

Alliance **C**harter **E**lementary **C**ouncil

Annual Meeting

April 25, 2017

Agenda

- **Year in Review**

- School Progress Highlights
- Parent Survey Highlights
- Board Progress Against the Objectives we set last year

- **Discussion**

- **Looking Backward:** What worked / what can we improve?
- **Looking Forward:** What are the top 2-3 areas **MOST CRITICAL** to focus on for next year and long term?

School Progress Highlights

This year, how did Alliance " *...engage and inspire students to become life-long learners, problem solvers, and responsible global citizens"?**

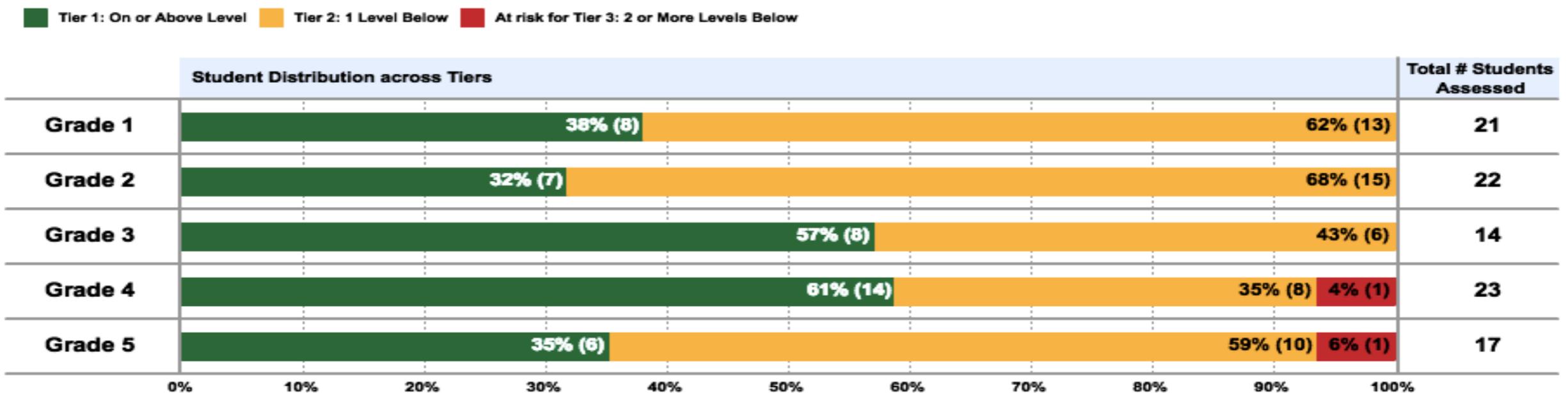
**Source: ACE Mission Statement*

Academics

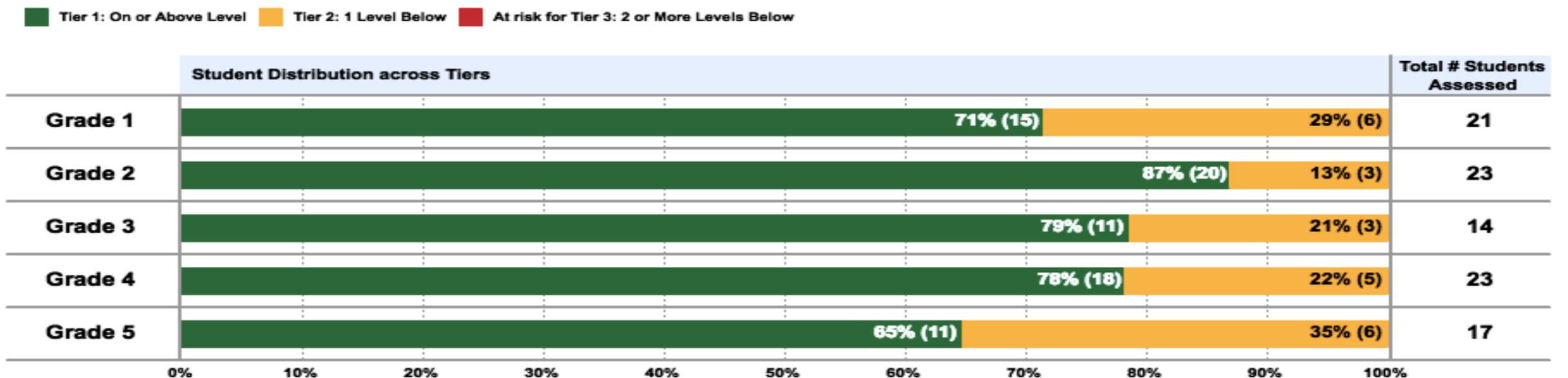
How are we developing life-long learners and problem solvers?

