Family Feedback
Online Exchange Report

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.

October 12, 2022

SPS Mission

The Shrewsbury Public Schools, **in partnership with the community**, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.

SPS Core Values

- Respect & Responsibility
- **Collaboration & Communication**
- Commitment to High Standards & Expectations
- Equity

Family Feedback:
Online Anonymous Exchange

We utilized the ThoughtExchange platform to ask families for feedback:

Now that we have started the new school year, please share

1) what is working well for your child(ren), and

2) any questions or concerns you have for the year ahead.

OVERVIEW

Exchange participation link: **my.thoughtexchange.com/scroll/293361089**

729	518	15,248	29
Participants	Thoughts	Ratings	Ratings Ratio

342	373	316
Participants shared thoughts	Participants rated thoughts	Participants explored thoughts
47%	51%	43%

Participation languages

%		Answer
97%	(707)	English
1%	(7)	Portuguese
1%	(4)	Spanish
1%	(4)	Chinese Simplified
0%	(2)	Japanese
0%	(1)	Czech
0%	(1)	Korean
0%	(1)	Nepali
0%	(1)	Albanian
0%	(1)	Vietnamese

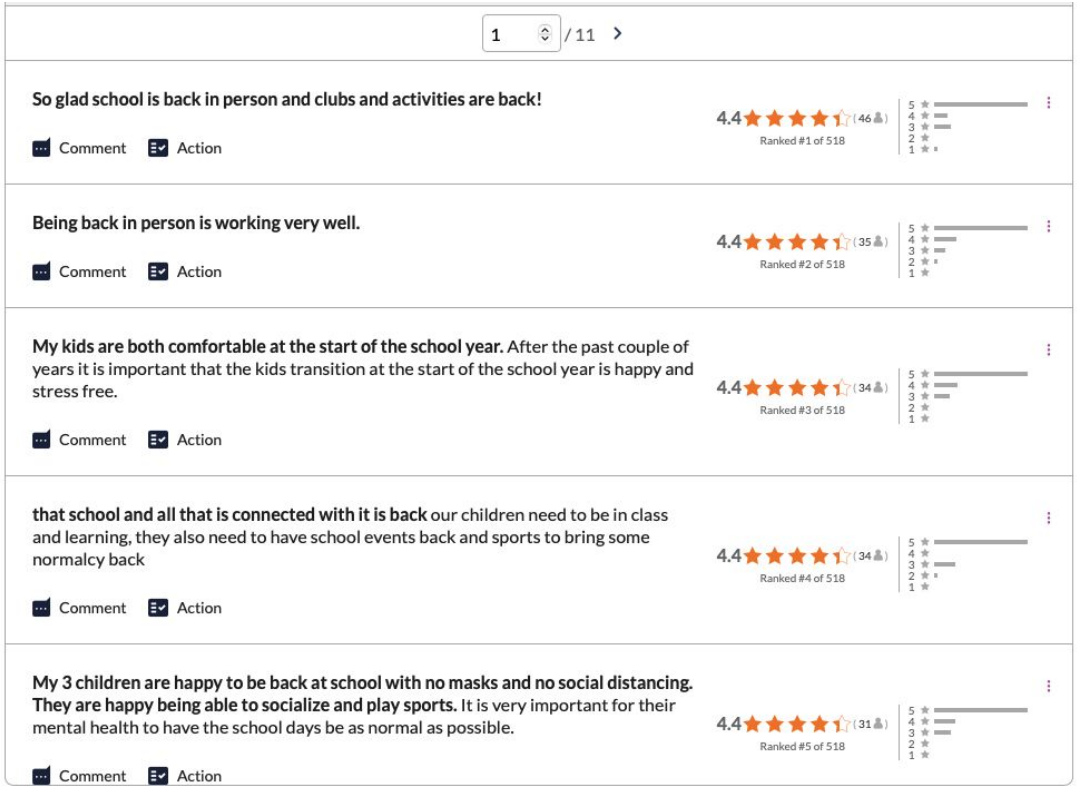
Please check off ALL schools where you have a child attending this year:

681
Responses

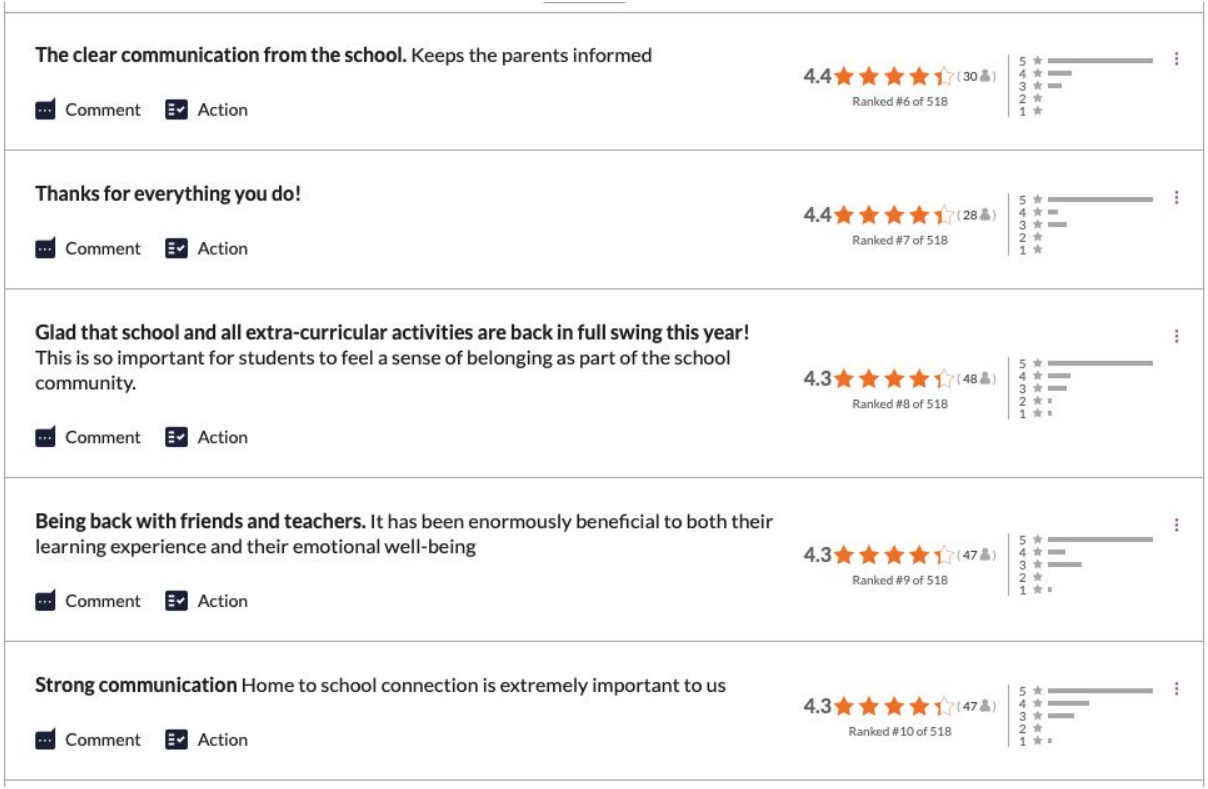
%		Answer *(Multi-select)*
5%	(40)	Parker Road Preschool
17%	(120)	Beal School
6%	(41)	Coolidge School
12%	(82)	Floral Street School
7%	(49)	Paton School
6%	(46)	Spring Street School
26%	(183)	Sherwood Middle School
23%	(157)	Oak Middle School
31%	(212)	Shrewsbury High School
0%	(3)	Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School
0%	(4)	Out-of-District School Placement

