



Sixth Annual Ed Talk – 2017/18

A Summary of Stakeholder Input

Prepared by:

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1.0 Executive Summary

The annual Ed Talk event provides a forum for Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) staff to engage in dialogue with students, parents, and the broader community concerning issues impacting education today. The 2017/18 Ed Talk held on November 4, 2017, focused on two keys to student success: personalized learning and life readiness. The first roundtable session, presentation and discussion focused on how the District is personalizing teaching and learning. The second roundtable session focused on social and emotional and academic development with an emphasis on developing a greater understanding of the challenges facing our students and the resources that are available. Intervening between the two-roundtable sessions, District staff reported on progress with regard to the Strategic Plan High-Quality Instruction Objectives of Literacy and Early Learning and Middle Grades Learning.

For the first time, Ed Talk was hosted at a school location: Hollywood Hills High School. By hosting the event at a school location, as opposed to the Broward County Convention Center or other venues, the cost was reduced from approximately \$25,000 to \$7,000.

During each roundtable discussion, participants' feedback was captured by a table facilitator, who entered the information into an electronic file. In addition, each participant provided evaluative feedback after each session by independently recording his or her ratings on an electronic form; these data were not discussed among the participants or otherwise recorded by the facilitator.

This document provides an overview of the feedback received from participants attending the 2017/18 Ed Talk. Sections include an overview of participants' characteristics and ideas shared during the roundtable discussions. In addition, this report brings a new dimension to Ed Talk feedback by including summaries of participants' evaluative ratings of the discussions with regard to relevance, engagement, and potential to improve academic experience.

2.0 Participant Characteristics

A total of 746 individuals registered online for Ed Talk in advance of the event, of which 256 (34 percent) attended. An additional 42 individuals who registered on-site on the day of the event also attended, yielding a **total of 298 participants**. A total of 247 participants (82.8 percent) completed feedback forms on which the following data summary is based. In addition, 144 District staff volunteers were on hand to ensure smooth execution of the event.

Of the 31 municipalities within Broward County, 24 (77 percent) were represented at Ed Talk. Figure 1A, displays the number of participants by municipality, including unincorporated areas (Broward Municipal Services District, $n=2$), as well as the number declining to respond ($n=8$). Figure 1B, displays the geographical regions represented by the participants, with the size of the markers corresponding to the number of representatives.

Figure 1A. Municipalities Represented

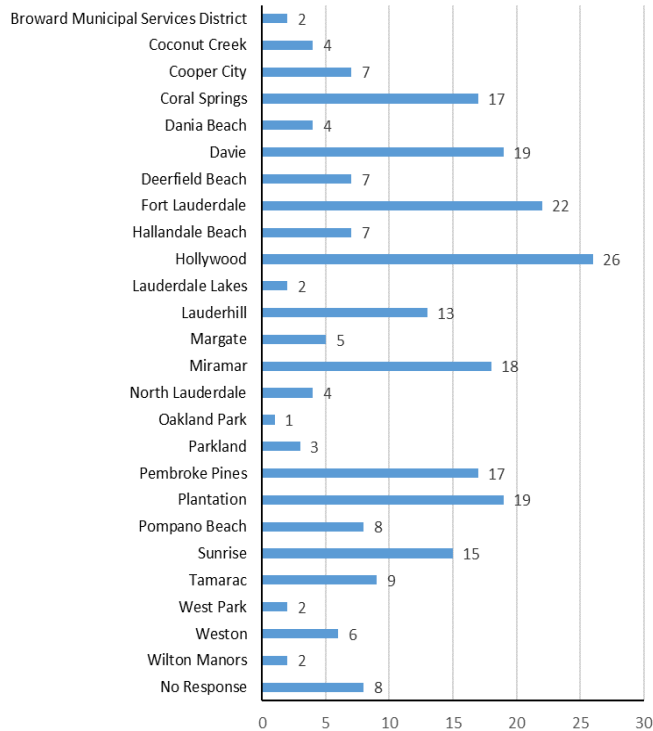
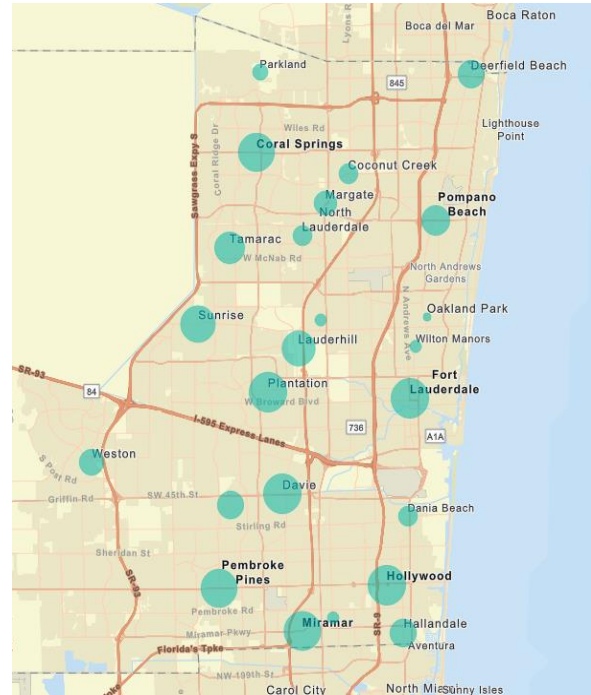


Figure 1B. Geographical Regions Represented



The participants represented many groups from throughout the community (Figure 2, next page). The largest groups represented included current K-12 students (27.2 percent, $n=65$) and BCPS employees/other [than teachers] (27.2 percent, $n=65$). Parents/Guardians (23.4 percent, $n=56$), BCPS Teachers (19.2 percent, $n=46$), and Community-Based Organizations (7.9 percent, $n=19$)¹ round out the top four most represented groups. Note that some individuals indicated they represent more than one group, resulting in a total of 290 responses for this item (exceeding the 247 number of participants providing completed feedback forms).

