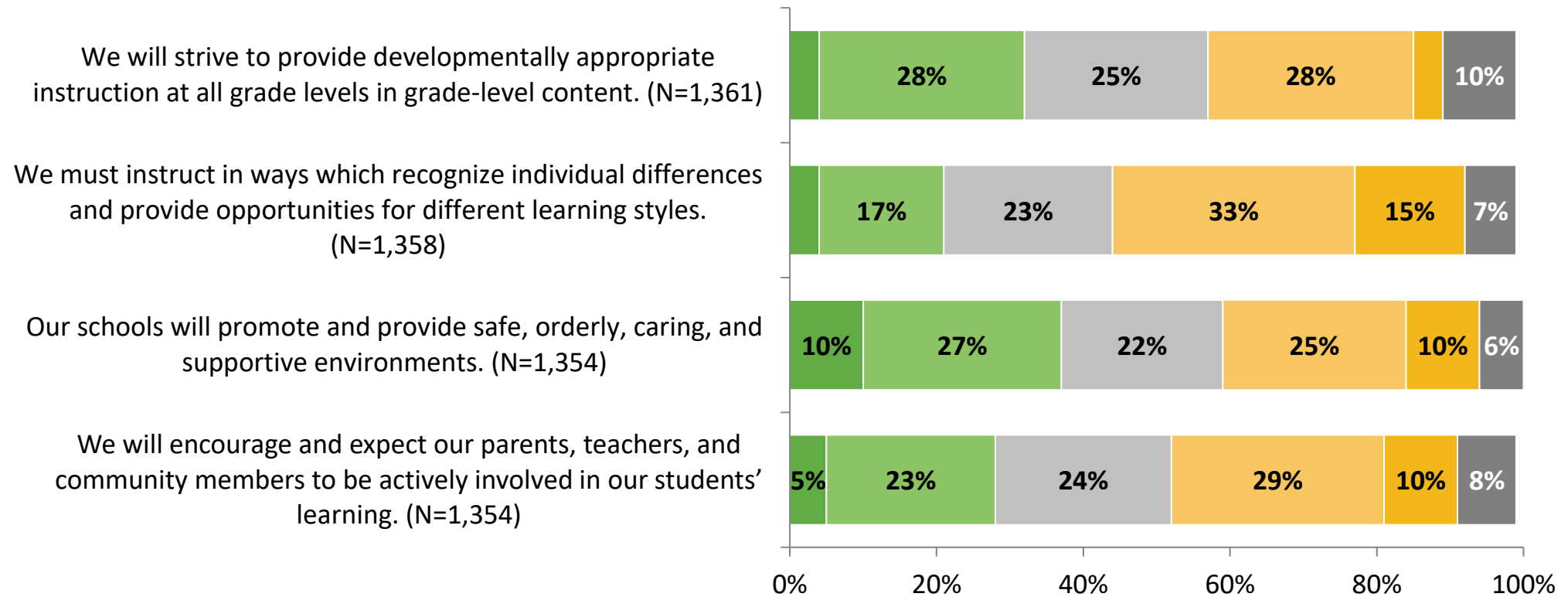
Revised Vision Statement by Participant Group

The school board recently adopted the following revised vision statement: *Rockbridge County Public Schools partners with families and the community to prepare students for a changing world through problem-based learning, technology, and innovative teaching. Our primary goal is for all students to be productive and responsible members of society, capable of competing in the global economy, and motivated to pursue lifelong learning.* Thinking about the next five years, does this vision statement represent the right direction for RCPS? (N=1,364)



Current Goals

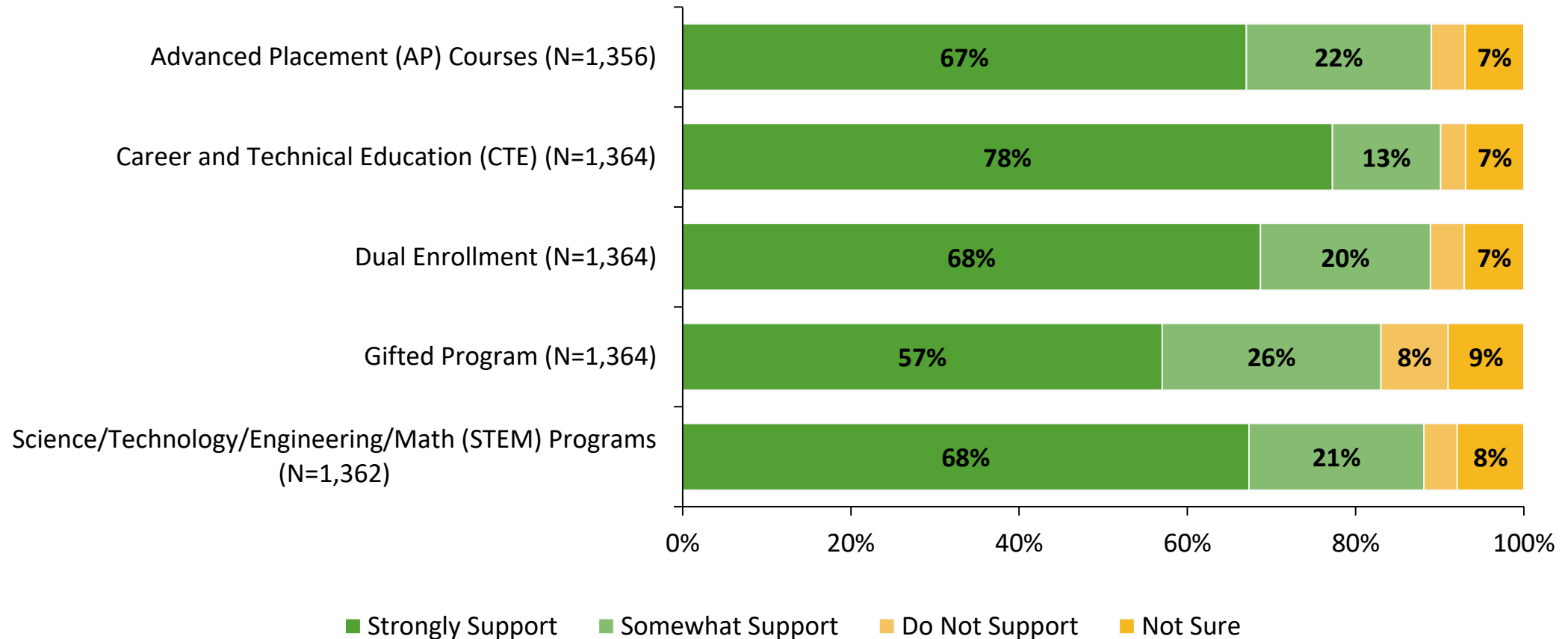
The following four school board-approved goals were used to develop the current RCPS strategic plan. Please tell us how the division is progressing toward each goal.



■ Surpassing Goal
 ■ Goal Met
 ■ A Lot of Progress
 ■ Some Progress
 ■ No Progress
 ■ Don't Know

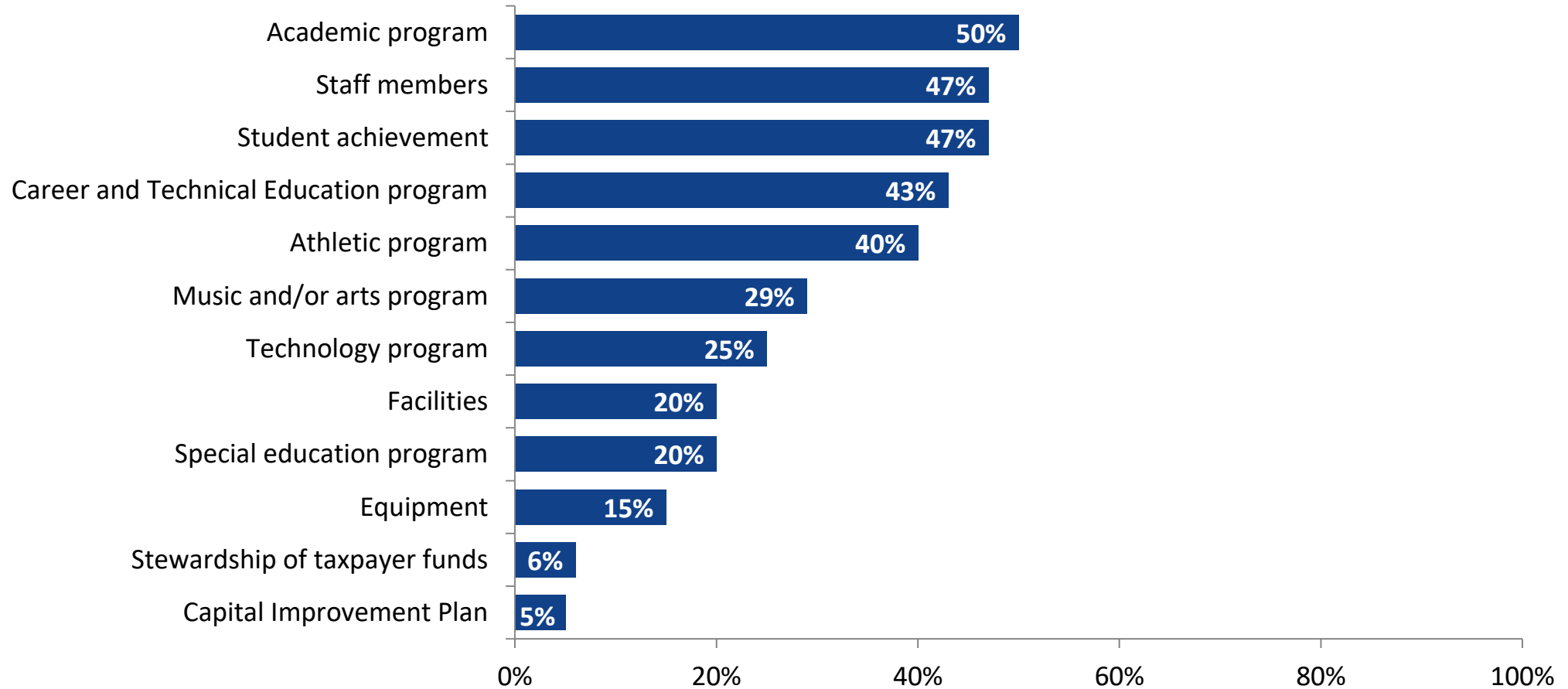
Current Division Programs and Initiatives

How strongly do you support the following division programs and initiatives?