homework
eat
work
staff
children
high
child
health
skills
normal
learning
ipad
lunch
social
time
early
start
parents
year
home
love
happy
comfortable
kids
routine
activities
help
inclusion
mental
day
great
feel
back
connected
support
good
know
important
class
communication

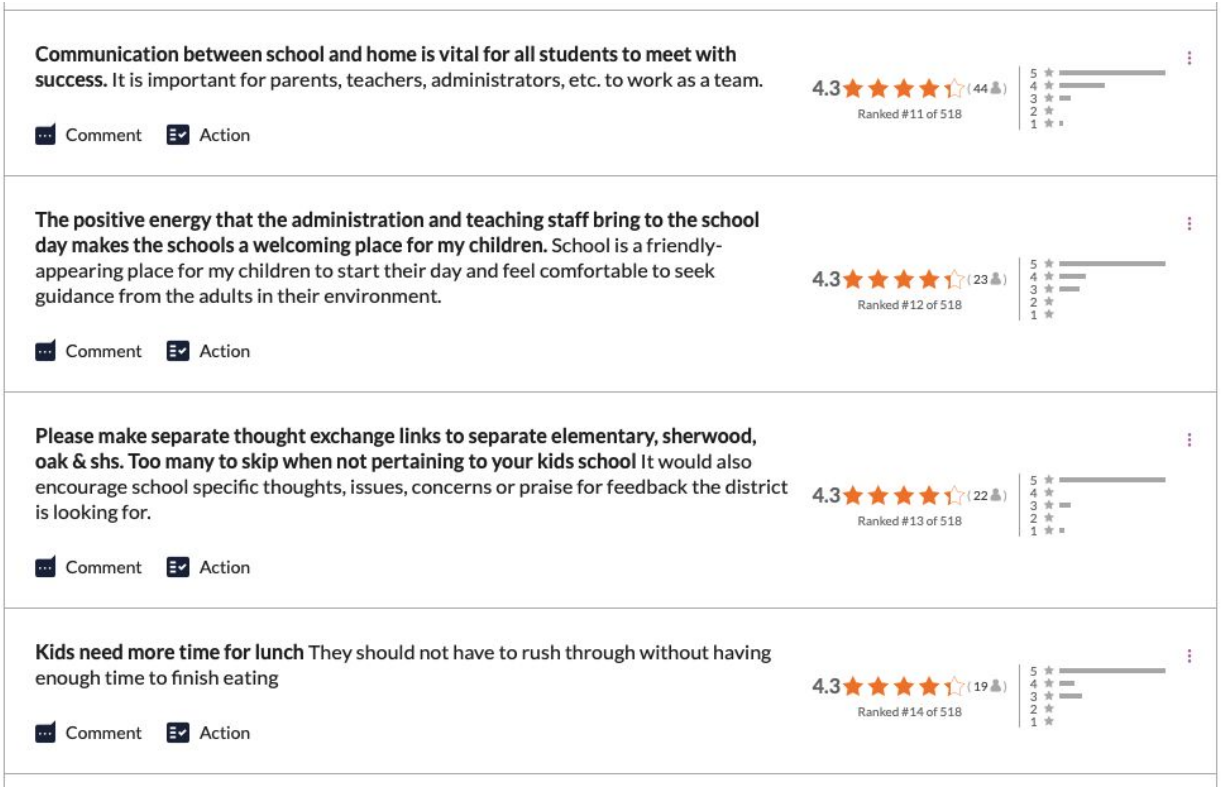
Top-Rated Thoughts



Top-Rated Thoughts (continued)



Top-Rated Thoughts (continued)



Communication between school and home is vital for all students to meet with success. It is important for parents, teachers, administrators, etc. to work as a team.

Comment Action

4.3 (44)
Ranked #11 of 518

The positive energy that the administration and teaching staff bring to the school day makes the schools a welcoming place for my children. School is a friendly-appearing place for my children to start their day and feel comfortable to seek guidance from the adults in their environment.

Comment Action

4.3 (23)
Ranked #12 of 518

Please make separate thought exchange links to separate elementary, sherwood, oak & shs. Too many to skip when not pertaining to your kids school It would also encourage school specific thoughts, issues, concerns or praise for feedback the district is looking for.

