

Comments from the Parent survey (April 2004, rev. 5/24)

Additional comments regarding homework:

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191

29.32% (56 respondents answered)

[978979](#)) For much of the homework, I can only assume that the assumption is that it is the parent's responsibility to teach the concepts. There often seems to have been little classroom discussions regarding the content of the assignments.

[978988](#)) The math homework is often confusing. The materials from Scott Foresman. My child prefers the teacher generated materials and seems to retain more info. from such materials.

[978993](#)) Extracurricular activities are more important than homework at this age.

[979027](#)) I have noticed that multiple homework assignments did not have directions on them or there were no examples of the math problems because the math book home. It would be helpful if the class took notes to bring home or some sort of written directions.

[979039](#)) Homework assignments could be more challenging. Can some of that be done on-line?

[979052](#)) My daughter is eager to do the homework and particularly likes projects. My son, now in 6th grade, did not take to the homework and projects so easily. The homework level for my daughter is exactly appropriate.

[979236](#)) Much of it is banal, even for first graders.

[979354](#)) I thought that there was too much homework in the 1st grade

2 years ago). But the amounts in 2nd and 3rd grade have seemed just right. I think it's good for the kids to start learning to budget their time while doing 2 and 3-week projects as homework.

[979355](#)) My question is if so much home work has a positive effect. In other well developed countries, children start to learn the "ABC" with 6. In the U.S., a 6 or 7 year-old child is already reading. Is that necessary?? Or shouldn't children at this age spend more time learning by playing instead of learning the seriousness of life?

[979651](#)) Much of the homework feels like busy work. For a child needing differentiated academics, most of the homework is an exercise in pushing a pencil, not the brain. I do like the emphasis on reading at home.

[979675](#)) none

[980193](#)) There should be challenging homework also on the math/logic side

[980226](#)) Amount is usually OK. A few times there was too much. Repeating things done in class can be a waste of time if the child already understands the work. The larger, longer term projects were excellent.

[980639](#)) They do not need any homework in first grade, too young, the only requirement should be reading 20 minutes per night.

[981987](#)) I think there is too much homework early on, and that it contributes to the busy life syndrome for 6 and 7 year olds. I don't object to homework when it is used for reinforcing skills, but I don't think kids this young should be having to practice doing homework.

[982104](#)) I'd like to see more writing, preferably 2 or three paragraphs in length. There is never any science homework, I'd like to see this changed.

[982118](#)) There's been a huge swing in the amount of time homework has taken. There are months when my 3rd grader is consistently doing 2 hours or MORE per night, followed by a month where he's doing only 45 minutes.

[982129](#)) I'm not pleased with the math homework. It's often ambiguous and isn't accompanied by any material that the child can refer to when they've forgotten how to do the problem.

[982143](#)) Not enough repetition work assigned during the time where children are acquiring core skills such as multiplication or basic set of spelling words. Not all children need the work but at least make it available - such as on the Nixon Website.

[982148](#)) Kids need a chance to be kids. But they often have very little time left for that. The kids who aren't at the top of their class really bear a burden because the homework takes a long time, and then other work comes home as well. And then they have no time for sports or scouting or other activities which are just as important as school. I would like to see less homework overall.

[982158](#)) Sometimes there are parts of my first grader's homework that seem pure busy work - multiple word-finds one week come to mind. I wanted to tell him that completing all of them was optional

because it didn't gain him much and it was taking a very long time) but he knows he is supposed to do all of his homework and felt bad not completing it.

[982175](#)) I just think that the first graders are not mature for so much homework as they normally have. I don't think that every thing in life should be just fun, but the kids should spend in my opinion more time playing so they can start gradually the life's earnest.

[982241](#)) Homework should only reinforce what is taught in the classroom. Occasional projects, such as book reports, also seems reasonable. The homework should be graded & returned by the following week so immediate feedback is obtained by the student. This has typically been our experience at Nixon through the years, but occasionally one teacher or another has a different plan. Grade level consistency with homework is extremely helpful. Teachers in grade levels should provide the same homework & work as a team.

