

Student Whispers, Chats, & Screams

A Look at Student Voice

Saeger Middle,
Cottleville, MO

Francis Howell School District
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In The Business World...

- The greatest asset is human resources

Your workforce is your most valuable asset. The knowledge and skills they have represent the fuel that drives the engine of business - and you can leverage that knowledge.

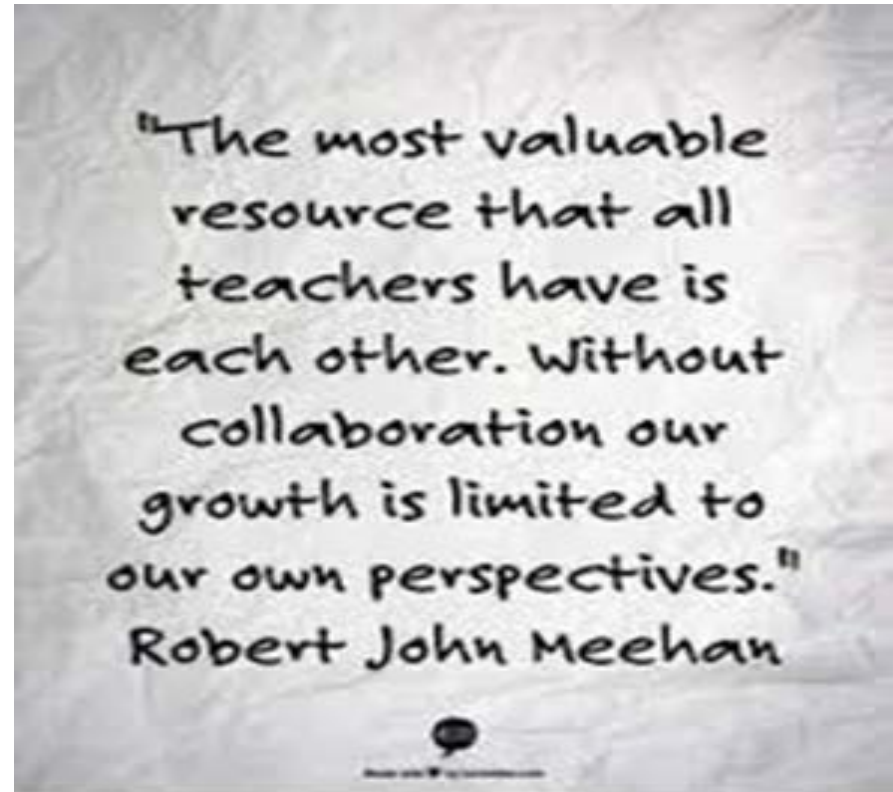
– *Harvey Mackay*

Double Quotes
doublequotes.net



In Education...

- Teachers are considered the most valuable asset



In Education...

- We often ignore the human resource sitting right in front of us
- Your students have brilliant ideas
- Are you hearing them?
- Does your climate foster & facilitate their voice and input?



Student Voice Is **Not**...

- Just a group of kids sitting around a table sharing ideas
- Just an annual survey of students to get their feedback
- Just your Student Council or one student-led organization
- It's so much more...



Student Voice Is...

- Embedded into your climate
- Included in every building initiative
- Woven into your curriculum
- Provides your students powerful, relevant, learning experiences



Student Voice

- Has different intonation, inflection, & tone
- It can be
 - A whisper of a single student
 - A chat of a few students
 - A scream of many students



Saeger Middle School Is...

- 750 Students
- Grades 6, 7, & 8
- 19% Free and Reduced
- 9.4% Alternative Education
- Procedures in Place for Tiers 1, 2, & 3
- 10 Years of SW-PBS



10 Years Ago...

In 2005 – 2006

- 2,335 discipline incidents
 - 415 in-school suspensions
 - 96 out-of-school suspensions



Today...

In 2015 – 2016

- 242 discipline incidents
 - 151 in-school suspensions **(63.6% decrease)**
 - 24 out-of-school suspensions **(75% decrease)**
- **An astounding 89.6% decrease overall!**
- A GOLD school for last 5 years.