Comment Action

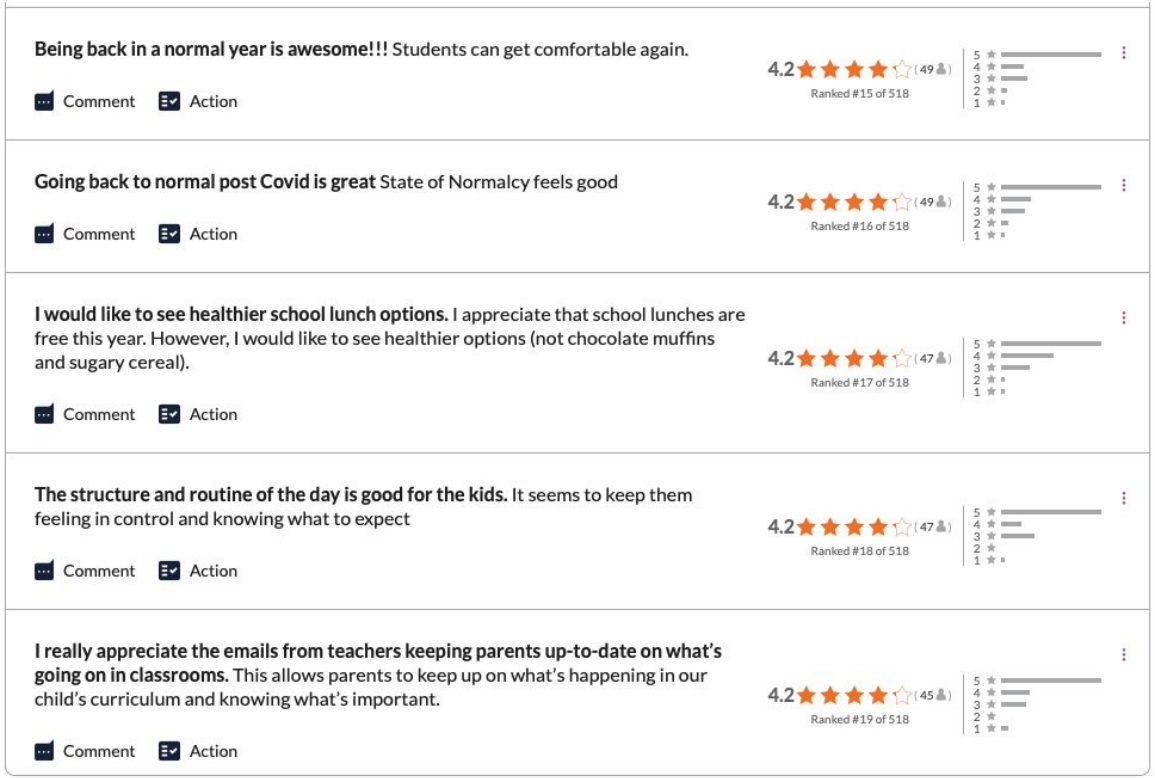
4.3 (22)
Ranked #13 of 518

Kids need more time for lunch They should not have to rush through without having enough time to finish eating

Comment Action

4.3 (19)
Ranked #14 of 518

Top-Rated Thoughts (continued)



Top-Rated Thoughts (Continued)

We are happy that school has returned to "normal." It is important for them socially and academically.

Comment Action

4.2 ★★★★☆ (36)
Ranked #20 of 518

Consistent communication with Parents is Awesome, helps to be in sync with the school happenings Becomes easy to put Kids schedule on schedule at home and plan around routines based on the communications

Comment Action

4.2 ★★★★☆ (35)
Ranked #21 of 518

My child's transition to high school was a success It was important for my child's mental health to be able to tour the school ,Meet mentors, get his schedule and identify friends in his classes.

Comment Action

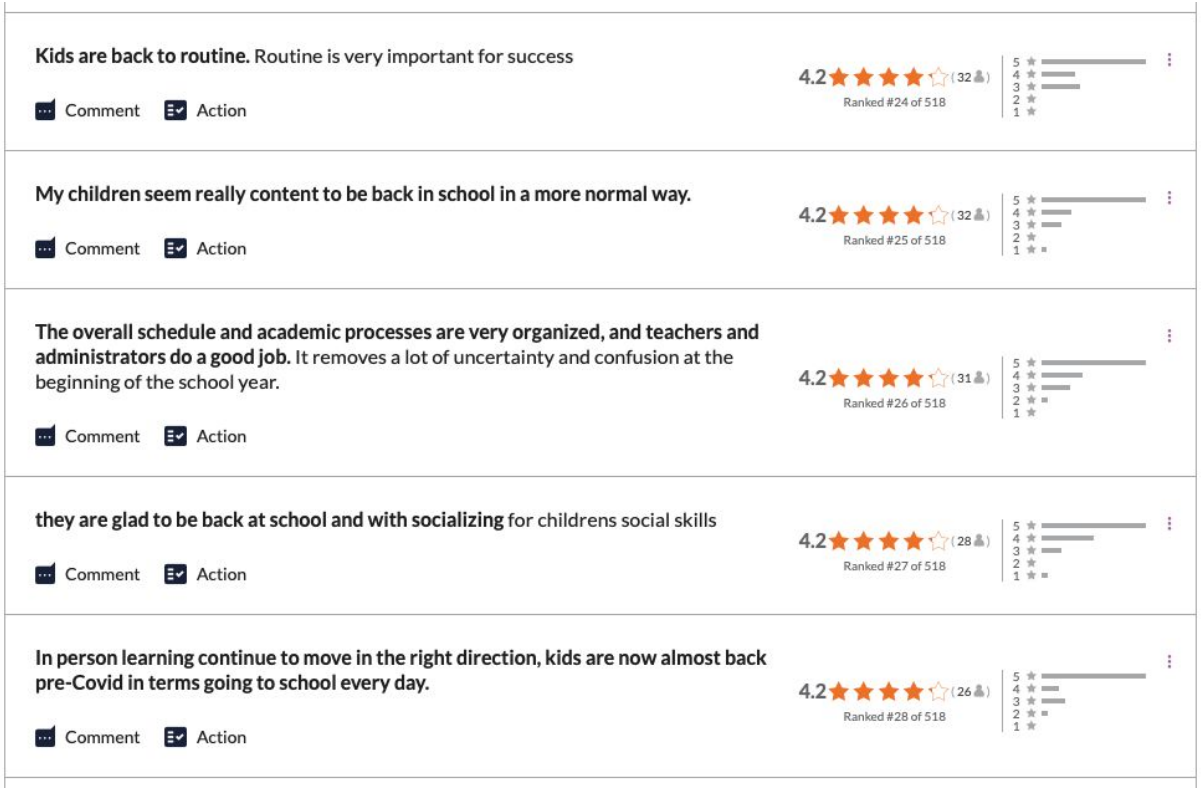
4.2 ★★★★☆ (35)
Ranked #22 of 518

Now that Covid is behind us and we are back to normal school scheduling and activities most things are working very well. Having a consistent routine for our kids is very important given other responsibilities and commitments we have.