The participants self-identified with a number of groups across the spectrum of race/ethnicity (Figure 3, next page). Nearly half (47 percent) identified themselves as African-American/Black, followed by 28 percent self-identifying as Caucasian and 14 percent as Hispanic. Only two individuals (<1 percent) identified themselves as Asian/Pacific Islanders, indicating an under-representation for this segment of the community. Most participants were female (68 percent, $n=168$) compared to 71 males (29 percent) and eight (3 percent) who did not specify their gender.

¹ Organizations targeted for Ed Talk include: Broward Education Foundation, Children’s Services Council, Community Foundation of Broward, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Unity of Florida, United Way of Broward County, and Urban League of Broward County.

Figure 2. Groups Represented

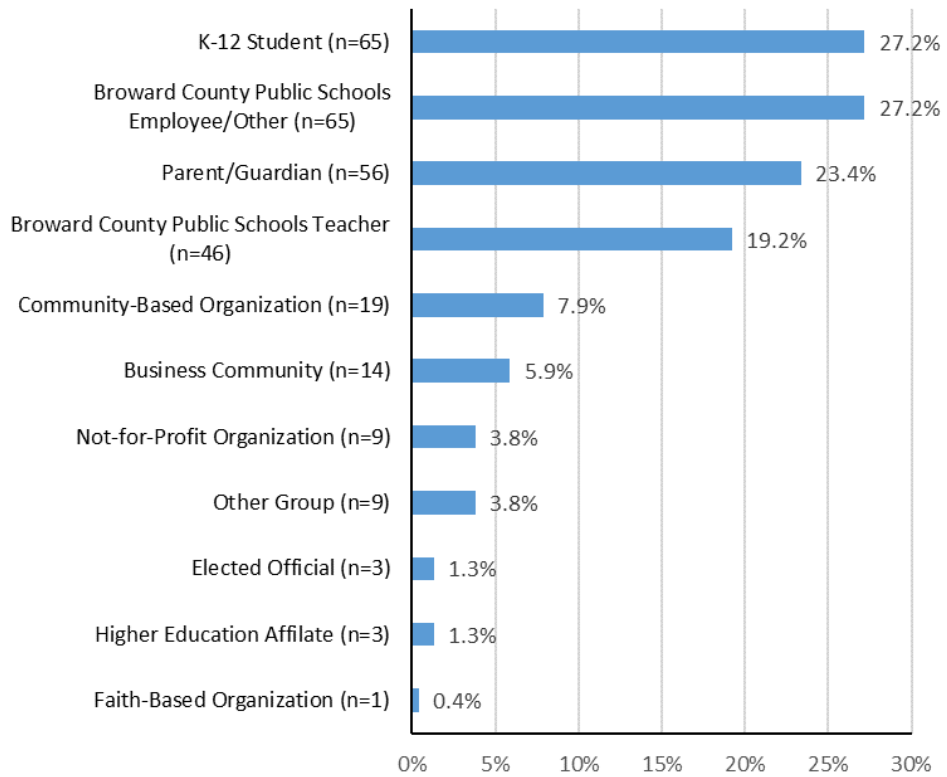
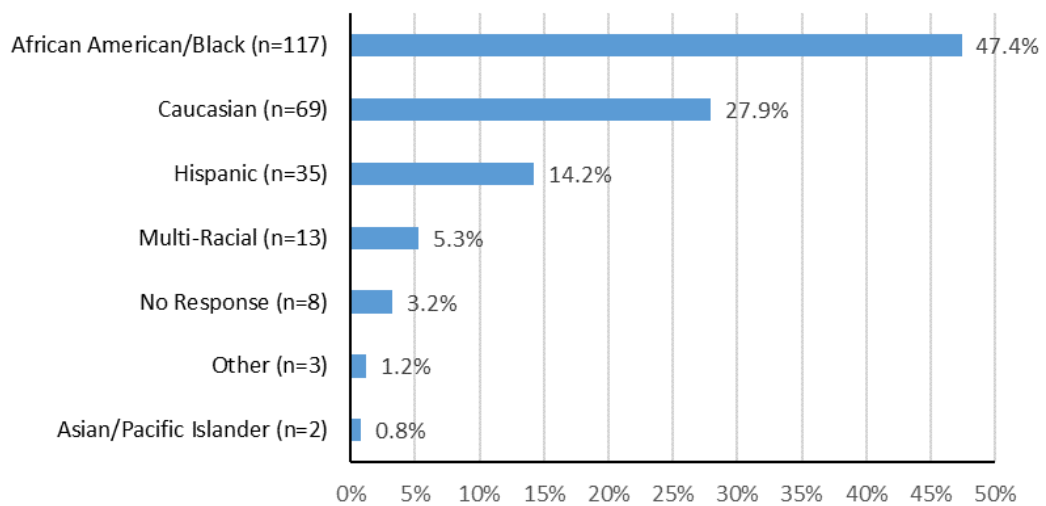


Figure 3. Race/Ethnicity



Many of the participants were 24 years old or younger (27 percent, $n=67$; Figure 4) and review of the educational attainment data indicates that a large segment of this age group are current K-12 students (20 percent, $n = 49$; Figure 5). The majority of the participants were either college graduates (19 percent, $n=46$) or had completed graduate degrees (42 percent, $n=103$).