[982696](#)) instructions are not always very clear and photocopies can be faded and hard to read

[982701](#)) Copies are not always clear and geometric shape problems cannot be done! Typo errors in instructions repeated every week. These should be corrected on the original.

[982836](#)) The extra credit assignments are an excellent approach to provide additional challenge and promote higher standard of learning.

[982968](#)) I have found the first grade homework to be appropriate, doable and even fun for my firstgrader

[982972](#)) Some of the California Math homework sheets look straightforward to an adult, but are actually very confusing to a child.

[982980](#)) My children are not challenged at school, and they often need to review materials they already mastered over and over and over again. Then they need to do the same thing for their homework. Consequently, they are bored to do homework, especially math. We do not understand why all students should do the same vocabulary list and math sheet for homework. Homework should be reflection of what a specific student actually needs to learn.

[982993](#)) The regular weekly assignments are fine, but I have found the writing projects in 2nd and 3rd grade to be difficult for my children and most others) to complete independently. Parents end up working too much on these biography and family tree projects. Most parents I have talked to feel the same. I would like to see written projects that children can work on independently.

[983067](#)) I do not feel that homework assignments are sufficiently tailored to my child, and upgraded as skills improve

[983634](#)) I feel Nixon is doing a great job with our kids.

[983755](#)) I like the fact that the whole week's homework is given on Monday, that way the students learn to budget their time to include extracurricular activities. Sometimes the xeroxed

sheets seem unrelated to curriculum and the seem like busy work. I don't see the need to have homework every night.

[983788](#)) Homework this year is relevant and appropriate, but I think there's too much. 2-3 days per week rather than every day would still be a lot for my family!

[983802](#)) Regarding Homework, I would like to see the advanced kids get a challenging homework v/s what all the kids in the class get.

[983869](#)) Occasional missed pages, not online, assignments are somewhat repetitive.

[983873](#)) I feel that there is too much in the early grades - especially for children who need help doing it. the children come home tired and then homework becomes a stressful learning activity between them and parents. reading would be enough.

[984060](#)) The kids shouldn't need to do homework in Grade 1. They are too young.

[984183](#)) The homework given is too little and I believe it does not prepare the student for 4th grade when they do a lot more HW. It does not set the basis for HW and future good study habits

[984277](#)) Insufficient depth or volume. The report cards does not express any individual analysis on how student performs at grade level or reflect timely individual progress.

[984871](#)) i find that some homework come home before it is taught in class. Not a lot, but sometimes.

[984901](#)) Too Much Homework

[985031](#)) I see very little science homework, and I think second-graders are capable of a longer-term science homework project. An example would be a journal consisting of drawings and descriptions of an outdoor location -- backyard or park -- as it changes throughout the school year, for example, how the weather changes, temperature charts, how the trees look, etc.

[985721](#)) Sometimes there is too much homework--more than one hour. If students need to do something creative

(write a poem with spelling words) or involved

(conducting or writing up an interview), this can be very time consuming and can require more adult supervision.

[985722](#)) I think homework are needed to reinforce what has been learned in the classroom and not the only time the child sees the material. Sometimes the expectations are unreasonable or the assignments are not challenging at all.

[986238](#)) Homework is sufficient

[988268](#)) My child really likes creative assignments

[988889](#)) I feel over the course of time at Nixon the homework assignments were unrelated to what was happening in class. I have loved the Spell It Write books versus the list of words for the week. There was no challenge in the list if you were a good speller. As for math I would have loved to see review /practice packets for those needed extra help;and for those that do not they can move on. Writing is lacking and I would have loved to have seen more. Writing/editing and rewriting a story is wonderful practice.

[988953](#)) Should be more practical and thought out. Just tear outs from books are not necessarily appropriate

[988993](#)) My child's had two different teachers, one for each half-year. The first half we had more than 2 hrs of homework each day; the second half different teacher) he's had practically no homework. The discrepancy seems bizarre and unreasonable.

[989100](#)) so far so good.

