



The 360|Report

Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) – Safe(r) Community Conversation & Dinner

30 March 2023

Facilitated by MTI

Event Date: 30 March 2023

Report Publication Date: Friday, 30 June 2023
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The 360 Report | Executive Summary & Overview

Safe(r) Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)
Community Conversation & Dinner
30 March 2023

Table 1: Demographics

Demographics	(n)	Total Participants (N)	%
Indigenous, Black or Other People of Color (IBPOC)	190	250	76%
Youth/Under 24	60	250	24%

The 360 | Executive Summary, Event Overview & Demographics

The first in a series of three open conversations hosted by Marnita's Table and Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) between March and May of 2023, this event brought together 250 community members in the Saint Paul metropolitan area.

Participants of this first event, held on March 30, 2023, at Washington Technology Magnet School, included current and former SPPS students, parents, and family members, SPPS staff, board members and administrators – approximately 76 percent of whom identified as Indigenous, Black, or other people of color and nearly a quarter of whom were under the age of 24. In keeping with district demographics and school priorities, the event was hosted in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali and Karen. Discussion notes submitted in languages other than English were transcribed and translated before analysis.

While originally planned as part of a series centered on the most recent strategic plan for the district, SPPS Achieves, the discussion content was redesigned with a focus on school safety and security in response to a violent incident at Harding Senior High School in Saint Paul. This pivot created space for community members to process, reflect and respond to the incident, while providing broad ranging feedback on school safety in general. Two later conversations advanced the original goal of providing information on the district's strategic plan and an open community forum for discussing that information. The results and discussion themes of this set of conversations is addressed in a separate report.

Event participants had the opportunity to engage with information about school safety plans and supportive resources during the community conversation, which featured in-depth small group engagement during the Mindstorm guided discussion sessions. Participants of these discussion groups described what safety and security mean to them as individuals, sharing personal experiences and perspectives on the theme. Analysis of the discussion themes shows that

conversations largely focused upon (1) elements of physical safety and security, (2) the importance of supporting mental, social and emotional health for the SPPS community as a whole – students as well as parents and families, teachers and other staff members, (3) shared responsibility and community resources for collaborating toward safer schools and environments, and (4) the important roles of culture and communications in ensuring safer learning and living spaces.

The series was co-hosted by staff and leadership of Saint Paul Public Schools who helped welcome community members to in-person events throughout the three-event series of community conversations, with event design and facilitation provided by the Marnita's Table team in the model of Intentional Social Interaction (IZI). Project coordination, logistics and outreach were led by senior project director Sammie Ardito Rivera and training director Lauren Williams with support from outreach specialist and Spanish language coordination lead Marlene Rojas. Materials design, research, evaluation and analysis were conducted under the supervision of research director Elexis Trinity with support from operations and evaluation manager Lars Goldstein and other members of the MTI team.

The following report consists of qualitative discussion data collected from the above activities and the thematic analysis of their results conducted by the Marnita's Table research team.

Table 2: Measurable Indicators of Success

Indicator	Goal	Delivered
At least 51% Indigenous, Black and other people of color (IBPOC) and/or marginalized immigrants	51%	76%
Met someone new across race, class, culture or other means of self-identity	80%	90%
Would come again	50%	95%
Would invite someone to another conversation	50%	90%
Felt that they belonged (at the event)	80%	95%
Felt heard and listened to	80%	90%
Met someone with whom they wanted to stay in touch	50%	90%



Safer SPPS Community Conversation & Dinner
Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)
Mindstorm

Questions for the conversation (45 minutes):

Choose the topic or topics your group finds most important to discuss.

- **Building a Safer Community:** Is there anything that makes you feel safe (in school or as a member of the SPPS community)? Is there anything that makes you feel unsafe? If so, please share. If you feel or have felt unsafe (at times, or in general), is there anything that could make you feel safer? Who should be responsible for ensuring that students feel safe in schools? Do you feel that you have a role in helping schools to be (or to feel) safer? If so, what is that role? Who should be involved in helping to make that change?
- **Are there any mental health, social-emotional or counseling resources** at SPPS that you particularly value? Are there ones that don't exist that you'd like to see more of? What are they? Are there particular mental health and safety resources you want or need for supporting students in particular? For teachers, staff, and administrators? For families and parents? Are there things you would prioritize in order to feel safer in Saint Paul Public Schools?
- **Seeking & Sharing Support:** If you needed support because you or your student(s) felt unsafe, what kind of resources would you like to have available? Is there someone you trust that you'd want yourself or your student to be able to talk to? If so, who is that person? What kind of help would you like? If you had done something that made someone else feel unsafe (as a student, parent, teacher, or community member), how would you want to be treated? What consequences (or other response) would you expect? How would you want the conflict to be resolved?
- **Are you aware of the current safety measures**, resources, and procedures currently in place at SPPS? **Are there physical safety measures (currently in place or not) that make you feel safe(r)?** Are there any physical safety or security measures that make you feel less safe? What are they and why? Are there alternatives you might suggest? What would you rank as most important for safety and security?
- **Are there any community resources or potential contributors** you'd like to see included in safety and security plans or efforts at SPPS? If so, what are they? What benefits might they provide? What would you like to see SPPS prioritize in their safety and security plans, programs and/or available resources?
- **Do you have any questions for SPPS?** Is there anything you'd like to know more about?
- **Is there anything that we didn't ask that we should have?** What isn't here that you would like to see? Are there any questions you have? Please share your question(s), and any answers that your group chats about.



The 360 Report | Mindstorm Themes & Analysis

Safe(r) Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)
Community Conversation and Dinner
30 March 2023

Overview & Methodology:

The following is a summary and analysis of the discussion notes submitted by small-group conversation facilitators during the Mindstorm sessions hosted at Washington Technology Magnet School in Saint Paul, Minnesota on March 30, 2023. While originally planned as part of a series of Saint Paul Public School (SPPS) community conversations centered on the most recent strategic plan for the district, SPPS Achieves, the discussion content was redesigned with a focus on school safety and security in response to a violent incident at Harding Senior High School in Saint Paul.¹ This redeveloped focused conversation series was undertaken by a total of 250 participants in individual small group discussions with dedicated scribes (notetakers) assigned to each group and language.² All events across this series (including two later IZIs dedicated to the district's strategic plan) were open to the public and welcomed participants from all over the Saint Paul metropolitan area.

Participating small groups submitted an aggregate total of 26 pages of notes and transcriptions from their conversations. In keeping with district demographics and school priorities, participation was facilitated in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali and Karen. Discussion notes submitted in languages other than English were transcribed and translated before analysis. The responses and discussion themes emerging from individual small-group sessions have subsequently been aggregated and deidentified where necessary for the purposes of this analysis. The full text of the submitted notes is available on page 14 of this report, while a facsimile of the Mindstorm packet distributed during these conversations, including instructions and questions, has also been included (*see: page 4 for more details*).

Because of the free-flowing nature of the hour-long small group discussions which were guided in an intentionally non-rigid manner in order to allow for flexibility, participant choice, and community-based responsiveness in accordance with the model of Intentional Social Interaction, many of the themes emerging during these conversations occur across individual

¹ Two additional community conversations and dinners planned for later in the spring carried forward the original discussion content as detailed in a separate 360 report dedicated to the SPPS Achieves outcomes and findings.

² All participants received the same instructions and discussion questions and were guided to focus on the themes and topics they considered most important to discuss. Transcriptions of the orally reported highlights and key observations from these discussions as summarized by participants during the event can be found on page 11 of this report.

discussion questions and overlap with topics raised by participants. Accordingly, the thematic content of this Mindstorm has been analyzed holistically with care and attention to both the substance and the context of participant discussions, and every attempt made to render topical linkages apparent and to highlight the many instances where themes overlap and participant stories and comments reference previous discussion themes or insights. The key themes emerging across both events have been summarized and outlined below in Table 3.

Table 3. Overview of Key Themes, Community Recommendations from Safe(r) SPPS

“[We need] more support for teachers, more communication on safety procedures and what to do in an emergency. It’s an ongoing process for teachers to know what to expect when emergencies happen.”

Key Theme: Physical safety and security; *resources – importance of tangible investments in security/student and educator/staff safety.*

Highlights:

- **Prevent smoking (vaping) in school bathrooms**, makes students feel unsafe.
- **Reduce unmonitored wandering** in hallways, safety, and supervision for kids in transit between classes, arriving and leaving the school at the beginning and end of school days.
- Lock entrances and exits in school buildings (**secure entry/exit** points).
- **Check bags** upon building entry (for weapons).
- **Mixed attitudes toward and concerns about SROs/cops**, metal detectors (students and people of color expressing more fear/concern/negative encounters with police and SROs, some parents with more positive perceptions).
- Consider **differential distribution of resources among urban and suburban schools** in the county (“Why can’t we have the things from the suburbs here?”).
- **Provide educators, staff and administrators with resources and support for achieving district priorities** including culturally responsive instruction, (“Culturally responsive instruction is important in the district, but teachers aren’t being given the tools right now.”)