Figure 4. Age

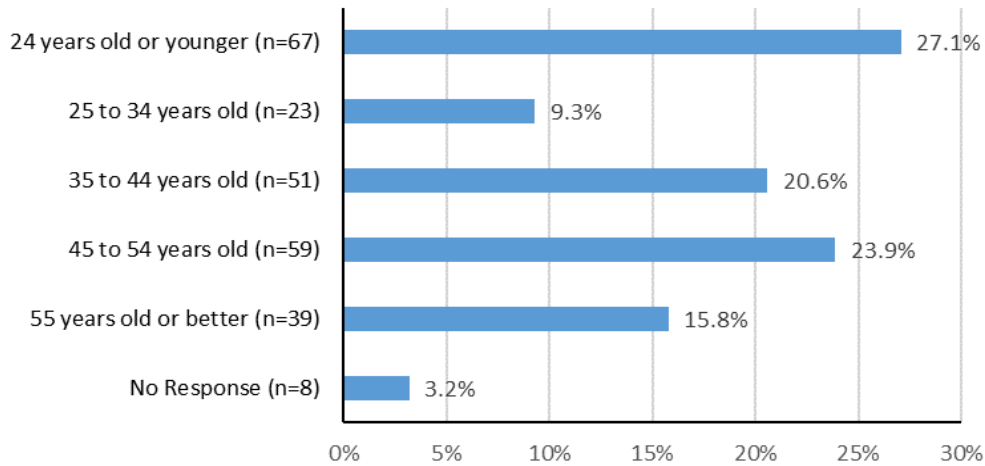


Figure 5. Educational Attainment

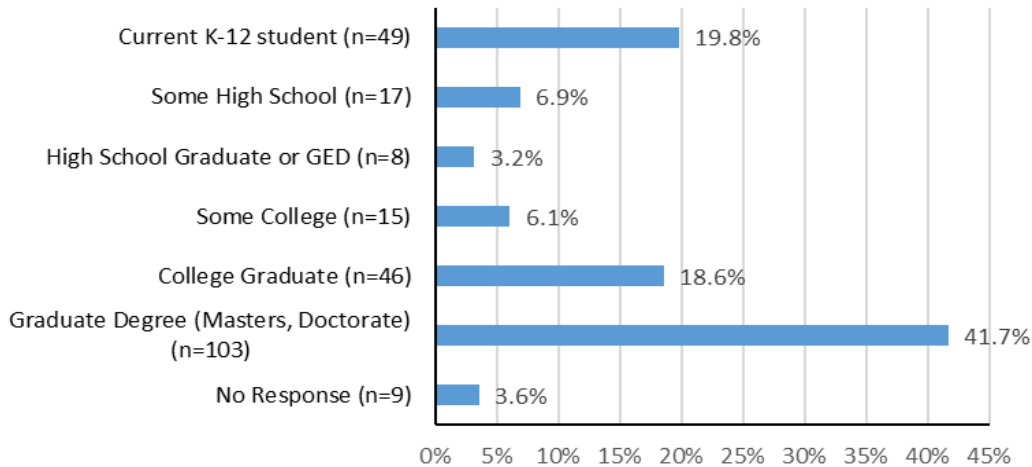
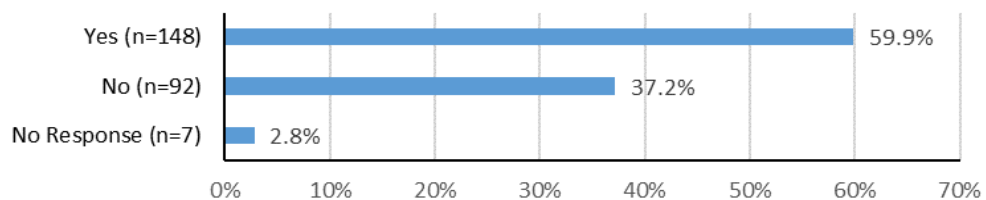


Figure 6. First Time Ed Talk Attendees



Most of this year's participants were attending Ed Talk for the first time (60 percent, $n=148$; Figure 6). Just over one-third (37 percent, $n=92$) indicated that they were returning participants. Further disaggregating the first-time Ed Talk attendees' responses revealed 78 percent of students and 76 percent of teachers were attending Ed Talk for the first time, compared to 46 percent of other BCPS staff and parents.

3.0 Session 1: Personalized Learning

Session 1 focused on how the District is personalizing teaching and learning for our students. The session included presentations by District staff and students as well as a hands-on demonstration at each of the discussion tables of personalized learning by leveraging technology such as CANVAS. Following presentations, participants at each of 39 tables were given an opportunity to share ideas. The discussion was framed around two questions:

1. What new ways could your school personalize learning to support its stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, administrators, community)?
2. What is the parent's role in fostering personalized learning?

Content from the participants' discussion was captured by the table facilitator, who summarized the information in an online form within CANVAS. The captured information was thematically coded by Program Evaluation staff; the emergent themes are summarized in Table 1 along with the number of tables addressing each theme.

Table 1.

Emergent Themes for Discussion Session 1.

