



## **2024 School Climate Survey**

### **Open-Ended Responses**

### ***Staff Summary Report***

# Overview

The 2024 Romeo Community Schools' School Climate Survey included two optional, open-ended questions that survey respondents were asked to complete. Although there was no limit to the length of these individual responses, the intent of the questions was to seek the highest priority answer as it relates to the specific question. Parents, staff, and students in grades 6-12 were asked the same two questions.

***In your opinion, what is the single best thing about your (your child's) school?***

***If you could change one thing at your (your child's) school, what one thing would you change?***

This report provides a summary of staff responses. Responses for parents and students in grades 6-12 are available in separate reports.

## Summary Report

There were over 5,000 individual answers to the two questions across all survey groups. The responses were screened three times by both Mischoolresearch staff and the District Survey Team. Personal names, vulgarities and profanities were redacted from responses. Inappropriate comments were removed in their entirety.

Initially the district leaders spent several hours analyzing the staff responses with the intent of identifying common "themes" that were mentioned with some level of frequency. The staff responses were then turned over to the principals to be analyzed for the top themes at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

In this district level report readers will find the most prevalent themes shared by staff (at each level). When a theme is identified there will also be a series of actual responses that represent or give examples of the intent of the theme. Major themes in most cases have been mentioned at a rate of 10% or greater of the total responses. Secondary themes may have been documented for use within specific school communities but are not included in this report.

These themes support our overall "Key Takeaways" from this second administration of the survey. Additionally, they are considered in support of the district's Strategic Plan, helping to assess areas of success as well as areas for continued focus and growth. Our Strategic Plan Focus Area teams will also consider themes that may identify areas that need to be included in future efforts. Finally, each principal is conducting a separate analysis of the responses from their school community that will lead to building specific initiatives to improve school climate as needed.

# Staff Response Summary

## *Elementary Level*

**Question 31: *In your opinion, what is the single best thing about your school?***

### ***Theme #1: Staff, colleagues and relationships***

Summary: A theme from the survey that captures the vast majority of responses is that our staff members feel that the relationships they build with their colleagues are the best thing about their schools. Staff feedback emphasized the level of dedication and passion their colleagues demonstrate for their craft. An overarching theme was that by providing extra care and support for their students, they were unified in a common goal to provide the best education possible for all students.

#### **Example responses:**

*“Our staff! We are dedicated and passionate. We love one another and our students like they are our own family!”*

*“The feeling of FAMILY. All staff members no matter their actual position are treated with respect and know that others care about them and are invested in their lives. It all starts at the top and we have an AMAZING principal who cares about everyone and isn't afraid to get dirty and join in on the fun as well as the trying times.”*

*“The single best thing about my school is the staff. They are amazing educators who want the best for their students. As a new teacher, the staff has been very welcoming and helpful for me as I learn about school procedures.”*

### ***Theme #2: Community feel and building/district culture***

Summary: A significant number of staff responses stated a positive culture is present at all levels within Romeo Community Schools. It was also stated that one of our strengths is a sense of community and a culture of support and collaboration.

#### **Example responses:**

*“My school has such a strong sense of community. The staff is so supportive of one another and the students.”*

*“The sense of community the staff have that reflects on the students in the classrooms.”*

*“The single best thing about our school is that it is such a collaborative and supportive environment to work in. Both administration and colleagues are always willing to help when someone is in need and are happy to celebrate one another’s success.”*

### **Theme #3: Leadership**

Summary: A primary theme of elementary staff emphasized respondents feeling positive about the leadership in their buildings. Responses included specific examples such as principals who support students, families and staff, contributing to that overall sense of community.

#### **Example responses:**

*“Our leadership which extends to the rest of the staff and students builds a very strong sense of community.”*

*“We have the best principal who shows so much love and support to all the school families!”*

*“I believe that our leadership is the best thing. It allows me to focus on teaching and working with my students and not other issues that arise throughout the day.”*

### **Question 32: If you could change one thing at your school, what one thing would you change?**

#### **Theme #1: Student supports**

Summary: A number of survey responses indicated a need for more intervention and support for students, specifically in special education and the English Learners program. There were some examples expressed about the need for more specific support staff. Additionally, meeting the needs of our most challenged learners within the new Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts curriculum as teachers work through the first year of implementation.