Key Theme: Mental, emotional, social health – *requires prioritization, resources, staffing, training, trauma-informed and culturally appropriate approaches.*

Highlights:

- More social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists (of color especially), **concern that existing ratios are not enough** (still resulting in overworked social workers and mental health professionals in the schools).
- Mental health support and **resources not just for students, but also parents (family system as a whole), teachers and other staff members**, support for **elementary and middle school students as well** as high school students.
- **Mindfulness resources and infrastructure in-school** (meditation classes, mindfulness room, etc.), mental health days.
- **Build mental health care practices/learning/skills/support into the curriculum**, especially as students and families are still grappling with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Parents report that **less disruptive students who still need support tend to fall through the cracks** (“skipping class, but being quiet about it – the school is like, is that all?”)
- **Ensure students have a community of trusted adults** and relational resources (including but not limited to teachers, counselors, therapists, parents, etc.).
- **More (and higher quality) support for teachers** in dealing with violence or behavioral issues, communicating about traumatic events, discussing safety and security plans, and directing students and families to available resources.

Key Theme: Community-based resources, opportunities, wrap-around resources; shared responsibility *for safety and security; shared decision-making, perspectives, and power.*

Highlights:

- Shared sense that **safety starts in home/community**, school is an extension of that; **responsibility for safety and security shared by all, unique roles** for government/policymakers, educators/staff, parents and families, students, nonprofits, community members at large, security professionals, **shared responsibility for de-escalation** requires support and training, preparation.
- **Shared decision-making** – should include students, perspectives from family members/staff/educators of color, collaborative, community-engaged processes for safety plan design.
- Interest in seeing SPPS **partner with local nonprofits** to expand resource base and programming, desire for better organized and more widely promoted **volunteering programs for parents, family and community members** to support the school.
- Provision of **more after-school options**, extracurricular opportunities **for students**.

Key Theme: **Culture & Communications**

Highlights:

- **Belonging, inclusion as a safety issue/resource.**
- **Communications as a safety issue/resource** (listening is key; communications should be reciprocal).
- **Parents and students want to be taken seriously by school leadership** and administration when they raise concerns or have questions about student safety, wellbeing, and success.
- **Implement restorative justice** approaches, proactive efforts, move away from punitive focus.
- **Take threats of violence seriously**, seek to protect whole school community (considering what it means to keep students, staff, and teachers safe together).
- Utilize **compassionate child-centered** approach to **managing student behavior, trauma-aware**, take the time to understand and **respond to root causes** of behavioral issues.
- **Treat racism seriously** and work to respond with **sensitivity to power differences** when students experience racism, bullying.
- **More communications with parents and families** about how safety processes are undertaken, how plans are made, how conversations happen in classrooms after an incident of violence in school, what resources are available to students, and just in general about SPPS decision-making, planning and support for safety.
- **Support teachers in having conversations about safety and violence** when incidents do occur, help staff feel equipped for such difficult, vulnerable conversations in the classroom.
- **Make use of high-quality, culturally specific resources**, training and approaches for teachers and administrators, as well as culturally based resources for students and families (including things like providing advanced placement classes on African American history and culture, mental health specialists of color, etc.).

Themes & Analysis: Summary

Key Theme: Physical Safety & Security

Participants of the Safe(r) event discussed what safety means to them, and more specifically, just what security might look like in the context of a shared interest and responsibility for creating safer schools and communities for everyone, grounding comments in their own diverse perspectives and experiences. Significant themes emerging in the qualitative content analysis of the small group discussion notes included considerations on physical safety and security measures, such as securing entrances and exits, scanning bags upon entry, limiting unsupervised time on campus for students, and ensuring safe transit for students – not only between classes, but when arriving and leaving school premises as well. Perhaps unsurprisingly, participants expressed mixed opinions about school resource officers (SROs) and police with most negative encounters or perspectives shared by people of color and students, although some (mostly parents) expressed positive perceptions of police and SROs.

Key Theme: Safety Starts at Home Shared Responsibility, Unique Roles & Resources

Overall, most discussion groups expressed the idea that safety “starts at home” and in the community, viewing school safety as an extension of this community experience. Many discussion groups emphasized a shared sense of responsibility for student safety and felt that everyone does or should have a role in supporting and maintaining safer communities, even if those roles might be distinct and specific – such as policymaking roles for government representatives, parental roles within the home, facilitation and communication roles for SPPS staff and administrators, mental health support roles for therapists, among other examples cited in the discussion notes. Some suggested that there could be a shared responsibility for de-escalating comments (emphasizing the undue burden that often falls upon teachers, who typically aren’t trained for this specialized skill), but also highlighted the need for specialized training and support for the development of de-escalation skills.

In general, discussion groups expressed an interest in being personally involved in school safety efforts, including seeing more and better advertised opportunities to volunteer in support of school safety and security (or toward the expansion of other critical school services), with some recommending partnership with existing nonprofits and community organizations that might be able to enrich the pool of resources available to Saint Paul Public Schools. Participants also indicated interest in collaborative processes for sharing power and community-engaged decision-making, including more opportunities to provide feedback and community perspectives relevant to school safety. Importantly, comments indicate the importance of incorporating the perspectives of family members, students themselves, staff, and educators of color. Other comments on this theme focus on providing more after-school and extracurricular activities for students, and ensuring students have a broad community of trusted adults and relational resources including (but not limited to) teachers, counselors, therapists, parents, et cetera.

Key Theme: Mental Health, Social-Emotional and Therapeutic Resources

This latter point previews another key theme to which participants dedicated significant discussion time and attention – the need for extensive resources, support and attention to mental health and social-emotional support. Participants were particularly concerned with the need for more and higher quality supports for teachers when dealing with violence or behavioral issues, and the importance of ensuring schools employ enough psychologists and psychiatrists (especially of color) to meet each campus’ needs, with several groups expressing concern that existing ratios are not enough, resulting in overworked social workers and mental health professionals in schools. As one group described: “[It feels like we need more] *Mental health coordinators, [there are] counselors in the school but [they mostly] focus on college prep. Only one can offer mental health counseling. More [are skilled] at academic planning.*” Another participant spoke to the data shared by SPPS during the conversation, echoing other groups which evinced similar opinions when commenting that the “*1 to 207 [ratio] is not enough support for mental health.*”

Several response groups recommended investment into mental health resources and infrastructures (like meditation classes, mental health days, or a mindfulness room), with a particular focus on practices, learning, skills and support that can be incorporated into the curriculum itself, and suggested that mental health support and resources ought to be broadly available to the entire SPPS community – not only for students, but also parents (considering the functioning of the family system as an integral whole), teachers and other staff members, especially given the ongoing recovery from the difficulties and strains of pandemic life. Other groups raised questions about the differential availability of resources available to elementary and middle school students or across schools in different parts of the district, directing attention to the need to ensure that “less disruptive” or quieter students still in need of support not be permitted to “fall through the cracks.” Based on submitted comments, discussion groups seem on the whole to be attentive to the extent to which such recommendations depend upon the availability of staff, training, and resources to support such services.

Key Theme(s): Culture & Communications

Two final key themes emerge in the content of the discussion notes, frequently in ways that are linked or related: namely culture and communications. In particular, participants described belonging and inclusion as a safety issue – and a potential resource for producing a feeling of safety in schools and in one’s community more broadly, helping to cope with traumatic incidents if and when they occur. Comments on this theme urged the implementation of restorative justice approaches and a move away from more punitive styles of behavioral management with some raising questions about what specifically this might look like in Saint Paul Public Schools and others pointing toward the protective capacities of utilizing a compassionate, child-centered approach to managing student behavior or highlighting the value of trauma-aware frameworks and taking the time to understand and respond to the root causes of behavioral issues. Several discussion groups suggested making use of high quality, culturally specific and appropriate resources, training, and approaches, as well as culturally based resources for students and families (including things like providing advanced placement classes on African American history and culture, mental health specialists of color, etc.).