[989178](#)) Most homework assignments seem to be appropriate for my child to handle pretty much on his own, except the biography assignment. Quite often he seemed to be lost, so we had to guide him.

[990244](#)) We checked "yes" to the question about appropriate amount, but that's not always the case. It has varied a lot depending on how easily our child can do it, and the amount itself. During the first semester, we really struggled, working roughly an hour each night. Perhaps in response, our teacher has eased up. But we do think some homework is good - our child needs the repetition.

[990581](#)) Summing up for having seen 2 kids go or presently going) through Nixon, I think there has been too much homework for the younger grades (grades 1 - 3), but it gets reasonable for them in 4th grade since they are more mature maybe too much emphasis on book reports in 4th grade)

[990601](#)) For the most part I feel that the homework reflects what they are learning. It is usually needed practice to better understand a concept. Sometimes it is unnecessary busy work. I didn't feel that my 3rd grader was developmentally ready for the biography report.

[990804](#)) Too much!

If you have any comments regarding the learning environment at Nixon, please provide them here:

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191

27.23% (52 respondents answered)

[978979](#)) I am dissatisfied with the apportionment of time devoted to basic skills (math, reading, science) in proportion to "social" studies. Even in history, as an example, far too much time is spent studying "native Americans" - a topic covered exhaustively in each grade through 5 - at the expense of fundamental US and World history.

[979023](#)) the teachers and environment fully meet our needs.

[979027](#)) I have found all of my son's teachers to be compassionate, fair, organized and supportive. When my son started at Nixon this past fall he was behind his other classmates. Through reading academy and the support of his teachers, he made excellent progress. I am very grateful to the devoted staff.

[979033](#)) My daughter loves school. The school provides a nurturing, good environment, where she can learn and grow.

[979039](#)) Nixon families bring a vast array of cultural, educational and socio-economic backgrounds to our school community. It is a privilege to have our students in such a great setting!

[979044](#)) All of the "standardized" tests are a mystery to us - what ones are applied? what do they really show? do the teachers think they are worth taking or is it just a necessary evil in which case?)?

[979052](#)) Nixon has been a great environment for my children. My daughter looks forward to going to school everyday.

[979125](#)) Teacher has some problem teaching math.

[979236](#)) It's generally good.

[979354](#)) Our family is extremely satisfied with Nixon - with the quality and dedication of the teachers and staff, the general respect and liking of the children, the extra events provided by the PTA.

[979388](#)) It would be nice if the school could provide physical education for Kindergartners. We are grateful!

[979404](#)) So much at Nixon is so wonderful. There is one thing I find frustrating, however, the report cards. I have seen 3 years of report cards with 3 different teachers. There consistently seems to be an issue matching what I hear in the conference with what is rated on the card for the section related to meeting grade level, exceeding grade level etc (sorry I don't know the correct wording). An example: I will be told that a child in first grade is reading above grade level, then find that the corresponding box for reading skills is checked for meeting rather than exceeding on the form. Is the intent to compare the child's progress to objective grade level standards? If so, then it doesn't seem to happen that way in practice. It seems there is some pressure not to check the exceeding standard box, or perhaps never until the end of the year? I would love to have more information about how to interpret these forms or how they are treated by the staff. The comments are always useful, but the check boxes seem to be treated as an after thought, checking the middle box on down the full set of skills.

[979651](#)) Children would benefit from more differentiation and more ability grouping (flexibly implemented). The repetition in first grade makes it feel like more day care than school often. I think if the teachers were given more freedom of action and support, they have the skills to do so much more.

[980193](#)) Generally, we love the school and the teacher. The atmosphere and the family events are really nice. The reading/writing teaching is great. The math part is not sufficiently challenging - it seems that the class is progressing at the pace of weakest students.

[980226](#)) Overall excellent. Method of addressing behavior problems somewhat inconsistent. Swings from trying too hard to have the kids work it out to quick edicts without clear understanding of the situation.

[980639](#)) Need more aid hours so that kids that have extra needs can be supported.

