



Summary of Regional Community Input Meetings

This report is a summary of the DeKalb County School District community input meetings held during October 2015. During these meetings, participants were polled on a set of 25 questions using an audience response system that captured input via an interactive PowerPoint presentation. Responses were viewed by participants immediately after they responded to the question. These responses became the basis of small group breakout sessions in which participants provided greater detail on their numerical responses from the polling sessions. This report provides a summary of both the polling responses and the discussions in the small group sessions. All data are provided as an aggregate of responses received across the five regional community input meetings.

Who Attended:

Stakeholder Group	Percent
Parents	56%
Employees	41%

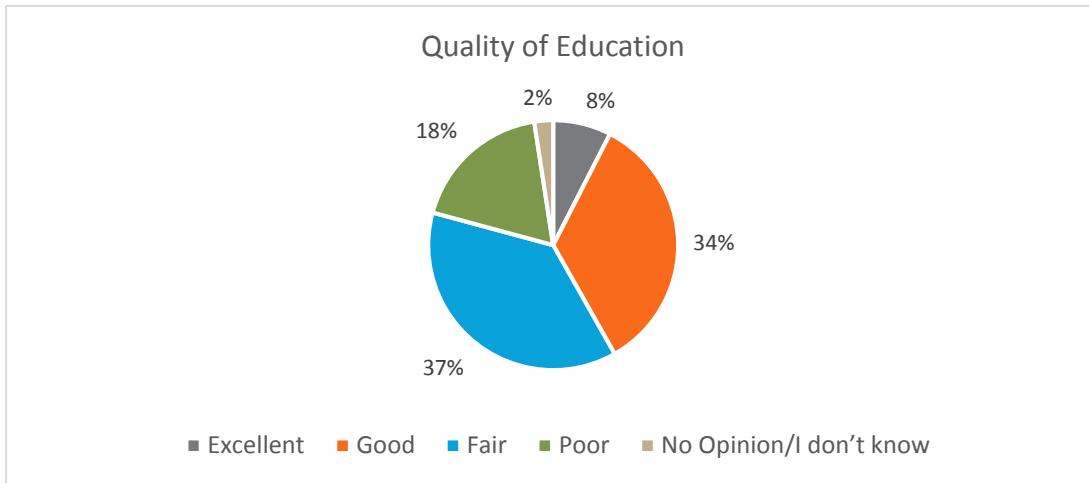
Feeder Patterns Represented

In addition to the schools listed below, each community input meeting had participants that indicated they did not live in DeKalb County (9%). There were a total of 274 people who indicated which high school cluster they lived in.

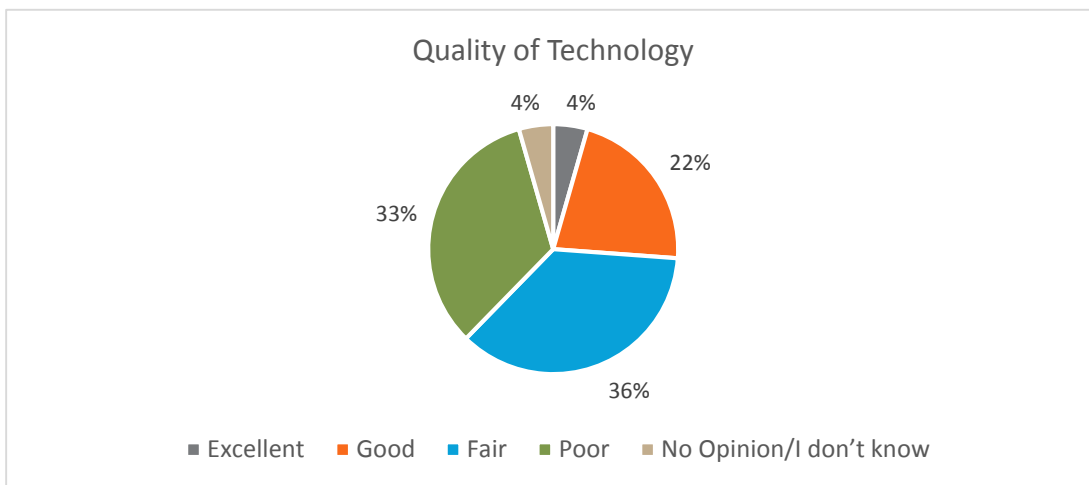
• Cedar Grove HS	• Dunwoody HS	• Redan HS
• Chamblee HS	• Lakeside HS	• Southwest DeKalb HS
• Clarkston HS	• Lithonia HS	• Stephenson HS
• Columbia HS	• Martin Luther King Jr. HS	• Stone Mountain HS
• Cross Keys HS	• McNair HS	• Towers HS
• Druid Hills HS	• Miller Grove HS	• Tucker HS

Large Group Polling Responses

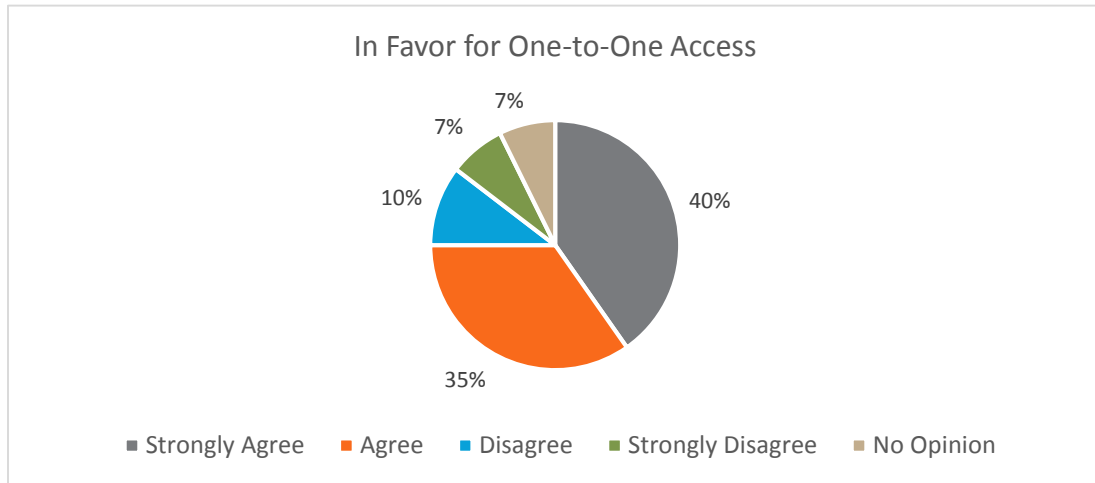
1. How would you rate the quality of education provided to students in the DeKalb County School District? (Multiple Choice)



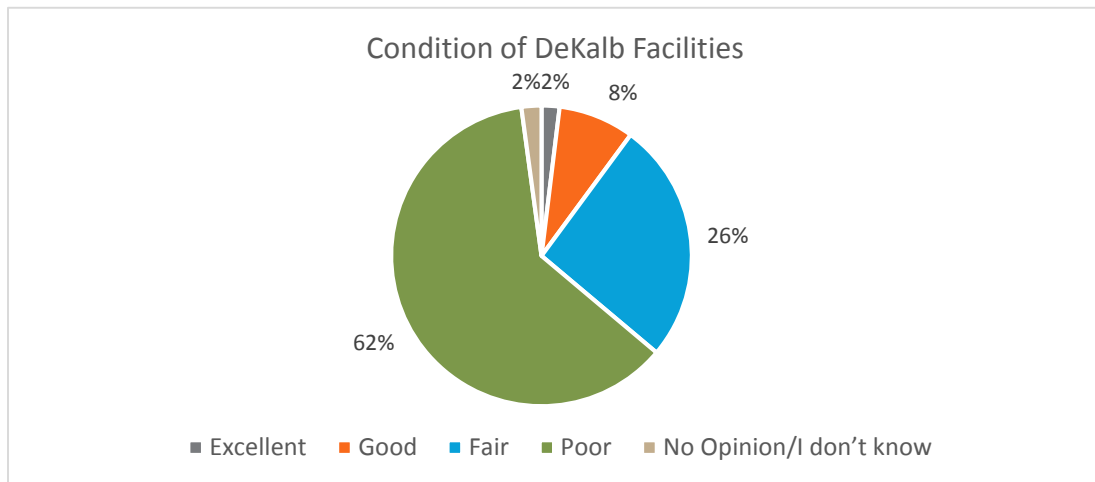
2. How would you rate the quality of technology provided for students and staff? (Multiple Choice)