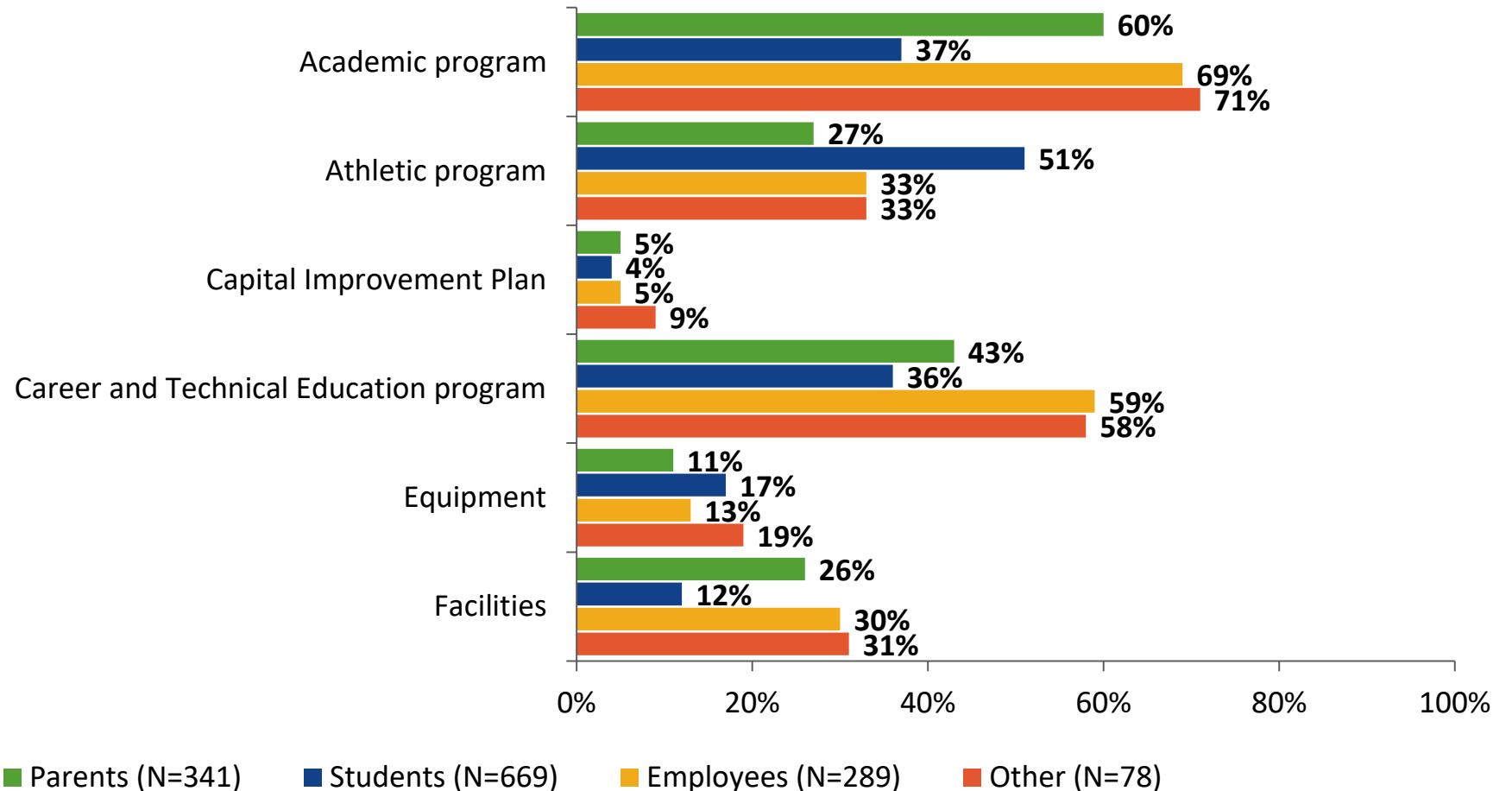
What Makes You Proud

When thinking about RCPS, what makes you feel proud? (N=1,272)



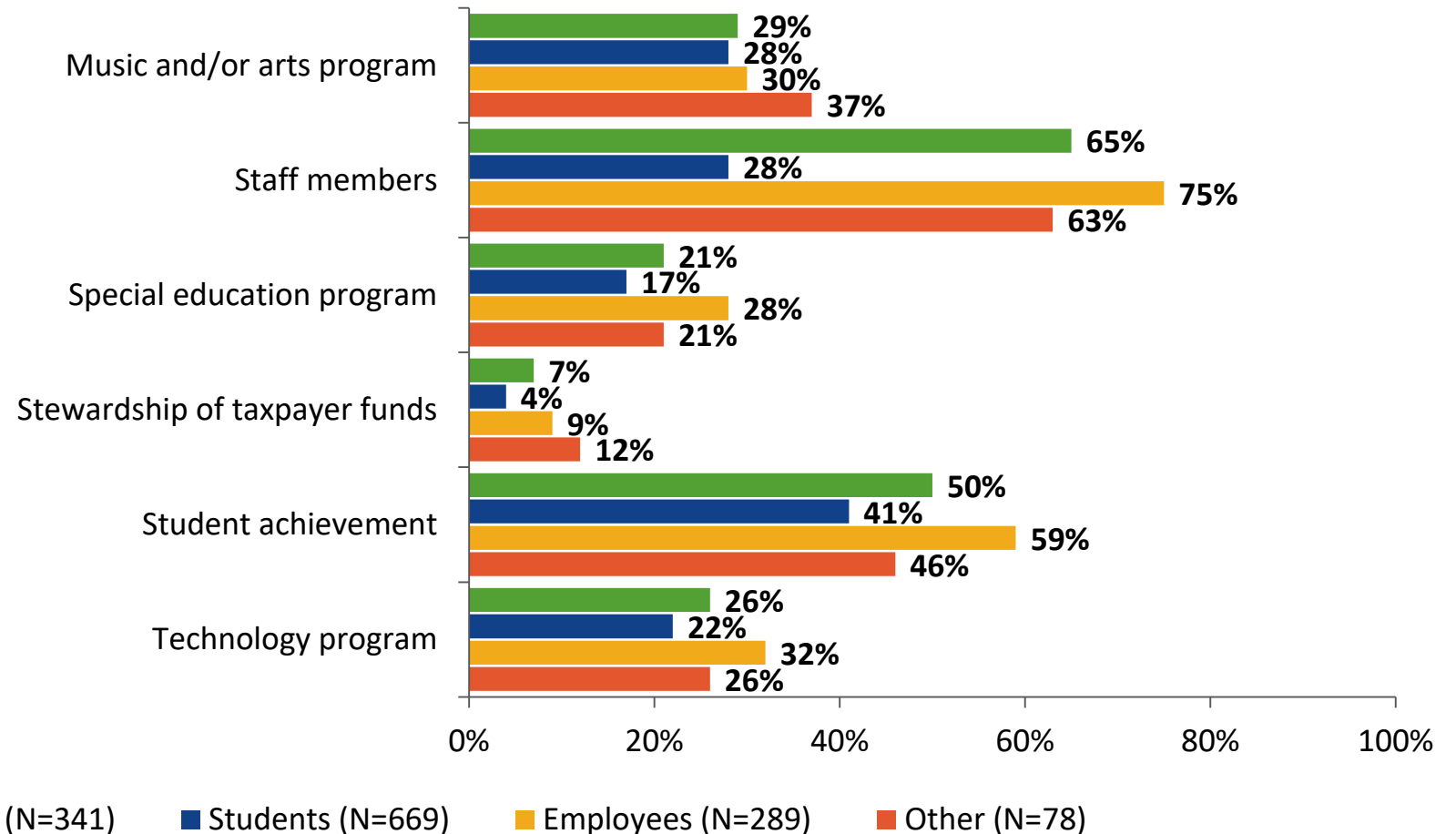
What Makes You Proud by Participant Group

When thinking about RCPS, what makes you feel proud?



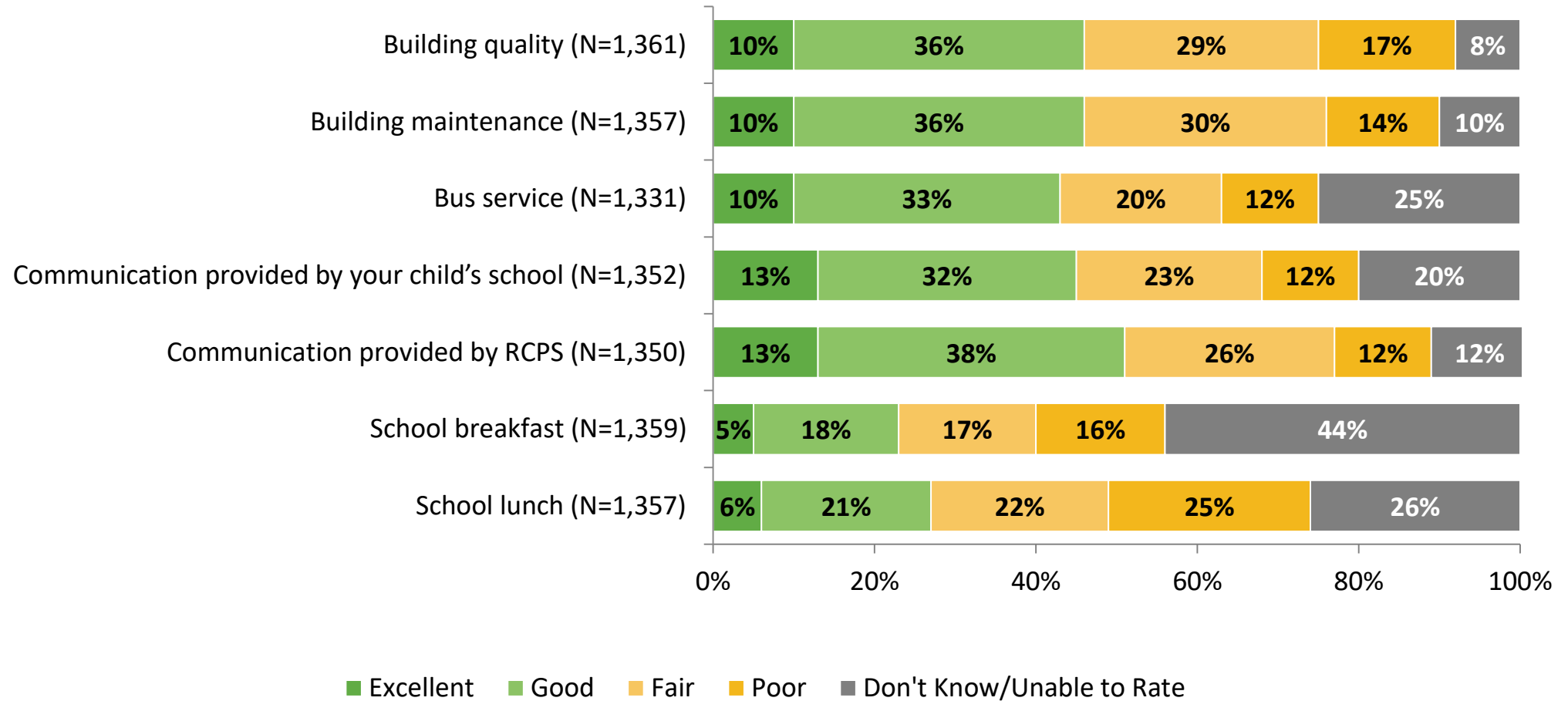
What Makes You Proud by Participant Group (Continued)

When thinking about RCPS, what makes you feel proud?