Comments on this theme also stressed the importance of proactive efforts and communications, highlighting the need to take threats of violence seriously and to seek to protect the whole school community, considering what it means to keep students, teachers, and other staff safe together. Participants discussed the importance of treating racism seriously and working to respond with sensitivity to power differences in instances where students may have encountered or experienced racism or bullying from an authority figure, with many discussions highlighting the need to support teachers better and more comprehensively. In particular, discussions on this theme suggest the urgency and importance of supporting teachers in having conversations about safety and violence, especially when incidents occur to help staff feel sufficiently equipped for what are sometimes difficult or vulnerable conversations in the classroom. Parents and teachers (and parents who were also teachers or other staff members) stressed in common their desire for their students to feel comfortable and supported in having open conversations about safety and school violence in their classrooms and communities more broadly, underscoring the significance of communication in building safer schools and

environments for learning and growing. An illustrative example of one groups' discussion of this topic was captured by the group's scribe in the following exchange:

Parent/staff member: *School is a microcosm of what's happening outside. Teachers should help students identify their feelings and understand how to express/describe how they feel.*

As a teacher, the kids know they can trust me. I can't stop the violence and guns, but the kids know that they have someone to go to.

Staff member: *As much as I have felt empowered to have conversations with students, I know many teachers don't feel safe and don't feel comfortable having those conversations.*

Parent: *After Harding it didn't come up at [my] kids' schools. The seventh-grade teacher said they weren't going to have that conversation.*

Staff member: *My question is why those conversations didn't happen. I want my kids to have the opportunity to have those conversations with their community.*

Staff member: *We need our staff to be skilled at handling these conversations.*

In general, the importance of communication was stressed throughout the Mindstorm small group discussions and positioned as a safety issue and resource for schools, families, and students. Comments from the notes make apparent the value of regular, clear, timely, accessible and ongoing communications between the schools, students and parents or guardians, with some adding that listening is a key element of good communications, and that the relationship should be a reciprocal one. Parents and students shared their desire to be taken seriously by school leadership and administration when they raise concerns or have questions about student safety, wellbeing, and success, and expressed particular interest in knowing more about what safety procedures were in place and how they are developed, how plans and decisions about safety are made and by whom, how conversations happen in classrooms after an incident of violence occurs in school. Similar comments expressed interest in knowing what resources are currently available to students and families, and in general, how SPPS approaches decision-making, planning and support for safety.

Conclusion(s), Opportunities for Intervention:

Taken together, these comments suggest that participants shared a sense of responsibility for safety and security, recognizing different roles for different people and organizations in the community. Many expressed the value of deeply engaged relationships with community-school safety, including volunteering opportunities, nonprofit collaborations with the schools, ongoing reciprocal communications, and hands-on parenting or supportive community-based relationships and programs for students. Importantly, several groups expressed confidence that SPPS staff and teachers care about their students and the SPPS community, working hard to create safe and effective learning environments, though most also recognized the challenges posed by limited resources and time. This suggests that participants largely see themselves as an active or potential resource for contributing to the safety and security of students, schools, and the community of Saint Paul more broadly and in ongoing relationship with other nodes in the safety network.



Safe(r) Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)
Community Conversation & Dinner
30 March 2023

Mindstorm: Oral Report Notes

About These Notes

The below notes were taken by members of our research team during the oral report-out from the Mindstorm small-group focused conversations during the Safe(r) SPPS event hosted at Washington Tech Magnet School on March 30, 2023. During this activity, participating discussion groups nominate a representative from their table to share with the larger group a few key themes emerging from their conversations. Groups have been numbered according to the order in which they presented.

Group 1: Our table agreed on three models, space for conversations, breaking stigma

Group 2: More support for teachers, more communication on safety procedures and what to do in an emergency. It's an ongoing process for teachers to know what to expect when emergencies happen.

Group 3: Safety procedures, so many people have ideas, we need to take action, not just listen, we need to take it and act.

Group 4: Take time to build relationships with your students to respect you like how you want to be respected.

Group 5: We talked about having a sense of community and welcoming school culture and everyone looking out for everyone.

Group 6: We wanted to identify the needs of our students, smaller classes, therapy during schools, and more support.

Group 7: I believe it all starts with money, they should put more money into schools so that they can have more guidance counselors that are qualified.

Group 8: We talked about feeling like we need to stop sending students away from schools, keep them grounded, we need to have clear communication with students that need to be sent to different schools because of their difficulties.

Group 9: The issue we discussed was bullying and racism, teachers being disrespectful towards students. We want staff to take more action when the problem is brought to them. A lot of

things are said through social media, it's really only there for 24 hours, it's already known, and if you take proof, and more harm is done.

Group 10: We talked about more support around mental health, more support for students, more support for teachers, all of us are responsible for safety.

Group 11: support more hiring practices, so staff reflect the student populations.

Group 12: We talked a lot about bringing table to families, rather than having families come to the table constantly.

Group 13: We do have a few things, with different alumni, these issues continue to exist, it existed before, the missing voices are researchers, if we want solutions, please listen to students, listen to researchers, that will continue to be sustainable, these alumni want to continue to bring their kids to SPPS.

Group 14: One thing I noticed, you see the problem, you just make excuses for yourself and that doesn't help.

Group 15: We discussed to hire more mental health support, more school counselors, intervention specialists that can speak our language and communicate with our family, so that our family can work with the school, so the school can collaborate with our community. We grew up in collective based community.

Group 16: Bringing support to the home and to families, making sure we aren't just supporting students, but also supporting families. Putting resources into making sure families are healthy, so students aren't just safe at school, but at home.

Group 17: Proactive programming, not just reactive. To practice drills, not just to promote fear culture, but also facilitate conversations like this.

Group 18: Having trusted adults in school, so that students can talk to them, protect them from bullying, retaliation, having those outlets and opportunities.

Group 19: We also talked about incorporating mental health, but also SEL – social emotional learning, incorporate into classes so it can be normalized.

Group 20: More student led groups, at Washington, we have ROTC, I feel very comfortable in that group, and other schools should have that.

Group 21: As a teacher, I value talk and discussion. The power of a good conversation, we can make a commitment, as teachers, educators, parents to pursue these conversations, normalize in our homes, to walk towards each other, not past each other.

Group 22: Our conversation, to recognize that individuals we are different, we can work together to build a better sense of community. Not only to teach students, but to socialize students.

Group 23: We talked about who's responsibility for safety, collectively, it takes students, parents, staff, it takes us all to ensure safety.

Group 24: We talked about more therapy in schools for students and teachers, fire alarms on side doors. We talked about classroom climate and having an inclusive approach to education.

Group 25: More ISS rooms, what's going on, how can we support them, how can we assist them. Everyone has something going on, reaching out to students, how can we help you.

Group 26: We talked about building a strong foundation, when we're in elementary school, we're told to take breaks, to be in our own place...

Group 27: We talked about communication, about the importance of outreach, transparency. Making sure that the communication is in all the major languages.

Group 28: We talked about social emotional learning and a little everything. We talked about how schools deal with depression, we need more social workers, to help kids with issues with depression. How to deal with the safety of schools with guns.

Mindstorm Notes | Raw Aggregate – SPPS Safe(r)

Please note: While the small group discussion notes in this document have been organized by discussion question, ordered by date of the virtual events (bolded in the texts) and separated by discussion group (indicated by the following symbol: ***), not all groups submitted notes in response to every question. Additionally, some groups submitted notes that were not organized by question, but by theme. Where possible, such notes including clear responses to particular questions in the discussion notes have been reorganized under the relevant question and date. Where the conversation notes submitted appear to be too general or too broad to be broken out according to the Mindstorm questions, they have been included under the final section of this Mindstorm which allows participants to propose their own questions and/or organizational structure for their conversations. Personal stories appear often in the text of the notes and have generally been included here in the section under which they were submitted in order to avoid separating such comments from the context of the conversation in which they occurred, including in cases where themes overlap and/or the discussion in fact addresses several questions posed in the Mindstorm discussion guides.

Question 1: Building a Safer Community: Is there anything that makes you feel safe (in school or as a member of the SPPS community)? Is there anything that makes you feel unsafe? If so, please comment it. If you feel or have felt unsafe (at times, or in general), is there anything that could make you feel safer? Who should be responsible for ensuring that students feel safe in schools? Do you feel that you have a role in helping schools to be (or to feel) safer? If so, what is that role? Who should be involved in helping to make that change?

Translated from the original Spanish:

- There is fear for the children. It doesn't feel safe because of the lack of security personnel. Knowing that there is access to weapons. I would feel safer if there was training available for parents and the community. Create spaces where there is clear communication on how to act in case of an emergency for ALL the school community. It makes me feel safer that this has not happened in Minnesota. To have a weapon detection system. Everyone is responsible for school safety.
- If the school assigned a role to each one of us, we would accept it for the sake of the children's safety. THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE OF COLOR during the decision making.
- My experience as a parent is that I feel that the school is inclusive; however.

.....

Translated from the original Spanish:

- To make a division such as how many people are in the community and the schools. Like teachers or people that work, and the students, and then by age you make groups and separate the groups Latino, Hmong, Somali and other, and then you create a moment of silence for the people that have passed.
- A safe community. We are afraid, not because of the violence, of having a person that brings a gun. Training for parents and teachers and staff. Communication in the home and in the school in [illegible] in the home and to have a weapons detector in the school, and that all parents and teachers watch the school entrance. The voice of

parents is a requirement. There is a language challenge for Latino parents and for that reason there is no information and are not at school and do not know how to help their children.

