



Retiree Communication Focus Group

Committee Members:

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The Project

Explore and evaluate the communication between the Sycamore Community School District and the retired and/or senior citizens of the Sycamore Community School District.



Demographic

National Center for Education Statistics

Dataset: CENSUS 2010
 Geography: Sycamore Community City School District, OH

	Population	
	Under 18 years	18 years and over
Total	8,033	20,062

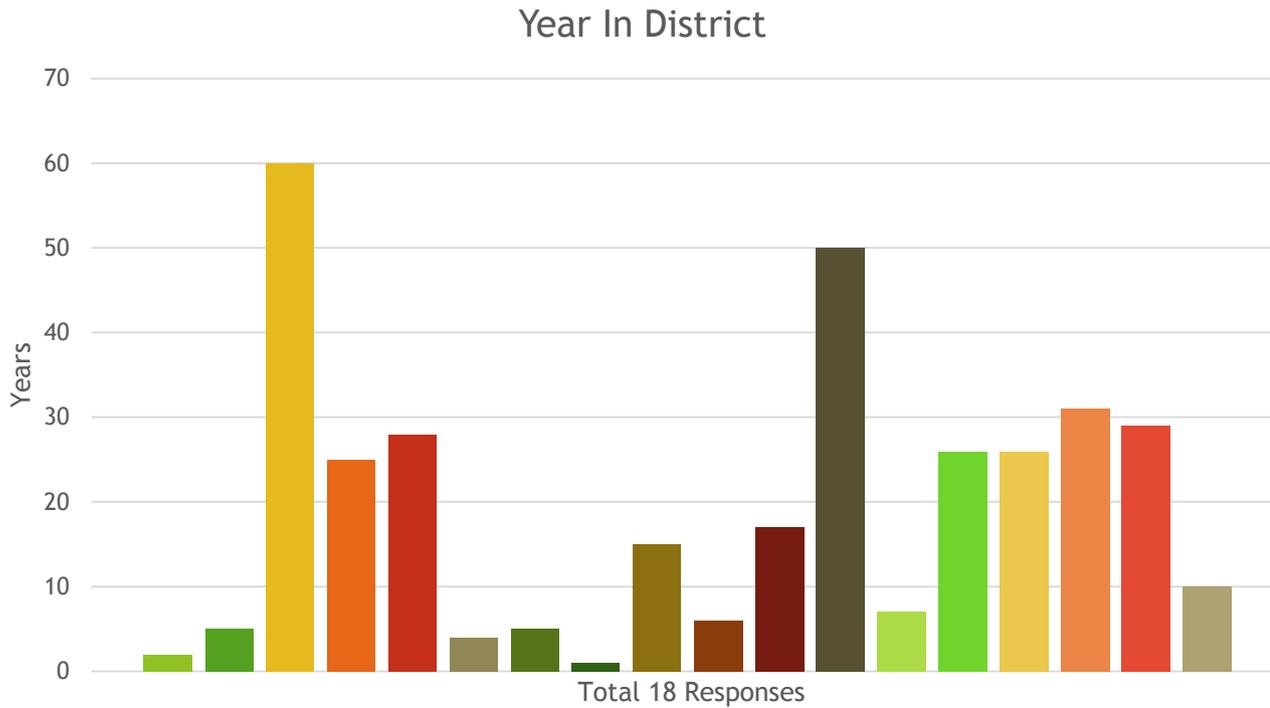
Population 65 years and over	In family households	Householder	In nonfamily households
5,321	3,400	1,820	1,662