Theme	Tables Addressing Theme	
	Number	Percent
Parent Involvement and/or Communication	29	74%
Increasing Parent Knowledge	28	72%
Teaching and Support for Individualized Learning Styles	22	56%
Provide More In/Out of School Programs	14	36%
Community Involvement and/or Communication	11	28%
Technology Use	9	23%
Elective/Academic Course Offerings/Pathways	9	23%
Communication with Students	8	21%
Real-World Experiences	7	18%
Academic Support/Tutoring for Students	7	18%
Career/Technical Options	7	18%
Social and Emotional Learning Support	5	13%
Teacher Professional Development	5	13%
Teacher Knowledge/Understanding of their Students	4	10%
Student Participation in Clubs/Sports	4	10%
Better Resources	2	5%
Student Autonomy	2	5%
Promote Diversity	2	5%
More Teacher Effort	1	3%
Physical Activity	1	3%

Most participant tables addressed three themes: the importance of parent involvement and communication with the schools; the need to increase parents' knowledge about how they can assist their child; and that teachers need support to craft instruction to complement their students' learning styles. The predominance of parent-related themes is likely due to the comparatively large representation of parents at the event. Below are some illustrative comments.

Parent Involvement and/or Communication (n=29):

- Parents need to be engaged on a regular basis and make sure they play a role in the learning process (they need to have a say). Use various forms of technology to reach out to parents within the community.
- All parents should be active participants in the process of personalized learning to provide necessary support. This involves continuous dialogue with all stakeholders providing suggestions and thoughts about their child's needs and possible ways to address the child's needs.

Increasing Parent Knowledge (n=28):

- Provide basic training for parents at teach step; for example, explain the terms to parents, such as "What is personalized learning."
- The parent role in personalized learning is the education of parents so that they can assist at home, the parent must first know how to help the child. Parents need to understand how the child processes the information.
- Parents want to help their children. We need to give them the tools and information to help them work with their children. We need to bring the information TO them rather than expect that they are available to come to us.

Teaching and Support for Individualized Learning Styles (n=22):

- Provide teachers with the appropriate tools to support learning in the classroom in order to differentiate learning and personalized instruction.
- The teacher must be trained to recognize not only the educational needs of the student, but also their social and emotional learning (SEL) needs.
- Give seasoned teachers an opportunity to learn how to provide the opportunity for personalization.
- Teacher should also be trained properly in the material that is used with support throughout while they implement.
- Provide teachers with hands-on resources to assist students with their learning style.

Following discussion, each participant was asked to rate the relevance of personalized learning for Broward County Public Schools (Figure 7), the level of discussion participation at the table (Figure 8), and the likelihood that the ideas shared about personalized learning could improve the academic experience for students (Figure 9).² Responses to these items indicated that the participants saw the discussions around the topic of personalized learning to be relevant, engaging, and potentially impactful for our students.³

² The small number of no-responses for each item were excluded from the figures.

³ Additional analyses (likelihood ratio) were conducted to determine whether the pattern of responses differed across respondent groups. In all cases, differences were non-significant.

Figure 7. In your view, was the discussion about personalized learning at your table relevant to student learning in Broward County Public Schools?

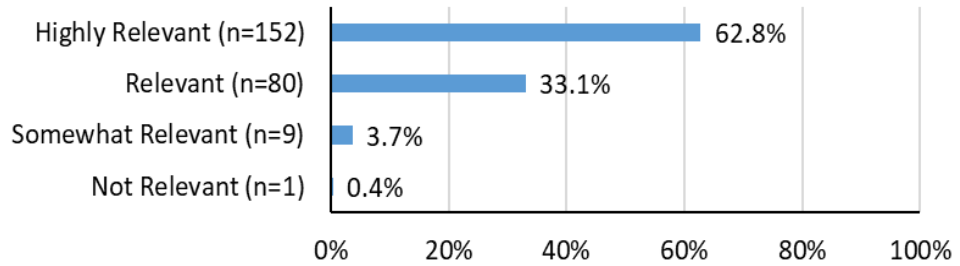


Figure 8. Which statement best describes the level of participation during the discussion at your table?

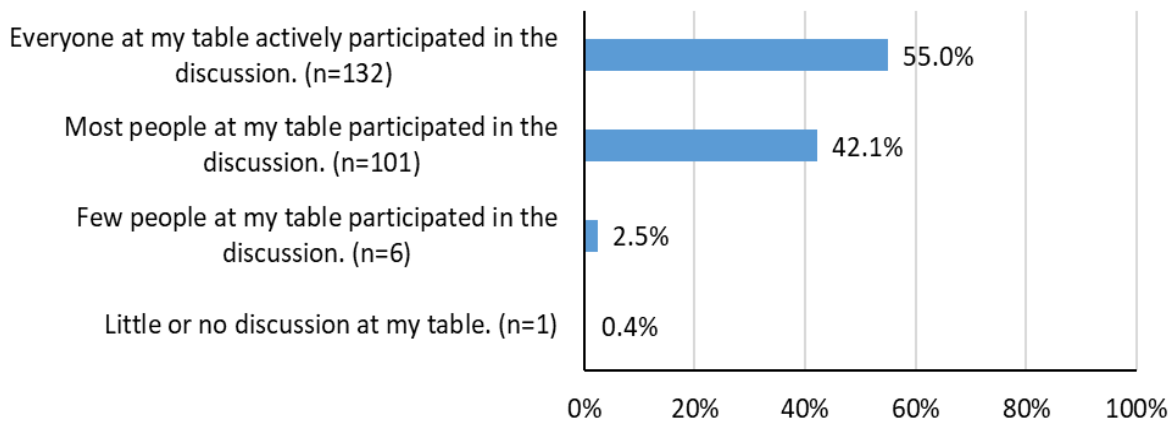
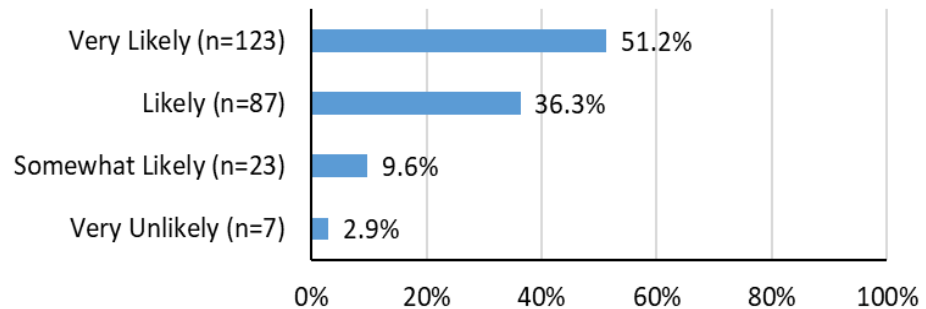