We call our SW-PBS THE SPARTAN WAY!



The Spartan Way is...

- Respectful
- Responsible
- Safe

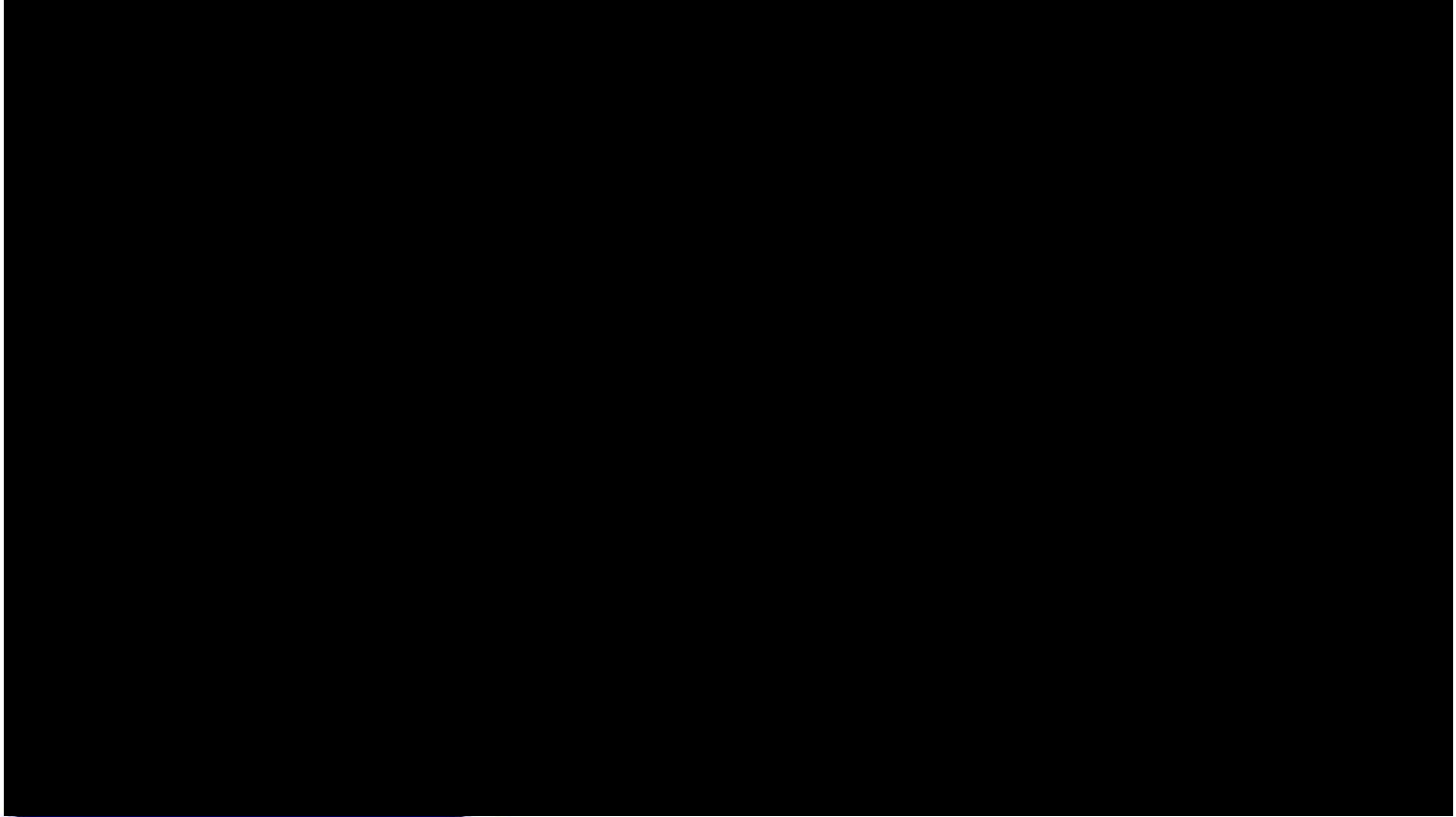


Student Voice Begins With...