[981987](#)) My children really enjoy any offerings in the arts/music/poetry. I wish the curriculum used art more creatively to teach fundamentals. I also worry about the needs of bright kids who are ready to learn, when one or two needy/disruptive kids can dominate a teacher's attention. I see this happening in my children's classes, but don't know what the solution is.

[982089](#)) Thanks!

[982129](#)) The learning environment at Nixon hasn't been optimum for my child's learning style. FAR too chaotic and too much group work, large projects, and art work. Not enough clear, concise practice. I know it sounds boring, but we've swung too far away from the basics! That's why there's such a waiting list on the direct instruction program at Terman, we're all worried about the large holes in our kids basic knowledge.

[982148](#)) I think the learning environment at Nixon is very good. I realize that you are often required to teach more than is reasonable. And hence the homework overload I complain about.

[982785](#)) The gate appears program is in name only, in spite of the rhetoric about it. There is no evidence for it's existence in k-3 and particularly grade 4. Clearly this is up to the individual teacher, which should not be the case. If Nixon chooses not to have a program that supports students who need an additional challenge, then admit that. Don't suggest that you have a program that you do not.

[982968](#)) I love the school and feel welcomed there by the staff and principal. I am very happy with the social and intellectual environment

[982972](#)) My criticism of some of the assessments (the Progress Reports and some of the assessments for the Literacy Portfolio) is that they "top out." Once a student reaches grade level

standards, the assessment tracking stops. That does not create a complete picture of a child's true academic profile.

[982980](#)) Not enough attention to needs of individual students, especially those who are more advanced. It would be better to have separate tracks or levels within each class, and appropriate expectations for each.

[982993](#)) I wish there wasn't so much testing, especially when the children are in 4-5 grades (state testing). I would like to see the writing process broken down more so that children can write more easily. The 6 traits of writing at the very young grades seems difficult for the kids to absorb.

[983024](#)) Not enough emphasis placed on writing skills. Furthermore, when students do writing assignments, teachers never seem to correct spelling and grammar or critique this work.

[982927](#)) NOTE ON THIS SURVEY - It would be good if you would tell at the beginning the number of screens that the survey will run, so people can estimate how long it will take to complete. If there were some way to leave and restart in the middle, that would be even better but I understand it may not be possible with this online survey tool).

[983755](#)) Wonderful

[983788](#)) Great learning environment, seems like most of the students exhibit a very high level of academic achievement and a good attitude towards school.

[983802](#)) I believe every child should be worked to reach their potential. Nixon is great at providing resources for under average kids but sadly lacking in resources to work with kids who are above average and need the right challenge and curriculum to keep them motivated. I personally believe for brighter kids it is too late to introduce them to the GATE program in Middle school v/s Elementary as they are already set in the mode to do only as much as is needed since the extra challenge was not provided to them in Elementary. Even though I supplement with advanced Math for the kids in my Son's class, I don't think using parent volunteers is the right way to approach this. These bright and energetic kids need a true professional teacher who is trained and understands how to work and bring out the best in them and help them reach their full potential, whatever that may be. I also noticed that a teacher's assistant in grade 1 does menial work versus actually helping in the class. This can be easily done by parent volunteers and it would be better to apply PTA resources to get assistants who actually help students in class. Having internship programs is a good thing which helps a teacher in class and lets the student-teacher learn in the right environment. For next year, I would like to see PTA dollars better utilized to hire some teachers even parttime) to challenge the advanced kids from K-3 as this is not provided currently. Another alternative which the school should seriously consider if it lacks resources is letting the child attend a class in another grade based on his/her ability. For eg. If the child is assessed to be a Grade-3 reader, then the child should be allowed to attend reading classes with grade 3 students) My last comment is in Student assessment and evaluation form. I was told that even though my child exceeds in certain areas currently, he will be only marked exceed at the end of the school year based on school policy. This doesn't sound right to me as a student's evaluation should indicate the correct assessment at that stage, which will help the school evaluate if they need to help this child in any way.

[983873](#)) excellent and creative

[985031](#)) The students seem to get wonderful individual attention, and an emphasis is placed on teaching students how to think as opposed to just teaching them facts. Both are strong advantages that will help them forever.