Figure 9. How likely will the ideas shared about personalized learning at your table improve academic experiences for students?



4.0 Strategic Plan Update

The Strategic Plan Update section of the program consisted of the District sharing information with the attendees concerning two major strategic initiatives: Literacy and Early Learning, and Reimagining Middle Grades Learning. While there was no participant table discussion on these sessions, the participants did respond to one feedback item for each strategic initiative. Figure 10 shows that most participants strongly agreed (40 percent) or agreed (52 percent) that the District is making progress on Literacy and Early Learning after the first year of implementation. With regard to Reimagining Middle Grades Learning, which is presently in the planning stage, most participants strongly agreed (35 percent) or agreed (59 percent) that the district is moving in the right direction (Figure 11).

Figure 10. In your opinion, BCPS is making progress with regard to Literacy and Early Learning.

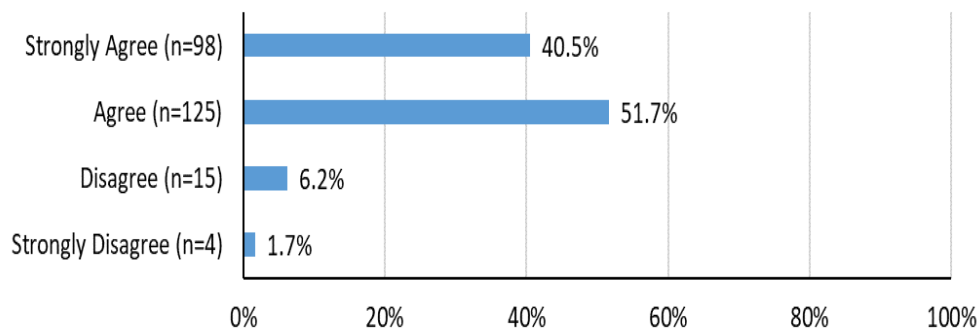
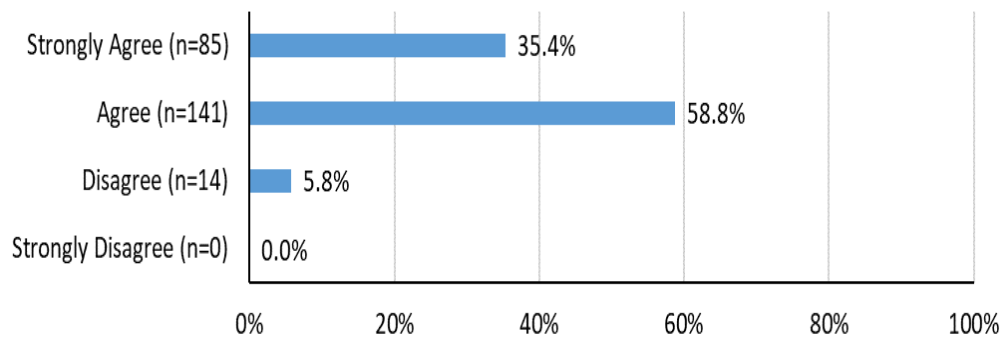


Figure 11. In your opinion, BCPS moving in the right direction with Reimagining Middle Grades Learning.



5.0 Session 2: Life Readiness

Session 2 provided another opportunity for participants to interact and share ideas, this time about helping students develop life readiness skills. The guiding questions for the discussion were:

1. What can we do to create the conditions for students to demonstrate their social and emotional learning skills and develop life skills to be happy and successful participants of a global society?
2. What is the community's role and how is the role implemented?
3. What is the parent's role and how is the role implemented?
4. What is the school's role and how is the role implemented?

Once again, the table facilitator captured the ideas shared during the discussion and entered the ideas into an electronic data form. The recorded ideas were again extracted and coded for summarization (Table 2). The themes were categorized according to whether they addressed the community, parents, school, or cut across categories (General).

Table 2.***Emergent Themes for Discussion Session 2.***

Theme	Tables Addressing Theme	
	Number	Percent
Community - Input	21	54%
Community - Provide Real-World Opportunities	19	49%
Community - Partnerships	19	49%
Community - Support Non-School Activities	9	23%
Community - Decision Making	6	15%
Parent - Involvement	32	82%
Parents - Increase Knowledge	24	62%
Parents - Give Students Greater Autonomy	5	13%
School - Provide/ Improve Social and Emotional Learning Services	26	67%
School - Environment	22	56%
School - Student Support	22	56%
School - Mentoring	11	28%
School - Teacher Support/Professional Development	8	21%
School - Provide Activities/Clubs for Students	5	13%
School - Encourage Student Self-Expression	2	5%
School - Leadership Opportunities	2	5%
General - Social and Emotional Learning Services	26	67%
General - Demonstrate Learning in Multiple Contexts	5	13%
General - Out of School Activities	4	10%

Community – Input:

- Linking community activities with school activities so that students feel connected to the community.
- The community's role is to partner up with schools to help fund programs, mentor students, and become involved with school and students.
- Bringing members of the community in to discuss career choices can help motivate them to prepare for the future.