.....

Translated from the original Karen:

- Some schools are safe, but I feel that some schools are not safe. We need more security for the students inside and outside the school environment.
- Students are fighting, they bring weapons to school, but school staff don't take the proper action with them. That is why the students often violate the rules.
- Teachers don't get enough support when students are disobeying the rules. Students use drugs and sell drugs in school, and the principle and staff don't take the proper effective action.
- Students don't pay attention and show respect to school staff because there are no police on duty at the school.
- School should hire police officers for the school's security.

-
- Understanding who each kid is
 - Teachers/staff understand needs of each child and make feel welcome (special ed, other needs, etc.)
 - Elementary school felt like everyone knew each other and felt really safe.
 - Relying on middle schooler to let them know how things are going.
 - Middle school feels harder to know what is happening. Rely on snapchats and other middle schoolers to know, not always clear.
 - More communication, not always informed when holds in place occur, etc.
 - Hubbs Center programming – feels safe.
 - Cell phone policy needs to be clear and followed with strict consequences.
 - Hallways can be very chaotic, can create a very chaotic atmosphere and unsafe environment.
 - Smaller classrooms help.
 - Missing: during class time, too many students in hallway.
 - If teacher calls for support, may wait too long for support to come – seen at Harding.
 - If more support given, what does that mean for budget?
 - What does that mean for funding from legislature?
 - Makes feel safer: Being able to visit and be in the school. Getting to know a child's classmates.
 - Having more reasons and ways that parents are invited to be at school.
 - Safer: parents knowing each other and connecting with each other.

-
- Having staff that are specially trained to know what to do in an emergency. Trained staff.
 - Doesn't believe anyone at the school would do something dangerous. Off-campus issues. Socially it is safe. Thinks [it is] outside people coming in [who represent the danger], External threats.

- No security or police at Hopkins.
- Others have posted threats on social media.
- Anxiety feelings when this happens.
- Middle and HS are close. They would both be in trouble if something happened.
- Administration should be responsible for safety. The city also needs to step in.
- Lots of rallies and protests to get more protection. Not mentioned or mentioned only once.
- Students should have a role because they have experienced it. The government should listen to them.
- School shootings will keep happening. Makes you think who will be next? You turn on [the] TV and see kids your age or younger dying.
- They have lockdown drills and kids panic because it creates lots of anxiety. Impacts you more than you talk at.
- Pressure government and school admin to get the school safer and make investments in safety.
- Works at hospital also affected by violence. Shoots and violence happens there. ER happens a lot. Do your best – confront people and keep showing up to work.

-
- Safe:
 - Parent pick up systems w/same staff, consistent.
 - Procedures in school for being buzzed.
 - Unsafe:
 - Doors propped open or not closing all the way, no one monitoring exits and entrances.
 - Playgrounds not fenced in and community by apartments/high rising [sic]
 - Lack of transparency w/ lockouts/lockdowns/weapons
 - What can we do to make us feel safer?
 - Accountability and bottom line for weapons, etc.
 - Transparency and communication when incidents occur.
 - Student accountability starting young.
 - What do we need?
 - Another adult when it's tricky
 - Unsafe: [from a] student perspective
 - A lot of missing resources and struggles for students post-covid, more fights.

-
- All doors locked at all times would make me safer
 - More support around mental health
 - More yes (adults) on students
 - More support for teachers
 - All of us are responsible for safety
 - Too many fights in school make me feel unsafe
 - Silos of communication across administration, schools, and parents, and resources
 - Metal detectors or checking bags at the door to ensure no weapons

- One entrance for all to come in – you have to be buzzed in
- There needs to be more access for everyone to access
- Each school community should have the ability to decide (from students, parents, leadership), an equitable school safety plan
- Fear of top-down approach from the administration – principals that say what is happening are singled out

-
- Metal detectors
 - Ball games, like prison?
 - Student IDs – enter school – not for entrance
 - Already has a button to push for picture, what does that do?
 - They have it at: [thought not continued]
 - More data around positive effects on how police officers are in schools
 - How are teachers or staff protected from students who are abusive or gets [sic] into fights?
 - How can we be sure that teachers can prevent violence in school?
 - Kids who are on the spectrum
 - Bathroom monitors
 - Police officers
 - Parents should be more accountable for their children's actions
 - What are the resources for parents when it comes to kids who are violent or going through things at home?
 - Parents who is [sic] aware and care about children who needs more counseling or individual group, regular therapy
 - Are there cameras everywhere in the schools?
 - In classrooms, hallways: To know what actually is happening when something goes on
 - Restorative justice? If it's in school, what does it look like?
 - Less students to teacher/school
 - The ratio, class size
 - Bathroom Stalls at Hidden River is [sic] too low

-
- Safe
 - Parent said she feels safer when students have an ID to buzz in
 - Students building trusting relationships with an adult
 - Students building trusting relationships with an adult without repercussions
 - Unsafe
 - Parent said issues existed 20 years ago when she went to Central High School

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- Safe: Locking doors, feels safe in community, learns about schools, children's safety, concerned, choosing high schools based on which is safer.

- How do you know which schools are safer? Friends, media, open house, talking to staff, rapport with my student and programs in place.
- Structure, way admin was involved and cared, communicated with the families at open house.
- Immersion programs pretty safe
- Kids 5 + 4, don't have answers, work in university, in student health. Gun safety expert at Hamline, guns don't make us safe. Data person.
- 9th grader feels safe, there are fights, awareness of kids in the hall, sister is HS teacher and doesn't feel supported by admin when students are sent to office and come back in an hour, kids don't listen and talk back when in the halls. Need policies and consequences consistent for the kids.
- Teachers afraid to confront the students, can't take the phones away, no policy, how do you enforce that?
- See the media and you feel scared to react.
- Mom is a para, gives advice and things we can do as parents to advocate and do what they should at school
- Kids on spectrum, can be stressful and hard, strong mom, fear reactions of other people, how they will react
- Teach kids you can't control other people, can only control yourself, don't go in wrong place at wrong time
- Daughter graduated in 2015, don't let someone else get you in trouble
- Grandson at other HS has IEP, he knows if you don't do it at home, don't do it outside of home. He doesn't care/nonchalant about if he feels safe, principal and teachers say he's a good kid. I question teachers, they have safety precautions. You go to school to learn, don't use profane language at school, he doesn't show fear. Autism makes his frame of thinking different. He was moved out of the classroom and asked why.
- Partner is a teacher, says if they try to move to a student to a different school, teachers don't know why or what they are coming in with
- Separate them out hoping they can solve the confrontation and resolve the problem, doesn't always work. Could who got in trouble all the time, knew the problem was with hi bullying fought and now they're best friends. Bully didn't feel loved at home and was jealous of my child who always got a hug from grandma, I started hugging all of them. A lot of kids begging for attention, don't know love. Broke through to a few kids, take kids for a walk and others followed.
- You create a community where they feel seen and heard, can't solve this problem if you don't talk to me, problem solve with the teacher.

-
- Feel safe: staff (some teachers) let you speak and they listen, keeps secret, teacher controls a lot
 - Unsafe: some threaten my school, admin don't take it serious, social media ignored...starts their [trails off]
 - Safe: staff was family: professional hired community members that cared.
 - Unsafe: teachers with tenure is a problem, can't fire them. The holding is unsafe. No exit Highland. No third-floor exit. No drills, fire, tornado. Bullying, racism, disrespectful, don't listen, talk down to you, teachers ignore more bullying.