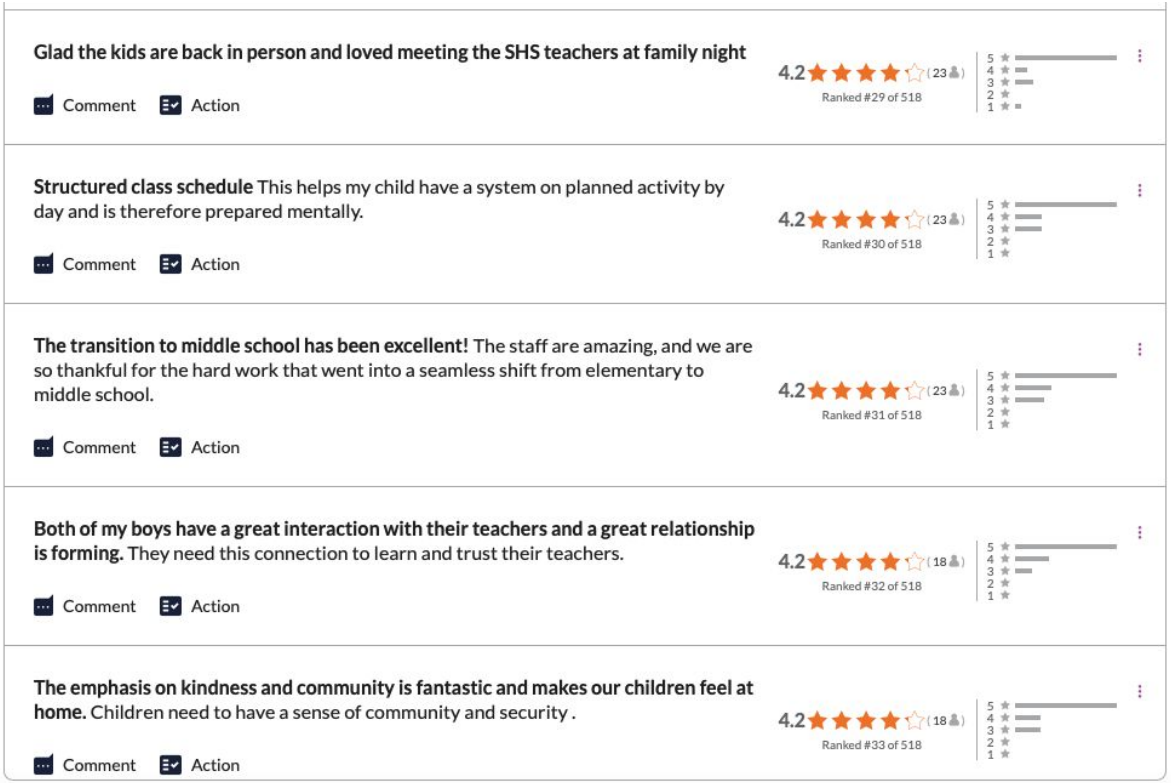
Comment Action

4.2 ★★★★☆ (34)
Ranked #23 of 518

Top-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



Top-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



Low-Rated Thoughts

Getting a response to any queries posted through emails to teachers have been very slow and requiring us to do multiple follow ups for weeks. Build the trust, collaboration between parents and teachers in the new school set up especially in a transition year from elementary to middle school

Comment Action

3.0 (5)
Ranked #482 of 518

Communication has been great. To know what's going on in the buildings, especially the classroom.

Comment Action

3.0 (2)
Ranked #483 of 518

SHS has a dress code that is in clear violation of Massachusetts state law; it should be officially rescinded. We are not legally or practically able to control what our students choose to wear; trying to do so negatively impacts their school experience.

Comment Action

2.9 (48)
Ranked #484 of 518

After attending the school orientation, my first thought was that the desks were very uncomfortable and you cannot adjust the seats. Students are in those seats all day.

Comment Action

2.9 (47)
Ranked #485 of 518

Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)

I am not impressed with the health teacher or curriculum. It seems heavily based on nutrition (so much that it could cause eating disorders) and there is very little emphasis on mental health.

Comment Action

2.9 (47)
Ranked #486 of 518

You seem to let the students do whatever they want in class instead of paying attention to the lesson It is disrespectful and disruptive for the other students

Comment Action

2.9 (47)
Ranked #487 of 518

No courses cub as finance

Comment Action

2.9 (34)
Ranked #488 of 518

I feel like teachers may be relying too much on ipads for teaching and homework. The math homework my child receives on the ipad is far too basic. It does not feel like learning, just busy work.

Comment Action

2.9 (33)
Ranked #489 of 518

Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)

On elementary school we do receive a lot of information about events and every thing and I think this is great, for High school students not that much My question/concerns is about doctors excuses letter? Why do students get absent when they bring doctor's excuses letter?

2.9 (32)
Ranked #490 of 518

Comment Action

Need more detailed academic updates...even just a brief weekly update. No idea what my son is learning in kindergarten. He can't tell me specific details about his day such as what books he read or type of math he learned

2.9 (31)
Ranked #491 of 518

Comment Action

We've swung the pendulum too far from too much homework to not enough. Kids need independent learning skills for HS and more importantly in college. It's also impacting the growth of time management skills.