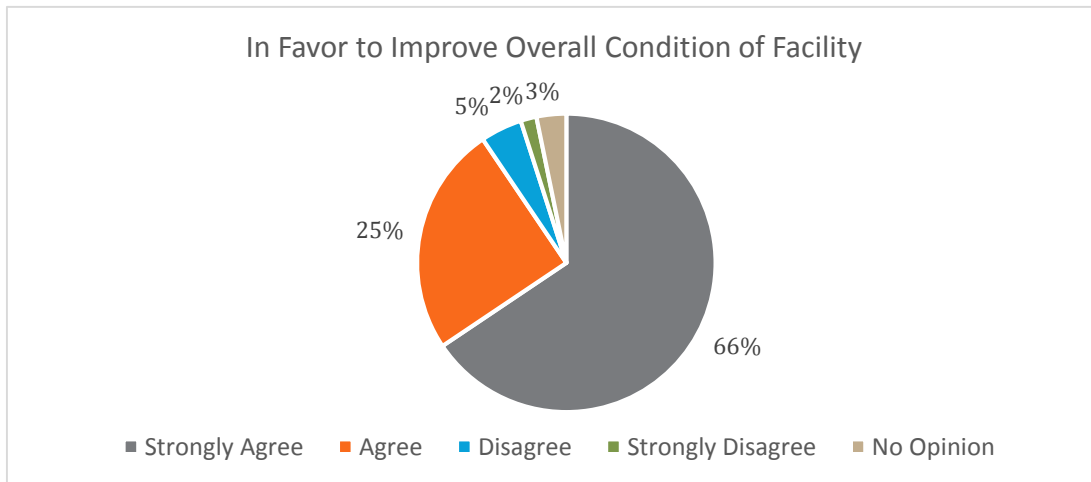
3. I would be in favor of using E-SPLOST funds to provide one-to-one access to technology for students and staff. (Multiple Choice)



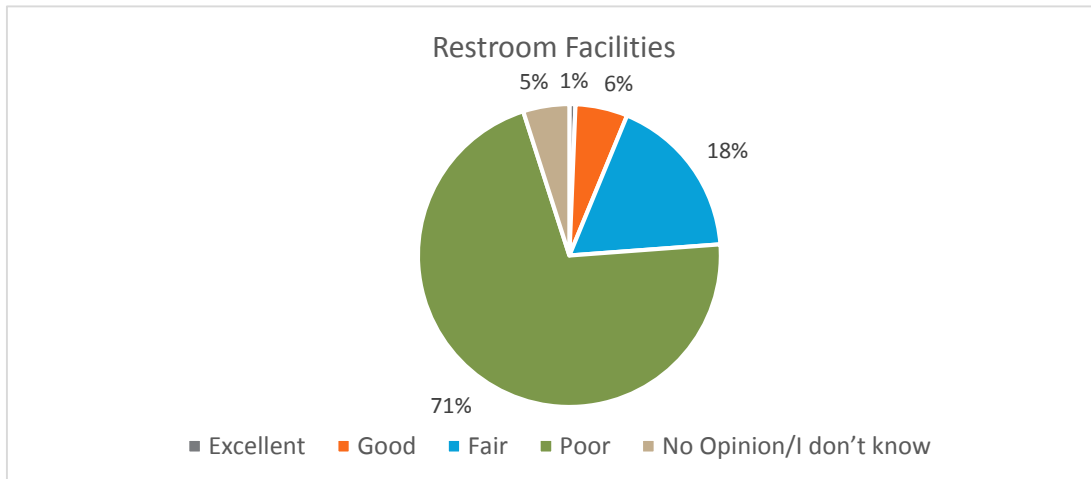
4. How would you rate the condition of DeKalb facilities (e.g. lighting, HVAC, etc.)? (Multiple Choice)



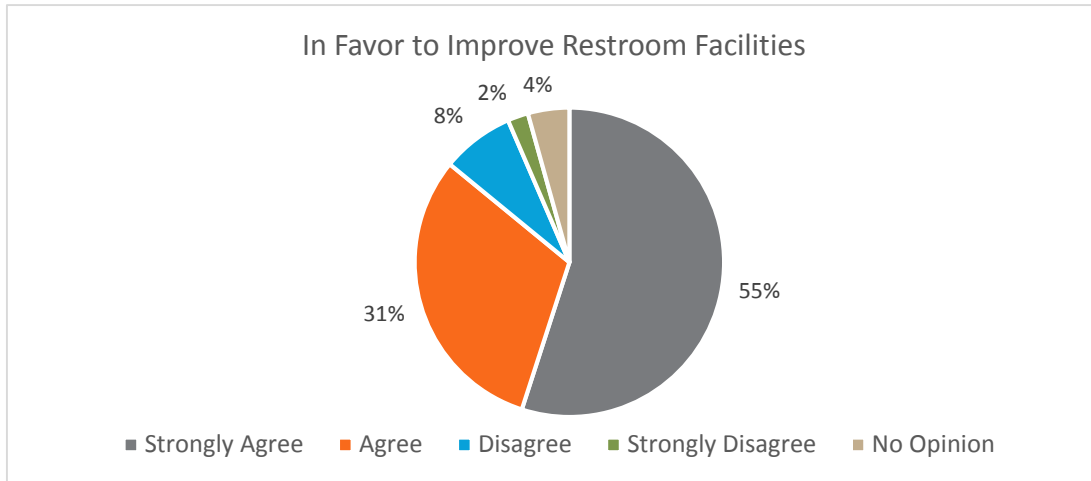
5. I would be in favor of using E-SPLOST funds to improve the overall condition of the facility. (Multiple Choice)



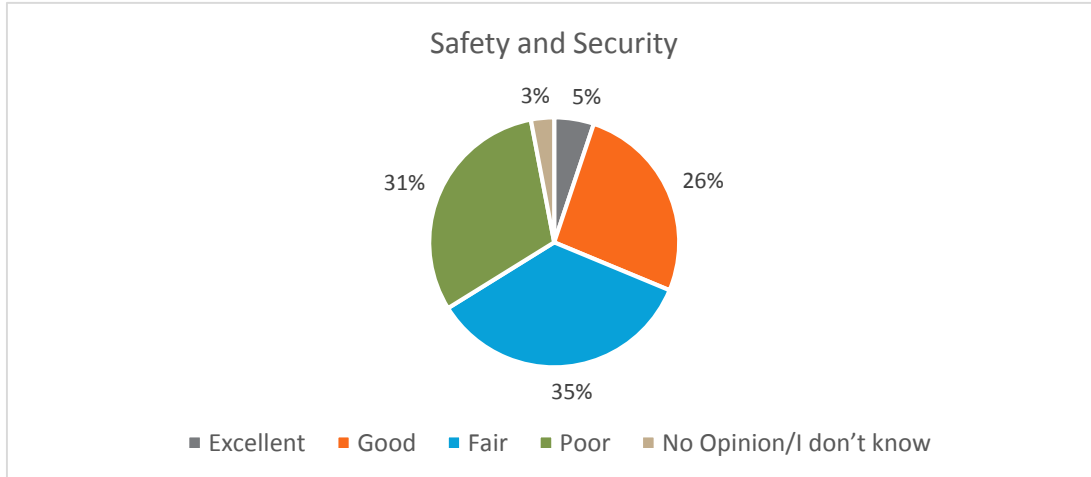
6. How would you rate the restroom facilities in the schools and athletic facilities (Multiple Choice)



