Runkle School Transition Survey Results (Term 2)
February 2011

Participation:

Out of our 372 families, 125 of Runkle families participated in the survey. All grades from Pre-K through Grade 8 were represented. The highest participation rate was at the second grade representing 27% of the respondents.

Grade Represented	Response Percent	Response Count
Pre-Kindergarten	5.6%	7
Kindergarten	12.8%	16
First Grade	21.6%	27
Second Grade	24.8%	31
Third Grade	12.8%	16
Fourth Grade	12.8%	16
Fifth Grade	22.4%	28
Sixth Grade	7.2%	9
Seventh Grade	16.0%	20
Eighth Grade	14.4%	18

Arrival Procedures

Of the 125 respondents, 76.8% report that their children take the bus to school, 19.2% are driven to school, 2.4% walk to school with their children and 1.6% send their children to walk to school by themselves. There were 12 comments in this section most often explaining that families do not always use the same mode of transportation. Different modes were cited for different siblings due to Pre-Kindergarten (2), one student lives outside the Runkle District, and nine comments cited different routines in the morning and afternoon. No issues were reported in this section.

The families reporting rated their experience with the morning transition to school as follows:

	Usually	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	N/A or I don't know	Response Count
Buses are "on schedule" to the stops in the AM	55.9%	23.7%	9.3%	0.8%	10.2%	118
Boarding procedures are easy to follow	67.2%	12.1%	2.6%	0.0%	18.1%	116
My children et breakfast at school in the morning	4.3%	1.7%	9.4%	82.1%	2.6%	117
Morning arrival procedures are working smoothly	41.0%	24.8%	5.1%	1.7%	27.4%	117

There were 16 additional comments for this section.

Bus Driver driving before students are seated. (1)
Morning arrival is an unwelcoming experience (1)
Bus Driver plays noise music—let's have a quiet bus (1)
Snow obstructs bus stop (2)
Late buses (10-15 min late) causes problems (for Pre-K parents as well) (2)
Love our driver…and appreciate Mary Murphy (1)
No complaints (1)
Early bus means a loss in quality time with my child (1)
Student issues on the bus without adult supervision…took him off the bus (1)
Took son off Winthrop bus—it is too early. (1)
There are no activities (1)
Once the bus came early and left without my kids. (1)
Use "Always" instead of "Usually" (1)

Although there were two comments about the bus arriving late to school, this occurred only a few times due to inclement weather. On all other days, the buses arrive before 8:00 a.m. allowing students ample time to report to their classes on time. The information regarding the arrival procedure as a whole and the impact of the snow will certainly help us to plan accordingly for the 2011-2012 Winter season. Although there are activities or games available in the Gym and Library, the older students in the cafeteria use that time to visit teachers for extra help, work on projects, or finish homework in the morning before classes begin. Students also visit the cafeteria to purchase breakfast as well.

Dismissal Procedures

Of the 125 respondents, 113 answered the question related to transportation from school and 12 skipped this question. Of the 113 respondents, 61.9% report that their children take the bus home from school, 29.2% meet their children and drive them home, 12.4% walk home alone, and 3.5% walk home from school with their children. There were 17 comments included in this section indicating that there is a mix of plans for families including a newly reported suggestion of carpooling after play rehearsal. This may prove to be an effective strategy for other families whose students are involved in sports, and other after school activities.

Of the 125 respondents to the question about after school activities, 64.2% indicated that their children do take part in after school activities. Based upon the 66 comments included in this section, 29 of the respondents' children take part in RASP, 4 take part in the Math League, 35 participate in RED, 6 participate in music lessons, band, or PALS, 9 participate in sports, 5 participated in the play, 1 cited MCAS Boost, and 4 cited homework center. Some respondents reported taking advantage of more than one after school activity.

The experience related to dismissal is described below:

	Usually	**Most of the time**	**Sometimes**	**Never**	**N/A or I don't know**	**Response Count**
It is easy to connect with my child at dismissal	50.9%	15.5%	7.3%	0.9%	25.5%	110
I am able to find a parking spot	32.4%	22.2%	15.7%	4.6%	25.0%	108
The bus arrives "on schedule" to the stops in the afternoon,	26.8%	33.0%	9.8%	0.9%	29.5%	112

There were 11 comments included in this section. Three comments mentioned that the snow provided some challenges with parking and timely arrival at the bus stop, but this also appeared to be somewhat expected. One comment mentioned that parking on Route 9 is challenging in the afternoon. One person cited that the bus is sometimes late and sometimes early, but that it has not been a huge problem. Two people mentioned difficulties related to Pre-K parking. One person mentioned that even with the permit, they have been challenged as they parked on Route 9.

School Response:

Overall, the comments in this section indicated that while there have been small problems, dismissal procedures are working well on the whole. However, a reminder may need to be provided to the crossing guards to be sure they are aware that Pre-K parents have special permits to park on Route 9 in the morning and at the conclusion of the morning program.