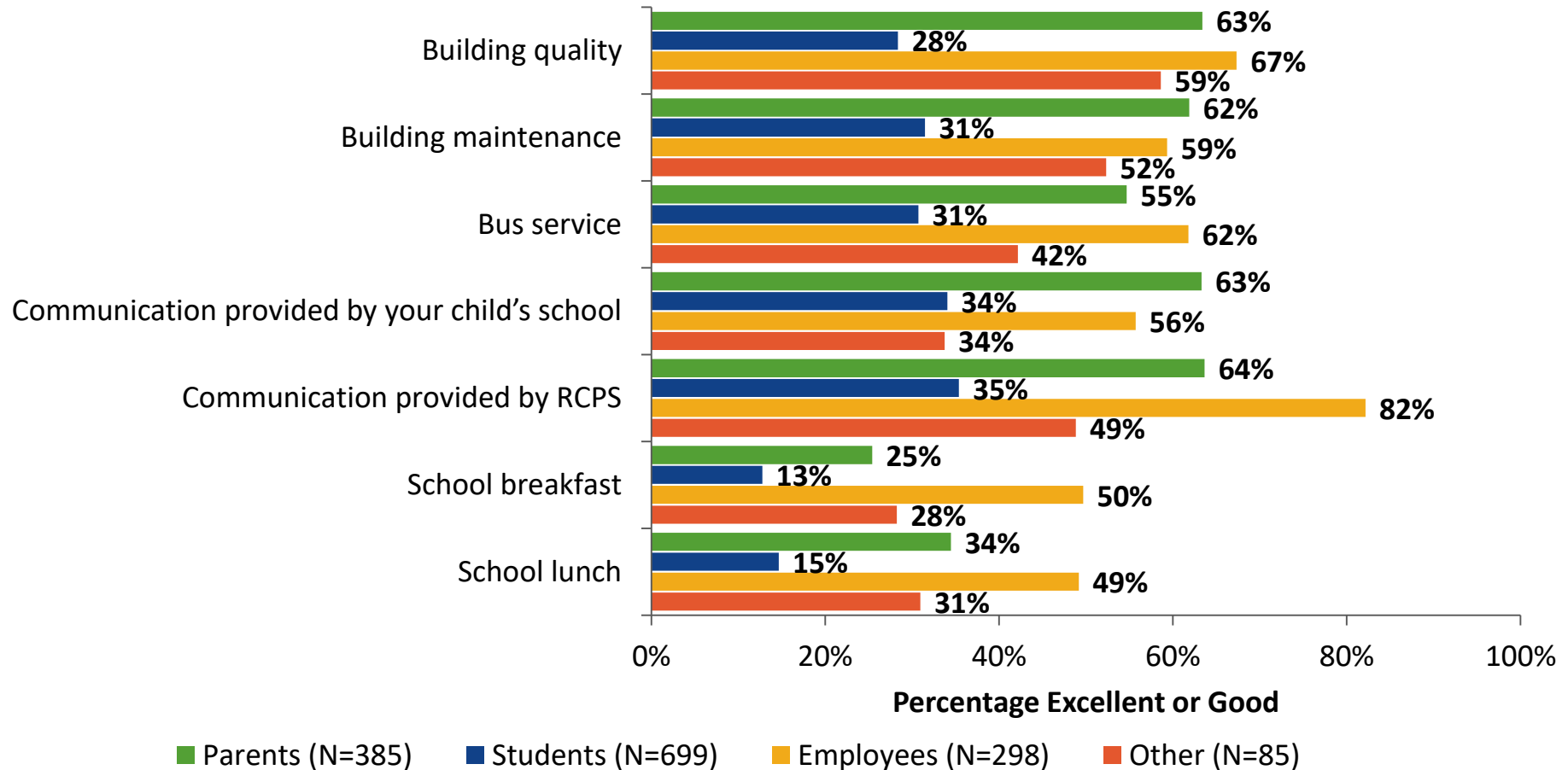
Quality of Facilities and Services

Please rate the overall quality of the following items. If you have not had experiences with an item, please select Don't Know/Unable to Rate.



Quality of Facilities and Services by Participant Group

Please rate the overall quality of the following items. If you have not had experiences with an item, please select Don't Know/Unable to Rate.

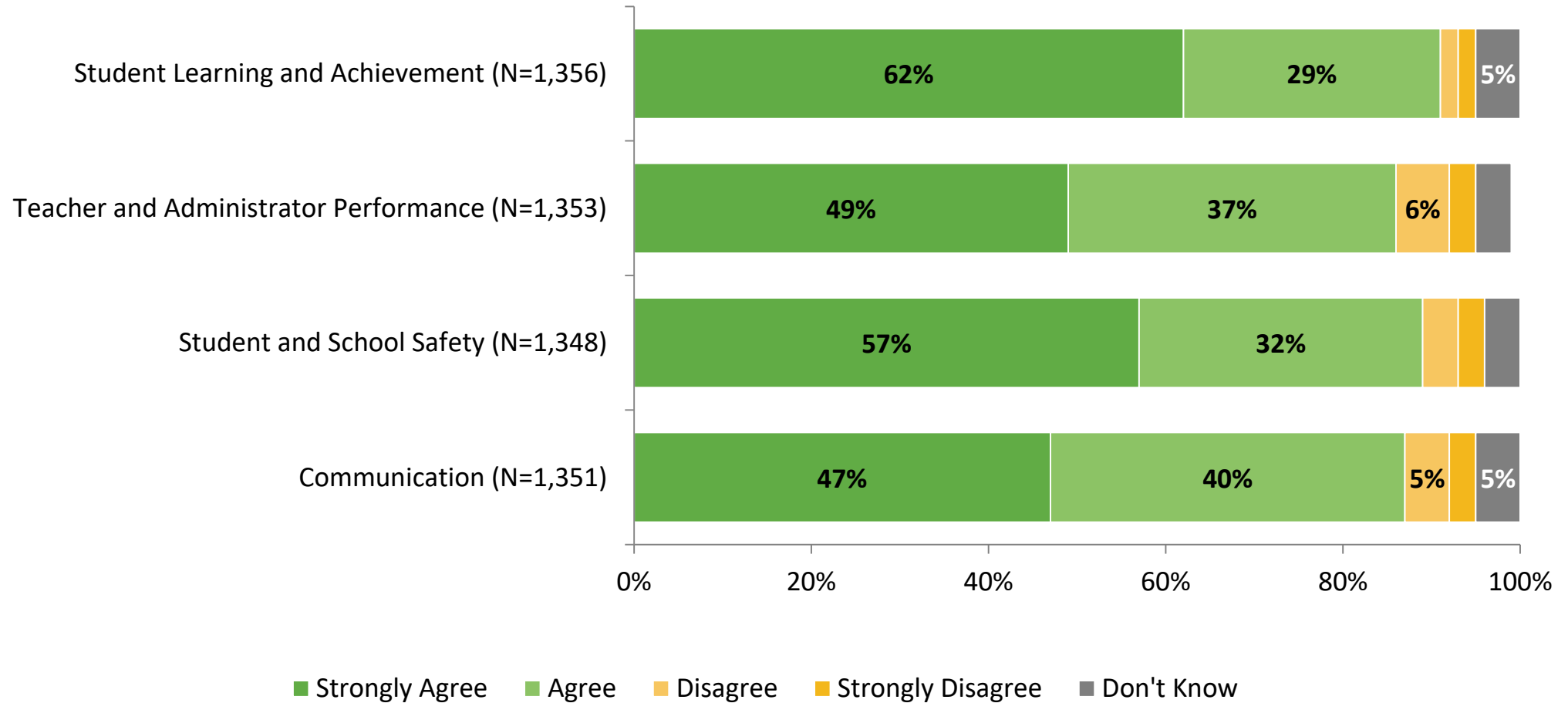


Answer Options: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, Don't Know/Unable to Rate

Note: Other group includes community members who do not have children in RCPS, business owners/representatives of nonprofit organizations, and advisory council members in RCPS.

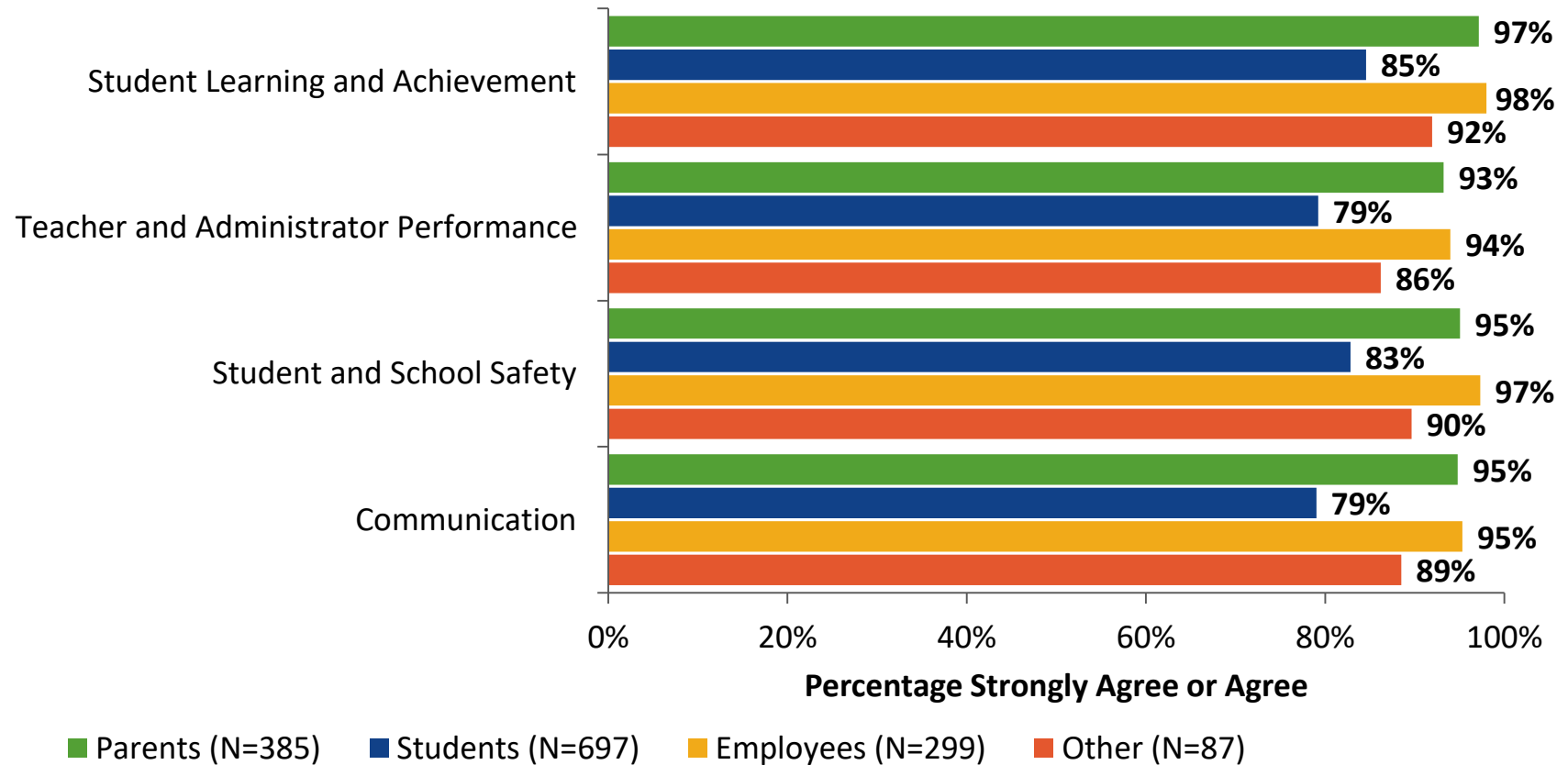
Future Priorities

The school board and division leaders are considering different priorities for RCPS. How strongly do you agree or disagree that these are the right priorities for RCPS?



Future Priorities by Participant Group

The school board and division leaders are considering different priorities for RCPS. How strongly do you agree or disagree that these are the right priorities for RCPS?