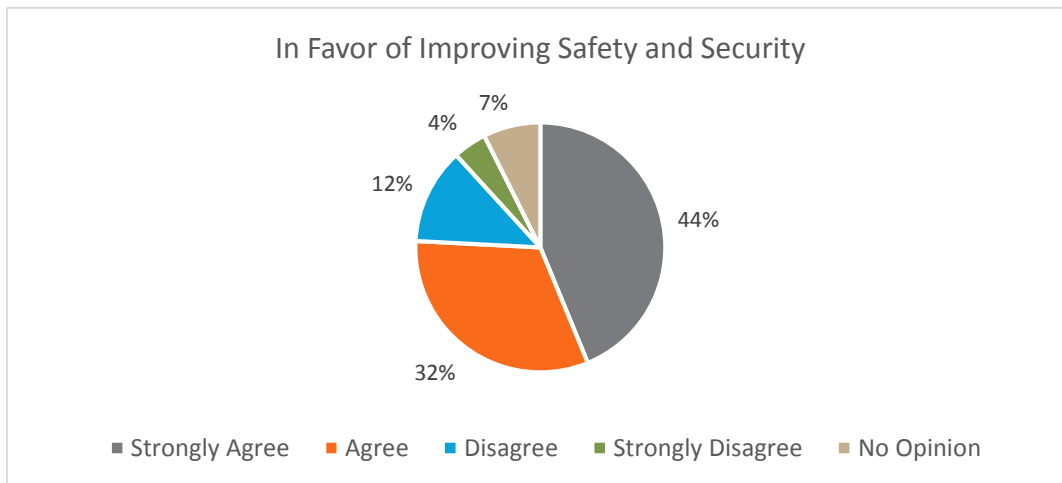
7. I would be in favor of using E-SPLOST funds to improve the restroom facilities across the district. (Multiple Choice)



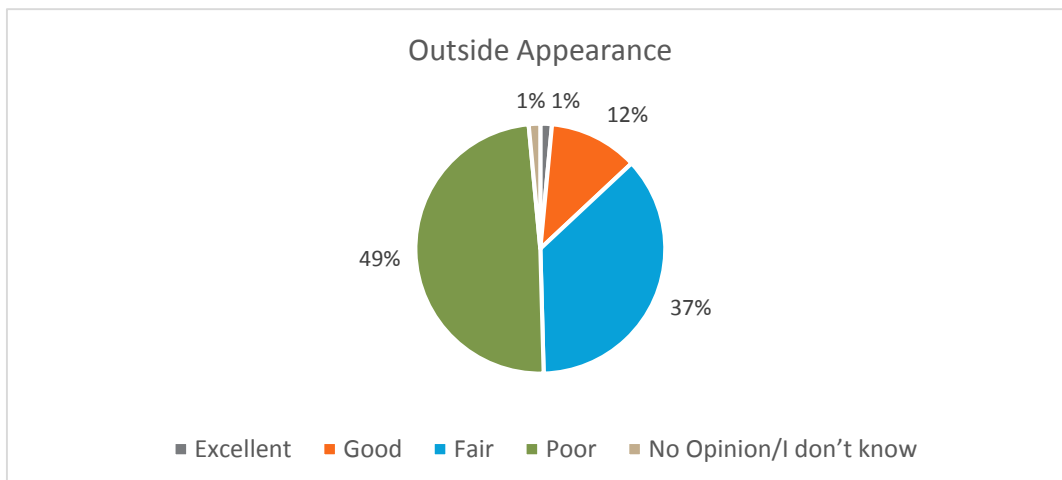
8. How would you rate the overall level of safety and security within the schools? (Multiple Choice)



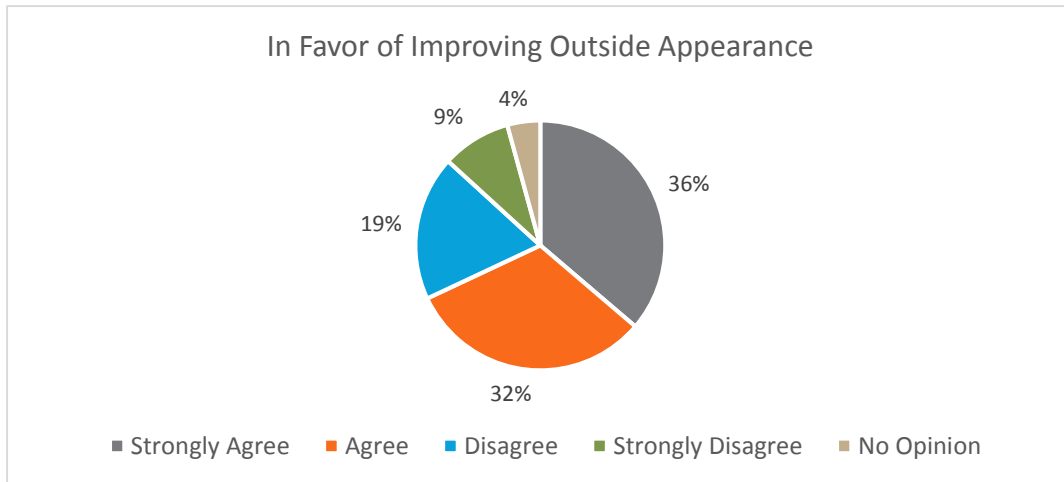
9. I would be in favor of using E-SPLOST funds to improve the overall safety and security within schools. (Multiple Choice)



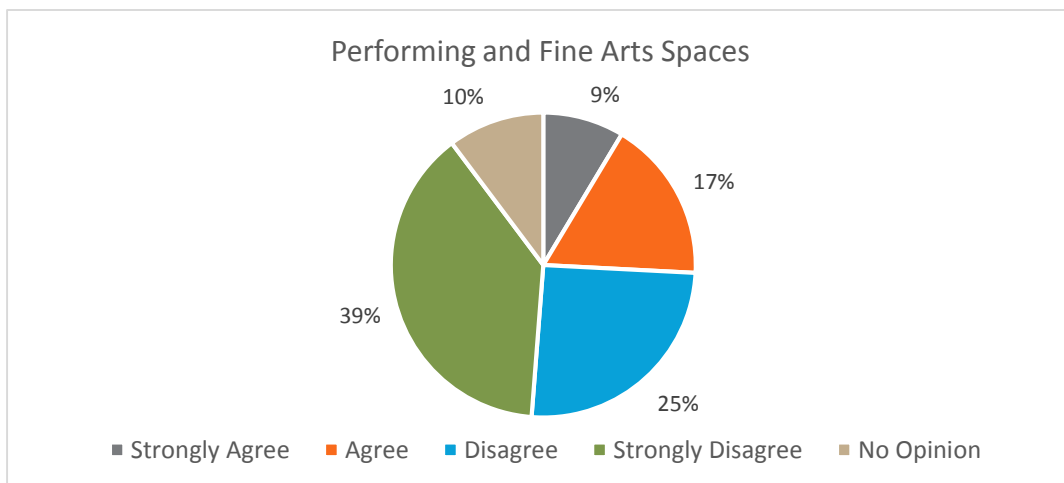
10. How would you rate DeKalb County School District for outside appearance and “curb appeal”? (Multiple Choice)