- A climate of caring, belonging, & safety
- Student questions & concerns need to be addressed
- Many avenues for students to express themselves
- Continual reminders of why their voice matters



“We Care” Reminders



Pause & Think...

- Do we regularly remind kids how much we care about them and their success?
- Do we regularly attempt to answer common questions our students ask building-wide?



Whispers – Anonymous Voice

- The timid child is just as valuable as your outspoken children
- Care & concern boxes

Care & Concern Box
See Something-Say Something

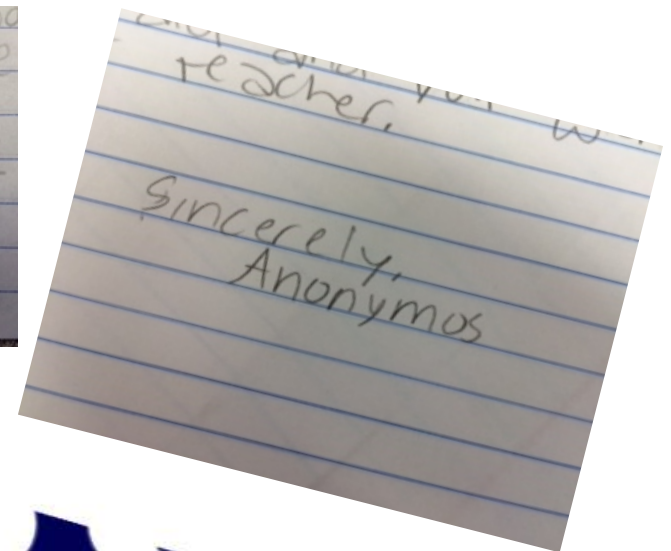
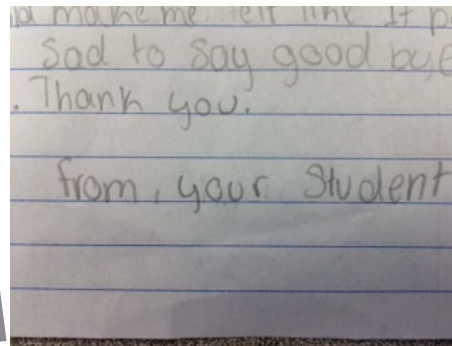
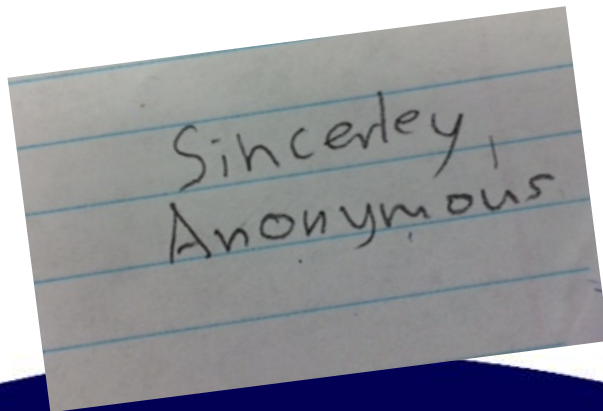


Report Bullying



Whispers – Anonymous Voice

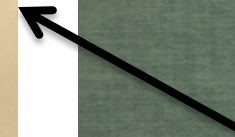
- Allow Anonymous Feedback
 - Letters to teachers or principals on what students like and don't like
 - Anonymous student climate surveys



Student Climate is Critical

Climate Survey Data (Students)

| | 13/14 Average | 14/15 | 15/16 |
|--|---------------|---------|---------|
| Q1: My teacher's really care about me. | 68% | 92% | 89% |
| Q2: I feel safe at school. | 73% | 93% | 90% |
| Q3: My teachers believe I can learn./ My school is a good place to learn | 79% | 74% | 70% |
| Q4: My teachers treat me with respect./I like going to school. | 68% | 80% | 82% |
| Q5: In the last year have you ever been bullied? | No Data | No-65% | No-69% |
| Q6: I set and monitor academic goals. | No Data | Yes-72% | Yes-68% |



CLIMATE



Climate Survey Data (Staff)

| | 13/14 | 14/15 | 15/16 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Q1: I feel safe at school. | 73% | 93% | 90% |
| Q2: My teachers believe I can learn./ My school is a good place to learn | 79% | 74% | 70% |
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Climate Survey Data (Parents)

| | 13/14 | 14/15 | 15/16 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Q1: I feel safe at school. | 73% | 93% | 90% |
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1. I feel safe at my school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

2. My school is a good place to learn.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

3. I like going to this school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

4. Adults in my school care about me.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

5. In the last year, have you ever been bullied while at school?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. I set and monitor academic goals at school.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Additional Comments:



Pause & Think...