- Tim Hayes...are you really going to college
- War between kids versus teacher...respect is not going both ways.
- Mr. Mack, Twin Cities Academy (pedophile)
- Behavioral specialist listens....looks like them
- Teachers take things personal, teachers expect children of color to be bad.
- Behavior specialist (Highland) can't fit you in....mediation happens, don't work [sic]
- Don't offer help
- Unclear mind and think you're dumb...look down on you!! Multiple times.
- Racism
- Bullying: 2 kids committed suicide (teacher passed)

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- Safety = ongoing lockdown drills, need practice
 - Bathrooms don't feel safe because of vaping
 - Instances of weapons being brought into the schools
 - Issues with public transportation spill over into school
 - Bus driver shortage – what can we do?
 - Security staff presence makes students feel safe
 - Locked doors and cameras at the front
 - Student fidgets in bathrooms and hallways
 - Parent issues/stability of families/parent mental health
 - As a parent, district feels too big to be [illegible] can feel helpless
 - Support staff should be visible in hallways
 - Students should not be allowed to roam hallways
 - During class time, how viable is escorting all kids?
 - Who is involved?
 - Admin, staff, parents, community, students, custodians
 - Need to understand how decisions are made
 - Would greater principal autonomy lead to creativity?
 - Must come with accountability
 - Need to have new engagement around SROs
 - More surveys/input – parents, staff, students

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- Sense of community and welcoming school culture
 - Students feel seen/heard
 - Everyone looking out for everyone
 - Feeling safe – school good at
 - Taking precaution, making students feel extra safe
 - Schools are [illegible] welcoming, inclusive, respectful
 - As parents, when we recognize our power to get organized and move things forward and work with community, we can make change happen
 - Easy to make things someone else's job, but it's our job
 - Staff/admin's job is to educate
 - It's our collective responsibility

- It's everyone's job
- Every child fully known and welcomed – and whatever can help with that
- Who's responsible and who is involved:
 - Partnership – students
 - Parents, staff, admin
 - Center on children
 - Focus on relationships
 - Mentoring
 - Was [illegible] – feet, teachers knew and helped me see them as people as they saw me
 - Relationships come in many forms and [illegible]
 - Foundation of helping kids be successful, regarding adults' "official" voice
 - It's responsibility of all of us
 - Gun violence and failures of "the government" to protect us and take actions needed
 - We've had so many conversations over the years about violence and discussions, input to have skilled people in schools to help deescalate
- [illegible]
 - One main entrance and exit controlled access – creates some comfort and protection from [illegible]
 - More social workers, psychologist, and help all learn how to see the warning signs
 - Welcoming everyone into the spaces
 - Much more voluntarism in all schools – it's truly transformative
 - Better organized and promoted volunteer structures that welcome and encourage volunteers
 - Encourage volunteerism to help kids feel safer so they can learn
- Feeling unsafe
 - Hearing about violence and tragedies in the news doesn't involve me as an adult feeling unsafe, but I know it affects my children and grandchildren, plus I realize it could be them

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- Locked doors
 - SROs – understand students but not calling 911
 - Parents need to be notified right away – and parents should be held responsible and know if their kids are bringing weapons to school – be sure parents know who they can talk to at school if they are concerned about their kid
 - If violence is part of home life, how can it be clear to parents that it's not okay or tolerated at school
 - Parent – I think kids who are "bad" are often known among groups and need (unfortunately) to be singled out for counseling and not stigma
-

- The teachers and school stuff
-

- Police feels “unsafe”/school staff, teachers – trauma with school officers
- Guns/violence unsafe
- Weapons/unsafe
- Safety
 - Weapon/I can protect myself
 - My son can sneak up for himself
 - My son can communicate to me
- Responsibility
 - Teachers
 - Support staff
 - Community
 - All school staff
 - Caring adults
 - Community leaders
 - Elders
 - Church
 - Nonprofits
- My roles
 - Make sure my kids are safe
 - Bringing in resources
 - Volunteer
 - Work in schools

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- One thing table thinks should be done to make SPPS safer
 - Peer support groups
 - NJROTC feels like family about 100 students
 - Student-led program
 - Money – metal detectors
 - Low cost – student led peer groups, ex. NJROTC
 - Unsafe/safe – security guards catch 22
 - Police cameras double edged
 - Security guards friendly with bad kids, gives them privilege
 - Teachers give bad kids more attention
 - More adults?

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- (1: makes you feel safe): Secure entrances, badge to get in, everyone communicating – engagement plan for an emergency, plans practiced
 - (2: makes you feel unsafe): Read on Twitter and [received] msg [message/s] from students – but no SPPs communications
 - Catalytic converter stolen at school while someone watched on security camera
 - Hearing about fights, students verbally attack teacher
 - Students strolling hall during class
 - (3: responsibility): Everyone – other students, parents, community

- (4: Your role?): Yes, we are involved
 - As parent, set expectations – reporting if uncomfortable
 - As educator, create a safe space
 - Develop relationships at home – adequate support staff, and students – counseling not enough
 - Social media content should / start ourselves, not degrade, put down school
 - As parent, community have a way to communicate thoughts to admin

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- Irreducible Grace
 - Love First
 - Glow up conference
-

- Curious about Tier I strategies in classrooms? Should be able to see some in the equity report.
- Parents concern[ed] for what is happening to support students of color in diploma classes, only a few students of color are in diploma program.
- Frustration for students of color feeling alone in IB program; not feeling like anyone could identify with her. What strategies are being used/school practices are being done?
- School-based approaches. Instructional mental health. Culturally responsive instruction is important in the district but teachers aren't being given the tools right now.
- Grandparent brought in community member who was accused of being racist and fired from her job at an SPPS school.
- Parents are sharing [what] they feel, and then students are feeling they're not liked. Teachers need to like and love their students.
- Structural processes need to be put in place for equity training
- Teachers from outside of city have back[ed] off investment in our kids
- Equity teams of each school is a recommendation from a parent/teacher from another district, the school equity teams were very effective

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- Parent – kids say they don't feel safe outside of building (Como Senior & Central)
 - Parents/staff – there's safety in seeing people that look like you.
 - There's an affinity group where my daughter can talk about being Hmong girl.
 - Intermingling of the middle school and high school (OWL and high school) make it feel unsafe.
 - Parent – there seems to be a lot of rumors and things that aren't communicated well to the parents
 - Parents/staff – want to foster trust with adults at the school – tell student to tell an adult if it feel unsafe. Then it's on the adult to act.
 - Staff hoping there would have been a space for students and families to talk after shooting at Jimmy Lee. We need to encourage each other to talk. It's okay to talk about. We need to be okay with each other's feelings and have brave and courageous conversations.

- Parent – every week there is a different shooting – we’re not handling it better than when I was young.
- Parent – it’s not just high schools. It felt like principals weren’t given any info to share with elementary families
- It would make me feel safe to know that these conversations are happening with students
- Parent – it’s beyond the classroom. Kids need to be safe in the hallways, getting to class when kids are let out of school.
- Parent – a friend of my student at Como had their expensive shoes stolen and was held at gun point. Nobody was hurt but that still affects students.
- Parent/staff – school is a microcosm of what’s happening outside. Teachers should help students identify their feelings and understand how to express/describe how they feel.
- As a teacher, the kids know they can trust me. I can’t stop the violence and guns, but the kids know that they have someone to go to.
- Staff – As much as I have felt empowered to have conversations with students, I know many teachers don’t feel safe and don’t feel comfortable having those conversations.
- Parent – after Harding it didn’t come up at her kids’ schools. The seventh-grade teacher said they weren’t going to have that conversation.
- Staff – my question is why those conversations didn’t happen. I want my kids to have the opportunity to have those conversations with their community.
- Staff – we need our staff to be skilled at handling these conversations.
- More restorative practices. Nokomis was a [pibt?] school and there used to be a coordinator on site; it can help to have conversations even before issues happen.

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- I: Appreciate when schools and community communicate with families, would like more information – communicate with community partners, families to help know when to talk
 - H: Glad SPPS is addressing. Supposedly urban kids [are] “resilient” and [require] no assistance. Kids [are] going numb from trauma – kids defining lockdown – brought [me] to tears, but [it is] good to see the teachers taught how to be safe. Sad, but good to have accountability for safety.
 - T: Agree. Support for MH – for my adult kids – they didn’t have that support. Bad gang violence, no counselor support. Thinking of current MJH student – better checking in with kids, but social-medical trauma, PTSD, news shooting, fights – if you can’t stop kids getting beat up, how can [you] stop shooters? Like support, want culturally-relevant supports – can relate to my child, shared lived experience. SROs – if they can’t stop fight, how to resp.?
 - C: Response: what’s available. Just punitive is not good. How can we implement protective factors. How to ID and prevent?
 - I: Not losing out on educational opportunities
 - C: Relationships, connections, homeschool, outside partner, work at survival
 - H: Used to be after school was the safe place, now can be a traumatic response, and if parents haven’t had help on their own trauma, they don’t respond
 - T: Having a mental health day is okay – not every week or month but when they are healing us, they need a break – in-school solutions like mindfulness room works

wonders. But who gets access to the classrooms, etc.? Would like more info on the process.