2.9 (29)
Ranked #492 of 518

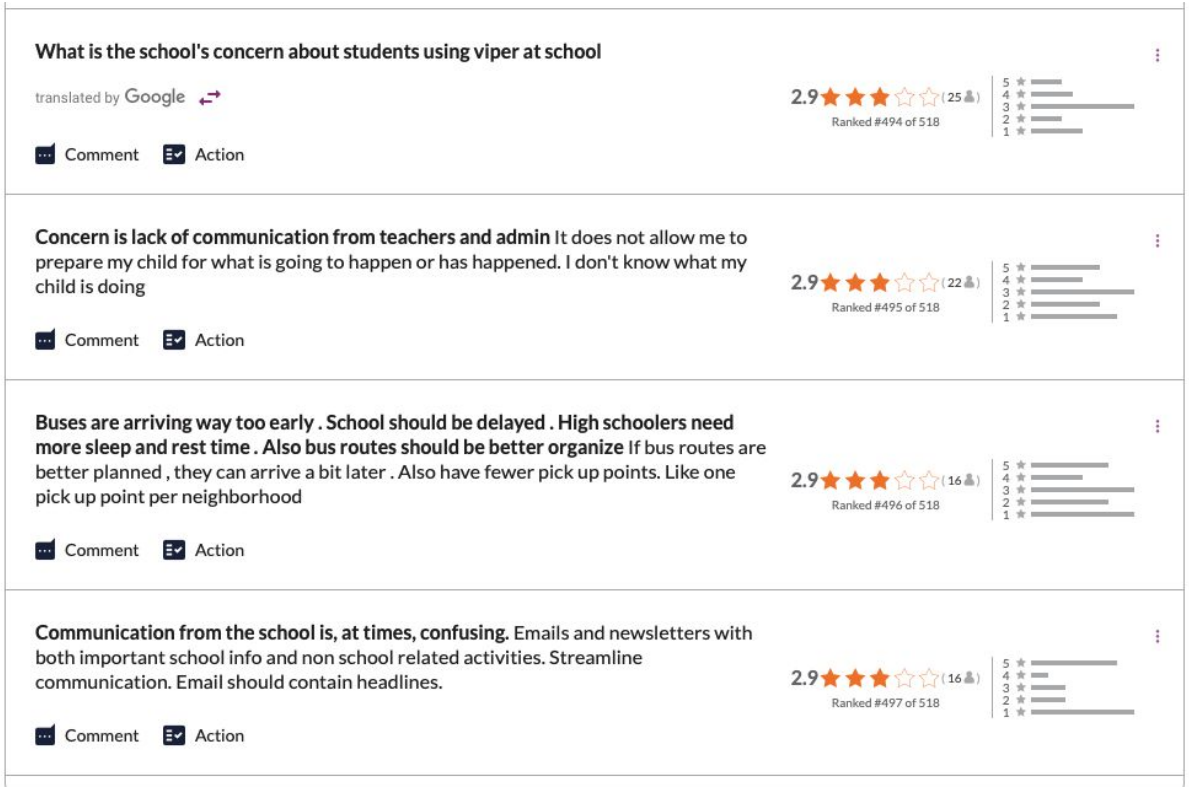
Comment Action

There has to be a better arrangement for parents and kids waiting area for music lessons As the weather gets colder , it's important that there is more space for parents to use.

2.9 (26)
Ranked #493 of 518

Comment Action

Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



What is the school's concern about students using viper at school

translated by Google

Comment Action

2.9 ★★★☆☆ (25)
Ranked #494 of 518

5 ★
4 ★
3 ★
2 ★
1 ★

Concern is lack of communication from teachers and admin It does not allow me to prepare my child for what is going to happen or has happened. I don't know what my child is doing

Comment Action

2.9 ★★★☆☆ (22)
Ranked #495 of 518

5 ★
4 ★
3 ★
2 ★
1 ★

Buses are arriving way too early . School should be delayed . High schoolers need more sleep and rest time . Also bus routes should be better organize If bus routes are better planned , they can arrive a bit later . Also have fewer pick up points. Like one pick up point per neighborhood

Comment Action

2.9 ★★★☆☆ (16)
Ranked #496 of 518

5 ★
4 ★
3 ★
2 ★
1 ★

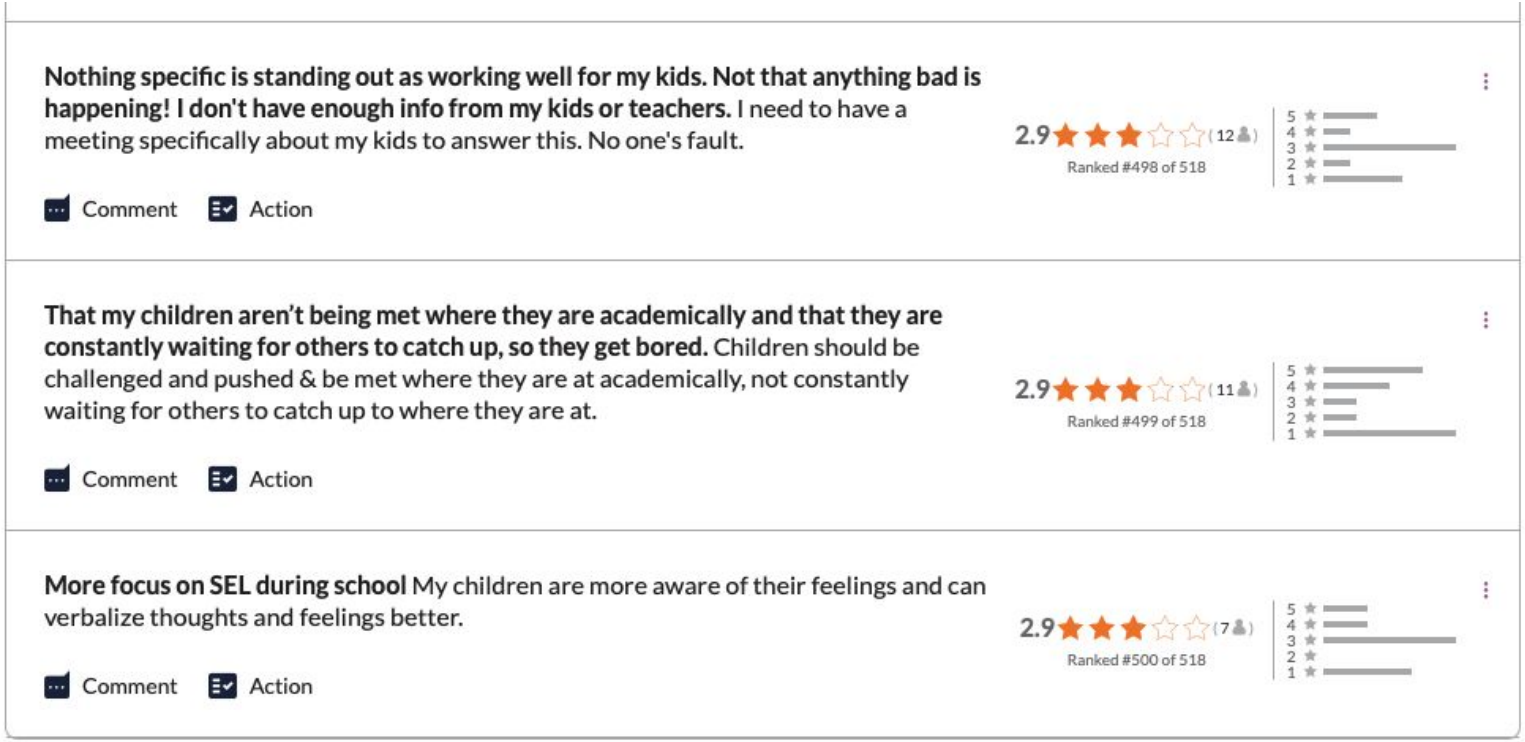
Communication from the school is, at times, confusing. Emails and newsletters with both important school info and non school related activities. Streamline communication. Email should contain headlines.