[985524](#)) More work on Grammar is needed. It is difficult to write without the building blocks. More time should be spent on grammar, worksheets, drills, proofreading exercises etc. I realize this is boring, but I do think it would be helpful. As far as I can tell, all grades at least 2-4) should be spending more of the curriculum on grammar.

[985722](#)) This year, I have experienced a very noisy classroom most of the time I was there and I am afraid the children are not able to concentrate adequately for a positive learning. I suspect the teacher is not providing guidance.

[986233](#)) Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades are very nurturing environments with much individual focus. This is excellent.

[986238](#)) It is not challenging enough for bright 5th graders. Perhaps there should be bridge classes or something more for those students that can read high school level classics and can do much more demanding math.

[988268](#)) My child's teacher has been a source of knowledge and inspiration

[988953](#)) My son needs to be challenged. The math enrichment course he was supposed to be registered in was cut..very frustrating

[989100](#)) It is fabulous. My daughter looks forward to going to school everyday.

[989523](#)) I like environment at Nixon and my kids love to go to school and they protest to miss even a day.

[989703](#)) I think math should be taught on tracks starting in at least grade three; there is a huge differential among class members

[990244](#)) We're very pleased overall. We do find the learning environment in our child's class this year generally too noisy and active for our child's learning style.

[990581](#)) In general, it's really pretty great.

[990601](#)) When I'm in the classroom, I see a high tolerance for the same kids distracting the rest of the class.

If you have any comments regarding the social and emotional environment at Nixon, please provide them here:

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191

19.37% (37 respondents answered)

[978979](#)) Forget the social skills - concentrate on the basic learning skills

[979354](#)) There have been interpersonal problems among some of the girls. My child's teacher has spent a lot of effort talking things over with the girls individually and as a group, and I understand Barbara W. has talked to some of the girls, too. I am grateful for all the attention that has been paid to the problems. Perhaps it's just part of being a child - but new problems always seem to crop up.

[979405](#)) I am extremely impressed with the social and emotional environment at Nixon. My son has feels happy to go to school every day and has an exceptional group of very nice friends.

[979651](#)) Having a boy that is not sports oriented not handball, not basketball) leaves little interaction for him at recess with the other boys. Luckily there are still girls that will play with him. Having sensitivities is not socially supported as a boy. Each teacher should read "The Highly Sensitive Child" so that they know what the lives of over 10% of the children are like and can perhaps be even more supportive.

[979675](#)) none

[980193](#)) My child really loves to come to school - that's the most important thing.

[980226](#)) Encouragement for children to work within various groups and form multiple connections/relationships is good within the classroom. However, outside of the classroom is a weak area.

[980639](#)) I think there is not enough staff in this area to really handle all the issues in the playground, classroom etc...

[981987](#)) I think this community overall (Silicon Valley) is excessively concerned with success, and the pressure is felt very early on. I appreciate the occasional efforts made to have family night, etc. but I don't think it is sufficient to balance out the pressures on families. Why does the chess class have to hand out rankings every week? Why are so many children joining swim teams instead of just going swimming? I worry that we have forgotten how to do something just for the fun of it.

[982104](#)) Very positive, we are very happy in this regard.

[982118](#)) The social environment at Nixon is definitely on the rough side! My child has been able to develop some wonderful close friends, however, so he's doing well. I'm assuming I can get back on and do a separate survey for my 5th grader...

[982129](#)) My child's experience at Nixon has been characterized by feeling left out and lacking in any close friends. Her feeling is that the playground is filled with cliques and mean behavior.

[982139](#)) I was thrilled to see the development of noon basketball. We are fortunate to have Mr. Young and Kevin as part of our staff. This has been a terrific addition to the school. I hope it expands to encompass other noon sports throughout the year.

[982179](#)) The class is absolutely lovely - from the teacher to the parents, and especially the children. We are very happy that our child is at Nixon. We can't think of a more loving environment where she can grow and learn.

[982274](#)) Overall the social environment at Nixon is good. There are always playground issues, but this seems typical. The majority of the teachers at Nixon genuinely care about their student's well-being.