- I: I'm a SAHM (stay-at-home mom) [in the] suburbs. Married husband, wanted St. Pal Working at Fam. Eng. Connecting with businesses re: donations for schools, food for events. Came easy to me. My kids would tell me – and the anxiety. I'm dealing with this too. I have trauma from having refugee parents. Kids behavior – telling mom about things going on at school that do not happen at home. Son wanted to be among other Hmong kids, went [to] Harding – more opportunities for Hmong students, but going from small to large [school]. Told principal and she didn't take [it] seriously, [simply saying] "you have to trust us." Harding didn't want me. Elementary and middle school = welcoming. High school [is] not. Why can't we have the things from the suburbs here? I tutor. Kids can't even read.
- H: Kids fall through cracks – skipping class but being quiet about it – the school is like, is that all?
- M: I never got replies to my emails – seeing that nothing changed, "it's the pandemic"

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- Wide gaps of feelings
 - Perspective
 - Beliefs in police in school versus community policing
 - Don't feel safe with [illegible] policing model
 - Feel safe when people reflect people
 - Good communication
 - [illegible] at elementary, support

-
- We need to listen more to students – how they feel, what they need from adults
 - Many shooters have digital footprints...
 - How can we plug into that and monitor as a proactive measure?
 - Having cyber security experts on staff to monitor social media

Question 2: Are there any mental health, social-emotional or counseling resources at SPPS that you particularly value? Are there ones that don't exist that you'd like to see more of? What are they? Are there particular mental health and safety resources you want or need for supporting students in particular? For teachers, staff, and administrators? For families and parents? Are there things you would prioritize in order to feel safer in Saint Paul Public Schools?

Translated from the original Spanish:

- More staff is required to support mental health in the schools, not only for the students but also for the parents. There is not enough trained staff in the schools to address topics such as abuse and discrimination. There should be more follow-up of individual

cases. More resources are required to support mental health. Many families don't have the resources to pay for psychologists or mental health professionals.

- Bullying is very frequent towards the kids from the Latino community.
- To find or escalate the follow-up processes of the students who are physically or mentally aggressive.
- Avoid isolating students with mental health and socialization problems and train the community to develop social and emotional skills in the community.
- The need for financial investment in mental health in schools is clear.
- To resort to entities or international personnel.

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- To seek help and to know which children are mentally ill.
 - The schools should have help for children with mental health and have more people in each classroom in the school.
 - More so with the children, the children of color, and those who are bullied. To include the child with mental health with the teachers and have them work with them little by little so they don't commit crimes and don't feel useless if they need support as a student.
 - E-mail and the teacher should do a follow-up to be able to solve the problem and not allow a child to be violent and something happens at his home for that reason and to know how to resolve this situation.

Translated from the original Karen:

- We need more counselors and social workers to help students and teachers.
- Hire more counselors and social workers that are the same ethnicity/race as students.
- Hire more intervention specialists that are the same ethnicity/race as students.

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- Hiring more mental health professionals: counselors, social workers.
 - Aligned to serve student population (language, culture, etc.).
 - Supporting more hiring practices that attract and retain educators and professionals of color.
 - Students relate to those with whom they can identify!

-
- Have meetings to talk about feelings.
 - Mental health coordinators, [there are] counselors in the school but focus on college prep. Only one can offer mental health counseling. More at academic planning.
 - [There is a] stigma [about seeking mental health support] – [that] something [is] wrong with you. Everyone wants to fit in. Talking to someone would benefit almost all students. They all need someone.
 - SW, counselors, and therapists, but hard to trust. They kind of help, but it is hard. They advocate for students. Will call parents, so overstepping boundaries.

- One counselor helps but she is taking on a lot. Know her, so that is a benefit. Not talking to a stranger.
- Extent of support is you go in, talk and then go back to class. She checks on you later. Find[s] you in the hallway, follows up.
- Went to counselor because of stressed due to tests. Didn't check-in, just left it there and sent it back to class.

- Teachers are not supported and are not given the resources they need.
- School psych and two counselors – there should be more.
- 1 to 207 [ratio] is not enough support for mental health.
- Relationship classes.
- Offer more classes and normalize depression and mental health and anxiety.
- Posters about depression are not enough.
- More diversity and inclusion and belonging training and understanding – more understanding of belonging.

- More resources for parents, students, teachers
- Support groups

- Special ed and neurodivergent students need more resources to support with SEL [social emotional learning] and mental health.
- Stop suspending kids – keep kids in classrooms!
- Need to lower ratios of social workers/counselors to students.

- Work in MPS, trauma systems theory program offers culturally relevant space to get together and talk about new way of life in MN.
- Students may look like they are having bad behavior, but that can be a way of surviving when they are at home. Working parents who need that extra support because they are in survival state.
- Younger ages not enough support for all the needs, has to start young, it's too late by the time they get to high school.
- There is a shortage, trying to recruit social workers/autism, mental health, training to help instructors with ASD, ADHD, recruiting for more teachers of color to close the gap.
- Trauma informed care, not what's wrong with you but what's happened to you, passing along troublemakers instead of helping them.
- Every element has at least one counselor, HS have more, plus school-based psychologists to offer services during the school day.
- Johnson has less issues at dismissal, doing more communicating with them, has to be really bad to dismiss them see some difference from last year.

- Yes, try, don't work
- Bullying, mental health
- Ganga are a false illusion – have your back
- Kids' anger, frustration, fear
- No person I can relate to
- Want Black history!!! Curriculum boring.
- Equity meeting – Highland
- Do you feel represented at Highland?? No, no, no.
- No African American Teachers
 - We don't know where WE come from...
- AP class for African American, ethnic studies, new class – about the demographics of the students

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- Value
 - What teachers were striking about
 - Students aren't oriented towards achievement
 - School social workers are good but are they universal?
 - MN ratio of counselors to students worst in nation
 - [Illegible] in High schools are fantastic! (MNCC)
 - How do we communicate this?
 - Multilingual outreach
 - Restorative practices cannot 'solve' a child in trauma
 - RP is a great idea on paper
 - Kids may need significant mental health supports

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- Kids hear real social workers – are protecting kids by connecting them to resources, they need legit social workers
 - Help them find food, therapy, food shelter – home problems
 - Social worker – like a first responder and they can get them resources
 - Students know to 'snitch' on anyone who may have a weapon or make a threat – should never be at school, sometimes can be just over a fight about something minor
 - Making therapy and counseling more common so less shame is attached to "bad" behaviors

-
- More social workers

-
- There needs to be more culturally appropriate response to mental health for example if kids experience racism from staff and may not be able to articulate, mental health support for dealing with racism
 - Cultural wellness

- Having access to Dr. Ray is a value – many people like him
- More social workers of color

-
- SSW there to help and listen
 - Boy suspended – teachers checkup
 - Physical – nurse asked if I needed mental health
 - Safety: more cameras, bathroom stinks (vaping)
 - January popped up out of nowhere
 - Students w/weapons - ~50% have weapons
 - Metal detectors (want here)
 - Pocket knife, mace (brought in)
 - I student brought knife and teacher didn't believe
 - Like that we have therapy and social workers
 - NJROTC
 - Affinity groups for students
 - BSU, a lot of groups for diff. ethnicities
 - Some groups during advisory so everyone can attend

-
- At Farnsworth Upper, my son's counselor stays with him from grade-to-grade. She is great and they have developed a relationship.
 - We need staff who has time to develop relationships with kids and build trust/communication.

-
- I: If you want to see change, you have to increase pay and support. Too much work, too little pay, understaffed – principal doing phones and attendance. Sp. Ed. para – kids missing out. Parents should see the district. The people at the buildings care and want to support. Ratio showed earlier is ridiculous.
 - C: I:207 – how much can work with this ratio?
 - I: Elementary kids missed out on key SEL development so they can't do academic progress. Need a lot more support, more staff, more pay, more benefits. Appreciate the staff who care.
 - C: Agency/risk eval/assessment, how can schools create support teams so prevent kids going down wrong path. Winter what that looks like district/bldg.? Consistent approach across building – hopefully lower kids falling through the cracks. Getting MH provides in schools is also an uphill battle.
 - H: Common to see parents working at schools when I was a kid. Hall monitors, maintenance lived in community. Why can we pay for educated people to get training and not community members.
 - T: COVID outsourcing to bring in resources to bring kids back – MH, bullying, I think that should be commonplace – if building does not have the staff, contract. But requirements like background checks can exclude people who could make a big difference – but are not able to. Bigger open door to a second chance. Example: Charter: PO at front desk, but security staff = community people – parents. Provide RP

circles, mediating. PO only gets involved in extreme. Also making sure they are trained – pay them – they are investing in schools lets invest in them.

- H: That's what it was like when I grew up. Accountability to community. I don't know how we got so far away from community. MH – last child was teaching me breathing! De-escalation! MH Should be built into the curriculum. COVID – families fell apart, then kids alone, then going back – need supports. Feeling stressed? Wanna talk about it? How can we have this.
- C: When it's worked in and normalized, routine, muscle memory, then kids help each other.
- H: 30 kids [illegible] what we get in
- C: How's it happening.