#### **Example responses:**

*“More staffing for students who need intensive interventions. An additional social worker. One is not enough to handle all the issues that come up. Ours is too occupied with our special ed students so gen ed students that need support do not receive it.”*

*“CKLA is not meeting the needs of my students in tier 2 & 3. The phonics instruction is not explicitly taught. Phonics First should be our primary program for phonics. It was more effective and we saw growth in reading and spelling in our students with intensive needs.”*

*“I would provide more EL support throughout the district.”*

## **Theme #2: Behavior/consequences/discipline**

Summary: Fostering an environment of respect for self and others was a theme among staff responses. An area of concern was the potential for behavioral issues to disrupt the learning environment. Also cited was the importance of positive reinforcement of good behavior while it was also stressed that consequences must be enforced for poor behavior.

### **Example responses:**

*"Teaching students about respecting teachers and each other."*

*"How to handle students that are physically dangerous and don't follow school rules. We can't keep allowing them to distract other students from learning. There need to be actual consequences. We can't keep passing along students just because they have troubled home life. They need to actually attempt school work."*

*"I wish students that had positive behavior were rewarded or acknowledged more often than students that did not have positive behavior."*

## **Theme #3: Facilities**

Summary: While overall facilities at the elementary level are viewed positively, areas cited for improvement included routine cleaning, playgrounds and black top. Also cited was the need for additional space for small group instruction or private meetings.

### **Example responses:**

*"More space available (and considered) for interventionists, specialists and ancillary staff which would support the ability to work with small groups, meet with individual students, have small consultative meetings, and meet with parents."*

*"The floors are sometimes really dirty even if the custodians clean."*

*"I would have the playgrounds updated and the black top fixed."*

# Parent Response Summary

## *Middle School*

### **Question 31: *In your opinion, what is the single best thing about your school?***

#### ***Theme #1: Colleagues/relationships***

Summary: It's no surprise that staff members should rank their relationships with their colleagues high, with a common theme that staff is united in a common goal to provide the best education possible for all students. A genuine care, concern and willingness to do whatever it takes to meet student needs is something these staff members value.

#### **Example responses:**

*"The staff is creative, invested and genuinely cares about kids."*

*"The single best thing about my school are the students and staff. The staff are amazing at what they do and the majority of them are here for the right reasons, this then makes our students amazing too!"*

*"I believe we have a lot of amazing teachers and support staff who want the best for our students."*

#### ***Theme #2: Community***

Summary: Romeo Community Schools is often described as a family, and this feeling is echoed by staff members at the middle school level. Creating a sense of community is a common theme in responses and the appreciation for how staff members support each other in addition to students is prevalent.

#### **Example responses:**

*"The school has a connection to the community and people are about one another."*

*"The sense of community. I feel it and I hope the students feel it as well."*

*"We come together as a community when a need arises."*

#### ***Theme #3: Programs and structures for students***

Summary: Many staff responses noted the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues as an asset and something that is beneficial to supporting students. While it provides benefits to staff members, the consensus is that it is also what is best for students.

**Example responses:**

*"I love that we have Advisory and Teaming. It has been so beneficial to come up with Team identities, strategies, celebrations, interventions, etc."*

*"I think implementing SLC time is a significant aspect to supporting students."*

*"Teaming (which still needs improvements) but overall it's what is best for the kiddos."*

**Question 32: If you could change one thing at your school, what one thing would you change?****Theme #1: Discipline/follow-through**

Summary: Discipline, student conduct, and dress code were comments that were stated with notable frequency in this portion of the survey. This shows that we still have work to do in the area of expectations for our students. The need for consistent implementation of expectations on behalf of all staff and ensuring there are consequences for bad choices. Communication and followthrough with staff about discipline was also referenced as an area that requires more attention. Finally, teaching students about respect and acceptance is represented in staff responses.

**Example responses:**

*"Consistency of all teachers following through with the rules for the kids - such as dress code."*

*"Giving and following through with consequences for those students who do not follow/meet building and classroom expectations."*

*"Clear expectations and boundaries for students and discipline and follow-through for those that need it,"*

**Theme #2: Programs/structures**

Summary: While the importance of giving time for staff to work in teams was mentioned as a positive, there were also responses about needing more time to build and strengthen relationships among staff members. Additionally, the need for intentional department/curriculum planning time as part of the teaming structure was referenced. Improvement to the current teaming model to eliminate cross grade level teams was noted.

**Example responses:**

*"Give more time for staff to work with their department."*

*"I wish I had more time with my department/grade level. I wish I had time with my whole grade level and my whole team."*

*"I think that implementing true teaming (no split teams) would be the most impactful thing we could do in our building. It would improve staff morale, and strengthen relationships between staff, between students, and between staff and students. I believe that it would improve the quality of lessons, and reduce staff burnout."*

### **Theme #3: Facilities**

Summary: Inconsistencies in heating and cooling, plumbing issues and overall cleanliness were cited among staff responses.