iReady Math Data- Window 1 (fall) on top, Window 2 (winter) on bottom

Detail by Grade ?



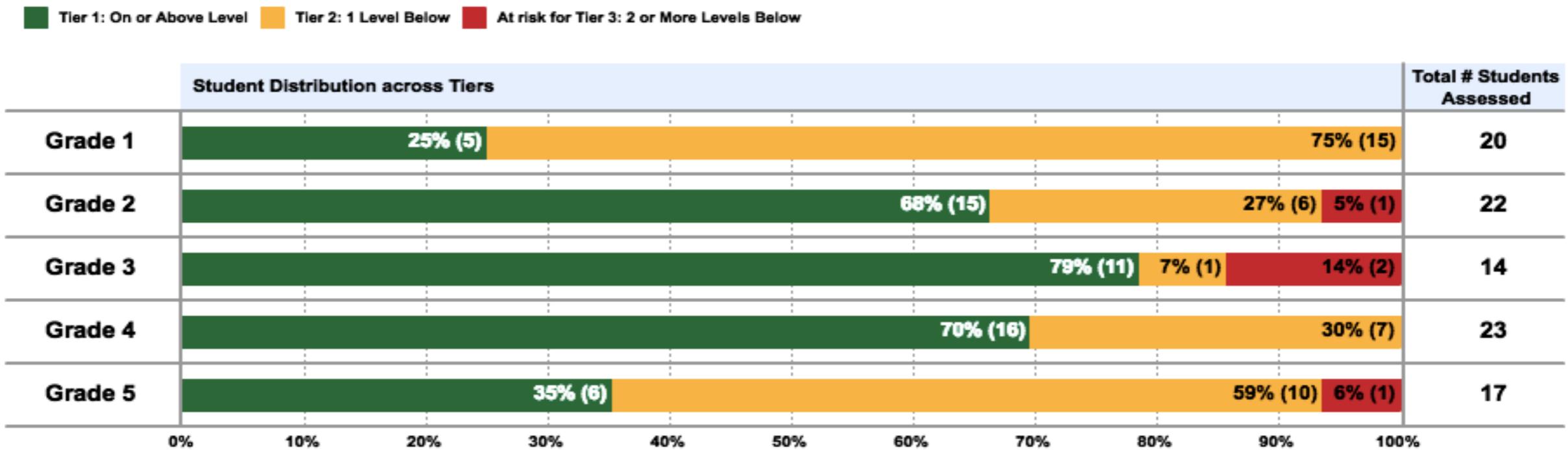
Detail by Grade ?