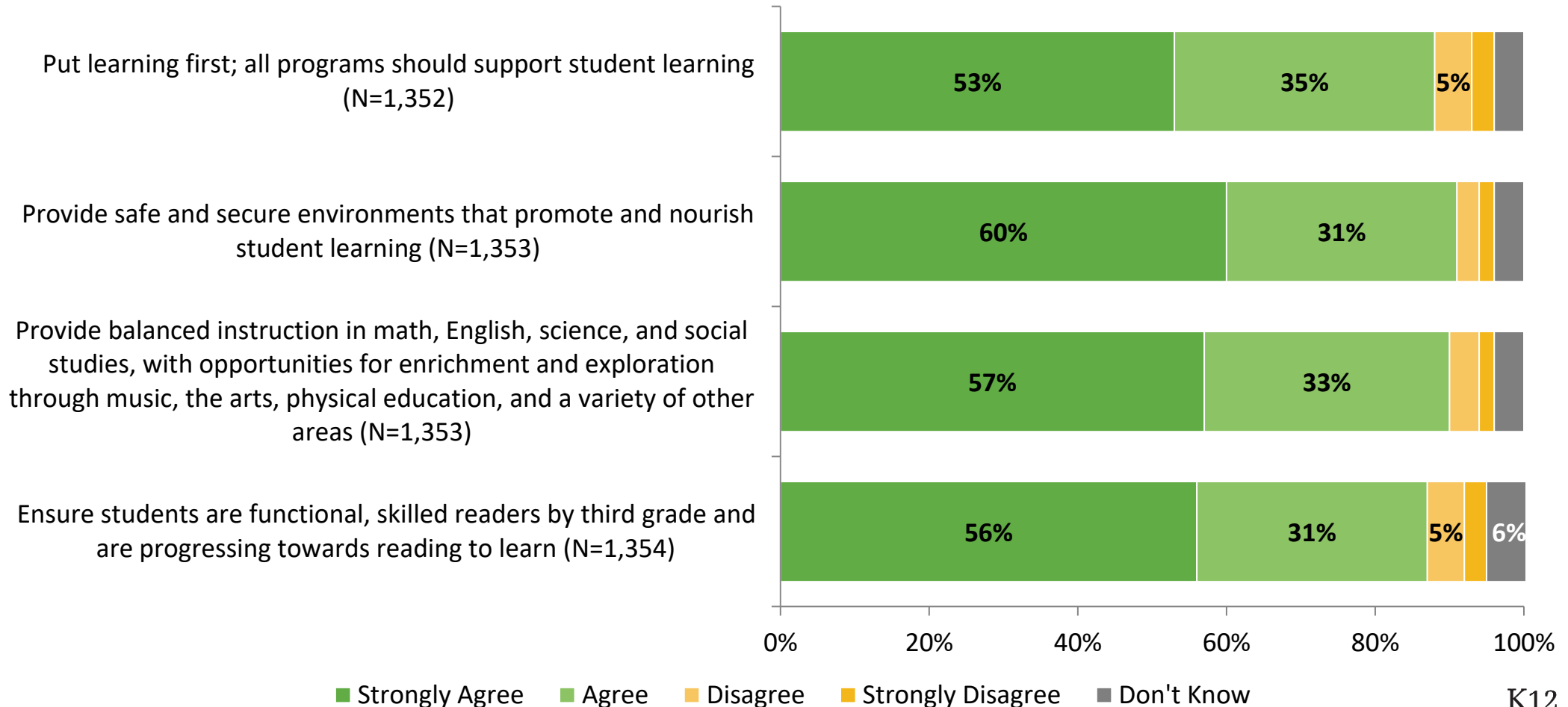


Answer Options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know

Note: Other group includes community members who do not have children in RCPS, business owners/representatives of nonprofit organizations, and advisory council members in RCPS.

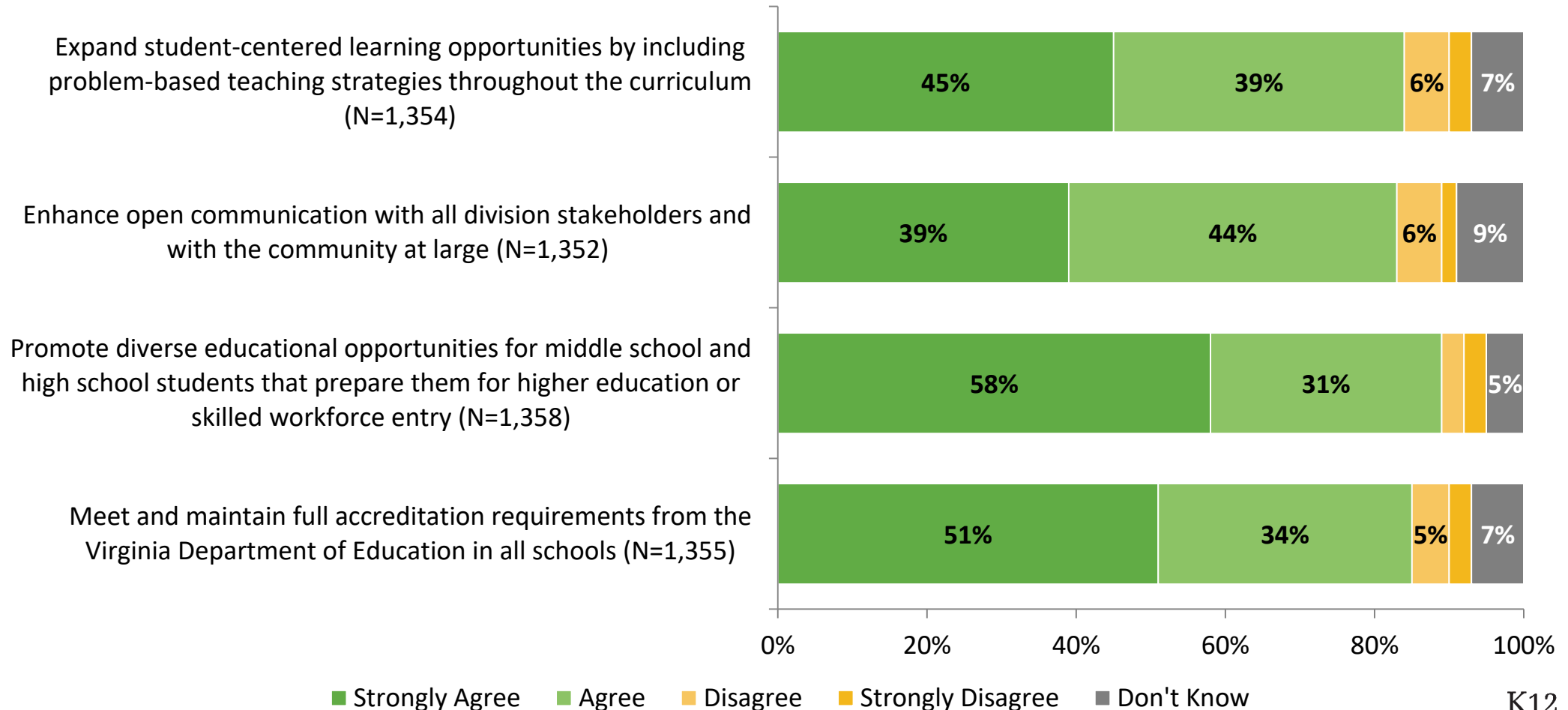
Future Goals

The school board and division leadership are considering several goals for RCPS. How strongly do you agree or disagree that these are the right goals for RCPS?



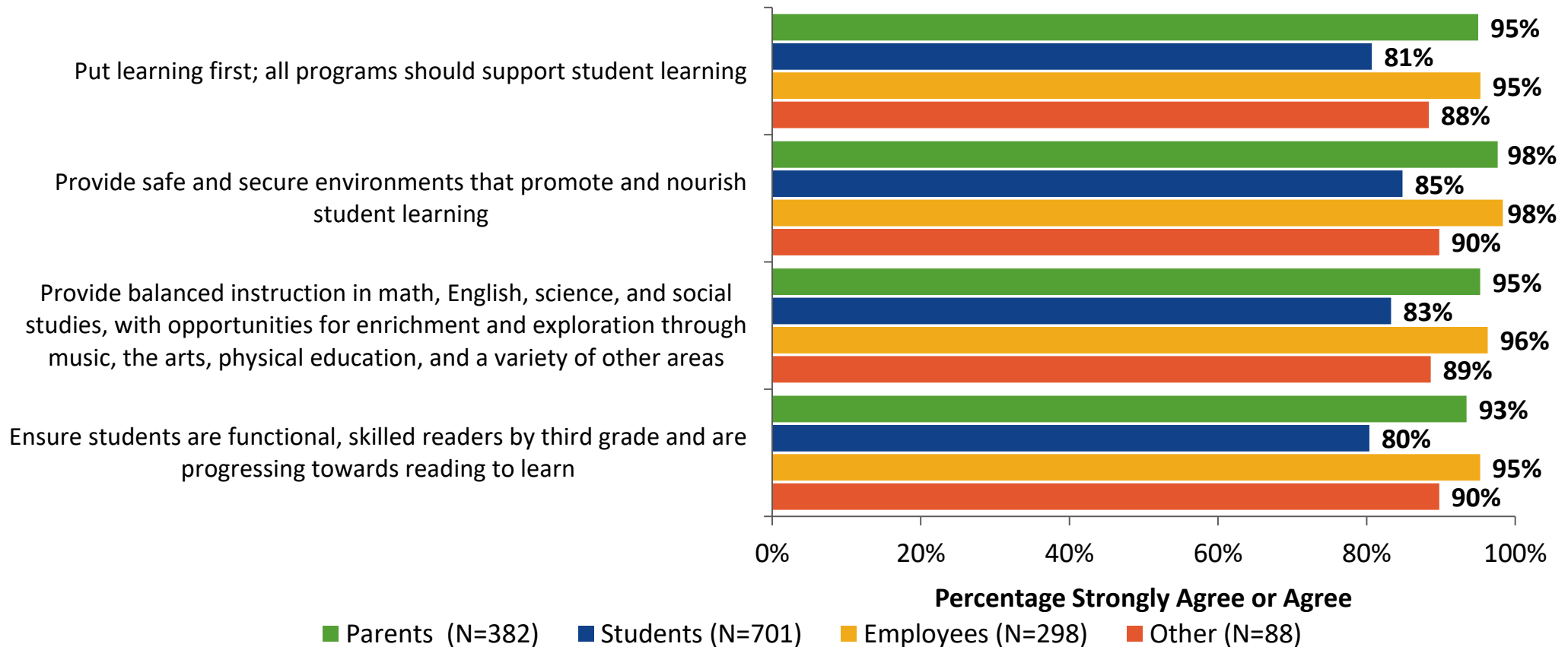
Future Goals (Continued)

The school board and division leadership are considering several goals for RCPS. How strongly do you agree or disagree that these are the right goals for RCPS?



Future Goals by Participant Group

The school board and division leadership are considering several goals for RCPS. How strongly do you agree or disagree that these are the right goals for RCPS?

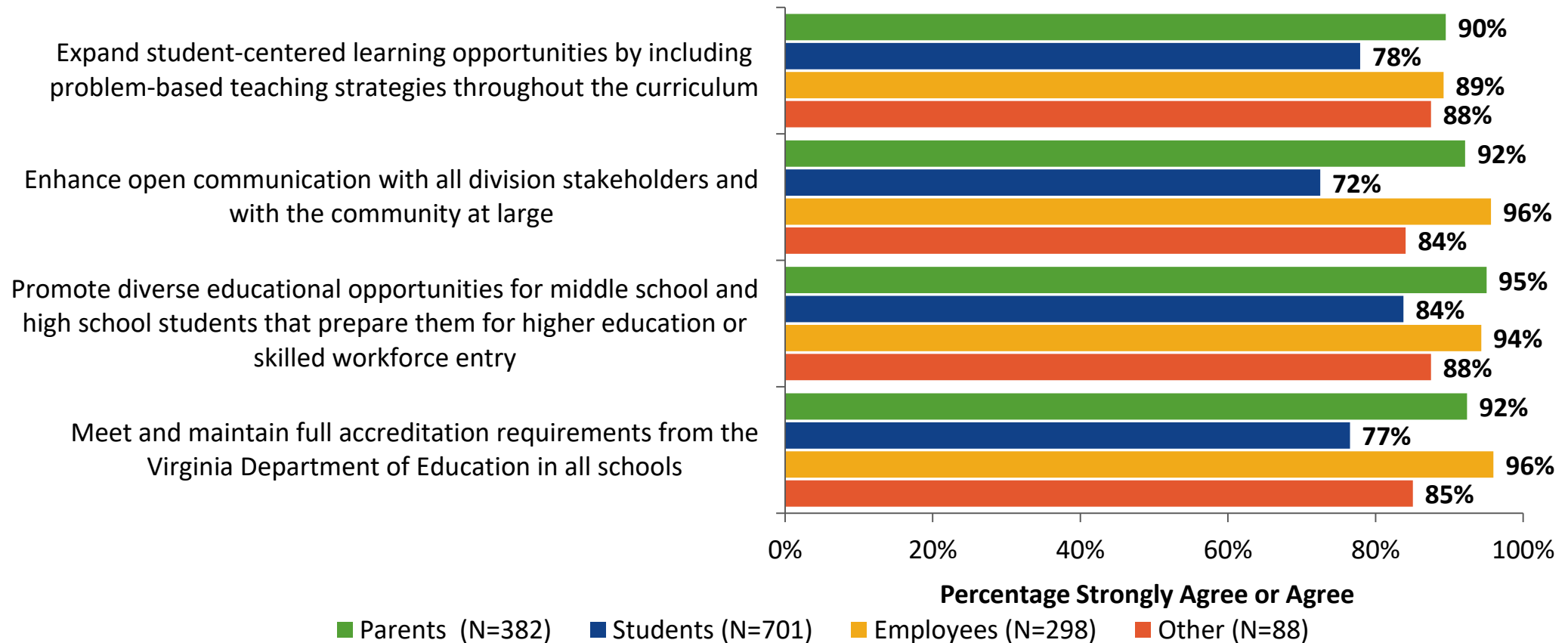


Answer Options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know

Note: Other group includes community members who do not have children in RCPS, business owners/representatives of nonprofit organizations, and advisory council members in RCPS.