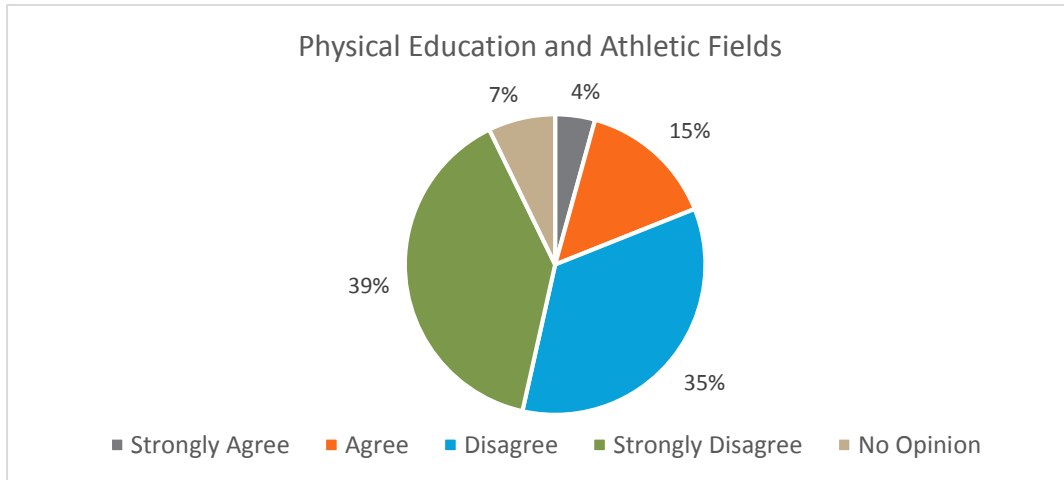
11. I would be in favor of using E-SPLOST funds to improve the outside appearance and “curb appeal” of schools. (Multiple Choice)



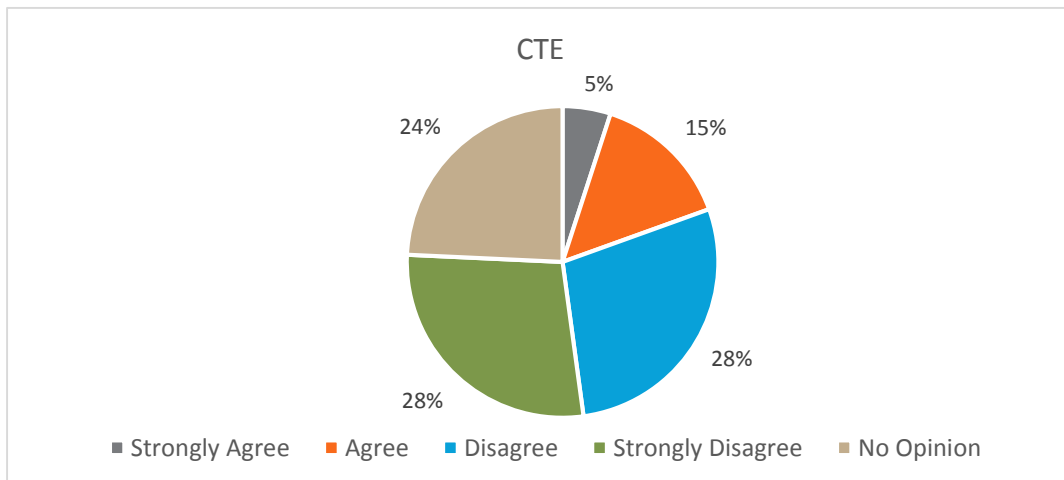
12. The performing and fine arts spaces are adequately designed to support the instructional programs. (Multiple Choice)



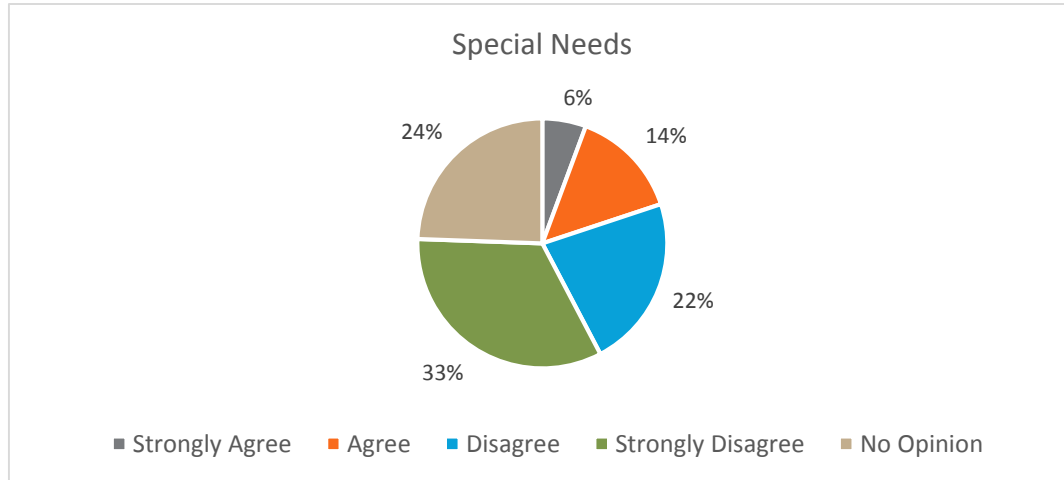
13. Physical education spaces and athletic fields are safe and adequate. (Multiple Choice)



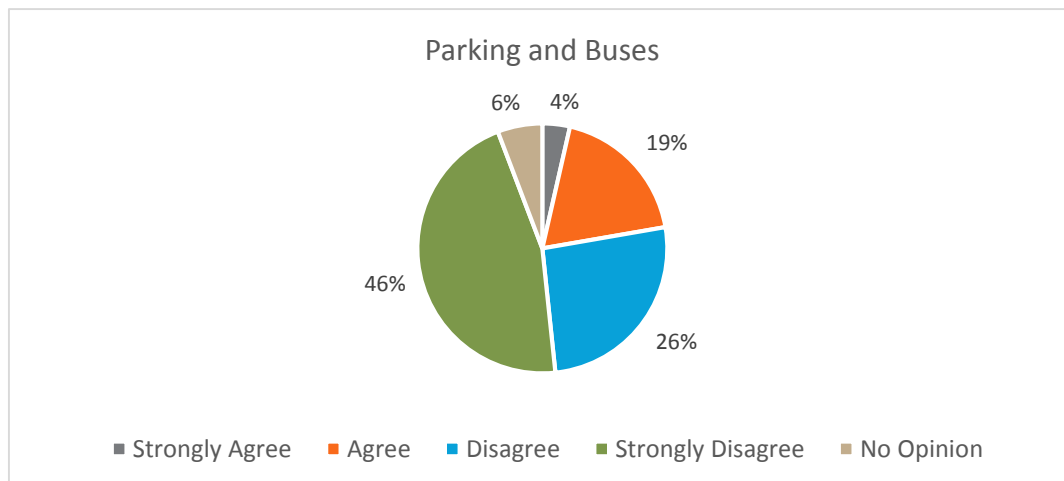
14. Career and technical students have access to current equipment and technology to support 21st century workforce development. (Multiple Choice)



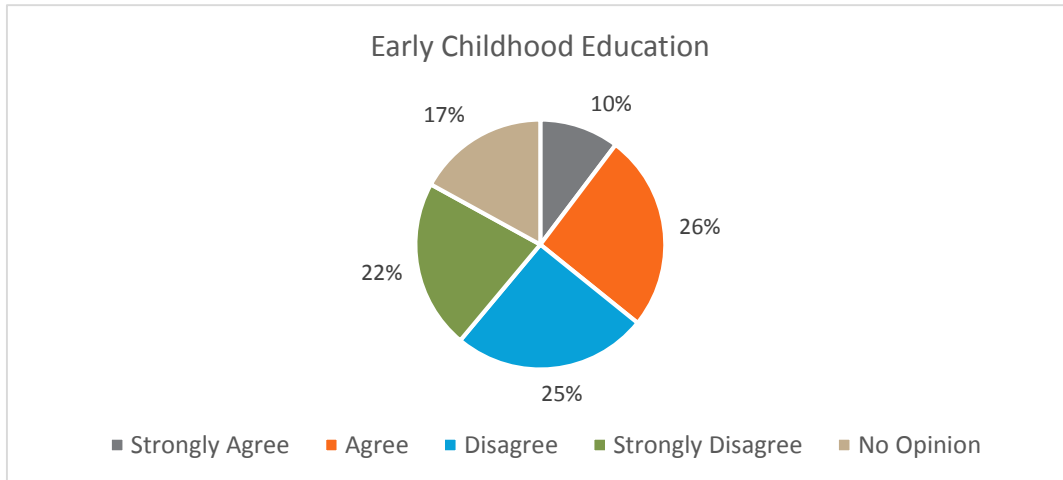
15. Students with special needs have appropriate learning spaces. (Multiple Choice)