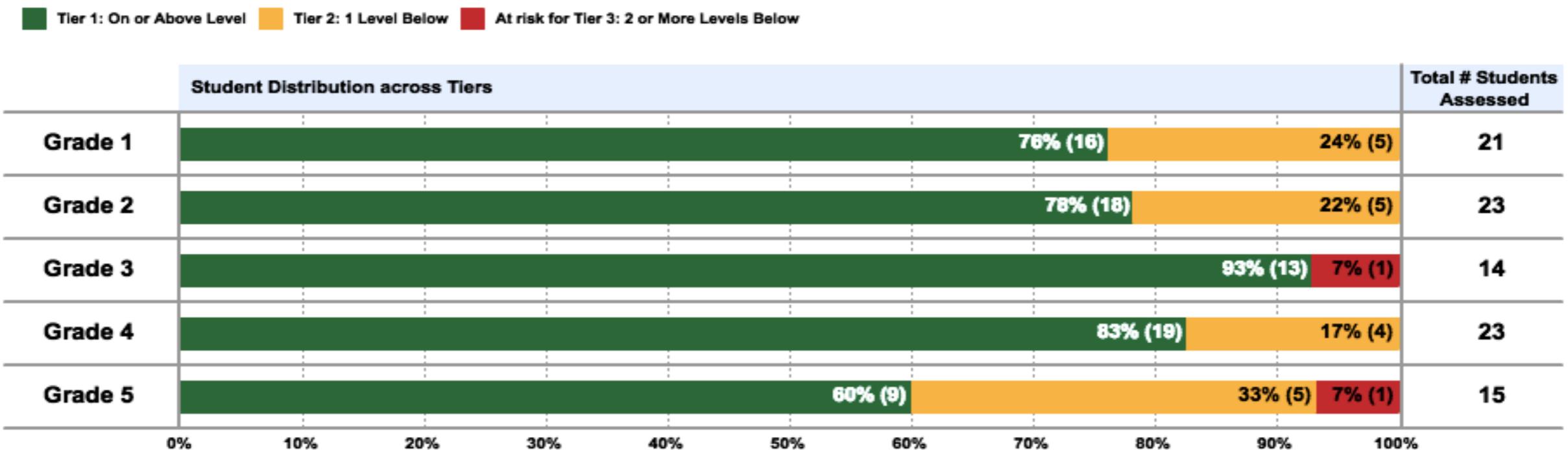
Academics continued

- iReady Reading Data- Window 1 (fall) on top, Window 2 (winter) on bottom.

Detail by Grade ?



Detail by Grade ?



Responsible Citizenry

How are we developing responsible global citizens?

- ❖ World Peace Day Celebration in September
- ❖ Virtue of the month
- ❖ Sunshine for Kai
- ❖ Olympic competition (Connor/Lennon)
- ❖ Bake Sale for Buddy Bench
- ❖ Valentine-o-grams for Children's Hospital
- ❖ Science Fair
- ❖ Wagon Warrior Campaign for Childhood Cancer
- ❖ Delivery of Poinsettias to our Island Neighbors