Future Goals by Participant Group (Continued)

The school board and division leadership are considering several goals for RCPS. How strongly do you agree or disagree that these are the right goals for RCPS?

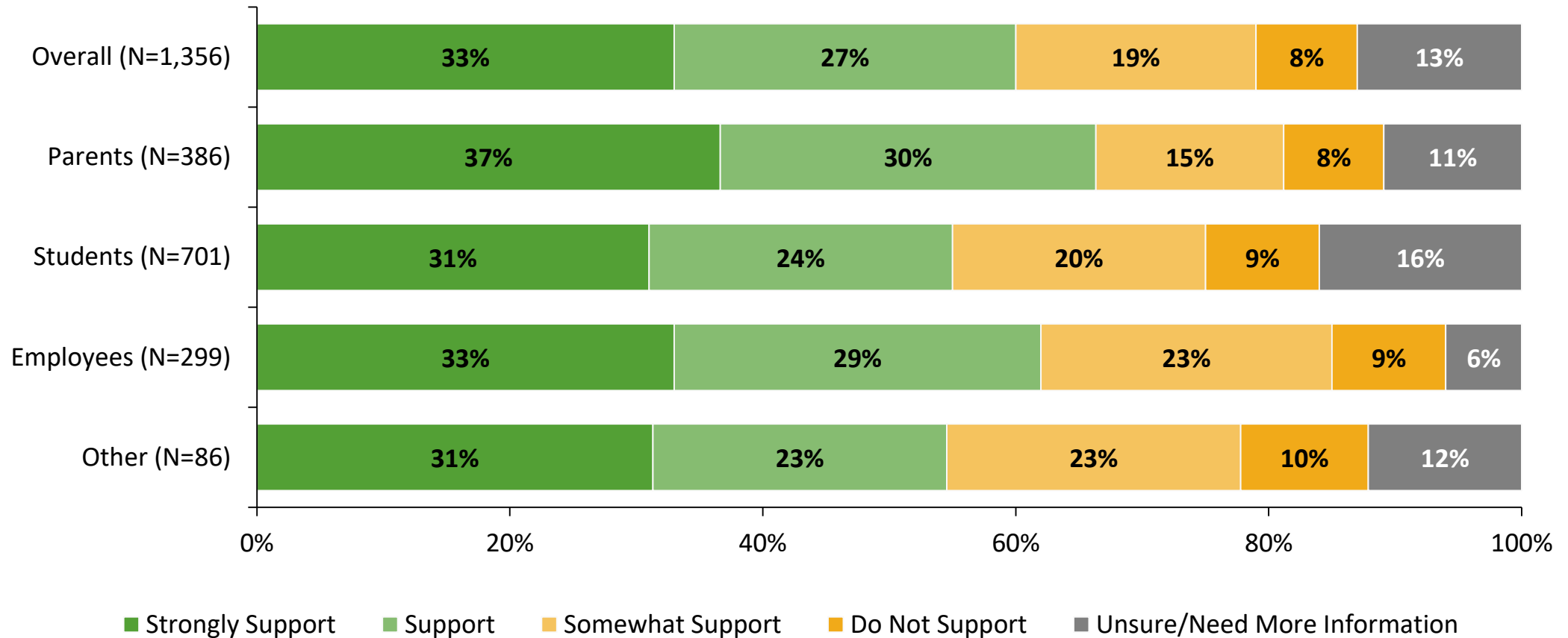


Answer Options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know

Note: Other group includes community members who do not have children in RCPS, business owners/representatives in nonprofit organizations, and advisory council members in RCPS.

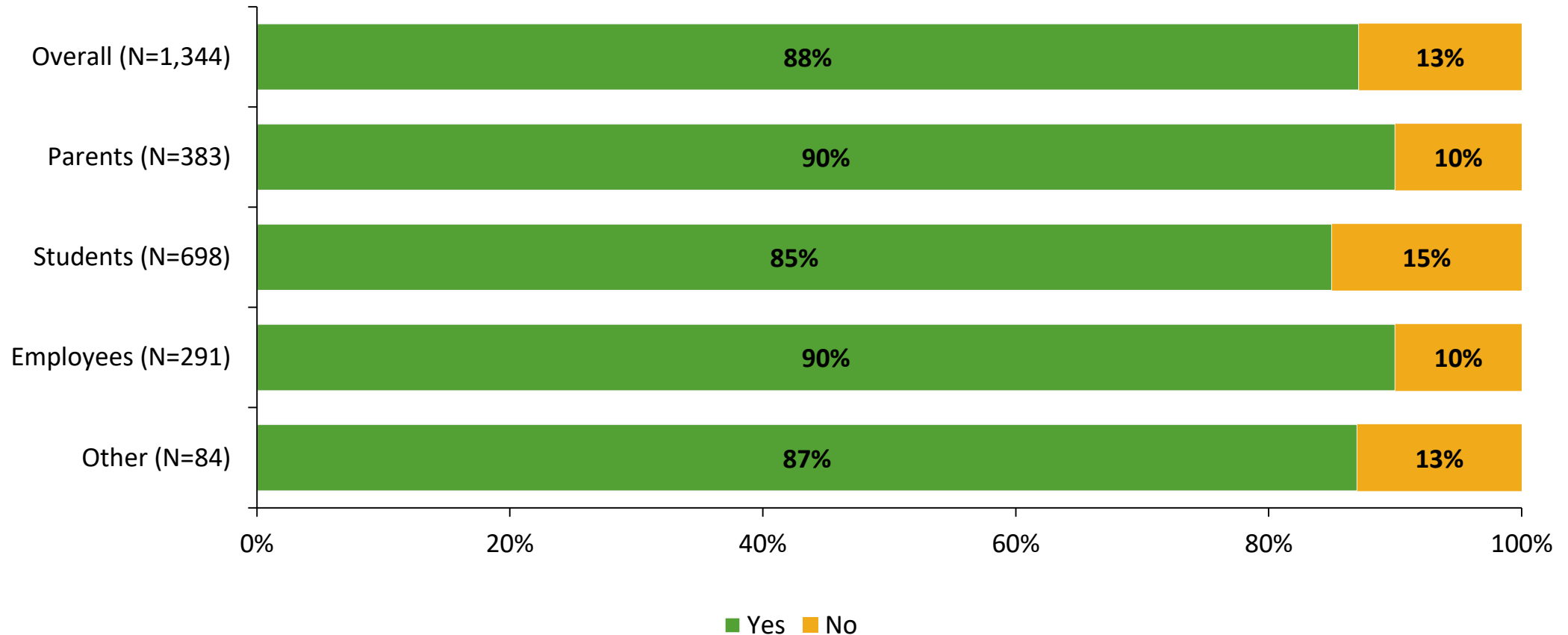
Expansion of Digital Conversion Program

RCPS is considering options that will expand the digital conversion program, so the 1:1 technology program provides a Chromebook to every middle and high school student. What is your position on expanding the digital conversion program?



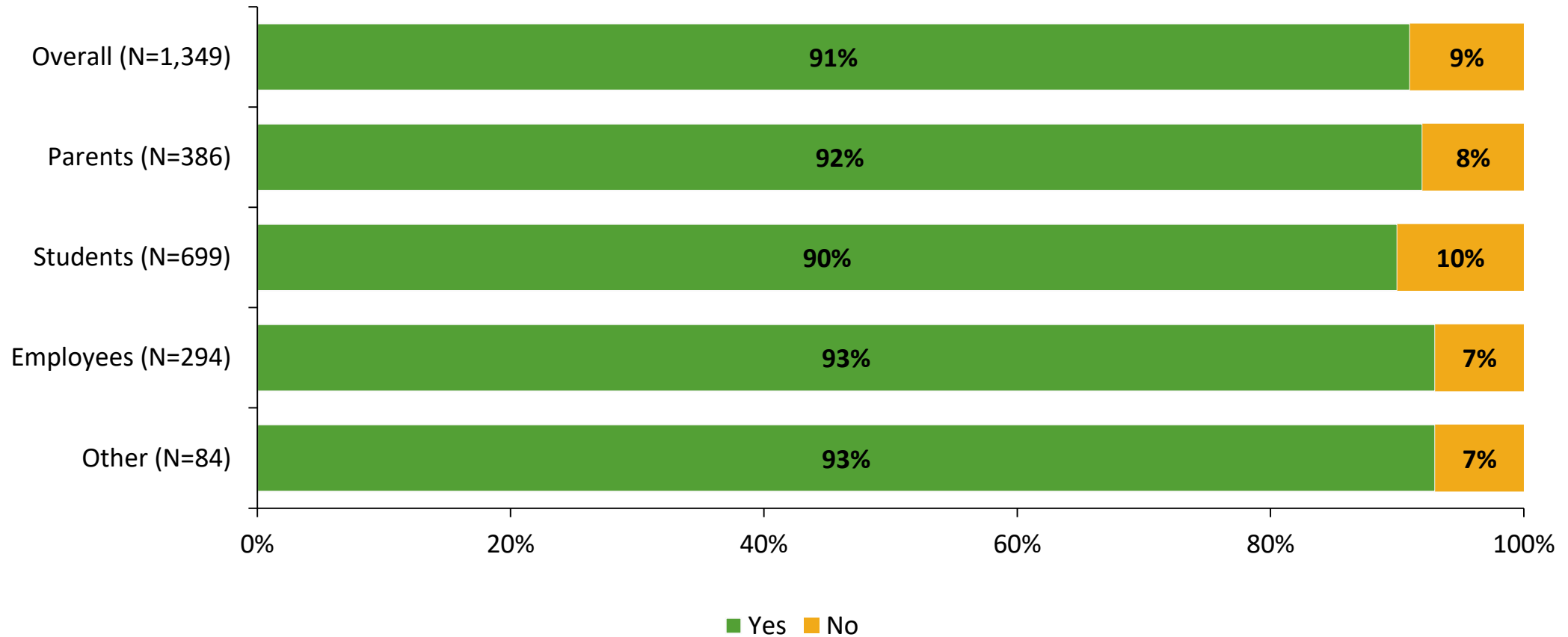
Internet Access by Participant Group

In designing and supporting instructional technology and blended learning, it is important to understand our families' technology resources. Do you have Internet access at home?



Digital Device by Participant Group

Is a digital device (smartphone, tablet, laptop, etc.) available in your home to complete school assignments?