[982701](#)) I think the parents and teachers in our community are very warm and supportive as a whole.

[982785](#)) Nixon sorely needs a program that informs a child of socially appropriate behavior in various classroom and playground situations. This type of program will not only aid the students emotional and social development it will help parents who are struggling through difficult situations.

[982993](#)) It would be nice to have some directed activities for kids who don't want to play handball. I see a lot of kids who look a bit lost out on the play ground.

[983788](#)) The community is small and very friendly and I'm very happy with the environment. My son has friends from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and that is probably one of the more unique things about Nixon.

[983869](#)) Teacher needs to be warmer and more inclusive

[984901](#)) Not all children and parents are treated equally by other parents and principle.

[984904](#)) Grades 3-5 are socially hard on many children, with clique formation and intense competition going on much of the time. These are age-related processes of mental/social development. I appreciate the school's efforts to minimize bullying, foster respect, and channel playground energy as constructively as possible; small classes sure help.

[985722](#)) I have no idea about my child social life at Nixon.

[986233](#)) Again, for the younger kids, it is fine. I will fill out a separate survey for my 5th grader, this will definitely be a gap here

[986238](#)) Currently there are conflicts that are arising in the 5th grade classrooms and there seem to be no avenues for the children to express their opinions and to work thru issues. Additionally, social challenges & respect for diversity is starting to appear. I see no support structure for these older students.

[988889](#)) I feel that the children at Nixon would benefit from an overall program (ie an outside source possibly) which promotes kindness and enlightens all on bullying and the effects of bullying.

[988953](#)) Becky in the front office is incredible..so helpful and always smiling.

[988993](#)) The teachers are extraordinarily supportive and friendly. We as parents, as well as our students, love to come to school.

[988997](#)) Nixon should make an effort to educate the parent and student community on how to cope with unkind or cruel behavior often encountered on the playground

[989100](#)) So far so good. Keep it up!

[989167](#)) Being a parent with special needs, I am particular sensitive to this specific issue. I am very pleased with the inclusive opportunities that have been afforded by the 1st graders and teacher to children with differences. My child has had the most positive social experience in structured and non-structured settings at Nixon.

[989178](#)) Ilove the fact that most of students regardless of their grades seem to get along quite well.

[989703](#)) School should could be more proactive to try to limit social cliques, which start at very early age

[990244](#)) Re the question about undue pressure - our child does feel some pressure in the classroom, but we're not sure if it's "undue" - there are a lot of smart kids here and sometimes he takes more time to finish. So in this sense he feels pressured and then gets frustrated.

[990581](#)) Nancy Kaye's various music classes (choir, Orff instruments, etc.) have been great.

Having the library and computer lab open is also great. Noon Art and Science are also great.

These are all places where kids can feel good outside of classroom. STAR testing was a little bit anxiety-provoking, but not too bad; I don't think the anxiety comes from the teachers, just from my child who is a bit of a perfectionist.

[990804](#)) Excellent.

If you have any comments regarding the budget and spending priorities at Nixon, please provide them here:

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191

13.09% (25 respondents answered)

[978979](#)) I'm concerned with the need for specialists and/or aids to teach fundamental concepts at the grade school level. Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I consider that the role of the classroom teacher.

[979354](#)) I think the classroom aides are VERY important for the lower grades

K-2), much less so

the way I've seen them used) for upper grades. With the exception of the YMCA noon activities

perhaps parent volunteers could provide activities?), I found it very hard to rank the above categories. I'm glad I'm not the principal!

[979388](#)) In K a classroom aide is really essential because apart from the academic curriculum the children are just learning how to BE in school in the first place. There needs to be enough staff to help with learning how to learn and with the social learning, the classroom behavior, treating materials, time, organization, etc...

[979404](#)) Although I think a computer lab/ tech specialist is relatively important role, I say that imagining that we would have someone in that role with more educational experience and a stronger technical background. I don't believe the current programs in this area are very enriching or inspiring for the children.