-
- Mental health is a social network opportunity. Addressing it directly with students only, needs to be broader.
 - Starts at home, schools can only do so much if [illegible] and community feel unsafe, it's hard to create the right [illegible] at school

Question 3: Seeking & Sharing Support: If you needed support because you or your student(s) felt unsafe, what kind of resources would you like to have available? Is there someone you trust that you'd want yourself or your student to be able to talk to? If so, who is that person? What kind of help would you like? If you had done something that made someone else feel unsafe (as a student, parent, teacher or community member), how would you want to be treated? What consequences (or other response) would you expect? How would you want the conflict to be resolved?

Translated from the original Spanish:

- The essential resource is time and follow-up. Parents, teachers, and children require more space for dialog to be able to resolve conflicts. The consequences of acts of aggression are sometimes very minor, indicating that it is possible to harass others without serious consequences.
- It is not enough to train children to deal with violence; it is necessary to educate children about empathy and respect for others, their life, and their individuality.

-
- Warning on who they are. Would have a quick alarm for police to return. Bulletproof windows. Police outside of the schools. Community resource. Police. Bulletproof window. Check backpacks and hire more people in the schools and police. Self-defense.
-

Translated from the original Karen:

- We need school staff specializing in social and psychological and whom we can trust.
- We need Karen staff in every school to work with Karen students.

- If there is a conflict between students that can't be solved by the school officials, the school should contact community leaders and religious leaders to help solve the problems.
- The school personnel should solve the problems in a way where everyone feels the solution is fair and just.

-
- Wellness Center – quiet space you can go and sit in. Can only go for ten minutes. This is because students abuse it. Need to go for longer. A space to work quietly. Classroom can be loud and too stimulating.
 - Students need to feel secure. For those who have trauma having police at might help feel safer. But then there are issues with the police. Not safe with them and not safe without them. Stuck out there on your own.
 - Need to be physically safe before [one] can be mentally safe.
 - Legislation needs to start listening to youth. Not heard because young. The youth do have experiences different than adults, do have experience. Too many old white men. Out of touch with experiences of youth today.
 - Three warnings then expelled. Three suspensions. The coach to the discipline staff. He gives out the warnings. It seems fair. For some they need more strikes. The students are told about the consequences. Expelled for grades. Academic probation. Skipping classes. Another student says 2/3 fight rule. Recommended for expulsion.
 - Need to investigate more. If you are [a] victim, then it is still a strike against you. [They] don't investigate.
 - Drugs in school and they don't do anything. No strike for drugs unless caught red-handed. Lots of vaping. In the bathroom. Vaping in the other school. Hold breath so water vapor dissolves. Probation for vaping. Lots of athletes have strict rules for drugs; could get kicked off the team. Bathroom is the only place without the camera.
 - One school had knives, no guns. One student showed the knife to another student and made threat. Would get in trouble for pepper spray.
 - Private school costs money so not going to mess it up. Scholarships, they don't want to leave. Core is academics. Harsh penalty for things.
 - Three kids selling/buying weed. Were expelled immediately.
 - School is good at telling you what you do right.
 - Activities: theater/choir/sports/academics.

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- There should be key points of contact for each group in a school (i.e., counselors)
 - We need to work on school culture and accountability
 - Listen and respond to problems
 - Anti-bullying resources
 - Weapon buyback programs at schools
 - Conflict resolution that is restorative

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- At least 1 or 2 teachers – safe haven distance self
 - No one really wants to get involved

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- Someone acting out/being hurtful in class – a social worker to intervene and give one-on-one counseling
 - More admin to reach to, each person can gravitate to a certain counselor, more options not just the principal, etc.
 - [How would you want to be treated?] To be shown respect and belief that I can change and do better
 - BUT there's a line, if you cause or threaten danger or physical harm – the person needs to be dealt with strictly to understand how scary it is.
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- School board members
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- Social workers
 - Counselor
 - Caring adults
 - Support staff
 - Elders
 - Community app that offer various services
 - Restorative and transformational justice
 - Policies and practices
 - Church leaders
 - Everyone should be treated with dignity
 - Accountability for the adults who cause harm to children and families
-

- Tell a teacher I trust, social workers
 - If I need help, I feel comfortable asking
-

- Roles: social workers, school nurse, supportive staff
 - Resources: safe space, calming items empowering the community to be that support
 - Policy on student action (walkouts)
 - And new policies that teachers/staff can do to support students
 - You mentor the younger (elementary/middle)
 - Don't focus solely on high school
 - After Harding, emphasis was on high schools, the elementary muddle that feed into them felt forgotten
 - Conflict resolution: communication
-

- Teachers are great, excellent connections
- Placement center was challenging, the experience felt hard

- If parents don't know where to go, but not everyone knows where to go
- Menu of options with multiple people to talk to

-
- Police in schools need to have training in mental health, deep background checks to ensure against racial bias
 - Students need to receive more training than drills – the physical practice
 - What if I was stuck outside if an active shooter?
 - We need more security cameras – are they in parking lots?
 - Better security in front offices
 - Parent-sometimes my children don't feel safe at school
 - Not a teacher's job to be the constant protector
 - Can classrooms have panic buttons? Like our offices?
 - Brown Barrettes – take advice that represents Latinx community
 - Have community experts provide training what to do when someone is hurt?
 - How is equity work happening/not happening in our schools?
 - Some districts have equity teams in each building that support uniform expectations from school to school (District 11)
 - Minneapolis student – police officers in schools felt uncomfortable
 - Parent – police make me feel protected and secure. Criminals will think twice before entering.

Question 4: Are you aware of the current safety measures, resources, and procedures currently in place at SPPS? Are there physical safety measures (currently in place or not) that make you feel safe(r)? Are there any physical safety or security measures that make you feel less safe? What are they and why? Are there alternatives you might suggest? What would you rank as most important for safety and security?

Translated from the original Spanish:

- We are not aware of the current measures (parents).
- What is missing is a faster alert system among the school members and between the school and the community to deal with or when a dangerous situation arises.
- Return of the police.
- Bulletproof windows.
- Weapon detection systems.
- More outdoor surveillance.

Translated from the original Karen:

- Some parents have safety training for inside and outside school environment.
 - We are aware that every school has safety measures and procedures in place.
 - But they need to act effectively.
-

- There is a planner that has all the rules. Dress code, discipline, sports, everything. They go through it at the beginning of the year at assembly. Three times per year by grade. Back from breaks.

-
- There is a TIP line
 - Staff don't know about the EOP at my school – or that they are on the safety team
 - All of these acronyms!
 - Crisis plan we don't have the staff!
 - There are many new teachers – an assumption that we know – the staff who know might know

-
- We need to consider what does safety look like for everyone
 - Yes, we are aware – there are not enough
 - BIPs in all schools (Behavioral Intervention Person)
 - Currently we are in a “crisis plan” not a “safety plan”
 - We need to create a safety plan together so that all voices are heard and everyone feels emotionally safe
 - We need to move from crisis to safety

-
- Lockdowns
 - Lockouts
 - Safety measures against gun violence
 - Even if there's gun-control there might still be danger
 - Gun violence
 - Right to responsibility
 - Accidents involving mishaps – like kitchen tools, garage tools
 - A lot of kids not feeling safe in general
 - Violence doesn't start at school
 - 415 policy – tool
 - Sadly, some kids initiate the incident
 - Metal detectors many times isn't [sic] going to stop an incident from happening
 - We don't want our kids to be going to schools that feel like prisons, too, though
 - Some kids definitely are bringing guns to school
 - There's a level of safety that isn't attainable
 - Big school = harder to control

-
- Stop shuffling kids around – have to separate kids for safety reason
 - Find out what's really going on with them
 - Establish a support team with the teacher and open communication
 - Communicate with the family and creating a plan with them for their student

- Shouldn't have to fight for services/IEP support
- Found a wonderful support group
- What about the children who don't have an advocate at home? Staff needs to be their advocate
- Better communication about why kids are being transferred, sometimes separate groups of students who are fighting as a last resort
- Can take different approaches if you know the issues they are having
- You have to be firm and educate yourself on the law, IEPs

-
- Group – locked doors
 - Scribe – my daughter (not here) at Central High – does not feel safe to go on second floor – she said too much vaping and people taking drugs. She said they should have stricter rules on three strikes you're out for smoking in the bathroom

-
- More or less
 - More rules, more structures

-
- No
 - No
 - Can Marnita's org/leaders to help with security
 - Develop positive school climate
 - Restorative practices
 - Collect data
 - Invest in caring adults NOT police
 - Assess and serve children [with] disabilities
 - Train behavioral specialists to not harm kids

-
- (1: Awareness): Student – fire drill, lockdown, lockout, educator – yes
 - (2: Physical safety measures): Age of building – not design for school shootings, PA system not working – not in room
 - Door alarms
 - Staff member not being open to hearing a parent, student concerns
 - Students do need to feel heart re: concerns
 - Lack of communicators makes us feel unsafe
 - Suggestions
 - We need to not be afraid to show emotions
 - Do not like police officers in building
 - Police can share intel regarding community gang dynamics
 - Most important measure: communication!