Challenges

What are the top five challenges (the most important issues or needs) that RCPS will need to address over the next five years? Please rank only five options, using Rank 1 through Rank 5. (N=1,327)

Response	Overall (N=1,327)	Parents (N=375)	Students (N=686)	Employees (N=296)	Other (N=84)
Addressing school funding issues	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 2
Recruiting, training, and retaining high-quality staff	Rank 2	Rank 1	Rank 4	Rank 2	Rank 1
Increasing student achievement	Rank 3	Rank 3	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 3
Preparing students for college	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 2	Rank 10	Rank 7
Expanding and improving the use of appropriate technology in classroom curricula	Rank 5	Rank 8	Rank 5	Rank 8	Rank 10
Providing a safe, orderly environment	Rank 6	Rank 4	Rank 10	Rank 3	Rank 9
Offering career programs that lead to high-skill, high-demand, high-wage occupations after graduating from high school	Rank 7	Rank 6	Rank 9	Rank 7	Rank 4
Preparing graduates to enter the job market	Rank 8	Rank 9	Rank 8	Rank 5	Rank 5
Improving programs and facilities for students with special needs	Rank 9	Rank 11	Rank 6	Rank 12	Rank 13
Expanding communication and community involvement	Rank 10	Rank 12	Rank 7	Rank 13	Rank 12

Challenges (Continued)

What are the top five challenges (the most important issues or needs) that RCPS will need to address over the next five years? Please rank only five options, using Rank 1 through Rank 5. (N=1,327)

Response	Overall (N=1,327)	Parents (N=375)	Students (N=686)	Employees (N=296)	Other (N=84)
Maintaining and improving school facilities to meet expanding enrollment	Rank 11	Rank 10	Rank 11	Rank 6	Rank 8
Providing challenging instructional programs	Rank 12	Rank 7	Rank 13	Rank 9	Rank 6
Narrowing the achievement gap between student subgroups	Rank 13	Rank 13	Rank 14	Rank 11	Rank 11
Meeting and exceeding Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and other standardized test requirements	Rank 14	Rank 14	Rank 12	Rank 14	Rank 14
Meeting the educational needs of English Language Learners	Rank 15	Rank 15	Rank 15	Rank 15	Rank 15

Important Skills and Abilities for Students

What are the five most important skills and abilities that students will need to be successful in the future? Please rank only five options, using Rank 1 through Rank 5. (N=1,306)

Response	Overall (N=1,306)	Parents (N=371)	Students (N=667)	Employees (N=295)	Other (N=85)
Communication skills (writing, listening, and speaking)	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 1
Critical thinking skills	Rank 2	Rank 2	Rank 2	Rank 2	Rank 2
Interpersonal skills (working with others)	Rank 3	Rank 3	Rank 6	Rank 3	Rank 3
Problem-solving skills	Rank 4	Rank 4	Rank 4	Rank 4	Rank 4
Organizational and time management skills	Rank 5	Rank 5	Rank 8	Rank 7	Rank 7
Personal financial management skills	Rank 6	Rank 7	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 9
Soft skills (work ethic, punctuality, etc.)	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 9	Rank 6	Rank 6
Leadership	Rank 8	Rank 11	Rank 5	Rank 9	Rank 11
A second language	Rank 9	Rank 10	Rank 3	Rank 12	Rank 8
Reading comprehension and math skills	Rank 10	Rank 6	Rank 13	Rank 5	Rank 5

Important Skills and Abilities for Students (Continued)

What are the five most important skills and abilities that students will need to be successful in the future? Please rank only five options, using Rank 1 through Rank 5. (N=1,306)

Response	Overall (N=1,306)	Parents (N=371)	Students (N=667)	Employees (N=295)	Other (N=85)
Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)	Rank 11	Rank 9	Rank 11	Rank 10	Rank 12
Community service (giving back to the community)	Rank 12	Rank 12	Rank 10	Rank 11	Rank 10
Fine and performing arts (music, theater, visual arts)	Rank 13	Rank 14	Rank 12	Rank 14	Rank 14
Research skills (gathering and analyzing information)	Rank 14	Rank 13	Rank 15	Rank 13	Rank 15
Social sciences (study of history, other cultures, economics, government)	Rank 15	Rank 15	Rank 14	Rank 15	Rank 13

Issues Facing Students

What are the top three issues facing students today? These may be community, family, and/or socioeconomic issues that are not necessarily the responsibility of the school division. (Please rank only three options, using 1 through 3.) (N=1,311)

Response	Overall (N=1,311)	Parents (N=374)	Students (N=670)	Employees (N=294)	Other (N=84)
College and workplace preparation	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 1
Lack of parental involvement	Rank 2	Rank 2	Rank 8	Rank 1	Rank 2
A changing economy	Rank 3	Rank 5	Rank 2	Rank 4	Rank 3
Rapidly changing world	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 5	Rank 3	Rank 4
Negative peer pressure	Rank 5	Rank 4	Rank 4	Rank 6	Rank 5
Substance abuse	Rank 6	Rank 6	Rank 3	Rank 5	Rank 6
Higher education requirements for jobs	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 6	Rank 9	Rank 6
Fewer high-paying jobs	Rank 8	Rank 9	Rank 7	Rank 7	Rank 8
Technology outpacing skills	Rank 9	Rank 7	Rank 10	Rank 8	Rank 7
Low math and science proficiency	Rank 10	Rank 10	Rank 9	Rank 10	Rank 9

Financial Priorities

What should be the top five financial priorities for RCPS? Please rank only five options, using Rank 1 through Rank 5. (N=1,294)

Response	Overall (N=1,294)	Parents (N=369)	Students (N=657)	Employees (N=295)	Other (N=81)
Competitive salary scale geared toward high-quality teachers	Rank 1	Rank 1	Rank 5	Rank 1	Rank 1
Recruiting, training, and retaining high-quality teachers	Rank 2	Rank 2	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 3
Optimal class sizes for teaching and learning	Rank 3	Rank 3	Rank 6	Rank 2	Rank 2
Additional courses (electives and Career and Technical Education focus)	Rank 4	Rank 4	Rank 1	Rank 7	Rank 4
Secure, clean, modern facilities and buildings	Rank 5	Rank 7	Rank 2	Rank 6	Rank 9
Funding for music, fine arts, and sports	Rank 6	Rank 9	Rank 3	Rank 10	Rank 8
Interventions and supports for at-risk students	Rank 7	Rank 5	Rank 10	Rank 4	Rank 6
Additional teaching positions to offer faculty support (e.g., instructional technology resource teachers)	Rank 8	Rank 6	Rank 9	Rank 5	Rank 5
Instructional technology and blended learning	Rank 9	Rank 8	Rank 8	Rank 9	Rank 7
New facilities to accommodate program expansion for 21st century learning	Rank 10	Rank 10	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 10
Libraries and media centers	Rank 11	Rank 11	Rank 11	Rank 11	Rank 11

Thematic Analysis

What areas of RCPS need improvement? (N=511)

Several comments were about having **high quality teachers in the division**. Participants appeared to define “high quality” as being effective, caring, and professional. Participants suggested holding teachers accountable, continually training teachers, and removing low performers.

Several comments were about addressing the division’s **building infrastructure and maintenance**. Participants noted the need to modernize buildings, address faulty equipment (e.g., HVAC equipment), and create more gym and outdoor space, as well as have more windows within school buildings. They noted that buildings are not clean or well maintained, and these buildings need to be expanded to accommodate a growing student population.

Several participants conveyed the importance of teachers being **more innovative in their techniques to engage students**. Suggestions offered by participants were about focusing on ways to empower students in their own education, knowing students, being innovative in delivering instruction, differentiating the instructional program to meet the diverse needs of students, implementing more inquiry-based learning techniques, being aware of the pace when conveying information, having a strong command over the material, clearly communicating information to students, and offering alternative education options.

Some comments were centered on the division providing **better compensation for employees**. Participants noted that having competitive compensation may translate into more qualified teachers wanting to teach in RCPS and higher teacher retention rates.

A few comments were related to **focusing less on standardized tests and the Standards of Learning (SOL) exams**. These participants recommended reducing the number of assessments that students are required to complete and shifting the focus to instruction.

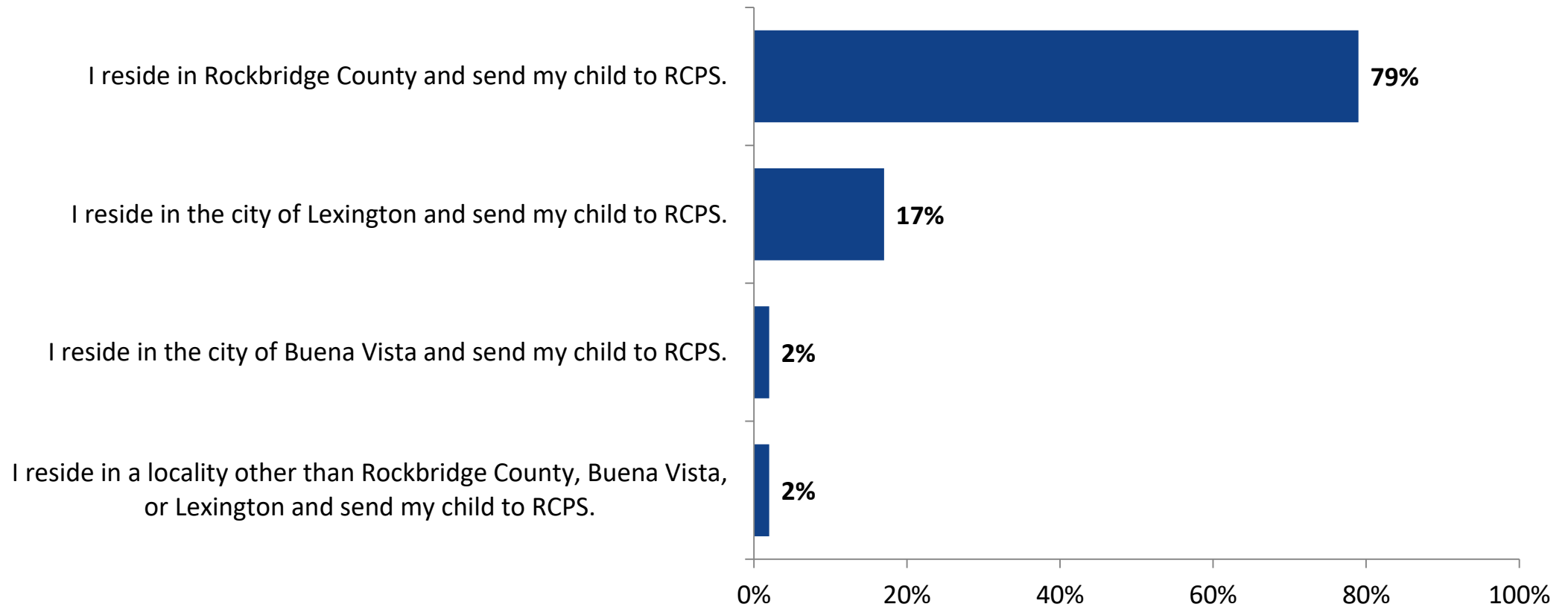
Key Insights

- 67% of participants rated the overall quality of an RCPS education as excellent or good. Slightly fewer participants either strongly agree or agree that RCPS is fulfilling its mission (63%) and that RCPS has clear goals to measure success (57%).
- Participants are most proud of the academic program (50%), staff members and student achievement (both 47%), and the Career and Technical Education program (43%). One area of improvement the division may want to consider is improving stakeholder perception of the school meal program, bus service, communication provided by the school and division, and building quality and maintenance.
- While there is support for current programs (Advanced Placement courses, dual enrollment, etc.) and approximately three in four participants said that the revised mission (74%) and vision (76%) statements adopted by the school board represent the right direction for RCPS, less than half of participants said they believe the division has met or surpassed current goals. For example, only 21% of participants said they believe the division has either surpassed or met the goal about instructing in new ways, recognizing individual differences, and providing opportunities for different learning styles.
- Most participants agreed that the goals under consideration by the school board and division leadership are the right goals for RCPS.
- The strong majority of participants have Internet access at home (88%) and access to a digital device to complete homework (91%). When asked about their position on expanding the digital conversion program, parents (67%) and employees (62%) were the two participant groups most likely to either Strongly Support or Support this idea.
- The top five challenges that RCPS needs to address over the next five years are: Addressing school funding issues; recruiting, training, and retaining high-quality staff; increasing student achievement; preparing students for college; and expanding and improving the use of appropriate technology in classroom curricula. Participants said the top three issues facing students today are college and workplace preparation, lack of parental involvement, and a changing economy.
- Participants ranked communication skills (writing, listening, and speaking), critical thinking skills, interpersonal skills (working with others), problem-solving skills, and organizational and time management skills as the five most important skills and abilities that students will need to be successful in the future.
- Participants said the top five financial priorities for RCPS should be: Competitive salary scale geared toward high-quality teachers; recruiting, training, and retaining high-quality teachers; optimal class sizes for teaching and learning; additional courses (electives and Career and Technical Education focus); and secure, clean, modern facilities and buildings.