Focus Group Questions

1. How long have you lived in the Sycamore Community School District?



Avg. years	19.3
<10 years	8
>10 years	10
median	17

14 people at the Sycamore Senior Center
4 people at Twin Lakes

Focus Group Questions

2. What are the reasons you moved to or have stayed in the local community?



Activities
Community
Doctors
Downsizing
Family
Friends
Safety
Schools



Focus Group Questions

3. Do you have any ongoing communication/information about Sycamore Schools?

33% Yes

67% No



4. Have you been in any of the Sycamore Schools? Reason?

67% Yes

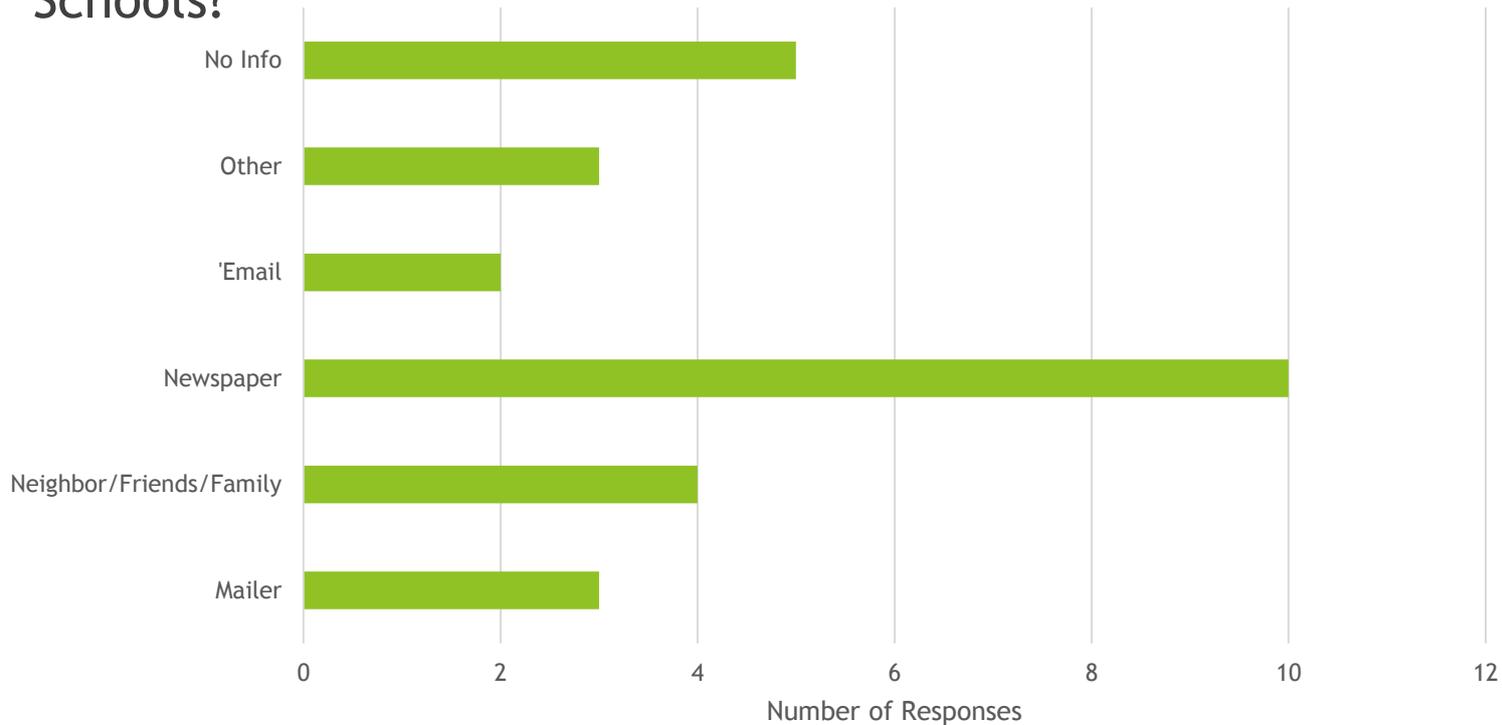
33% No

Reasons: Shows, Sports, Kids Attended, Grandkids, Meeting, & Lectures.



Focus Group Questions

4. How do you get most of your news and information about Sycamore Schools?



Half of the positive responses stated they received their information about Sycamore Schools from the **newspaper** (probably intermittent), while one-quarter had information from family/friends/neighbors (possibly from grandchildren who attend schools). Very few received flyers or emails.



Focus Group Questions

5. Have you had interactions with the Sycamore School students or faculty outside the school environment?

67% Yes

33% No

Only 6 (33%) respondents have had **no contact** outside of the school environment, while 12 (67%) answer affirmatively. There was no delineation whether this was personal contact (e.g. with their relatives) or institutional contact (e.g. with the School District).



Focus Group Questions

➤ Would you like to have interactions the Sycamore Schools (e.g. volunteers, performances)?

100% YES

All of those surveyed **would like contact** with Sycamore Schools. The questionnaire did not ask whether that would be within or outside actual school environments, or whether the contact would be information about the District or attendance at school events.

Conclusion



- ▶ Respondents tend to have long residency but limited contact and information with the schools, except for those who have grandkids that attend Sycamore.
- ▶ Their current information about the Schools comes from sporadic coverage in newspapers and word-of-mouth from friends and family.
- ▶ The two locations visited for the focus had different procedures for disseminating information, e.g. news letters - printed & emails, bulletin boards, & flyers.
- ▶ The seniors have different technology access, e.g. Email to no email.
- ▶ During the focus group talks many wanted to volunteer in the schools. Some like set schedule and some wanted various dates and times.





Recommendation



▶ Advertise different ways to get information.

▶ Since retirees seem to want more contact with Sycamore Schools, we should promote the availability and use of Gold Cards among that community.

▶ Setup a volunteer program for seniors.

▶ Assign an advocate for dialog between the Schools and the retired and/or senior citizens of the Sycamore Community School District.

▶ The 'Senior Connection' could become a planning process to develop and share ideas between representatives of the Sycamore Senior Center and Seniors from the High School:

Concept:

- (1) Seniors in life and in high school are at different stages;
- (2) One group embarks on a life filled with unknowns; the other group has experienced many pitfalls and gained survival skills and perhaps even wisdom.
- (3) There are elements of technology which older people want to learn; while the young group needs to appreciate history, on the micro and mega scales;
- (4) Both groups might be eager to share.

