



Educational Community Case Study

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CHALLENGES

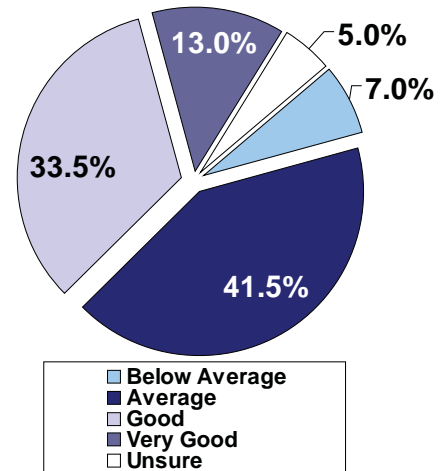
Lakeview School District, located in Battle Creek, Michigan, has worked with Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. for six years, using our services to benchmark progress and assess community response to a variety of issues. This year, the issues included: progress towards district goals; measuring and quantifying community perception of safety and the district, along with understanding communication within the district.

Once Perspectives understood Lakeview School District’s goals, Perspectives customized and executed a community telephone survey that addressed the desired issues for Lakeview School District.

SOLUTIONS

The telephone survey was conducted with residents of the Lakeview School District, who were randomly selected to be a representative sample of the district. The survey was put together collaboratively with Perspectives and Lakeview School District and consisted of 40 questions. Once the goal of 400 completed surveys was reached, Perspectives went to work forming a report and presenting conclusions to the district.

Rating Communication



Perspectives analyzed the results of the survey and identified several issues to address for the district including the top issues of safety, quality of education, finance/money, and curriculum. Perspectives also looked at the trends in the responses over past years, and was able to track the changes of scores for several areas such as safety and information. By understanding these issues, Lakeview School District was able to target their efforts in the various areas.

"Lakeview School District has used this information to focus communication goals and messages and therefore use their *resources more efficiently.*"



Lakeview High School • Battle Creek, Michigan

Perspectives was able to quantify community perceptions and present those findings to the district in a way that is useful and valuable to Lakeview School District. Through Perspectives' evaluation of district ratings, Lakeview School District was able to identify changes in scores and determine which

areas the scores were primarily increasing or decreasing. Results showed that more than half of the areas were improving over previous years; areas such as community pride, the value received from the district, and also the handling of finances.

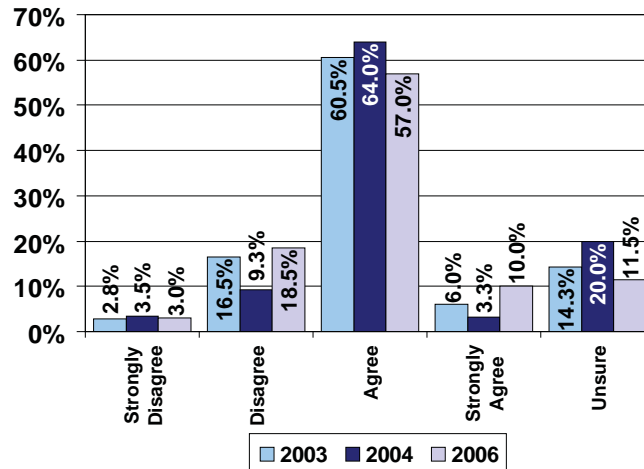
RESULTS

Perspectives was able to uncover findings regarding different aspects of the communication in the district. This allowed Lakeview School District to put a priority list together and focus their communication efforts. Lakeview School District was able to evaluate their communication strategy and methods, and their effectiveness. Through this study, Perspectives found that parents' primary information resources were school newsletters and their children in school. As for those who did not have children attending, they used the newspaper, friends and relatives.

Lakeview School District has used this information to focus communication goals and messages and therefore use their resources more efficiently. They were able to identify and quantify the community's perception of their district. Also, Lakeview School District was able to focus their safety efforts to increase the positive perception held by the parents and general community of the district.

A SAMPLE FROM THE FINAL REPORT

The survey respondents were asked if they trust the school board and administration. A total of 320 survey respondents answered this question, and the average rating was 2.84 on a 1 to 4 scale.



Residents Trust School Board/ Administration

ABOUT PERSPECTIVES

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. is dedicated to the mission of providing information and planning that make the difference. Our primary focus is meeting the market research and strategic planning needs of businesses, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, governmental agencies, religious organizations, and United Ways throughout the United States.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. uses state-of-the-art market research techniques to obtain the information necessary to make efficient and effective decisions and plan for the future. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. offers a full-range of planning services including facilitated strategic planning, market assessment, and feasibility studies that are essential to succeed in today's marketplace.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. was founded in 1987 by Gary M. Goscenski, Director of Consulting Services and Dr. Paul M. Lane, Senior Consultant and is located in Paw Paw, Michigan.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 496
Paw Paw, MI 49079

P • 269.657.5400/800.724.9994
F • 269.657-0500
www.perspec.com

Residents trust the Lakeview School District school board and administration (320 respondents – average 2.84)

An analysis of differences between survey respondents is completed. In this case, several demographic groups rated this question higher.

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: Respondents age 18-34 (2.92), respondents who live near Westlake Elementary (2.91), and respondents who have lived in the area 1-2 years (2.96).

There were also correlations between this question and how survey respondents answered questions about district finances and communication. This shows how different aspects of the district all influence residents' perceptions.

There is a strong correlation between the statement, "Residents trust the Lakeview School District school board and administration," and the statement, "Lakeview School District finances are handled in a responsible manner." Respondents that agreed residents trust the school board and administration were more likely to agree that finances are handled in a responsible manner.

There is a strong correlation between the statement, "Residents trust the Lakeview School District school board and administration," and the statement, "Communication received from the Lakeview School District is open and honest." Respondents that agreed residents trust the school board and administration were more likely to agree that communication received from the Lakeview School District is open and honest.



Perspectives
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