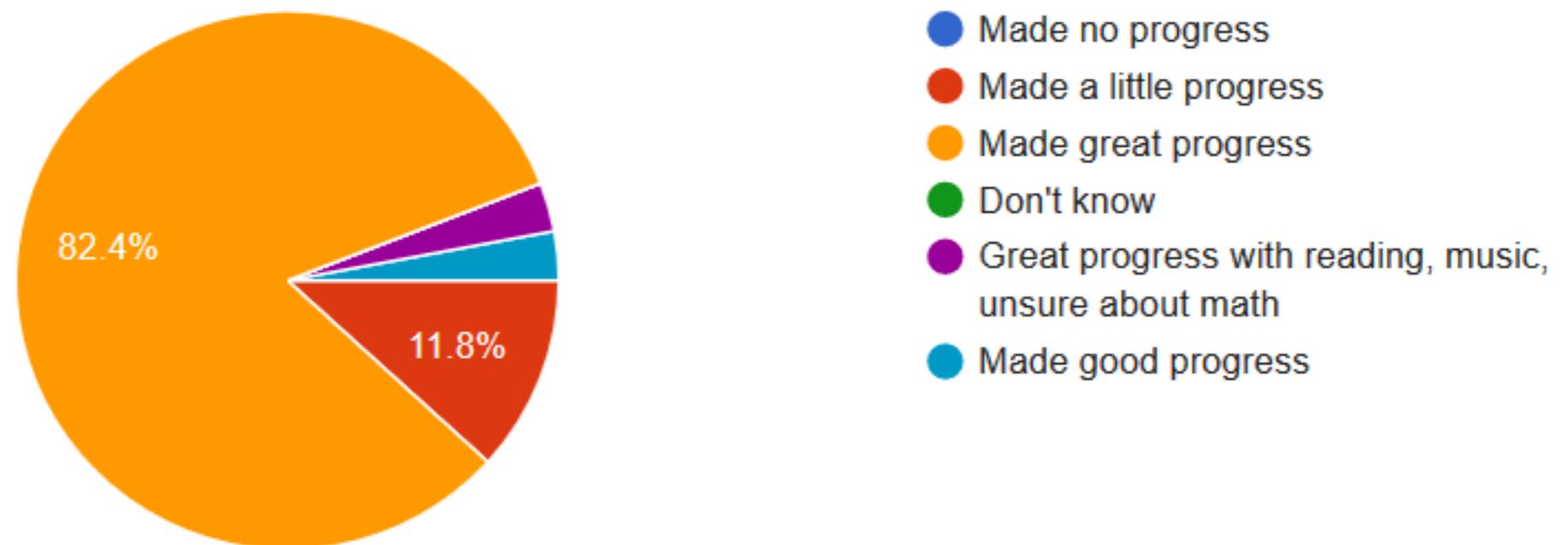
Parent Survey: Highlights

- 8 question survey fielded to all the parents
- 34 responses
- Overall very positive, with a few suggestions for how to improve connection

Parents feel their children are making good academic progress

How much progress do you feel your child/ren made this year in learning new things or improving skills?