Communication

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A or I don't know	Response Count
The information in the *Runkle News* is informative	27.4%	65.5%	3.5%	0.0%	3.5%	113
I access the Runkle website often	6.3%	38.4%	36.6%	15.2%	3.6%	112
The website is informative	8.0%	56.6%	11.5%	4.4%	19.5%	113
Telephone calls, notes, and emails are responded to promptly	19.1%	60.0%	5.5%	1.8%	13.6%	110
The principal and vice principal are accessible	26.8%	46.4%	5.4%	1.8%	19.6%	112
The guidance counselors are accessible	18.9%	30.6%	2.7%	0.9%	46.8%	111
Teachers are accessible	47.8%	46.0%	2.7%	0.9%	2.7%	113
Families are given adequate notice about upcoming events	25.9%	58.0%	10.7%	5.4%	0.0%	112

There were 28 comments submitted for this question. There were several comments remarking that families would prefer to have notice about events at least two weeks in advance and some notes that they do not here about class-specific events soon enough. A few families commented that it would be helpful to know who is "sharing" during the K-2 Morning Meetings on Fridays so that families can make plans to attend. Overall, accessibility to the Principal, Vice Principal, and Teachers is good, but the set up in the building is still not conducive to dropping by and delivering a quick message. A couple of comments mentioned that it is hard to find the guidance office. One person noted that they have never experienced less of a sense of community. One remarked that the building is not welcoming. Several people remarked that the teachers, principal, and vice principal are doing the best they can to be available to families and that those efforts are appreciated. One commented that the communication is getting better and one person

remarked that their family's experience at Runkle has been nothing but positive with everyone.

Parent Coffees

There were two new questions for this survey. The first asked about attendance at the Parent Coffees with Dr. Beauchaine. Thirty-one percent of the respondents said that they had attended a parent coffee and a few commented that they were planning on attending the parent coffee that was planned during the week of the survey. The next question was meant to elicit topics for future Parent Coffees so that Dr. Beauchaine could provide the information families were seeking. The following topics were suggested:

Runkle Construction Progress (7)
Grade-specific Academics (World Language, MCAS prep, facts about current issues) (6)
Relevant Updates (including safety updates) (5)
How teachers are differentiating to meet the needs of high-end learners (3)
Principal's Vision (3)
Placement Process (2)
"How are you doing in your first year?" (1)
"Percentage of children speaking a second language at home and children having the opportunity to share with classmates the experience of speaking a second language at home." (1)
Active living initiatives (1)
Many children have been sick this year –heating issues (1)
Changes for the 2011-2012 school year (1)
How parents will be involved in implementing the bullying prevention plan at Runkle (1)
Graduation and End of the Year Planning (1)
How to support our children at home (1)
Budget Implications (1)
Classroom Management Strategies that are currently effective in our classes (1)

While it will not be possible to address each and every one of these topics by the end of this year, There will be opportunities throughout the year to address the topics that were cited most often. The next round of coffees has already been scheduled and we will refer to this list of topics as we plan further events as well.

Learning Environment

I am pleased with the general appeal, cleanliness, and comfort of:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A or I don't know	Response Count
Classrooms	22.5%	60.5%	9.9%	3.6%	3.6%	111
Hallways	5.5%	53.6%	20.9%	17.3%	2.7%	110
Office	13.0%	57.4%	4.6%	3.7%	21.3%	108
Cafeteria	10.0%	56.4%	17.3%	10.0%	6.4%	110
Gymnasium	13.6%	54.5%	10.9%	3.6%	17.3%	110
Library	26.6%	44.0%	5.5%	3.7%	20.2%	109
Computer Lab	12.8%	25.7%	2.8%	1.8%	56.9%	109
Bathrooms	2.7%	22.7%	26.4%	13.6%	34.5%	110

There were 25 comments added in response to this question. Some comments were made with phrases such as, "Doing the best we can," or "Perfectly serviceable". Many of the comments, however, still sited a general concern regarding neatness and cleanliness throughout the common areas of the building including the bathroom. There were also several comments regarding issues that have been addressed such as providing additional coat hooks on the first floor and adding new coat hooks on the basement level for R.E.D. In addition to the regular cleaning that is done by our custodial team, the time over February vacation was used to wax all of the floors, which also helped to raise the level of the appearance of the building. Some others suggested ideas such as painting the bathrooms for a fresher look. These suggestions will be taken into consideration as we plan what will be done in the building over the April break as well as the Summer.

Conclusion:

While there appears to be movement in a positive direction overall, there continues to be areas that need attention in the building to ensure a positive learning environment. We will try to incorporate as many of the suggestions as possible that will further our school goals and will help us to continue to improve the teaching and learning opportunities at Runkle School.

On behalf of the School Council, I would like to thank you again for taking the time to fill out this survey. Please remember that next year, we will be putting together a survey for all aspects of Runkle School and will be gathering information as we proceed with a

new School Improvement Plan (to be completed in April 2011) and look forward to our return to Runkle School on Druce Street the following year.