



Vision and Mission Surveys: Information Summary

Prepared By:



March 2010

Background

In fall 2009, the Louis Riel School Division initiated a process to survey parents, students and staff in the Division regarding the Division's **Vision and Mission**.

The Division contracted with Proactive Information Services Inc., a Manitoba-based social research and evaluation company to provide technical support for the process.¹ Proactive assisted with questionnaire design, administration, analysis and preparation of this Information Summary.

The questionnaires were developed in October 2009 with all three surveys containing the same basic core questions. All were administered as web-surveys, for completion during November 2009. The parent survey was also available in paper form. Some wording was adjusted for the student survey.

Students in Grades 5 to 12 were invited to participate. All staff in the Division were potential respondents. When parents attended the November student progress conferences, they were offered the opportunity of responding on-line in the school computer lab or of completing a paper questionnaire.

¹ Proactive Information Services Inc. was established in 1984 specifically to provide research and evaluation services to clients in the public and non-profit sectors. Proactive's clients include ministries of education, school divisions/districts, foundations, and other NGOs in Canada and internationally. For more information on Proactive, visit www.proactive.mb.ca.

Response and Respondent Characteristics

Completed surveys were received from:

- ✦ **3,266 parents**, representing approximately **35%** of total possible families who could have responded;
- ✦ **7,153 students** in Grades 5 to 12, representing approximately **77%** of the student population in these grades;
- ✦ **1,744 Division staff**, representing **88%** of the total possible staff respondents.

The numbers and response rates provide sufficient data for analytical purposes.

Parents

Parent respondents most often had **two children** in the Division (46%), followed by 41% with one child.

Parents indicated that they had children **attending school in the Division** for:

Less than a year	9%
1 to 4 years	34%
5 to 9 years	36%
10 years or more	21%

Parents reported that they had children in the following **grade levels**:

Grades K – 4	57%
Grades 5 – 8	57%
Grades 9 – 12	28%

Nine percent of parent respondents (n=296) indicated they were an Aboriginal person (First Nations, Métis, Inuit), while 8% (261) identified themselves as a newcomer to Canada.

83% of parents indicated that English was their first language, while 76% of newcomers to Canada, reported a first language other than English, French, or a Canadian Aboriginal language.

Students

Student respondents were **evenly divided between middle and senior years**, with 47% in Grades 5 to 8 and 53% in Grades 9 to 12.

There was an **even gender distribution**; 50% female, 50% male. **English** was identified as their first language by **88% of students**.

Staff

Table 1 shows the distribution* of staff respondents by their current assignment.

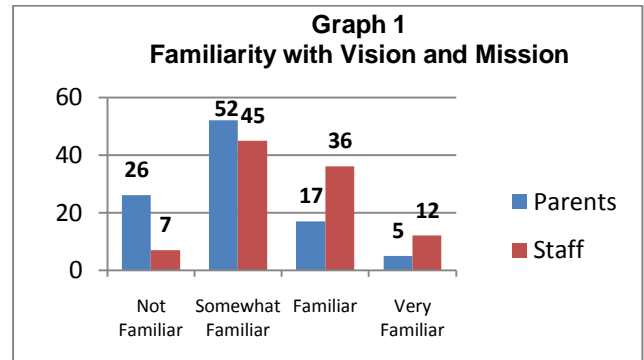
Assignment	N	%
Classroom Teacher	745	43%
Teacher in Support Role (e.g. student services)	164	9%
Administrator	79	5%
Educational Assistant	404	23%
Non-teaching Staff in School - Clerical	82	5%
Non-teaching Staff in School – Custodians, Library Technicians etc.	116	7%
Non-teaching Staff in Division/ Board Office	79	5%
Educator/Professional in Division/ Board Office	75	4%

(*Rounded to whole percentage points)

One-third of respondents (32%) had worked in the Division for **more than 15 years**, while 25% had worked in the Division for fewer than five years.

Familiarity with Division Vision and Mission

Parents and Division staff were asked to indicate how familiar they were with the Division’s Vision and Mission Statements. Graph 1 shows the comparison between Division staff and parents.