#### **Example responses:**

*"Heating/cooling problems and the brown water coming out of the sink in the bathroom all year."*

*"The building needs to be more presentable and comfortable. Halls are overcrowded and busy. Things are dirty."*

*"The building conditions for staff members."*



# Parent Response Summary

## High School

### Question 31: *In your opinion, what is the single best thing about your school?*

#### **Theme #1: Colleagues/relationships**

Summary: Support for one another, students, families and the community was cited as an overarching theme. A passion for what they teach, a commitment to their students, and dedication to putting student needs first were emphasized.

#### **Example responses:**

*"I absolutely love my colleagues. The faculty and staff members at this school are collaborative and supportive. I truly feel like the people I teach with would do anything to help when needed. The level of instruction happening at the high school level is incredible. I hope our students know how lucky they are to have teachers who reflect on their craft in order to improve it day after day, year after year."*

*"The staff is the best thing about RHS. The majority of staff members are passionate about what they teach and excited about who they teach their content to. The staff at RHS makes a meaningful impact on the education of the students. RHS staff cares about students are people and as learners."*

*"Staff. Honestly. They work so hard to teach students and make learning fun. The nice building is a plus but the academies coming to fruition are on the staff. Without them there is none of that. Staff care about students and enjoy what they do."*

#### **Theme #2: Programs/structures**

Summary: A predominant theme from the survey is the positive impact of the continued growth of the Academies structure. The structures are supporting enhanced learning, engagement, accountability and increasing opportunities.

#### **Example responses:**

*"I think that the Academy program has re-energized the staff and created focus for students. The SLC process is another level of accountability and support for students. I think that we are creating better connections."*

*"I believe our district is constantly trying to improve upon the current structure in place. There is a growth minded approach to enhancing student learning, engagement, and connection to our*

community.”

*“The Academies - this structure allows for students to excel and staff to work together for the students.”*

### **Theme #3: Students**

Summary: Staff members have listed the students as one of the best parts of their job and what keeps them motivated in spite of some of the challenges and obstacles they face.

#### **Example responses:**

*“Our students. Despite the challenges, the students I interact with every day are the best thing about my job and the best thing about this school.”*

*“Students who are positive contributors to the classroom and school.”*

*“Most of the students in my program truly care about others.”*

### **Question 32: If you could change one thing at your school, what one thing would you change?**

#### **Theme #1: Student supports**

Summary: Similar to other grade levels, staff expressed a desire for more support for English Learners, at-risk students and students with special needs, as well as for general education teachers who may not be equipped to handle the needs of all students.

#### **Example responses:**

*“I wish there was more Newcomer ELL support at the high school level and that the approach with these students was consistent. There are students who do not proficiently speak English who are not getting the help and resources they need to succeed in our district. I was able to attend a Newcomer's Summit in Lansing this past summer, and I wish that every teacher at the high school could attend that training because it provided simple yet effective ways to accommodate Multilingual Language Learners in our district.”*

*“I would offer more support to general education teachers who have a high number of IEP/504/ELL students.”*

*“That special education was thought of when decisions are made and not after. This is not just at the building level, this is district wide.”*

#### **Theme #2: Program structures**

Summary: There is still some resistance to the block scheduling more often at the 9th grade

level. Additionally, the desire for more structure regarding cross-curricular, business-connected projects, which are perceived as more impactful in some subject areas than others.

**Example responses:**

*"Block scheduling - go back to 60 minute classes. Students are getting burned out, and we are losing curriculum time."*

*"Maybe add academy activities for students - a chance to connect with each other on a smaller scale than school wide assemblies. Or pair up groups of students between academies."*

*"Academy projects. We really don't know what we are doing to get the core Academy Model projects off the ground. We have no direction from leadership when asked what our goals are. We are grasping at straws to make the "partners" work. Most just don't fit. Many staff members are going through the motions because it is obvious that the proposed projects will not benefit the students' learning process as a whole. The Academy Projects/Partnerships - the core of the entire program- need to be rethought. We are attempting to put a square peg in a round hole. We need goals and a vision. We do not want to squander a good program."*

***Theme #3: Culture/relationships within the building***

Summary: Staff expressed a desire for more formal and informal programming to promote school spirit and improved culture with an emphasis on pride and shared responsibility.

**Example responses:**

*"I think we could do more to promote school spirit. It seems like pep assemblies and spirit weeks aren't what they used to be. We can do more to foster a sense of pride in our school and our community."*

*"I would like to see programs offered (during the school day) to the school as a whole, such as motivational speakers or other positive information."*

*"School climate and team/shared responsibility mentality."*