Community – Provide Real-World Opportunities:

- Students should be able to get real world experiences.
- Mentor, present at schools, provide internship opportunities, put more resources into the schools, opportunities for on the job training.
- The community should offer opportunities for students to have different experiences to prepare them for career and college.
- Businesses should partner with schools to provide opportunities to explore how the knowledge will be applied and how tangible school skills transfer into the real world.

Parents – Involvement:

- Getting more parents involved is important.
- Perhaps more parent involvement programs to empower the parents in their child's education. We need to involve the employers to allow parents to attend parent conferences.
- Parents should stay abreast of all social media accounts and information that students have access to. Pay attention to peer relationships and people they spend time with.
- Parents need to be actively involved and support their child.

Parents – Increase Knowledge:

- Take an active interest and support the learning as well as educate themselves about the new methods of learning.
- Parents need education on current pressure that modern students are experiencing.
- Hold parent workshops on how to connect with your child.
- Schools should let parents know what early indicators are so that they know how to support their students.

School – Provide/Improve SEL services:

- Schools that support and teach about the triggers of stress and how to manage.
- Each school needs a pathway to assist the teachers and school staff to help the student in the social and emotional experience especially in the middle grades. Without addressing the social and emotional stability in the student and the family, there is a gap in delivering the academics.
- Schools need to implement programs that promote an integrated curriculum that encourages awareness, respect, and love for all.
- Make it a school priority to address the personal needs of the student first.

School – Environment:

- Schools must listen, be welcoming, embrace ALL children and their parents, celebrate, and recognize student accomplishments.
- Schools should be more welcoming to all parents and not be judgmental.
- Create a comfortable environment for students so that there is a level of trust reciprocally.
- There needs to be a "mental" check in so that the school can provide the right kind of help, developing an environment of trust.

General – SEL:

- Create a climate and a culture that is accepting and promotes social and emotional learning.
- It is very important that as a society we create an environment of global awareness.
- Need to feel safe to talk and without any blowback. Students are afraid if they speak about problems, it will be used against them on social media, in school, or at home. Need more of these resources in school and to be publicized.
- Behavioral therapists are needed to assist students with their social and emotional learning.

General – Demonstrate Learning in Multiple Contexts:

- More opportunities to show what they know utilizing a variety of mediums.
- Mentorships, internships, business partners, community centers-extended day activities, free opportunities to include all students; businesses should partner with schools to provide opportunities to explore how the knowledge will be applied and how tangible school skills transfer into the real world.

Once again, each participant was asked to rate the relevance of life readiness for Broward County Public Schools students (Figure 12), the level of discussion participation at the table (Figure 13), and the likelihood that the ideas shared about personalized learning could improve the academic experience for students (Figure 14). Responses to these items indicated that the participants saw the discussions around the topic of life readiness to be relevant, engaging, and potentially impactful for our students.

Figure 12. In your view, was the discussion about life readiness at your table relevant to student learning in Broward County Public Schools?

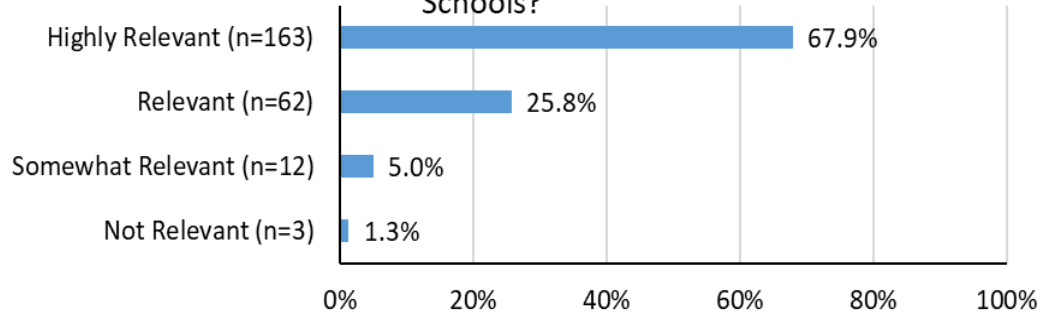


Figure 13. Which statement best describes the level of participation during the discussion at your table?