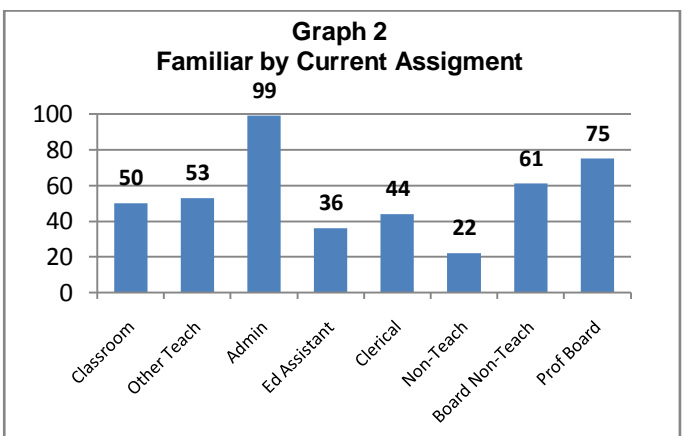


Divisional staff reported greater familiarity with the Vision and Mission than did parents. About a quarter of parents (26%) indicated they were not familiar at all with the Vision and Mission of the Division.

Overall **parents** were most likely to indicate they were “somewhat familiar” (45%). Those who identified themselves as newcomers to Canada were more likely than other groups to indicate they were “not familiar at all” (38%).

Of those parents who reported being “very familiar” with the Vision and Mission, 42% had attended a discussion on school priorities at their child’s school.

Staff responses grouped by “familiar” and “very familiar” differed by role (Graph 2). Also, 64% of staff who had been in the Division for more than 15 years indicated higher levels of familiarity with the Vision and Mission.



Vision

All groups were asked to respond to questions regarding how well Louis Riel School Division meets various aspects of its Vision.

Table 2 shows how the three respondent groups compare on “agreeing”² that the Division supports its students in various areas. **Approximately 90% or more** of all respondent groups believed the Division was **successful in every aspect of the Vision**.

Aspect of Vision	Parents	Students	Staff
Caring person	98%	87%	97%
Literate person	98%	96%	95%
Capable person	99%	93%	96%
Person who values learning	96%	92%	93%
Person who strives to reach his/her own potential	94%	90%	92%
Person who cares about the common good	98%	89%	94%

Responses were also analyzed regarding the percentage of respondents who **“strongly”** agreed. Given the high percentage who agreed, observing even minor differences in strong agreement might provide additional insights.

Regarding **students**, 60% “strongly” agreed that they were becoming **literate** as a result of being students in Louis Riel School Division. They were less likely to “strongly” agree that the Division helped them become caring people (29%). In all areas, female students responded more positively than males. Students at Grades 5 to 8 were more likely than their older counterparts to “strongly” agree in all areas. For example, 40% of students in Grades 5 to 8 “strongly” agreed they were helped to become caring people, as compared to 20% of students in Grades 9 to 12.

While few differences emerged by grade level of their oldest child, **parents** with children in Grades 9 to 12 were less likely to “strongly” agree that the aspects of the Vision were evident. For example, 50% “strongly” agreed that their children were learning to be **caring people** (as compared to 56% overall).

² “Agreement” combines “agree” and “strongly agree” both Tables 2 and 3.

Overall, 62% of newcomer parents “strongly” agreed their children were learning to be caring people.

Staff more frequently agreed “strongly” with the statement that schooling in LRSD helped students become **caring people** (36%). They were less likely to “strongly” agree that students become people who strive to reach their potential. Staff working at the Grade 9 to 12 level were less likely to “strongly agree” with the Division’s progress towards realizing all aspects of the Vision.

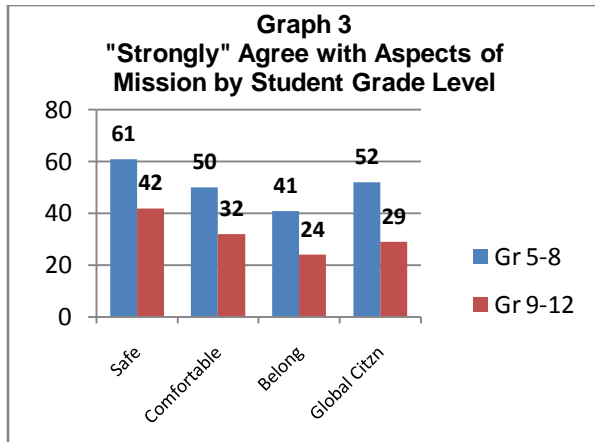
Mission

All groups were also asked to respond to questions regarding how well Louis Riel School Division meets various aspects of its Mission. However, students were not asked to assess “respectful home, school and community partnerships.” Table 3 illustrates the “agreement” of the various groups with the key aspects of the Division’s Mission. There is **high agreement** across all groups.