[979590](#)) Whatever we do, I would hope the school would do everything it possibly can to throw resources at kids who are struggling, particularly in the earliest grades like kindergarten. A stitch in time saves nine.

[979690](#)) Does money for art materials count as instructional materials? There should be funding for art on a par with funding for music.

[980639](#)) I think the aid hours are too low, and some parents are unaware that more help is needed in the class.

[982104](#)) I'm happy that our teachers and administrators are well paid relatively speaking. However, I think a slow-down in professional personnel raises might be in order to address budget deficits. Not a reduction in salary, I'm simply recommending a freeze.

[982118](#)) The way the math specialist is listed above is grossly misleading. It makes it sound like she's working with at-risk kids when it's actually the opposite, she only works with gifted kids. There is no math support for at-risk kids who don't qualify for an IEP. To support gifted activities when there are kids not meeting the minimums seems out of balance.

[982139](#)) Any budget cuts need to be as far removed from our children as possible....that means going into the district office and finding ways to cut there first. I am tired of our kids getting the short end of the stick and tired of making our staff have to figure out which of our programs are "least valuable"...all of our programs and teachers are valuable and necessary for our children.

[982143](#)) My impression is that Math Specialist works with children that are very good at Math while the Reading Specialist works with children who needs help in reading. If this is true and while the budget is tight, I think spending for the Math Specialist should take a lower priority. If the Math Specialist is also working with at risk children, then I think we should find a way to fund the Math Specialist as well.

[982785](#)) Important in answering this question is to know with what type of student the specialists spend time. Are these students that cannot be helped by one on one tutoring with a volunteer? If they can be helped with a volunteer, then I think a tutoring program consisting of volunteers could save money and be effective. If we use the specialists for their skills with all students, low, average and high achieving, in a special program for all kids, then I find them more valuable. It is less valuable to me for these specialists to only have contact with the lowest achievers, (unless of course that is their skill.)

[982972](#)) Although we often talk about separating individual personalities from support staff positions, at some point we should acknowledge that we get a huge "bang for our buck" from Barbara Vana and Barbara Sih Klausner.

[982980](#)) I do not see the benefits of class room aids except for K because they seem to do menial duties such as copying or grading. I would like to see someone who actually helps students in terms of real learning experience. Many parent volunteers are doing menial jobs as well. I am

sure that many parents would not mind doing this kind of work more if we knew the classroom aids were more involved with an actual learning process. In this way, teachers could pay more attention to the needs of individual students and provide different levels of stimuli that fit individual needs. Otherwise, I feel that it would be more useful for the school to hire more part time math specialists or reading specialists to help the advanced students.

[982993](#)) I would like to see more aide time for the class rooms. I would also like to see the aides working with the kids more and working directly with the classes instead of making copies etc. Parents could do some of this paperwork.

[983788](#)) My preference would be to spend money on people who spend time working directly with students (classroom Aides etc) rather than equipment or materials or administrative support.

[984901](#)) All Nixon parents should not spend money for few who think that their children should receive extra input in math. It should be equally given to all children.

[984904](#)) Keeping outstanding staff--in reading, math, and PE--is the highest priority. I'd like the teachers to set the main priorities after that. Parents will volunteer around the edges and pitch in for materials if need be.

[985722](#)) At elementary level computer technology should not be of concern. What is the use of a computer if there is no basic literacy and mathematical skills?

[988993](#)) I would rate the music program as a very high priority. I don't know what the math specialist does - it hasn't helped my child.

[988997](#)) The specialist we presently have are all valuable and appropriate to our community. It however is disappointing that the math specialist is not used for advanced students. Since the reading specialist is only used for the slower achieving students, it would be nice to have a small benefit for the more advanced students, since this is often an area teachers do not wish to teach. One spending priority that may not come under this budget is to provide our students with enough tables and umbrellas for shade once we return to the Nixon campus. That the students eat on the ground in the sun is in my opinion unacceptable and something that is within our power to raise funds for.

[989167](#)) Enrichment course and activities, eg. arts, music, and science, should not be reduced purely based on the cuts in budget. These areas of study is essential to provide a well-rounded education.