Comment Action

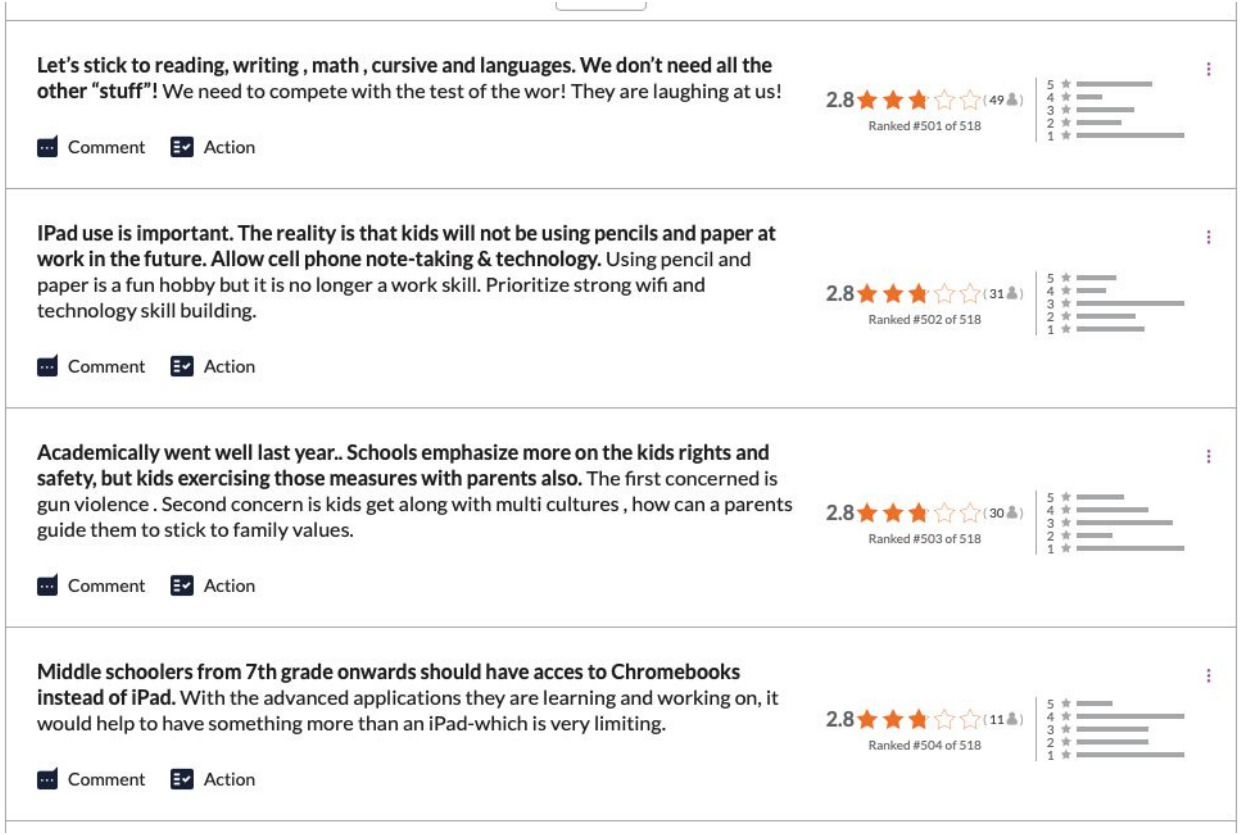
2.9 ★★★☆☆ (16)
Ranked #497 of 518

5 ★
4 ★
3 ★
2 ★
1 ★

Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



Let's stick to reading, writing , math , cursive and languages. We don't need all the other "stuff"! We need to compete with the test of the wor! They are laughing at us!

Comment Action

2.8 (49)
Ranked #501 of 518

IPad use is important. The reality is that kids will not be using pencils and paper at work in the future. Allow cell phone note-taking & technology. Using pencil and paper is a fun hobby but it is no longer a work skill. Prioritize strong wifi and technology skill building.

Comment Action

2.8 (31)
Ranked #502 of 518

Academically went well last year.. Schools emphasize more on the kids rights and safety, but kids exercising those measures with parents also. The first concerned is gun violence . Second concern is kids get along with multi cultures , how can a parents guide them to stick to family values.