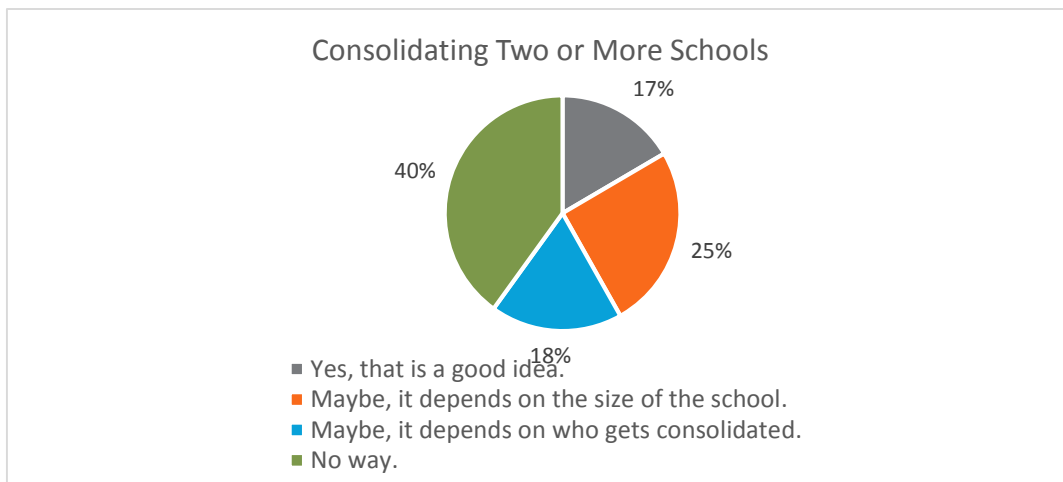
16. There is adequate parking and safe access for students, parents, and buses at DeKalb schools. (Multiple Choice)



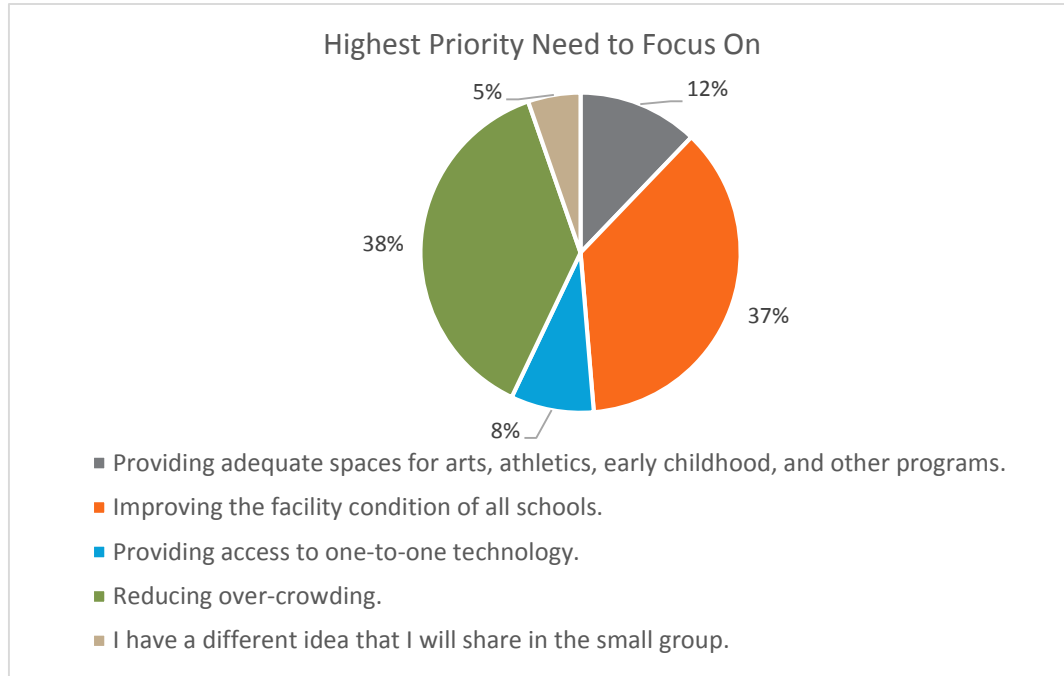
17. Early childhood education is a high priority in DeKalb School District. (Multiple Choice)



18. If DeKalb County School District could save a significant amount of money by consolidating two or more schools, would you be in favor of doing so? (Multiple Choice)



19. The highest priority need for E-SPLOST V in the district should focus primarily on: (Multiple Choice)





Small Group Responses

Note: All responses are provided as received and without edits.

Overall Quality of Education (42 responses)

- Not teaching skills
- Teaching to the test
- Adequate support – teachers need proper tools: technology, space, overcrowding, working computers
- Labs for science need to be bigger
- Preparation for vocational and college ready skills
- Job ready skills
- Consistency in curriculum
- A parent discussed the negative quality of the teachers and many positions were not filled at the beginning of the year.
- A citizen discussed the poor quality of high school graduates in the area regarding poor customer service and that the high school graduates did not have the basic skills to perform at local businesses.
- A parent discussed the issue with too many trailers.
- A parent discussed the overcrowding and requested a 4th and 5th grade school or a school like Kittredge to address the overcrowding.
- A parent discussed the safety, electrical problems, inadequate technology, and a water drainage issue.
- Overall, across the county there is disparity even though some schools are doing very well there are still schools with low performance
- How does DCSD compare with other districts (ex. Gwinnett, Cobb)
- Not adequately prepared for next level
- Significant discrepancies in educational opportunities across the district
- Students are ill-prepared for college
- Instructional needs are not being met
- Students are not challenged
- Teachers' motivation in doubt
- Passing students along
- Attitudes of students are not conducive to learning
- Dated or inadequate resources
- Teachers are often late to school - there are no subs in their absence
- Students are left unattended
- No administrators show up to direct students - no work for them to proceed
- Teachers are often absent (most often it occurs in subject areas of social studies and science)
- Too many distractions during instructional time – some from outside of the classroom
- Poor textbook quality – sometimes students must take pictures of missing pages
- Poor instructional resources
- DeKalb is slower paced compared to Gwinnett



- Not up to par at x; the rigor does not prepare students for college except AP courses.
- Technology and classroom materials (lab, books, etc.) are limited, and condition of the classes (temperature, noise level from other classes, etc.) prevent teacher from being able to be effective teachers.
- Too many tests, especially for lower performing students, does not allow teachers to use time teaching.
- Classes with students who are known to be performing at a level lower than expected for their grade have too many students to be able to remediate deficit areas.
- The timelines for teaching students who are known to struggle academically are unrealistic for students to be able to meet.
- Unrealistic demands put on teachers to raise skill levels for students who are known to be under-performing (Example: A student reading on 3rd/4th grade level being expected to raise reading level to 10th grade in 1 year)
- Students- Feel that teachers don't care. Teachers have low expectations of students or feel that they aren't going anywhere in life.
- Responded that they know of alumni who have returned from college and reported that they were not prepared for college academics. Students feel that few teachers challenge them academically.
- Parents feel that there is a lack of AP courses offered, poor attitudes of staff. Reported that they often feel teachers have low expectations of students and they are not going anywhere in life. Feels that students are not encouraged.
- Some feel that the quality depends highly on the school you attend. Some feel that opinions are based on personal experiences, level of support, and perception.
- Respondent also reported that it depends on the culture of the school. Some schools rise to the challenges. Some have lots of behavioral distractions that deflect from academics.