- Do you have several ways for your students to quietly and anonymously voice their concerns?



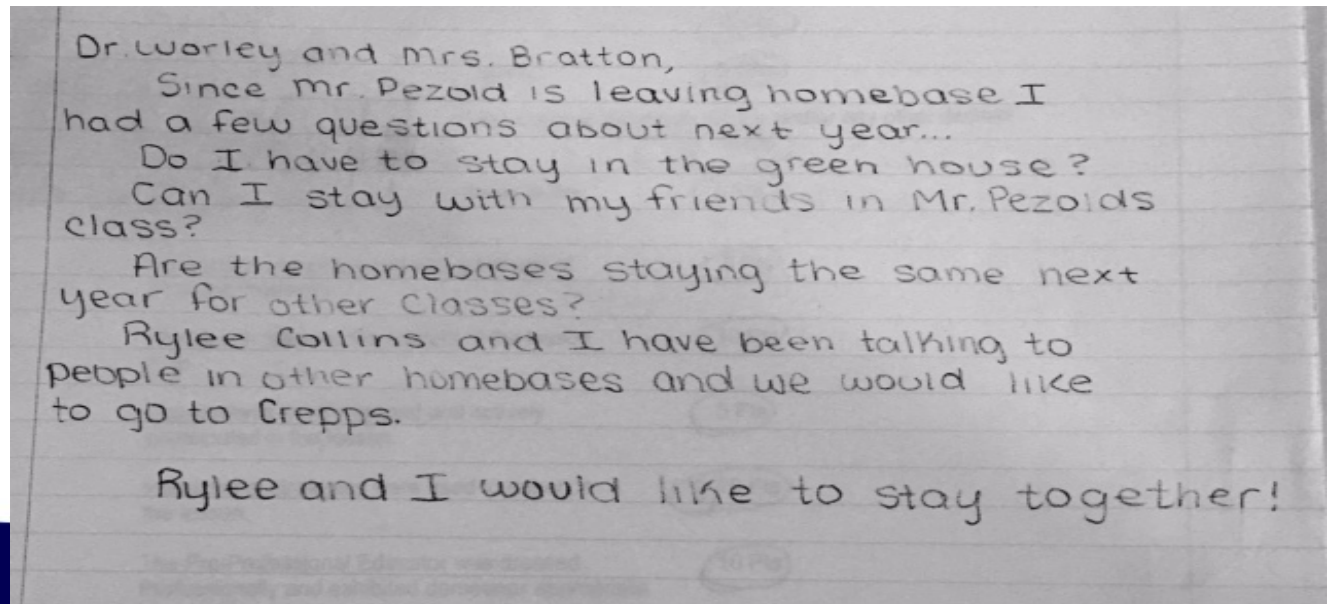
Chats

- Students want to feel safe, empowered, and heard in their school community
- This happens in MANY different ways and needs to be woven into the fabric of your school community



Encourage Letter Writing

- Seize a student concern as a learning opportunity
- Ideas need to be expressed in writing