Comment Action

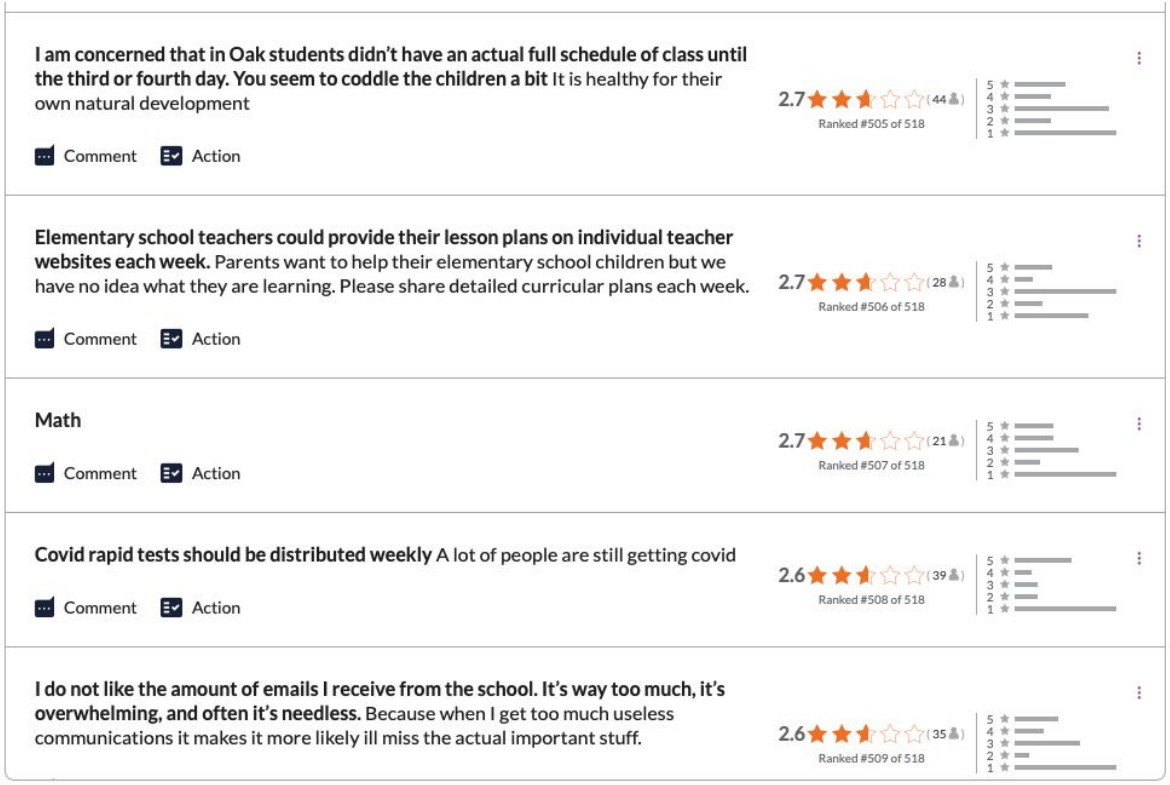
2.8 (30)
Ranked #503 of 518

Middle schoolers from 7th grade onwards should have acces to Chromebooks instead of iPad. With the advanced applications they are learning and working on, it would help to have something more than an iPad-which is very limiting.

Comment Action

2.8 (11)
Ranked #504 of 518

Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



I am concerned that in Oak students didn't have an actual full schedule of class until the third or fourth day. You seem to coddle the children a bit It is healthy for their own natural development

Comment Action

2.7 (44)
Ranked #505 of 518

Elementary school teachers could provide their lesson plans on individual teacher websites each week. Parents want to help their elementary school children but we have no idea what they are learning. Please share detailed curricular plans each week.

Comment Action

2.7 (28)
Ranked #506 of 518

Math

Comment Action

2.7 (21)
Ranked #507 of 518

Covid rapid tests should be distributed weekly A lot of people are still getting covid

