



## COLUMBIA SCHOOL SYSTEM

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June 6, 2017

Dear School Community,

As you know the first Future Needs Committee Survey was completed on May 15, 2017. The results have been posted on our website at [hwporter.org](http://hwporter.org).

Some highlights:

- 194 responses were received
- There were over 450 written responses to the open-ended questions.
- Parents, community members and staff were consistent in what they identified as the most important criteria for a quality school.
- The top 3 were:
  - A Safe and Secure Environment
  - Emphasis on core skills of reading, writing and math, and
  - Connecting skills and knowledge to real life situations.
- The survey identified our greatest challenges for the future as:
  - Declining and/or fluctuating enrollment
  - Financial and/or funding issues
  - Retaining students while meeting competition from magnet and charter schools

The survey will help guide the Future Needs Committee in developing its long-range plan. This is a long-term project. Keep in mind that:

- We have contracts with our 2 designated high schools, Bolton and E.O. Smith that do not expire until 2022.
- In 2021 we have to notify both high schools of our intention whether or not to extend the contracts.
- We have every intention to honor those contracts.

- The Board has begun this planning project now in order to plan carefully and involve our entire community.

### **What are the next steps?**

- (1) A focus group meeting to explore some of the issues raised by the survey is scheduled for:

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. in the H.W. Porter School Cafeteria.**

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS WELCOME.**

- (2) The Future Needs Committee will continue to seek input through meetings, website postings and surveys as we move into the next school year.

Sincerely,



Lol Fearon, Superintendent