Aspect of Mission	Parents	Students	Staff
Safe learning environment	97%	93%	97%
Inviting learning environment	98%	87%	97%
Inclusive learning environment	97%	78%	96%
Development of responsible global citizens	97%	89%	94%
Respectful home, school and community partnerships	97%	n/a	95%

Again, responses were analyzed regarding the percentage of respondents who **“strongly”** agreed.

Students were most likely to “strongly” agree with the statement that their school was a **safe place to learn** (51%). They “strongly” agreed less often that their school was an inclusive environment where they “belonged” (32%). Again, students in Grades 5 to 8 were more likely than their older peers to strongly agree in all areas (Graph 3).



Parents most frequently “strongly” agreed that schools fostered a **safe learning environment** (55%). Similar to the results regarding the divisional Vision, parents whose oldest child was in high school were less likely to “strongly” agree that the school fostered aspects of the Mission. Parents who identified themselves as newcomers to Canada were the parental group most likely to “strongly” agree that all aspects of the Mission were fostered.

Consistent with students and parents, Division **staff** most “strongly” agreed that schools fostered a **safe learning environment** (45%).

Staff at the high school level less frequently expressed strong agreement than their counterparts at other levels regarding realization of the various aspects of the Mission. For example, while 42% of the total staff “strongly” agreed that an inclusive learning environment was promoted in schools, 34% of staff at the Grade 9 to 12 level “strongly” agreed with that statement.

Parent Involvement and Information

Parents were also asked questions regarding their involvement in their child’s school and how they accessed information from the school.

Involvement

Table 4 shows the top five ways parents are **involved with their child’s school**. The greatest range of difference in involvement lay between the third and fourth ranked nature of involvement.

	%	Rank
Helped my child at home	97%	1
Attended a performance/special event	88%	2
Attended a student progress conference	85%	3
Worked as a volunteer	56%	4
Attended a sports/athletic event	54%	5

Parents who identified themselves as newcomers to Canada were less likely than other parents to have been involved in ways such as working as a volunteer (24% as compared to 56%), attending a school performance/special event (64% as compared to 88%), or supervising a field trip (16% as compared to 40%).

Compared to parents of younger children, parents of high school students more frequently reported having attended a sports/athletic event (73%) and less frequently reported having supervised a field trip (33%).

Information

	%	Rank
Report cards	97%	1
From my child	96%	2
Take home notices	96%	2
Student progress conferences	93%	4
School newsletter	91%	5

Parents indicated they were least likely to visit a classroom website (14%), be involved in a school committee (17%), or get information from their neighbours (28%).

Newcomer parents were less likely than others to visit the school website (35% as compared to 59% of all respondents). Both Aboriginal (39%) and newcomer (31%) parents reported being less likely than the overall respondent population (50%) to get information via email.

Parents of high school students were less likely than other parents to report relying on student planning/agenda books as a source of information (66% as compared to 77% overall).

In Conclusion

According to respondents, the schools of the Louis Riel School Division effectively realize the key aspects of the Vision and Mission. The consistently high totals of **combined “agreement” and “strong agreement”** expressed by the three respondent groups do not suggest dissonant viewpoints.

However, the Division may wish to consider further inquiry amongst student respondents regarding the inclusivity they report experiencing in their schools.

The Division may also wish to consider two follow-up activities with staff teams:

- ✦ further research into the differences between staff working in senior years and elementary settings,
- ✦ activity to increase awareness in staff groups whose length of employment in the division may be a relevant factor.

The aim of the survey was to assess the Division’s success with realizing actions to support the statements, **as distinct from** familiarity with the statements as one element of the Division’s communication plan.

While some variations emerged by certain role and demographic characteristics, the responses of all groups, regarding the statements of Vision and Mission as a **conceptual entity**, demonstrate high agreement that the Division’s schools effectively **realize the actual elements** or “goals” embedded within the Vision and Mission statements.

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