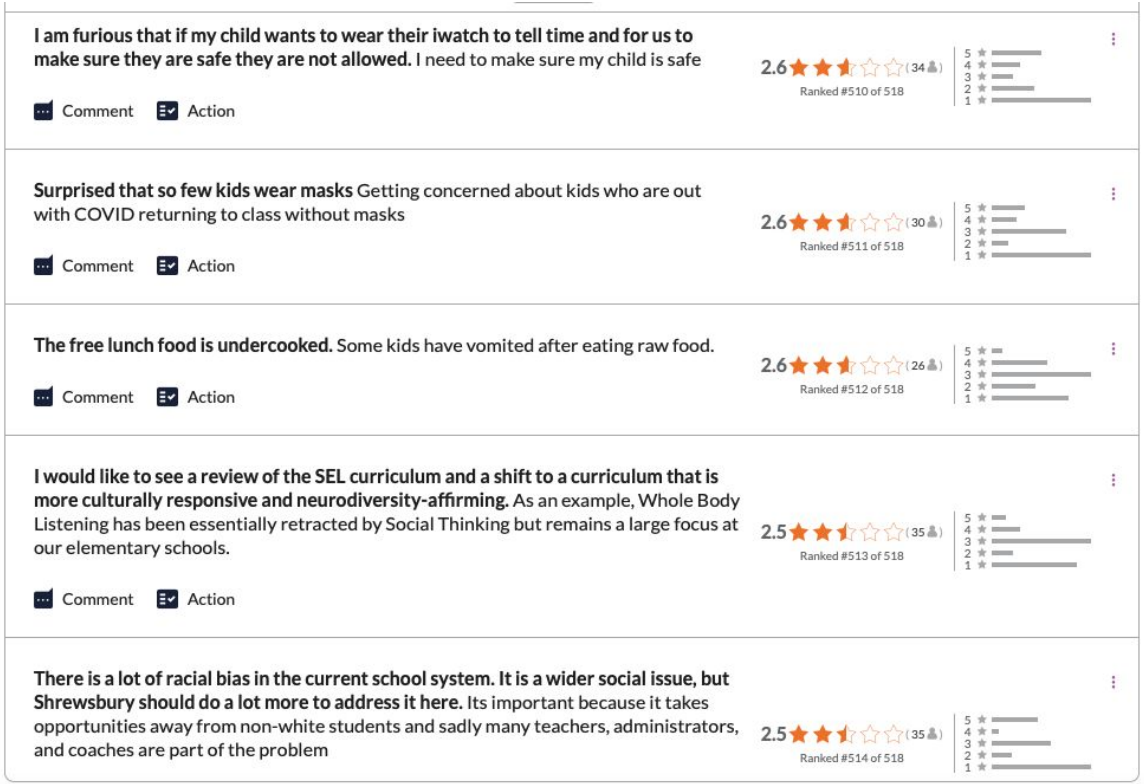
Comment Action

2.6 (39)
Ranked #508 of 518

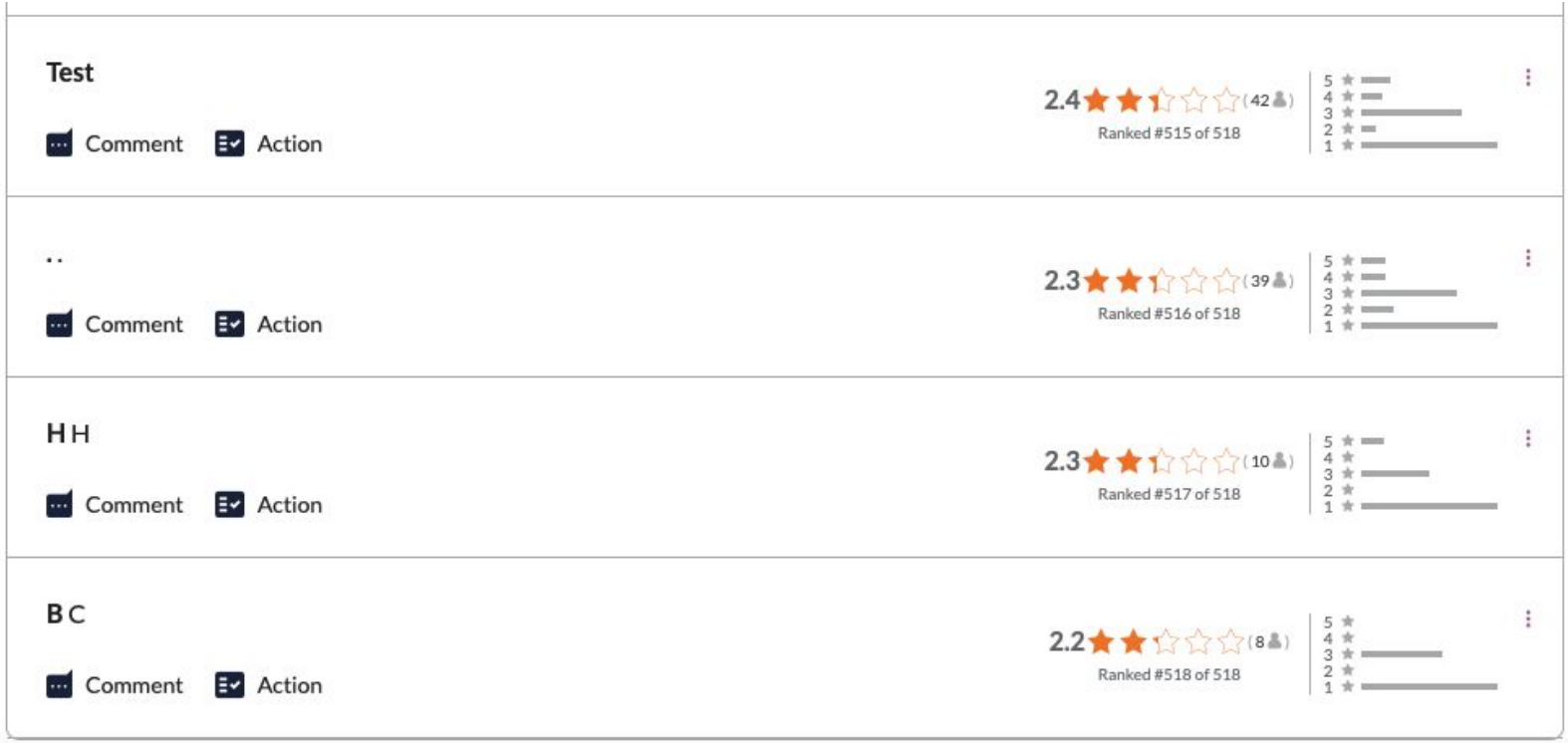
I do not like the amount of emails I receive from the school. It's way too much, it's overwhelming, and often it's needless. Because when I get too much useless communications it makes it more likely ill miss the actual important stuff.

2.6 (35)
Ranked #509 of 518

Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



Low-Rated Thoughts (Continued)



Opening of School: Themes

1. We have had an excellent start to the new school year
2. The emotional climate in all of our schools is very positive
3. Our focus is on belonging, well-being, and learning
4. There are many challenges and opportunities ahead

There will always be conflicting perceptions

The high school dress code should be implemented and seen that it is followed . Some kids dress sense esp during gym causes discomfort to the others. H. Sch. kids should dress in decent clothes as it's like a workplace . Extremely short pants, plunging necklines with crop tops are not appropriate .

SHS has a dress code that is in clear violation of Massachusetts state law; it should be officially rescinded. We are not legally or practically able to control what our students choose to wear; trying to do so negatively impacts their school experience.

There will always be conflicting perceptions

Homework has not been proven to make a meaningful difference in children's education Our kids need to learn healthy school/life balance. Excessive homework is barrier to achieving that

We've swung the pendulum too far from too much homework to not enough. Kids need independent learning skills for HS and more importantly in college. It's also impacting the growth of time management skills.

What are we doing with the feedback?

1. Leadership team has reviewed the feedback at two meetings
2. Continue practices that feedback suggests are working well
3. Consider ways to address specific concerns
    a. Some are in progress, e.g. Sleep Health Advisory Committee
4. Part of the ongoing work to develop our next strategic plan

Thank you for your feedback!