Appendix

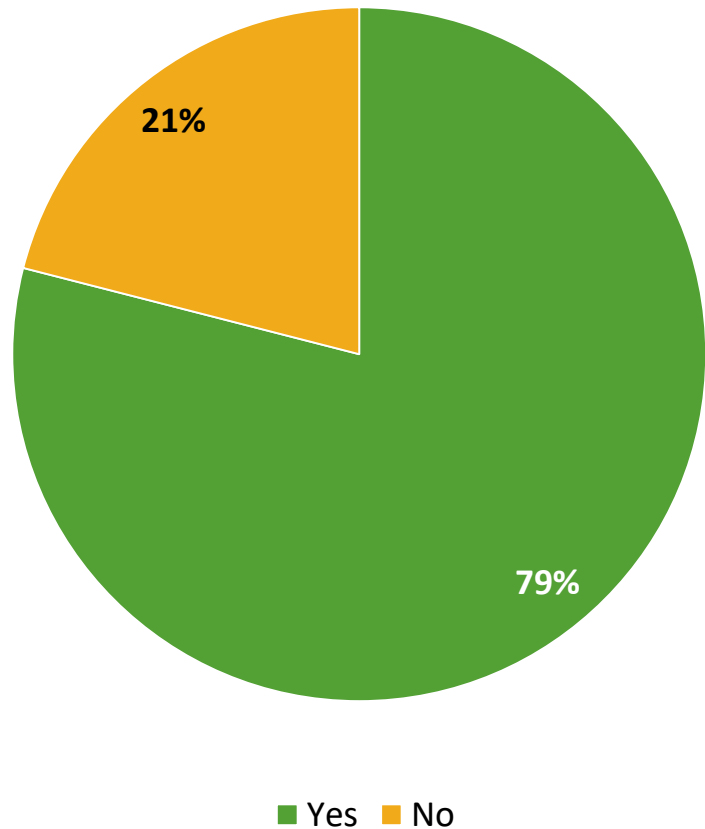
Participation

Which of the following best describes your affiliation as a parent of a child who currently attends school in RCPS? (N=381)

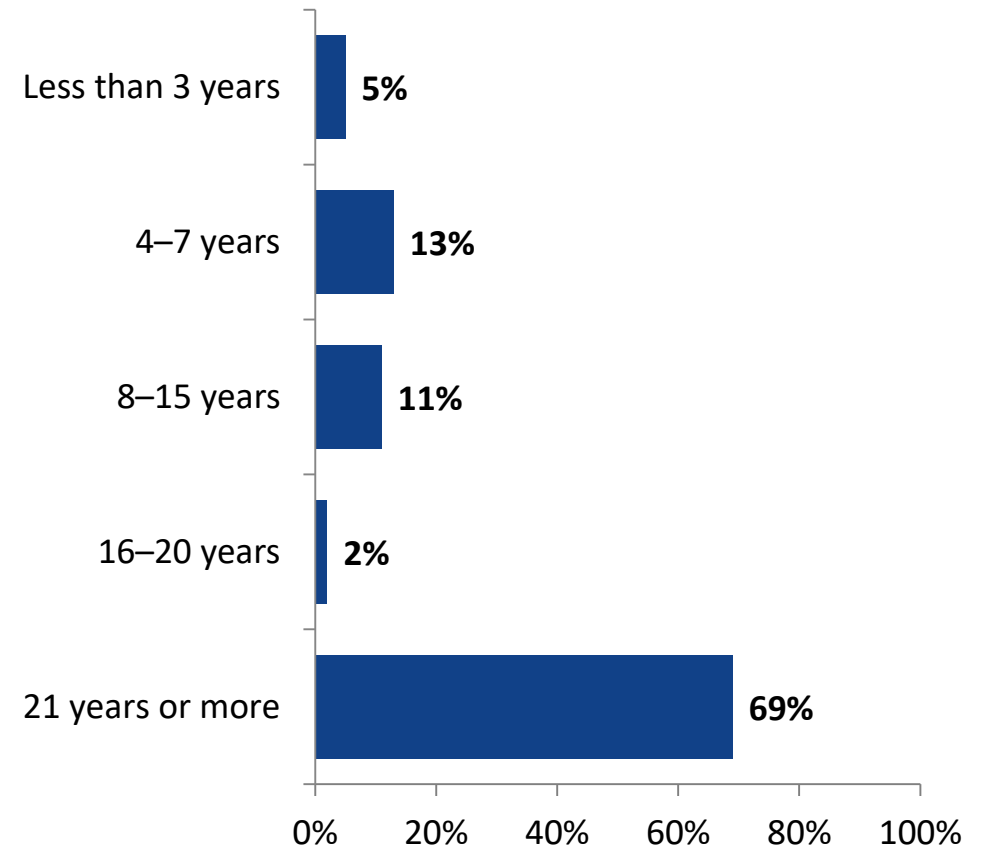


Participation (Continued)

Do you reside in Rockbridge County? (N=77)

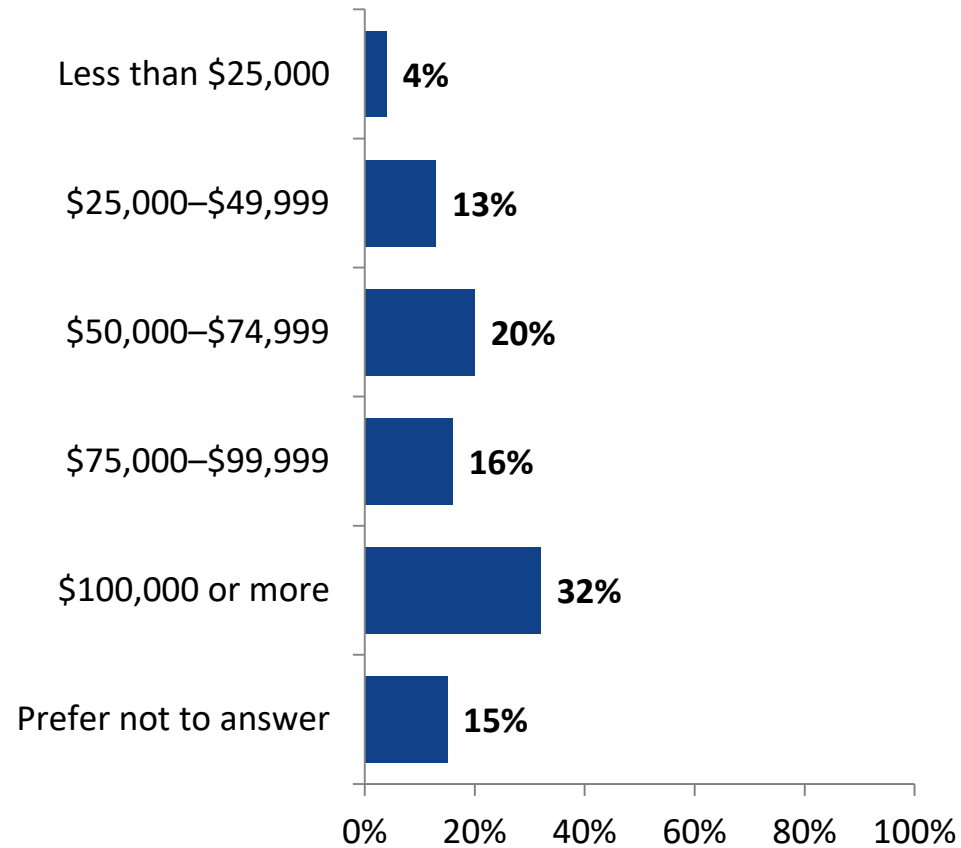


How many years have you lived in Rockbridge County? (N=61)

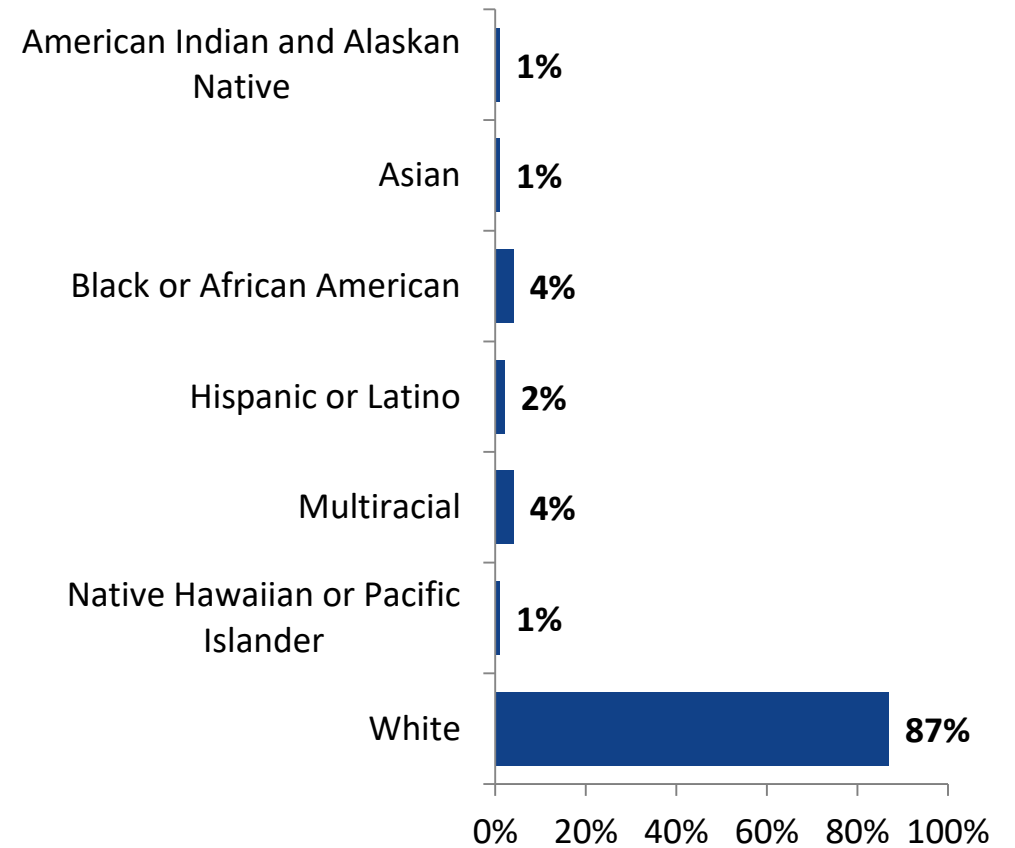


Participation (Continued)

What is your annual household income? (N=435)