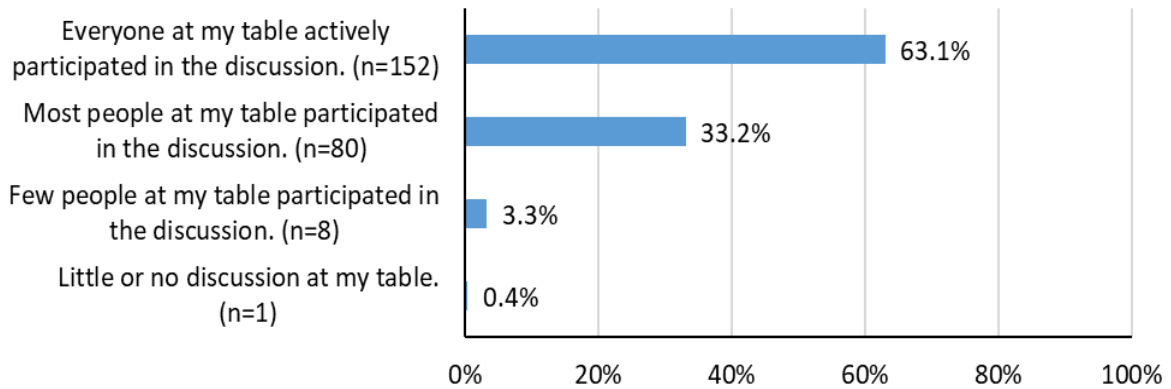
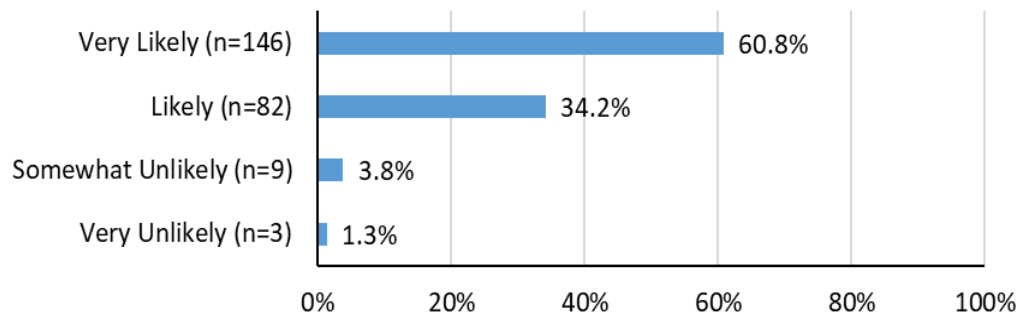


Figure 14. How likely will the ideas shared about life readiness at your table improve academic experiences for students?



6.0 Closing Session

Following the final discussion session, the participants were asked to provide a final round of ratings concerning the Ed Talk event overall. The impressions they shared were very positive. First, most participants strongly agreed (58 percent) or agreed (39 percent) that their views, as expressed at the event, were valued by the District (Figure 15). Second, most participants indicated that it was very likely (68 percent) or likely (25 percent) that they would attend another Ed Talk event in the future (Figure 16).

The participants also indicated how they had heard about Ed Talk (Figure 17). Most said they found out via email (22 percent) and the District website (21 percent). Few indicated they found out from the newspaper (<2 percent).

Figure 15. The views and opinions I expressed today were valued by the School District.

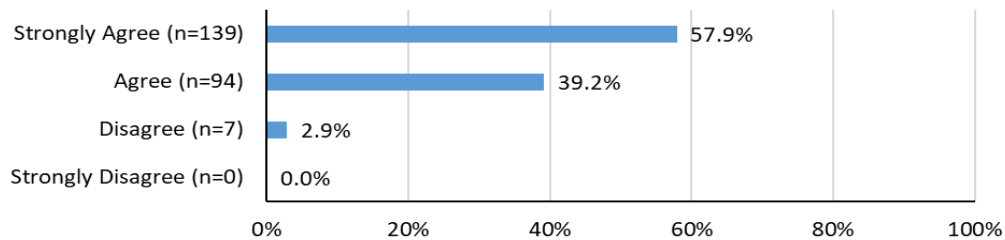


Figure 16. How likely is it that you would attend another EdTalk event in the future?

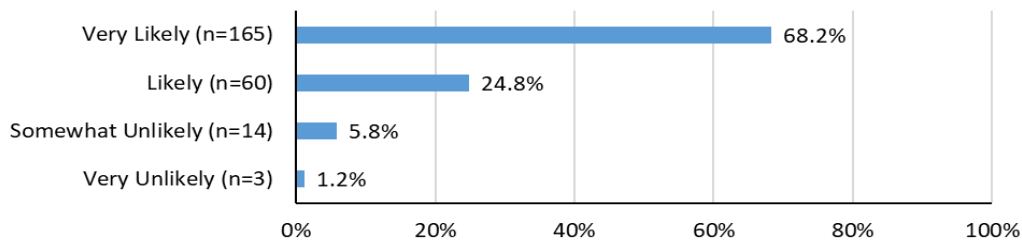
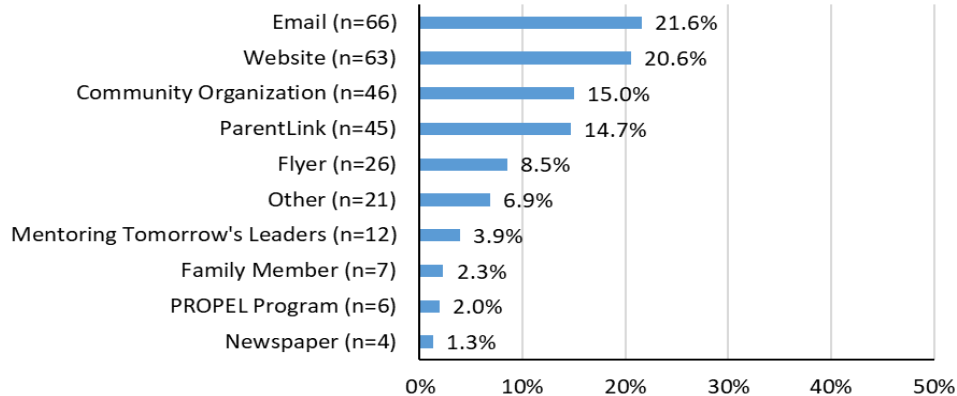


Figure 17. How did you find out about Ed Talk?



The participants were also given an opportunity to provide written feedback on ideas for improving Ed Talk by responding to three open-ended questions:

- What suggestions do you have to improve Ed Talk?
- What topics should be addressed in Ed Talk?
- What additional comments would you like to share?