Quality of Technology (39 responses)

- Update of equipment
- Connection issues
- Technology service improvement – timeliness of response
- Interfaces with platforms not always user friendly or giving wanted information (Infinite Campus)
- Training of teachers and parents
- Parents cannot email from Infinite Campus
- Updating of grades
- Student codes not always working for network log-on
- Student training
- Assumption all homes have computers and appropriate access
- Two parents discussed the absence of poor technology regarding Theater Production and technology in the classroom.
- A parent discussed the negative quality of technology in the schools.
- A parent discussed issues with the electricity which was having an effect on the technology in the classroom.



- Druid Hills Middle, Henderson Middle have technology but facility may not adequately support the equipment
- Inconsistent access to technology and software across the district (ex. Access to e-books)
- Access to one on one technology is a great concept but what about connectivity in the school house as well as at home
- How early would use be implemented?
- What is the status of "bring your own" device for connectivity?
- Are there options for lease/ or families being able to purchase technology
- Promethean boards don't work
- Teachers are not able to print assignments (often parents are asked to print out work from their job)
- Infinite Campus deletes grades – teachers have to input several times
- Exposed wires in some areas
- Not up to date; not enough Wifi to be productive in class.
- Wifi not accessible to student nor all teachers
- e-books should be available to students and updated in a timely manner.
- Students on the North end have iPad, lab tops, etc. given to them or are able to check them out, but not the students on the South end of DeKalb.
- Teachers are not properly trained on the Promethean Board to be effectively used.
- Website not up-to-date; allowing students to have input and design it would be motivating to students and cost efficient for the county.
- There are not enough working computers for students when testing; therefore test scores on computer do not accurately reflect student's ability (students get frustrated with them not working, working slowly, shuts down in the middle of testing and students have to start over or not complete)
- Students on the South end do not have computers at home or school, but students on the North end have both.
- Teacher's jobs can't be stored when printing to a shared copier.
- Copy machines are old and there is not an appropriate amount of copiers based on the number of students.
- Clickers: for answering questions on computer/T.V.
- Schools on the North end have flat screen T.Vs and the ones on the South end have big outdated T.V.s
- Technology in the classrooms often do not work efficiently to be effective when providing remediation to students; more time is spent trying to get a computer or program to work and the teaching/learning of the skill is lost.
- IT person needs more training and place to store materials
- Laptop on carts often do not work, or is not secure enough to deter theft - if students had access to have or check out computers there would less need to steal them.
- Respondents felt strongly that it makes no sense to have iPads but students can't use them due to no accessibility to Wi-Fi. IT Infrastructure is poor (pointed out a very old television in the classroom). There are 1-2 good computer labs, but not enough accessibility for all students. Some schools reported having duct tape on wires on promethean board. Teacher reported it is rare to be able to get her entire class in the computer lab due to the size and several computers not working properly.



Condition of DeKalb Facilities (29 responses)

- Roofs leaking
- Maintenance
- HVAC
- Restrooms
- A parent discussed the need for the electrical system to be updated.
- A parent discussed electrical problems with the air conditioning system and a generator being very noisy.
- People can walk into 2 different schools and find 1 state of the art and 1 less than adequate
- Will there be a consistent standard for all schools?
- Do schools meet code: yes, however regular maintenance seems to be lacking
- What can be done to ensure there is a process, regular schedule for regular maintenance
- E-SPLOST should be used to get new cutting edge facilities and enhancements, not for regular maintenance type of improvements
- Lighting
- HVAC
- Mold and mildew issues
- Lack of computer labs
- Air system barely ever works
- Moldy air from ventilation system – students often get sick
- Teachers resort to moving classrooms into the auditorium
- AC gets too cold and the HV gets too hot (or they don't work at all; distracts students from learning.
- SMHS has no windows
- All facilities on the South end are in poor conditions
- Water rarely is on or brown
- The ceiling leaks at SMHS and Stephenson
- SMHS needs to be torn down
- The hallways are too narrow to support the number of students; students cannot get through and are often late to class as a result.
- Not enough space/classroom; auditorium is used as a classroom, chorus and band have mobile classes and are a distraction to academic classes when they are next door due to the thinness of the walls, the cafeteria too small for all students to eat and be to their next class on time (they have to choose to eat or get in trouble for being late).
- School very old. Restrooms not up to standards. Low quality and condition of building. There are classrooms with no windows. No classrooms have been remodeled since the building was built. The ceiling is caving in (Stone Mountain HS report). There are petitions dividing rooms which makes it hard not to disturb other classrooms. HVAC units not working properly in many schools. When



schools are relocated (such as DSPA) they are relocated to old schools that often are in need of repair. There are old tiles and building.

- Frustrated that other schools get renovations, but they don't. One parent admitted to voting disagree to most poll questions because she feels that her schools (Stone Mountain Cluster) do not get their fair share of funds. She felt they always get shafted and there is no accountability as to how the money is spent.
- Many agreed that the South DeKalb area always get the "left overs" while the North side gets more than their fair share of funds.
- Halford Stadium needs lots of repairs – capital improvements for artificial turf

Restroom Conditions (18 responses)

- Poor ventilation
- Doors don't lock or swing both ways
- No toilet paper holders or supplies
- Henderson MSA rough edges in gym
- A parent discussed the negative quality regarding the track and outside facilities, and restroom facilities. Lighting was a factor and safety regarding steps.
- Presentation, functionality, privacy, sanitary conditions
- Not enough restroom facilities
- Bathrooms are often vandalized
- There are no locks on restroom stalls
- Sinks don't work (only cold water)
- Broken mirrors
- Overall deplorable conditions
- Clarkston: doors to bathroom are broken so you can see people when they are using the bathroom, there's a hole in the girl's bathroom wall so you can see in it from the hallway.
- There are limited useable bathrooms and bathroom stalls at SMHS for the number of students
- Bathrooms and building at SMHS has not been upgraded since it was built
- No soap or paper towels to wash hands; no toilet paper in the girl's bathroom
- Not cleaned or maintained

Safety and Security (31 responses)

- A parent discussed the safety and lay-out of the front wing, she also had concerns about a recent crime in the area.
- Proactive on security issues
- Training
- Doors
- Location of buildings
- Brush grown up around schools
- Security systems



- Open school/Open campus at middle and high schools
- Concerns about access that the public has to students
- Is there a difference between daytime safety and security plans
- Is there consistency with access (Security doors, proper lighting, security cameras, surveillance/monitoring)
- Is there consistency with safety measures across the district
- Doors unprepared for emergency situations
- Need for more security
- Lockers and cameras are needed
- Better communication about issues
- At one school there is only 1 female officer – she is often not present
- Parents are not notified in a timely manner of security infractions at school
- Lock down procedures are not implemented in offensive situations
- Fire alarms are often ignored by faculty and students (assumed false alarms)
- Student reported that there have been weapons on campus but no one knew until the next day.
- Need cameras with VCR, metal detectors, clear book bags
- Dryer caught on fire 2 years in a row
- Upset parents/strangers can just walk in and no one knows or stop them
- Some teachers do not have access cards to get into the building or allow their class in when outside.
- Need more SROs
- Some places in the building are not seen on cameras and students know where
- Locks are on doors but can be pushed opened if pressure is applied.
- Buildings have poor outside lighting and when it gets dark early, presents safety issues. There is no lighting in parking lots.
- Fire alarms will go off so often, administrators tell students to disregard. In reality, there was a fire in an area the other day, but students were told to disregard the fire alarm placing them in danger.
- Students are concerned about other students bringing weapons to school since there are no search procedures. Recommended a need for metal detectors. There are certain times of year (Halloween, end of school, etc.) that book bags aren't allowed, but no other safety precautions taken throughout the rest of the year.
- Some locks are not working properly on doors. (Locked doors can still be pulled open). Cameras don't work.