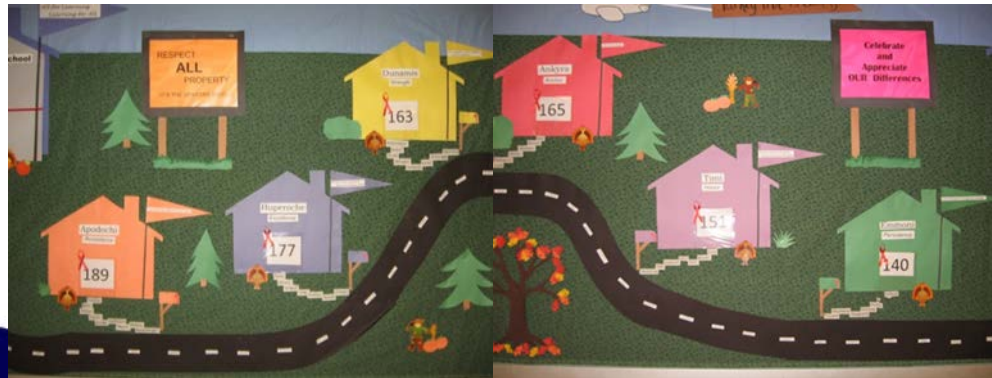
Chats – School Clubs

- Connections empower student voice
- After-school organizations **MUST** make room for everyone
 - Membership needs to be fluid
 - **EVERYONE** needs to be eligible
 - Service Club (allows for restorative justice)
 - All-of-Us Club (includes SpEd, reg ed, gifted)



Chats - Houses

- House leaders
- House meetings
- House competitions
- Student-created motto, mascot, flag, & cheer



Chats – Ambassadors

- Junior Spartan Ambassadors
 - Mentors
 - New Student Helpers
 - Teach PBS lessons
 - Help at school events



Chats – Student Council

- Principals regularly visit with student council and other groups to glean input and ideas
- Students vote on dances, special events, & even teacher appreciation week gifts



Chats – Journalism

- Student Newspaper



Youth in Government a Huge Success!

November 17, 2015 • [\(Edit\)](#)

Filed under [News](#), [Uncategorized](#)

[Print](#) [PDF](#) Mr. Shirley and Mr. Van Horn had a great



The Fabulous Variety at the Variety Show!

Ali Zolman, 7th Grade Editor

October 20, 2015 • [\(Edit\)](#)

Filed under [News](#)

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From lima beans to confetti, the Saeger Middle School Variety Show had it all. Featuring the talented students of Saeger Middle School, the Variety Show included fun acts such as gymnastics, singing, and monologues. While the acts were the main part of the night, the announcers brought the show together perfectly. Everyone had phenomenal costumes, including, but not limited to, Lanie Sanders and her boisterous sparkly eyelashes, Taylor Krieg with her colorful top hat and matching outfit, and Macey Caldwell in her shockingly song appropriate skeletal attire.

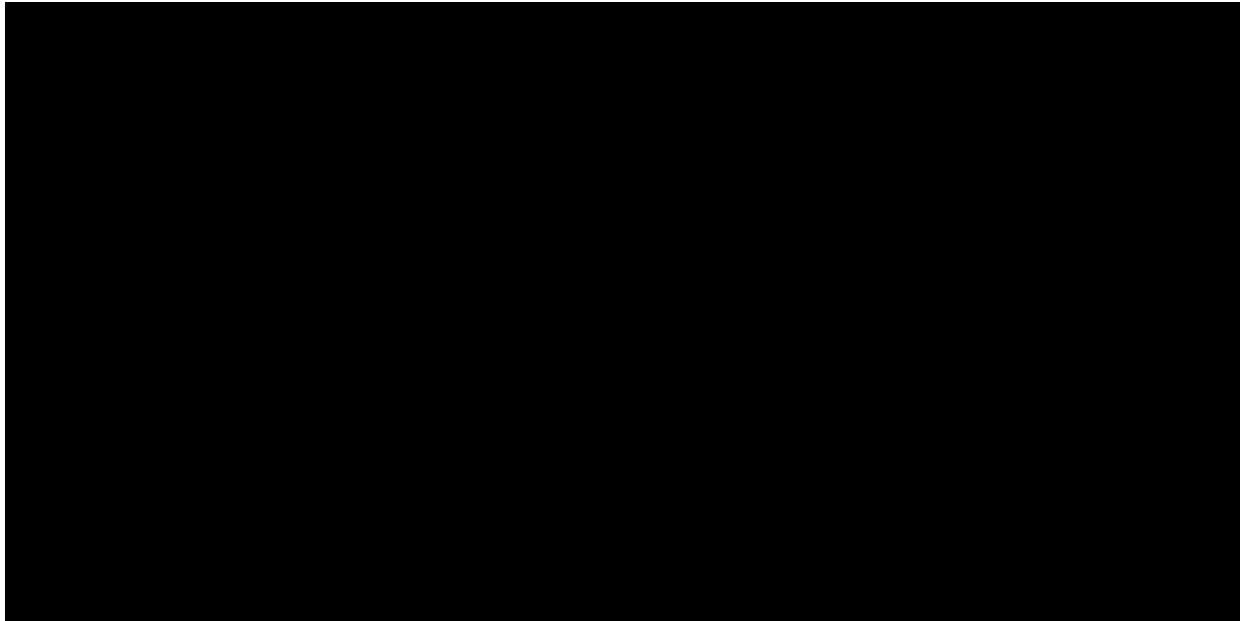
The evening's festivities began with a song, sung by Sarah Skelly, in the Francis Howell Central High School auditorium. Throughout the night, the audience was wowed by seventeen acts, including musicians, speakers, gymnasts, and dancers. The musicians were not only singers, but a drummer, guitarists, a ukulele player, and a pianist. The speakers were two seventh grade girls who performed monologues with interesting themes reflecting on fairy tales and barbie dolls. Every act made the audience roar with excitement and a few students even made a poster to cheer their friends on.