Responses to each of these questions were thematically coded; the identified themes are summarized below along with illustrative responses.

Suggestions for Improvement. A total of 190 of the 247 (77 percent) participants wrote some responses to the request for improvement suggestions. Of these responses, 152 substantive suggestions were extracted. These suggestions could be categorized according to the broad themes listed in Table 3.

Table 3.

Identified categories of suggestions to improve Ed Talk.

Theme	Count
More Active Participation Opportunities	32
Improved Facilitation	30
Adjustments to Venue	20
Student Participation	19
Time Allocated for Event or Segment	17
Topics for Discussion	13
Follow-Through on Learning	11
Advertisement and Recruitment	10

A sampling of specific suggestions include:

- More Active Participation Opportunities:
 - Permit more tables to provide input, not just the "selected tables."
 - I personally feel that they didn't allow everyone to talk and take part in this discussion but had officials talk for a long time.
 - Have more hands-on activities at the table.
 - If the Ed Talk had games, because it was a little bit boring to watch.
 - More fun activities to keep kids engaged.
 - Less promotion and more dialog.

- Improved Facilitation:
 - Put District leaders at each table so they can hear and discuss the topics with the stakeholders.
 - The facilitator's role and table communication would be enhanced if the laptop interacted with the i-Pads, especially for the students.
 - Have the information on the facilitator's computer also available on the tablets.
 - Improved technical support (was still good though).
 - More discussion questions less talk on stage.

- Adjustments to Venue:
 - Continue to hold at school locations, rotate to different schools.
 - Larger facility, more seating.
 - More food.

- Student Participation:
 - Continue to include students within the sessions. It makes the work tangible.
 - More student sharing, perhaps as facilitators.
 - More opportunity for students to share their concerns.
 - I recommend that a period of 15 or 20 minutes is allowed for students to bring up their individual concerns.
 - More students from different backgrounds. English for Speakers of Other Languages students were not in attendance!
 - Would love to see more student-provided entertainment like there was in 2016.

- Time Allocated for Event or Segment:
 - More time for discussion/input from attendees.

- Topics for Discussion:
 - Environment of students.
 - Parent segment.
 - Student with disability as Life Readiness-micro enterprises.
 - Mental health.
 - Nonprofits focus on children.
 - School lunch/meals.
 - Bullying/cyberbullying.

- Follow-Through on Learning:
 - Show how the responses [from Ed Talk] were used.
 - Have a follow up in 6 months to show what has been done.
 - Stay in touch and keep us in touch with one another via videoconferencing!
Set up various interest groups for us to join on videoconferencing.
 - I would like to know objective ways these ideas are being implemented.

- Advertisement and Recruitment:
 - Make topics available before registration.
 - Outreach to greater community.
 - Greater outreach to parents.
 - Increase awareness of Ed Talk.

Suggestions for Topics. A total of 146 of the 247 (59 percent) participants wrote some responses to the request for topic suggestions. Of these responses, 142 substantive suggestions were extracted. These are summarized in Table 4 (next page).

Additional Comments. The additional comments offered tended to be largely evaluative with 54 of the 84 comments (64 percent) expressing a positive sentiment (e.g. “The program was wonderful,” “Good job,” “Thank you”). Only two comments were expressively negative (“Too dark. Crowded space, Attendants at parking were not sure where event was,” and “This got boring so if it was more fun, it would be good”). Twenty-seven comments offered suggestions that were largely captured in the preceding two open response questions.

Table 4.

Identified topics for Ed Talk.

Topic	Count
College/Career/Life Skills	20
Character Education/Social and Emotional Learning	19
Parent/Family Support	18
Student-Selected	14
Academic Programs	13
Teacher Support/Pay	8
Community Involvement	6
District Current Events/Outreach	6
Testing/Assessment	6
Exceptional Student Education	5
Policy	4
English Speakers of Other Languages	3
Accountability	2
After School	2
Behavior/Discipline	2
Bullying	2
Lunch/Meals	2
Safety	2
Other*	8

* Other topics include one response each: attendance, clubs, diversity, graduation, immigration, private school support, school-home communication, and technology.

7.0 Discussion

The 2017/18 Ed Talk event continued the annual dialogue among students, parents, teachers, District staff, and the broader community. This year's event brought several innovative changes. First, the traditional venue at the Broward County Convention Center or other commercial forum was replaced by a school site, thereby providing an authentic school environment for the participants to experience. This change of forum was generally well-received, with feedback that Ed Talk should rotate to different school sites throughout the county.

Second, this year a more detailed participant feedback procedure was used which rated each segment of the program during the course of the event. The two central discussion sessions were rated independently by each participant with regard to relevance of the topic, level of participation among the participants, and perceptions of potential for impact on student experience. Responses to all these items were largely favorable for both discussion topics.

The event feedback procedure also collected perceptions of the program overall. The participants overwhelmingly indicated that they felt their views are valued by the District and they would likely attend another Ed Talk event in the future. However, intentions may not always align with actual behaviors. Case in point: More than 90 percent of participants indicated that they would likely attend another Ed Talk event, but only slightly more than one-third (37 percent) of this year's participants had attended before.

Although the feedback from the participants was largely positive and participation was active, the value of the Ed Talk largely comes from whether the District learns anything from the participants, and whether the input can be put into action. District staff are encouraged to review the information contained herein to inform planning and practice around personalized learning and life readiness. The information contained herein will also prove valuable in continuous improvement for Ed Talk implementation.

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