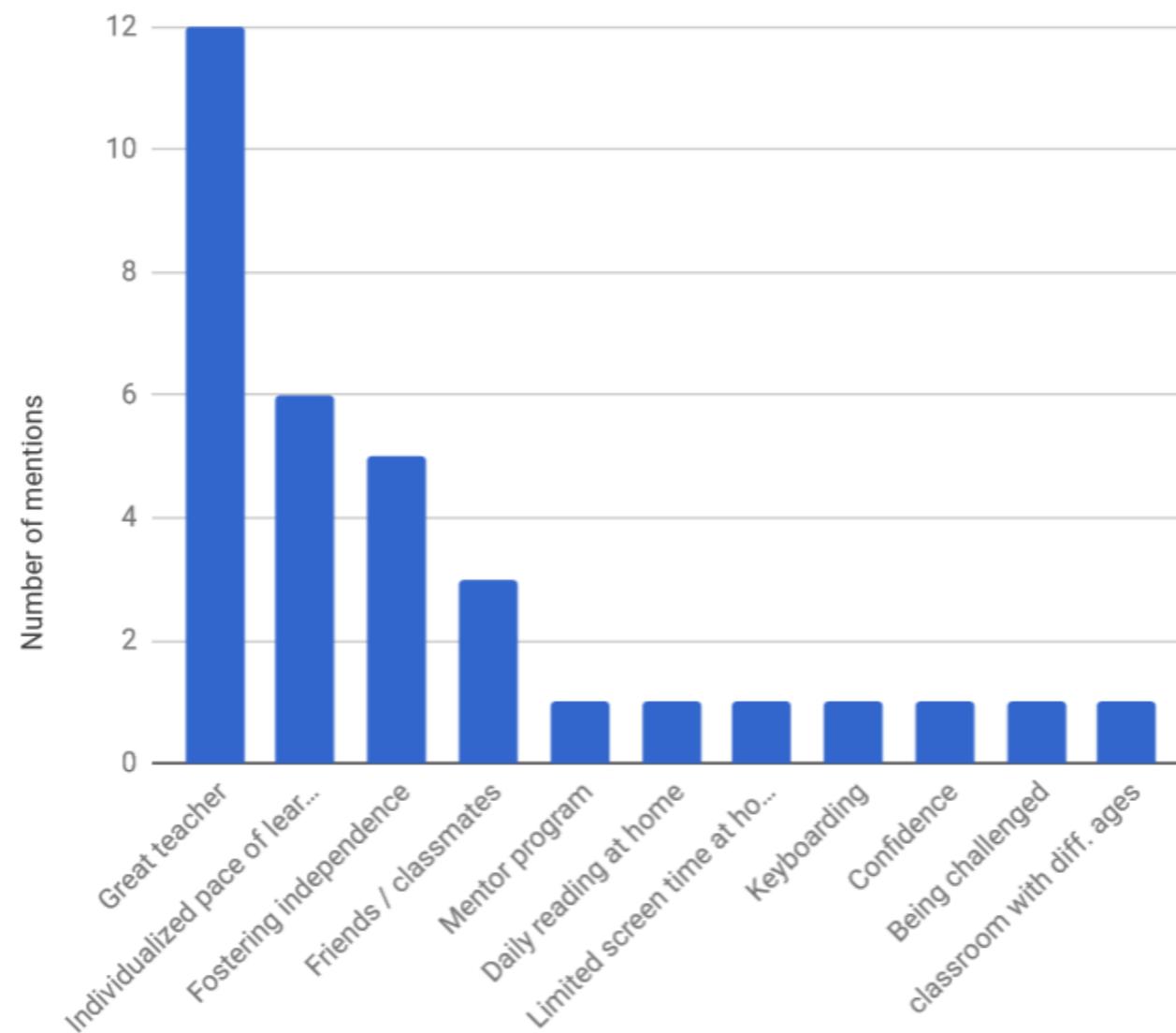
34 responses



Teachers are seen as the prime drivers of progress

What one or two things this year had the most positive impact on your child's growth academically?

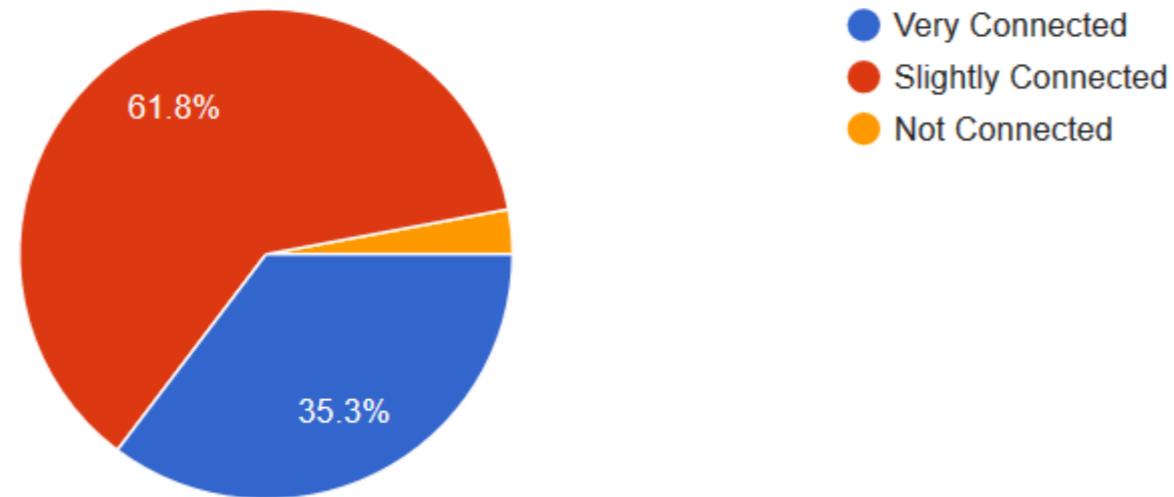
26 responses



Most parents feel “slightly connected” to the school, but would like to be “very connected”

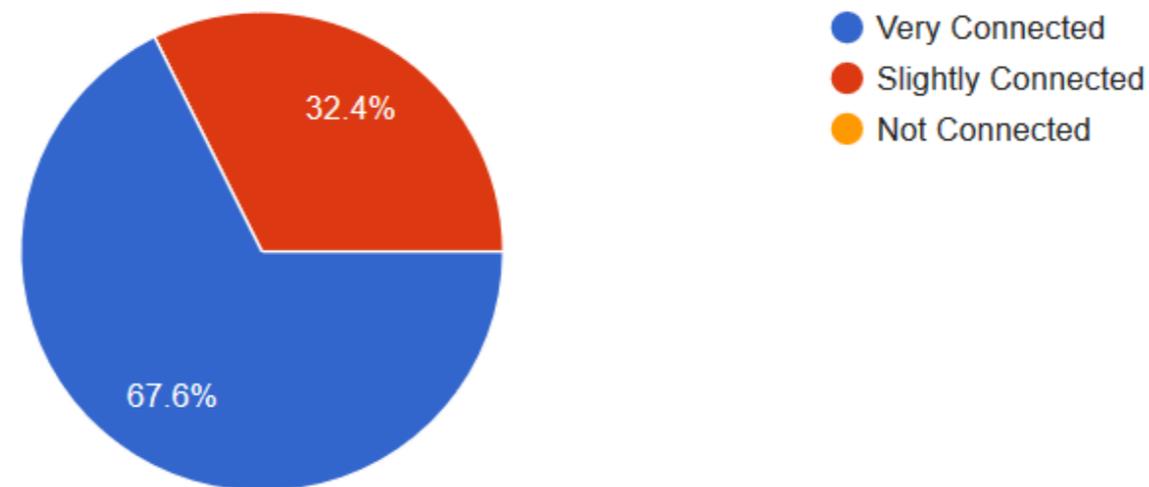
How connected do you feel to the school community?