In between every act, the announcers made an appearance and introduced who was coming up. However, some of these transitions occurred in a strange and fascinating way. Just as an example, one announcer was afraid of disco music and another gave a can of lima beans to an audience member. Others included attempts at singing, throwing confetti, and making really "Gouda" puns. Overall, the night was a complete success and a marvelous way for students to showcase their talents in front of others.

Congratulations to all the evening's performers:

Chats – Journalism

- Student News Broadcast



Chats – Classroom Choices

- Multiple opportunities to respond
- Sequence of events
- Choice in reading assignments
- Choice in how to use class time
- More choice = more opportunities to teach decision making skills



Chats – Tier 2 & 3 Voices

- As you mentor & collaboratively problem solve to remove triggers for behavior, really listen to what these students say
 - Schedule changes
 - Bus changes
 - Lunch table changes
 - Whatever it takes



Chats – Classroom Meetings

- Spartan Time twice a week
- Spartan Way lessons every week building-wide
- Springboards for class conversations



Chats – Individual Connections

- Counselors
- SRO
- Principals
- Paraprofessionals
- Teachers
- School Nurse



Because of Student Chats...

- We allow students to “donate” the fruit off their lunch tray
- We now allow book bags to be carried
- We opened up the library during lunch times for lunch bunch groups
- We allow water bottles vs. students having to use fountains



Pause & Think...

- Do all your students have a place in your existing clubs & activities to foster connectedness?
- Do your students have an on-going means to voice their concerns?
- Do you regularly teach your students to make choices?



SCREAMS!

- Allow activism and protest
- Seize this opportunity to teach petitions, letter writing, and scheduling meetings with adults
- This is how we prepare tomorrow's adults to run our country



The Bookbag Controversy

- Our policy was no book bags in classrooms
- We allowed drawstring bags
- Students tested the limits of what was a drawstring bag
- This turned in to a bevy of “care & concern” notes
- We now allow book bags in classrooms



Food Choices in the Lunchroom

- Students have input (or demand input) into our lunch choices, which we pass along to our food vendor
- Thanks to our students we now have chicken & waffles – and, pudding cups!



Spartan Time Revolt of '15

- We used to have Spartan Time daily
- Our new Principal changed it to once a week
- Students revolted with letters & petitions
- We now have 2 Spartan Time classes per week



Pause and Think...

- Do you allow your students to be impassioned by the causes that are important to them?
- Do you consider the student voice in every major school decision? Or, do you assume you know the student voice?



Imagine If ...

- Students sat on your hiring committees
- Students sat on building improvement committee or your PTO
- Students reviewed new building policies
- Students helped plan special events
 - Assemblies
 - Awards Ceremonies
 - Fieldtrips



Questions?

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