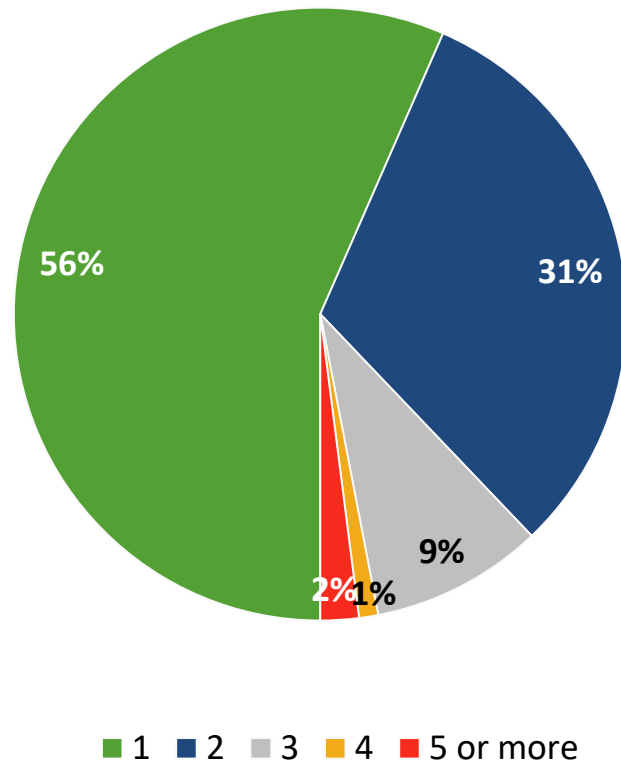
Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity? (N=1,351)



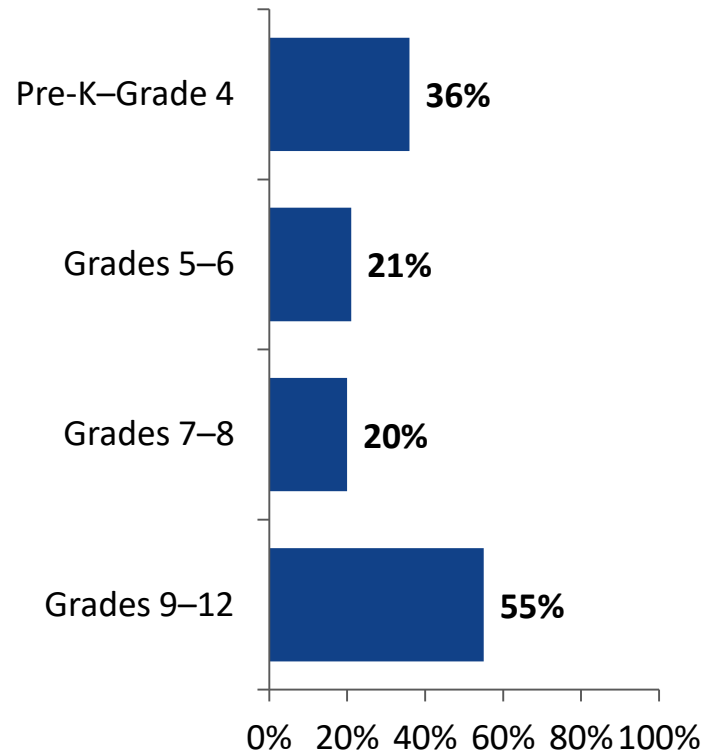
Note: Only parents/guardians of a child in RCPS, community members who do not have a child in RCPS, or business owners/representatives of nonprofit organizations answered this question.

Parent Participation

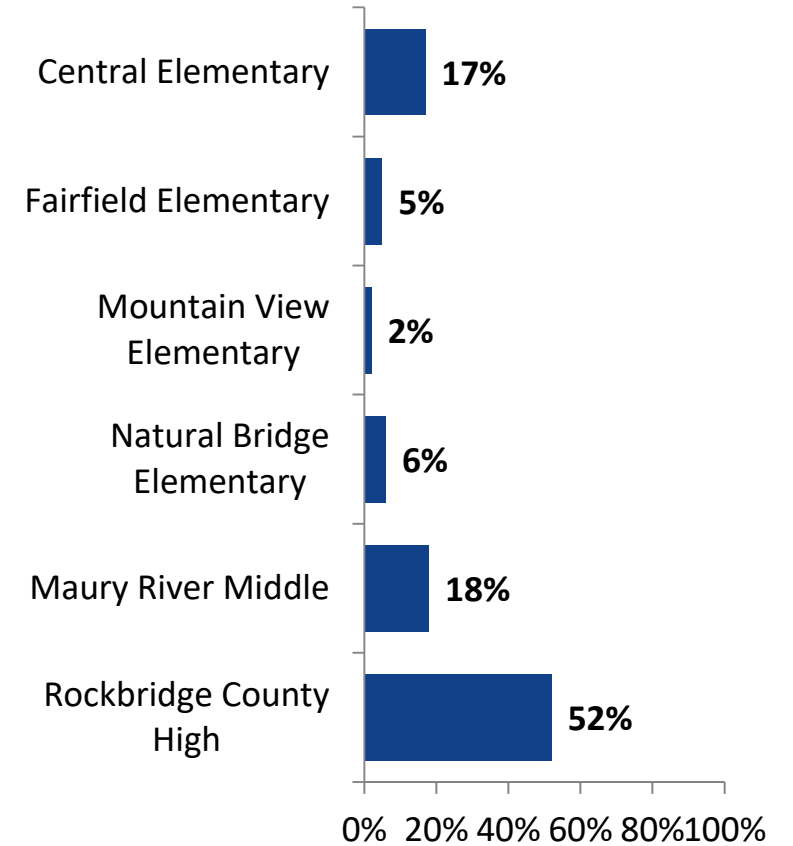
How many of your children are enrolled in the Rockbridge County Public Schools? (N=383)



Which of the following grade ranges apply to your child or children? (N=384)



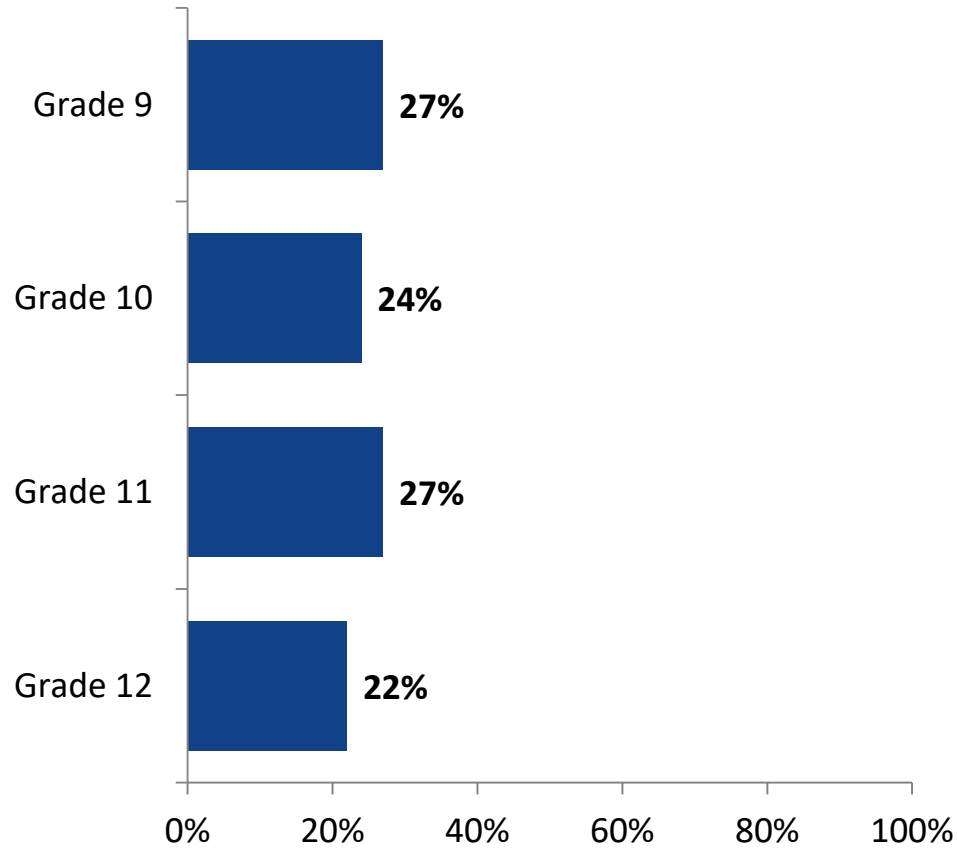
Please select your child's or children's school(s). (N=374)



Notes: Only parents/guardians of a child in RCPS answered these questions. Sum may exceed 100 percent because participants could select more than one answer for the question about their child's grade range.

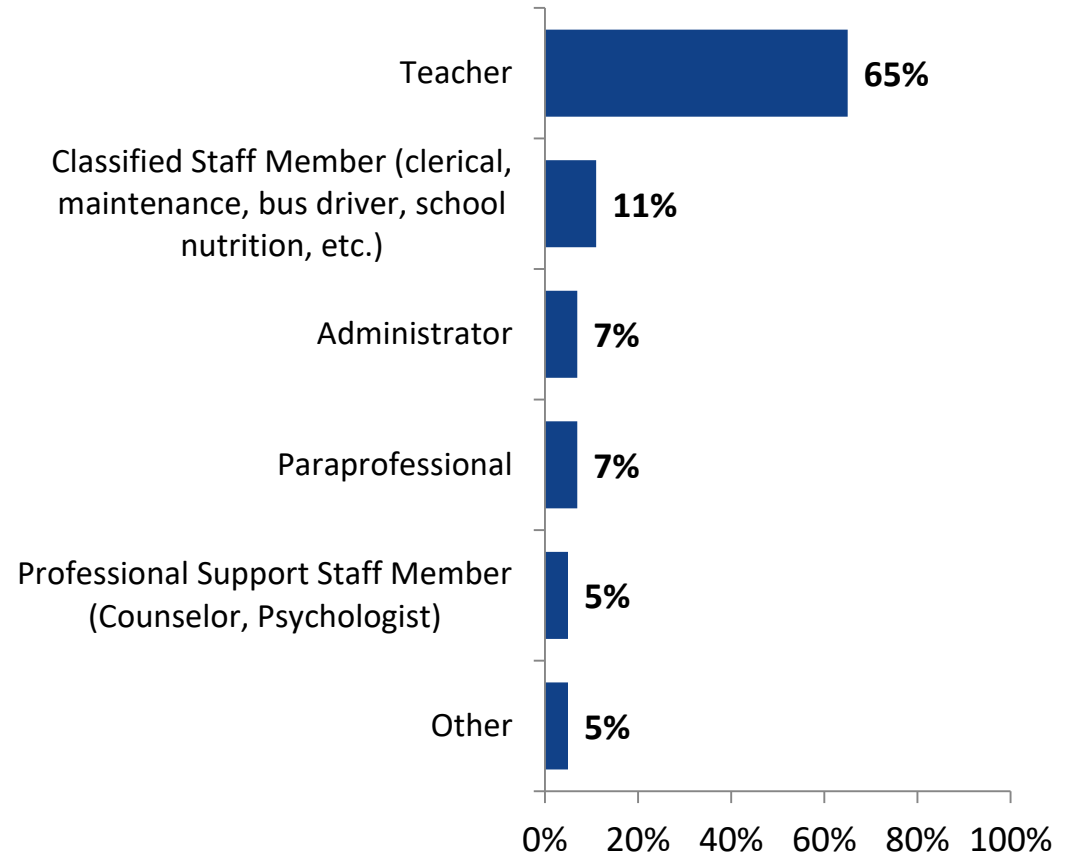
Student and Employee Participation

Please select your grade. (N=702)



Note: Only RCPS students answered this question.

I am a(n) ... (N=297)



Note: Only RCPS employees answered this question.



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