Question 5: Are there any community resources or potential contributors you'd like to see included in safety and security plans or efforts at SPPS? If so, what are they? What benefits might they provide? What would you like to see SPPS prioritize in their safety and security plans, programs and/or available resources?

Translated from the original Spanish:

- Alarms, police, weapon detectors.
- To hire more mental health staff and to strengthen socialization projects and teaching social and emotional skills as well as tolerance.
- Teaching self-defense workshops.
- Describe to students and children clear routes to follow in case of an emergency.

-
- Be smart for kids.org
 - “Be Smart” – safe gun storage and storing them in the house
 - Presentations and PTO etc.
 - More individual therapy sessions opportunity at schools
 - More opportunities for ALCs for 7-8-8-10-15 day drop
 - Can all staff have the definitions easily accessible?

-
- Having time to talk about stress or how to deal with it.
 - Have a class with a mental health coach or for serious problems a medical therapist.
 - Confidence building, social media
 - Now there is no weekend
 - No break, kids with social problems/relationships don't have time to recoup because of social media
 - Undercover officer – who is trained

-
- Daycare after school
 - Free activities

-
- Uplift MN
 - Secrets 2 Truth
 - Project Reform MN
 - JK Movement
 - Black Healing Arts Center
 - Nation 21 Parent's Union
 - Project Wandi
 - MN teen activist
 - Vjama Place
 - FatherProject

- Centro
- Equilinox
- Shine
- 30KFT
- Cultural Wellness Center

-
- Community groups – who has capacity?
 - Parks and recs
 - Trusted neighbors – make schools more accessible to community volunteers
 - More sports stuff – badminton
 - Communities in schools
 - 9th best prep – Deloitte, Xcel Energy
 - Got to know outside school
 - More trades
 - More people who work in culinary/trade spaces
 - Cooks of Crocus Hill
 - NAZ equivalent – Wilder
 - Promise Neighborhoods – needs to be community born

Translated from the original Spanish:

- Checking of backpacks
- Supervise the classrooms

-
- Irreducible Grace – provides support to foster care kids. They now train all children in trauma-informed [methods].
 - Love First – fun by Satara Strong Allen
 - Grow and glow
 - Black joy
 - Philosophy is “love first”
 - Roosevelt Mansfield man that runs youth groups for young men

-
- St. Paul parks and recreation

-
- More therapy at middle/high
 - Scared of having her go to a big public school.
 - Alarms on doors
 - Not the police – the intimidate by [illegible] brown – it could be a good reason to get involved.
 - Not all is bad, it starts at home, show kids how to live a good life.

- Importance of the classroom climate, avoid having an inclusive approach to education

Question 6: Do you have any questions for SPPS? Is there anything you'd like to know more about?

- What are the next steps for SPPS?
- Will they be shared with staff?
- District wide?
- What will it look like?
- When will that plan be announced?

- Why are classrooms so large?
- There are too many students per teachers with NOT enough support

- Smaller class size
 - More opportunities for students who need more personal help emotionally, mentally, and physically
- 26-28 students to 20 students/classroom school space?
- Wants something to be done by the end of the year
- Help identify the needs of our students, be it much smaller class sizes, reopen schools and/or therapy during school.

- How do we
 - Substitute teachers
 - Racist teachers talk down to us
 - Get AP classes for AA
 - Bullying...do little
 - Teachers +

- What programs the school have for the kids

- Boys badminton?
- Budget. Ability to hire SSW, case managers, more people.
- How can community partners support financially?
- More things like this! Opinions
- Give students spaces like this. I feel comfortable.
- Snacks for MS students because lunch is so early (Washington)
- Restorative justice?
- Can we improve lunches? No chicken repetition!

- Teachers and meditation – some classes and advisory, ms foundations, instead of do now, deep breathing
- Teachers stressed w/A+B

.....

Translated from the original Spanish:

- To know more about SPPS.

-
- Parent conversations

Question 7: Is there anything that we didn't ask that we should have? What isn't here that you would like to see? Are there any questions you have? Please share your question(s), and any answers that your group chats about.

- Making investments in hiring a more diverse workforce.
 - Where does all this money come from?

-
- Be open to conversation.
 - Amplify student voice.
 - Racism/homophobia – tackle this by opening spaces to have conversations.
 - Have students share on topics like someone came to talk about mental health.
 - Students teaching students.
 - Assemblies on these topics.
 - Capstone community project.
 - Proposing culture day where everyone brings from their culture to represent.
 - Encouraging diversity. Too many all-white spaces. Other groups not felt seen or heard.
 - Don't know. The experiences of other students. May be homeless, dealing with poverty, living with others, lots of stigma. Living in the suburbs. Didn't meet the idea he had of homeless. Students struggle with these things.
 - Main themes: getting rid of stigma, student voice, creating space.

-
- Surprised that the turnout for this event was less than expected – the community support
 - Disappointed that there was not that much Hmong parents [sic]
 - What is going to happen to the discussions tonight? Who is going to look at it?

-
- 1. Same issues exist from 25 years ago, 20 years ago, and 10 years ago
 - 2. Missing voices = students and researchers finding solutions that
 - 3. Keep kids in the classroom!
-

- Free time in nature – does being outside benefit kids?
- Could there be a separate wing where kids who are exhibiting very bad behaviors have to spend time away but get a lot of one-on-one time with therapy, therapy dogs – compassion with why they are so angry/unruly

-
- Safety for the kids
-

- Not much bullying at Washington, mostly rumors.
-

Translated from the original Spanish:

- Security, therapy, counselors (that send me information so that I can take them together).
-

- Students talked about teachers that are tenured and are so disrespectful to the students. Teachers that don't want to be teaching or are disrespectful are "destroying kids."
- In 1994/95 a teacher home grown from the community was very supportive of students and would fire teachers that weren't respectful to students. The principal was fired – 800 people demonstrated their outrage at his firing.
- Parents want to create equity and inclusion in the classrooms!
- So much prejudice and bias gets in the way of the student teacher relationship.



Safe(r) Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)
Community Conversation & Dinner
30 March 2023

Circle Share-in Notes

Prompt: *Something I've always want to hear about myself is [that I am] ...*

- Smart and deserving of love
- Someone that cares
- Creative
- A parent
- A child
- Concerned active member of community
- Someone that wants to fit in
- Someone that wants to fit in
- Someone who cares about these kids
- A friend
- Kind person
- A person with anger issues
- A person trying to help you
- Working towards her goals
- Looking for solutions to big problems
- Supportive
- A leader, the future
- A bundle of energy
- Dedicated
- Warm and compassionate
- A friend in the community
- A part of the community
- Someone capable
- Someone that is enough
- A change maker
- Privileged to be here
- A loving and caring neighbor
- Someone that is constantly working towards something better
- Someone that wants to make a positive difference
- Someone that believes in you
- Someone that is worthy
- Somebody that is listening and wants to be part of the change

- A curious learner
- Always willing to listen
- A strong black mother of two daughters
- a sister
- intelligent person
- your brother
- your friend
- a friend
- someone who sees you
- everything change for better
- someone you can trust
- a solution to our youth, twin cities community
- the evidence of resilience and never ending commitment to humanity
- someone that loves the community
- someone that moves by faith
- a St. Paul peacemaker
- someone that wants to make a change
- someone that wants the best for their kids and community
- someone that believes in you
- a resource
- capable
- a bright light, the powers of the black panther
- someone committed to the excellence of St. Paul
- someone that works for what is right, not what is popular
- a friend
- someone that cares
- someone that will do the work with you to make a strong community
- competent
- a connector
- someone that never gives up
- compassionate
- someone that wants to make the world a better place
- someone that cares about the environment in the community
- someone that makes a difference
- somebody that seeks peace
- a present human
- someone who will lead you, go through the door first
- someone that finds happiness in serving others
- a shining light for others
- a little girl willing to die for a better world
- someone that looks for the good and cares about everyone
- an advocate
- see me as a college student
- a loving engaged member of the community
- see me
- as human
- as effective and engaged

- someone that is understanding
- a person that is loving and caring
- see me as a friend
- see me as an elder
- see me as a grateful community member
- see me as an optimist
- see me as a neighbor
- see me as a person that supports the community
- caring and supportive
- someone that believes in you and your very bright future
- one of the next leaders, diplomats and overall leaders
- a survivor during this generation
- someone that has hope for the future
- someone that is always willing to listen
- to make change for everyone
- someone who needs to do more
- see me as a help
- a child
- someone that is trying
- an advocate
- part of your team
- your servant
- a productive member of society that is raising wholesome individuals
- an artist
- as optimism
- willing to compromise for community
- a refugee immigrant that can help community better
- a person grateful for and committed to this community.