Curb Appeal (24 responses)

- A parent discussed the danger of large trees which needed to be maintained.
- Grass in sidewalks
- Concrete broken
- Limited spaces in parking lots for traffic flow
- Consider traffic patterns with new construction



- This is more than landscape, what about parking lot traffic, flow
- How does the building curb appeal enhance community or does it detract from the community
- How can we utilize parents, employees, and business partners to assist in maintaining curb appeal
- Maintaining landscape is also important
- There is a difference between landscape curb appeal and overall building quality (design, trailers)
- DCSD may have to be more creative with landscape (hardscape)
- There is a mix of different problem related to curb appeal (electric wires, trailers, dead trees, erosion, etc.)
- Can DCSD incorporate sustainability projects and STEM to promote changes
- Landscaping
- Not enough personnel to maintain landscaping
- Athletic fields are in terrible shape
- Functionality of athletic spaces are inefficient
- Buildings are dilapidated
- Dull appearance – low quality maintenance
- SMHS: Looks like a jail or alternative school; gives impression students are delinquents or unimportant.
- SMHS: announcement marque's door is broken and cannot close - need electronic
- Parents: DeKalb County intentionally allocates grooming resources to schools on the North end; from the outside all Southside schools, except those newly built, look much worse than those on the North end
- There is no landscaping, flowers, trees, bushes, etc.
- Respondents felt that some schools look better than others. Appearance is everything as to whether you want your child to attend a certain school. There were reports of poor landscaping and parking lots falling apart.
- Older buildings need a face lift. Some schools are hidden (surrounded by woods). Reports that dumpsters and trash cans line the perimeter of the school where people are most. One parent reported that a group of parents took it upon themselves to clean up and landscape their local school. That was fine, but it should be a county upkeep, not something that comes out of parents pockets.

Fine and Performing Arts Spaces (16 responses)

- DESA/DSA discussed concerns of program being housed in one building and that SPLOST money was previously spent, but the project was not completed.
- Science programs/labs in lower levels
- Auditoriums at more schools with seating for performance/practice
- Funding chorus, band, other outside functions
- Invest in arts programs
- Funding for instrument purchase



- It seems that schools that have these programs have great facilities
- Could some of the funds promote the expansion/ creation of a state of the art Fine/Performing arts school
- Partnership with neighboring industries
- No acoustics
- Spaces are inefficient and extremely limited
- Instruments are damaged or broken as a result of inadequate storage spaces
- Some students practice dance – there are no adequate spaces for this activity
- SMHS: (Drama) no space for costumes, props, class, risers for performances; (Band) no space for instruments, instruments are in poor conditions and very limited; (Chorus) no steady place to hold class, constantly asked to sing lower and be quiet because they disturb neighboring classes, needs a place with sound proof walls.
- Feel that arts programs are not supported, therefore, appearances are as if they don't care. There are broken instruments reported. Also, one school reports that the chorus does not have a room and they put them in a regular classroom. That creates a disturbance for other classes. There is not enough access to supplies.
- It was reported that DSPA does not have an adequate theatre. The entire student body can not fit in the theatre. There is not enough space to support the growing program they have. Considering that Atlanta is fast becoming the "Hollywood of the South", they program should be more state of the art.

Sports/PE Spaces (33 responses)

- The parents and community members were very unhappy with the quality of the athletic fields and safety. Citing that several athletic clubs had to share the field during the same season. The field is hilly with pot holes, muddy due to sprinkler system not working properly, the track is made up of protruding concrete with trees in danger of falling or uprooting the concrete. They want rubber track field for various safety reasons.
- Making all stadiums equal
- Rats, fencing, stairs
- Best vision with w/school construction
- Sports equipment
- Remodeling of fields – football/baseball/track
- Vision with school construction – more long range planning
- Perception comparing DCSD to other districts that DCSD is not as "good" as Gwinnett or other districts
- Physical spaces are not functional
- Serious need for improvement
- Score boards malfunction, access to water limited, gyms are extremely outdated
- Safety and health issues are present in optional spaces – such as weight room (mold under mats)
- Work-out rooms – too small to accommodate a reasonable sized class
- Track field is concrete – students receive many injuries from running on it
- Track field is not well-kept



- Insufficient Soccer field – there is no grass or turf (only dirt)
- Outdated football field – no grass or turf – goal posts are down (need repair)
- SMHS: (Football Field) muddy, not proper length, not enough alternative places to practice when raining due to other extra-curricular activities having the alternate places, games forfeited due to lack of lighting, goal post not real- just wooden boards; (Baseball Field) score board doesn't work, cages don't have dirt and has bad concrete, chairs are tied around gate to keep people out; (Track) dangerous and causes injury to players due to hills in concrete - needs a good rubber track, no lights; (Drama) lights, projectors and sound not working, hazardous trying to fix; (Tennis Courts) grassy; (Weight Room) students had to build/fix, not enough equipment (Facilities) showers and lockers not working/broke: (Parking Lot) no lights uprooting
- Winter: Fields are muddy, icy, dangerous
- Winners can't host game, as tradition, due to field not being up to standards
- Basketball court does not have mat behind goal post on wall for safety
- Basketball rims are uneven and not in good shape
- Can't take pictures on field due to no lights
- Several athletics use same field (baseball, soccer, football)
- PE/Health/Foreign Languages classes float
- Respondents shared that tracks are torn up and asphalt is broken. One parent even reported that she will leave her neighborhood and drive to North side schools to walk on their tracks due to the condition of the ones in her neighborhood. One student reported that she fell on the track and broke ribs due it being so uneven and not level.
- Gym floors are reportedly not waxed. There are not enough score boards. Also there is not enough space in the gym for multiple student activities.
- Baseball field- no lights, scoreboard, and infield is not clay, but grass.
- Football fields- Often flood due to poor drainage systems
- Tennis court has roots coming out of it
- Major concern is that no schools in the county have stadiums. That could be revenue coming to the school. There are only 4 swimming pools and (3 working) in the county for the swimming program.
- There is plenty of unused acreage behind school that is not being utilized.

Spaces for Special Education (12 responses)

- A parent referenced that the school was out of compliance with ADA law regarding safety and bathrooms. There were also an overall consensus that building and/or facilities were not handicapped accessible to students nor those who would enter the building for various other reasons.
- Only one class for severe needs
- Sharing information with special educations needs students based on abilities
- Spaces larger enough to support needs
- Responsive technology for interaction
- More attractive rooms
- Hands-on equipment



- More classroom spaces needed
- Just as other students, students with special needs do not have appropriate learning spaces
- There are no handicap access to lecture halls and auditorium.
- They are next door to general education classes that sometimes have activities requiring a higher noise level; the sounds sometimes have a negative affect on them negatively because the walls are so thin
- ELL students some without the basic skills before leaving the international school - they should be taught more at the international school in order for them to be successful when they come to a regular public school

CTE/21st Century Standards (8 responses)

- A parent discussed more programs were needed and referenced Rockdale County Schools in having programs that were preparing students to enter the workforce with certificate programs such as an electrical program.
- Most were in agreement that the technology needed to vary depending on the needs of the community (i.e. some communities have students functioning a level lower than expected and needed to concentrate on skills using their hands, some were higher functioning and could take some classes on line which would reduce the over-crowding in schools, and some were meeting grade level expectations and needed a variety of career prep classes.
- Most were in agreement with building and offering sites that would not only prepare students for career related skills, but also allowing the community to use the facilities as a way to generate funds and get community involvement
- Equipment lacking
- Older schools, better in newer schools
- Larger rooms and tools for student support
- There is no access to current equipment and technology to support 21st Century workforce development
- Concerns with consistent technology across schools. Reports that current technology is not supportive of workforce preparation.

Parking (6 responses)

- Dedicated staff/student parking – placement of reserved spaces
- More visitor spaces
- More bus lane dedication
- Parking is not utilized appropriately
- Especially not adequate for student parking
- Respondents reported that parking lots need lots of repairs. Concerns of potholes, damaged speed humps, poor lighting, and paving. Reported that buses take up space with arrival and dismissal causing car riders to have to go down the street to meet parents. Needs more room.