34 responses



How connected would you LIKE to feel to the school community?

34 responses



Suggestions about how to increase the sense of connection

In your opinion, what would be most helpful for improving connection and involvement with the school community?

- A **new parent handbook** outlining traditions within the school. Having teachers be mindful of new families and making sure they know upcoming events that are traditional to the school and actually explaining what they are, when they are etc. we would have attended more things had we known more about what they were. :)
- More **parents socials**
- **Increased communication. More field trips** that involve parents. **Weekend activities** like STEAM.
- Having more opportunities to spread the word about parent involvement and what is expected. It would be nice to see more parents involved in the ACEC meetings
- **Classroom newsletters**
- Having **more events** in the fall and spring. I miss the end of the year school picnic at school, as I was able to get there on my lunch. Now I miss it all together with it being off campus, as I cannot take a day off and it's too far to travel for lunch :(
- More **group volunteer opportunities**
- The **parent coffee morning** was great, we also like the family activities in the evenings.
- I would love to socialize more with other parents and more opportunities for that would be great!
- Just make sure events are **accessible for working parents**.
- **hearing future goals/plans**
- The **after school events** as well as having parents come to the school as helpers.

What parents feel went well this year: Themes

Overall, what two things would you NOT want to change for next year? What went well? What did you really like about this year?

- **Teachers and school**
 - “Overall it’s a great school with friendly staff.”
 - “I like the constant communication that parents are able to have with their child’s teacher”
 - “I would not want to change the approach in teaching that Alliance is giving my daughter. She loves her teacher and really enjoys going to school.”
 - “The teachers are wonderful.”
- **Field trips:** “Field trips are fantastic as well as brain breaks.”
- **Extras and After School Events:**
 - “I like the amount of extras after school and fundraising nights offered.”
 - “Science Fair- my kids absolutely love it!”
 - “The various activity nights are always fun.”
- **Fundraising Events**
 - “I always think the knowledgeathon/basket raffle is a fun evening and I also enjoy the glowrun.”
 - “Loved the basket raffle”
- **Activities involving Parents**
 - “Loved the coffee and donuts on the first day.”
 - “Keeping parental involvement.”
- **Keep the school at present location** (2 comments)
- **Piano and PE**
- **Multiple years with one teacher:** “I love the multiple years under the guidance of one teacher and enjoy that the children stay with the same children each year to build a bond of friendship.”

What parents would like to be different: Themes (1)

What are two things that you would like to see changed next year? Do you have ideas on how to make those things better?

- **Communication** (3 comments)
 - Notices of school/board events more in advance
 - “Parent engagement, notifications”
 - I am uncertain where the meeting notes are that come out of the council meetings.
- **After School pick-up line** (2 comments)
 - “I like the after school pick up line. However, I very much dislike the way parents use it. This should be a no cell phone zone and a 5mph zone. I also think it’s very dangerous to have parent pull into the parking g spots by the building and back out. This should be done differently to be safer.”
- **More Art & Sports** (3 comments)
 - “It would be nice to see more from the Art program. I would like to see them learn about specific artists and techniques.”
 - “I would love to see after school sports encouraged more. It would be great to if Alliance could send out flyers and ask for parent volunteers for these activities.”
 - “More Music and Art to promote individual creativity”
- **More Parent Socials** (1 comment)
 - “Also, more opportunities to socialize with parents outside of the work day would be nice!”
- **Social Opportunities for Children** (2 comments)
 - Breakfast: “The other thing I wish Alliance still offered was breakfast. We can afford to feed our children at home ..., but when my daughter attended Alliance she enjoyed visiting with her friends. One of my sons still talk about it, but my youngest was never able to take part in the Alliance breakfast. I also believe that there are some children that do not have breakfast offered at home....”
 - “Somehow helping kids in different classes get to know each other better.”

