



Community Thoughts – Hamden School Redistricting

As you may know, the Hamden Board of Education is involved in the “3R” (*Rethink, Restructure, Results*) initiative, which will examine and ultimately implement changes to Hamden’s elementary school organization and attendance zones. The initiative goals are to improve student learning experiences and ensure a long-term financially sustainable school system of excellence.

In an effort to better understand the concerns and ideas of our community members around this initiative, the district solicited feedback in late August and early September 2018, through an online tool called ThoughtExchange. The Board is reviewing the results and is grateful for the input of so many. This page includes a summary of the results of our ThoughtExchange.

Participation

Just under 1000 participants visited to share and rate ideas. Though some schools had more participation, most schools were well represented according to their total student population. The table to the right shows participation by school community as well as those who do not currently have children in an elementary school in Hamden. These numbers include 14 students and 152 staff members.

	Number of Participants
Alice Peck	12
Bear Path	90
Church Street	23
Dunbar Hill	33
Helen Street	32
Ridge Hill	42
Shepherd Glen	33
Spring Glen	141
West Woods	75
Wintergreen (ACES)	57
Did not specify	132
No children currently in Hamden elementary	320

“Every child deserves an equitable, enriching education, and everyone wins when our collective educational experiences improve.”

(One of the top-ranked thoughts shared by a community member.)

“All decisions should be based upon what is best for our kids first.”

(One of the top-ranked thoughts shared by a community member.)

Big Ideas

Two central themes emerged among all the ideas shared and rated:

1. Every Hamden student deserves a high-quality education;
2. Class sizes should remain at a level that allows students to learn and teachers to teach.

Other highly-rated ideas included:

- Importance of adequate planning and strategies for upcoming changes
- Recognition that schools are communities
- Importance of family and staff input in change process

Big Ideas - Representative Thoughts

High Quality Education – What Matters?

- *“All students have equal opportunity for an excellent education with a diverse community of children and teachers. Education quality/diversity should not be dictated by where you live.”*
- *“We want to make sure they (students) get the same education or better than they have now.”*
- *“Providing quality education for EVERYONE regardless of where you live.”*
- *“I want to ensure that all of Hamden’s students have equitable academic and social experiences.”*

Class Size – What Matters?

- *“I would like to see a reasonable ratio of teachers to students.”*
- *“I want my child to get a good level of attention from the teacher.”*
- *“I love the fact that although my son is in a public school, his class size is small. I hope that closures and/or redistricting won’t change that and have 30 kids in a class fighting for desks and other resources.”*