Early Childhood Education a Priority (17 responses)

- One parent agreed that early childhood education was a priority regarding the Pre-k program.
- Placement by grade – state guidelines
- Need equipment for early childhood education program – playgrounds
- Lack of resources in Pre-K
- Carpeting
- Clarification of grade level in ECE: Pre-K -5
- Parents had mixed feelings:
- 1 parent stated it was really good
- 1 parent stated it was fair because Pre-K is a lottery and feels all Pre-K students in the district should have access
- 1 parent stated that teachers need more resources or have support to engage in activities beyond the grade standards
- Space may not be sufficient to meet diverse learning needs
- How will the district address the influx of children; can flex space be built to accommodate growth
- This is not evident from either parent or student observation
- Question was confusing. Many thought it meant Early Childhood Education Classes taught to general education students.
- Need more Pre-K class in the areas high risk for educational difficulties, to give them an even start, starting in Kindergarten.
- The required age level to start education should be lowered in low income areas to catch them before they get behind.
- Respondents feel if parents are lucky enough to win the lottery for magnet and pre-K programs, then they can get a good education. If not, then oh, well. There is not an emphasis on early childhood education. Pre-K isn't mandatory in Georgia as it is in other states. One parent reported her son's 5th grade class had 32 students in one room. (previous years)

Significant Cost Savings from School Consolidation (6 responses)

- Overcrowding
- No more trailers
- Combining troubled situations would not benefit students' academic achievement
- Depends on the class size - The teacher/student ratio should be lowered in schools functioning at a lower level and early educational years.
- Historically there has been a decrease in the quality of education in areas already functioning at low levels.
- Overwhelmingly No! Feels that schools are already overcrowded... Consolidating schools will only lead to more trouble.

Responses to E-SPLOST Questions

E-SPLOST to Support One-to-One Initiative (10 responses)

- Discussion of how/what E-SPLOST funds can be used for
- Not only for technology, looking at roofs
- Not used to address maintenance issues
- Transparency for parents and community
- Some people in schools (elementary) breaking connections, wireless
- Infrastructure in older buildings
- Concern with allocation of E-SPLOST funds from III and IV
- Discussion by oversight team member about the meetings and current access to information
- 100% = Strongly Agree
- Respondents felt that there should be a different fund for technology. They should not co-mingle agendas of technology and E-SPLOST.

E-SPLOST to Improve School Facilities (5 responses)

- Yes the group was in favor for using E-SPLOST funds to improve conditions.
- Current facilities are not large enough to accommodate classroom sizes
- Need more adequate instructional space
- Outdated conditions throughout the schools
- Definitely

E-SPLOST to Improve Bathroom Facilities (2 responses)

- 100% = Strongly Agree
- Definitely

E-SPLOST to Improve Safety and Security (4 responses)

- Yes, the group agreed
- E-SPLOST should be used to develop and maintain consistent safety measures for all schools
- 100 = Agree
- Yes

E-SPLOST Highest Priorities (21 responses)

- Updating technology and addressing the safety concerns including electrical problems, water drainage, and improving athletic fields.
- Environment effects how students learn
- Can a plan be created that would allow each school in the district to be touched
- Parents would like for a plan to be implemented to address getting all facilities up to an acceptable standard
- Can all schools in need receive adequate funding to make this improvements
- Highest priority: ensuring there is adequate space in schools to house students (not trailers)
- Can all schools receive money and have autonomy to determine what is a priority in their building? How does this fair with remediation?
- Who is looking at the cutting edge of education?
- DCSD should have take a global view at how students are learning today
- How can DCSD change the delivery space (consider telephone-cellphone, model-T-Tesla)
- Can DCSD create the cutting edge school?
- Media Centers need upgrading
- Place an emphasis on the look and feel of the learning environment
- Facilities need to be conducive to learning
- Traffic flow needs improvement
- The quality of education should be paramount with the DeKalb County School District
- In this order: Facility, Technology, Athletics and other Extra-Curricula activities
- P.A. System
- Flat screen T.V.
- Anti-Theft devices on iPads, lap-tops, etc. - Low jack, or devices installed in the technology to make it unusable outside the designated area.
- Buildings. Feel that instead of continuously repairing old, outdated schools, they should consider investing in building new schools with adequate spaces, technology, and safety.

Major Themes

Following the small group discussions at the regional community input meetings, the facilitators reviewed the responses and identified themes that emerged from the conversation.

Major Themes (26 Identified)

- Equitable allocation for maximum efficiency use of dollars
- Access to information – SPLOST knowledge
- Feedback on quality of instruction
- Condition of facilities



- Quality of education- Students were pleased with the challenging courses offered and knowledge of the curriculum provided by instructors.
- Areas of improvement within the classroom- teacher student ratio was too large, lack of materials, not enough textbooks for each student, internet often crashing in the middle of lessons, teachers sharing classrooms and lack of space in the rooms and overall throughout the school.
- Areas of improvement within the building- air conditioner not working in several parts of the building, leaking throughout the building, many lockers are broken, restrooms without hot water and functioning doors.
- Security concerns- number of break-ins, lack of fencing around the building, lack of lighting around soccer field, IDs are not required.
- Technology- promethean boards not updated, lack of enough laptops/lpads, and overall students just feel like their school needed the most significant upgrade here. in order to compete with other high schools.
- A recommendation was to repair and upgrade athletic fields regarding restrooms, concession stands, lighting, steps and walk ways. Also make sure that we are within the ADA guidelines, so that students with special needs are able to participate in organized sports programs. A recommendation was for Schools and Athletic fields to be more assessable to the community by allowing groups and organizations to rent them.
- Recommendations to improve facilities regarding electrical issues and HVAC issues.
- Improve technology regarding workstations, computer labs, classrooms, and theatrical spaces.
- Recommendations to improve the safety of buildings due to the increase of crime in certain areas.
- Another concern was to offer non-traditional graduation program including certification programs with diverse calendars including a year round calendar.
- Students and Parents felt the schools on the South end of the county get more financial assistance than the schools on the North end of the county; the buildings, grounds, technology, fields, etc. are built, updated, allocated, maintained, etc.
- Since the students on the South end of the county tends to be functioning overall at a level lower than those on the North end of the town more money should be allocated to them because they tend not to have the resources and time the parents on the North end of town have.
- The condition of the schools on the South end of town has a considerable negative impact on student learning, motivation, and overall emotional well-being because they are viewed as insignificant.
- Parents are very frustrated with lack of accountability among the way money is spent in the county. Feel that "DeKalb County Schools does with the money what DeKalb County Schools" wants to. Concerned about lack of "watchdog" efforts to ensure funds are spent the areas they are allocated to.
- Overwhelming perception that there is poor student support and expectations. Students and parents alike feel that teachers don't care and don't challenge them academically.
- North versus South. Overwhelming feelings that the north side of the district gets more than their fair share of funding, while the south side gets "left overs" or nothing at all. Feel that there is a major disparity between school quality and access within the same district.
- Concern that the district only supports college prep and does not put enough support into other areas such as the arts, vocational, etc.



- More attention needs to be given to those schools that have problems in meeting minimum functions within the school to create a learning environment. One parent said that teachers/parents have to buy their own light bulbs.
- Health seemed to be a concern for my group. One person said that health inspection just includes the cafeteria not other areas of the school such as bathrooms etc.
- There is a need to eliminate overcrowding. My group wanted to know what factors would lead to consolidation. These factors should be fair to all parties and that a better educational environment should be the final result.
- Schools in DeKalb have no curb appeal. Comments included no grass, trees that need pruning, or are on the verge of collapse. One parent said children have to walk through a chained linked fence to get to school. One parent suggested restoring positions to maintain school grounds. Trailers should blend in with the school building and not stick out like a sore thumb.
- Security was an issue for my group. One teacher said that the trailers at her school are unprotected. Another parent said students will often keep door open to let their friends in.