What parents would like to be different: Themes (2)

What are two things that you would like to see changed next year? Do you have ideas on how to make those things better?

- **More opportunities to understand what to help kids with at home** (2 comments)
 - “I think teachers could be more supportive of different learning styles. We would have appreciated more ideas on what to work on at home to improve skills.”
 - “I learned quite a bit about what my children needed help with by doing a couple assignments at home. I wish there was a way to know what to help them with at home without a dual homework.”
- **Comments about events**
 - “Knowledge-a-thon doesn't run as smooth as before it was an evening event. It's too load in the gym with everything else happening students can't hear the iPads. And too much else happening they don't want to. Walk-a-thon maybe a weekend or evening event so parent/family can walk with?”
 - “I liked the Book Fair last year. Would like to see that come back.”
- **Miscellaneous**
 - “Start school in August and run longer. We have a very short school year compared to other states. Pay teachers more.”
 - “I felt like the expectation difference from kindergarten to 1st was a bit much for a small child. I like the push for independence, but it also seems like it sometimes interferes with knowing their in a supportive environment as a very young child.”

Final Parent Comments

Is there anything else you'd like to share with the Alliance Charter Elementary Council?

- **Interest in growth** (2 comments)
 - “I think this is a wonderful program that has put my children considerably ahead of the curve. My daughter is in middle score and they had to rank who felt that they should receive A's in their class. Alliance had the highest vote that their expectation was to work hard for all A's. When asked how much they liked their elementary school, once again Alliance children rated their development education the highest. I realize that some children cannot function in a Montessori environment, but I believe that the program has proven itself multiple times and it might be time to consider changing more classrooms to this structure.”
 - Possibility of a 4K classroom? I know space is limited, but something to consider?
- **Foreign Language** (1 comment): “I would love to see foreign language (Spanish or Mandarin) added to the curriculum”
- **Appreciation for the school** (many comments!)
 - “I appreciate the work you all do!”
 - “[My child] loves her Alliance
 - “Thank you to all who have served on the board and helped all year long making our school run.”
 - “Our child has had a fantastic school year. We could not be more pleased with what she has learned, how far she has progressed, and the relationships she has formed.”
 - “I am very grateful that our daughter is getting this opportunity to learn under the Alliance teaching system.”
 - “I love it”
 - “So happy this school exist within the NJSD.”
 - “great job and sorry I can't be more connected and helpful.”

Board Progress

- **Accomplishments in 2017/18**
- **Opportunities for Improvement**

Last Year's Priorities

- **Strategic Priorities**

- Renew Charter
- Recruit and hire 1,2,3 Teacher for 2018-19 School Year

- **Operational Priorities**

- Raise funds to meet budget - \$17,100 Raised approximately \$10K – covered expenses.
- Build strong volunteer base Some improvement – opportunity for growth.
 - ▶ Parent education for helping in classroom
 - ▶ Clarify other opportunities to volunteer

List of Accomplishments

Strategic

- **Renewed Charter**
- Recruited and hired **new teacher**
- **Revised lottery process** to ensure clear guidelines and match best practices
- Examined pros/cons of growth of school and **made decision to pursue growth**

Operational

- **Fundraising**
 - Water fountain, Glow Run, Basket Raffle / Knowledge- a-thon, Walk-a-thon, Skate Nights & A&W, Sunset Blvd, Butterbraids, SCRIP
 - Online payments – new option
- **Community-Building**
 - First day of school coffee & donuts, coffee
 - Parent Coffee
 - Many fundraising events also build community
- **Supporting Staff / Community**
 - Staff meals at conference time, Winter break meal
 - Volunteer training for in-class parents
 - Thank-you gifts, life-changing event gifts (pregnancy/deaths)
- **Expanding Volunteer Base**
 - Sign-ups in the fall
 - New system in place to document volunteer responsibilities

Discussion

- **Looking backward**
 - What worked for us this year as a board?
 - What could be improved?
- **Looking forward:**
 - What are the top 2-3 areas most critical to focus on for next year?
 - What are top 2-3 areas most critical to focus on for long-term strategy?