[989703](#)) Math should be taught on tracks, and this would not necessarily require a greater budget, but requires greater organization.

[990804](#)) Basics first for the classroom. Then the arts, music, visual, drama...

List one or two aspects of Nixon that you value most. Briefly explain if necessary.

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191
41.36% (79 respondents answered)

[978979](#)) My child likes the school - feels it has a friendly atmosphere.

[978993](#)) The teachers have all been great.

[978995](#)) Excellent Teaching Staff

(including the specialist) Focus on events to build community spirit

[979023](#)) Great teachers and families. Very positive experience overall.

[979027](#)) Reading academy as explained before. The staff as explained before

[979033](#)) 1) A well rounded education with music, P.E.and computerlab included. 2) Lots of individual attention for each child. Lot of parent volunteer

[979039](#)) The families and teachers at Nixon. The students have such a diverse background - it's wonderful! The teachers are SUPER!

[979041](#)) Communication is excellent and immensely valuable to working parents. There is a strong sense of community at Nixon...an asset to our children in such a disconnected society.

[979044](#)) 1. diversity of students - international + ethnic 2. adequate funding levels - with active parent participation

[979052](#)) The consistently supportive atmosphere for the children. The staff seems to work extremely well together and the school feels like a closely knit community. I think Nixon is luck to have so many exceptional teachers and in my seven years at Nixon the quality has consistently improved.

[979108](#)) 1) The professionalism of the teaching staff. Nixon's teachers are a dedicated lot! They always seem to go the extra mile for all of their students. 2) The parent community is very supportive of both the school staff and one another.

[979354](#)) I love the special extra things the school provides: math night, international night, etc. Those activities create a real sense of belonging for my family. I also really appreciate how so many of the teachers work together to provide consistent grade level instruction, and to take advantage of each other's expertise.

[979382](#)) Seeing that teachers and staff truly strive to do what is right and best for each child.

[979388](#)) Friendly, cooperative atmosphere, respect. Very engaged parents, teachers, and staff.

[979404](#)) The community is fabulous. My children's peer group is inspiring to them. The teachers, for the most part, relate to my child and give them a positive learning environment full of respect and inspiration.

[979405](#)) The caliber of people. Very nice and interesting people.

[979437](#)) I really like the sense of community and caring. I like the diversity and the acceptance of all of the families.

[979489](#)) The teachers

[979521](#)) the teachers

[979651](#)) We had an excellent teacher this year, without her school would not have been nearly as enjoyable and worthwhile.

[979690](#)) I like that the school is small, and the teachers tend to stay with Nixon, so that it becomes a community.

[979694](#)) Teachers Enrichment within classroom (specialists) Enrichment outside of classroom

[980193](#)) 1) Teachers 2) Diversity - culture 3) Atmosphere 4) Level of reading and writing.

[980226](#)) High quality staff Excellent mix of students Core group of active parents

[980639](#)) The value parents and teachers put on education. Making Nixon a close knit community and safe place.

[981987](#)) I really have been pleased with my children's teachers, and have felt that they had the best interest of the children at heart. I also have also enjoyed the overall Nixon community of families. I feel connected to the school overall, and both of my children have been very happy at school.

[982089](#)) Nixon makes learning fun yet retaining a high standard.

[982118](#)) The resource support at Nixon is stellar!

[982135](#)) friendly encouraging teachers strong academic standards

[982136](#)) Its location and surrounding community

[982139](#)) The dedication the teachers have to our kids. It seems that most teachers enjoy their jobs and take pride in doing their best. Our children are fortunate to have teachers that genuinely care about who they become.

[982143](#)) Teachers are very friendly and approachable. They respond to parents' questions and concerns promptly. Very nice group of parents that helps out in school.

[982144](#)) My child feels good about school and is confident and happy. I think a large part of that is due to the teachers he has had. They have all valued the "whole child" as being important, not just focusing on academics.

[982148](#)) Nixon has a warm, supportive atmosphere for both kids and parents. It helps everyone's attitude about school. I often rail against how children are being pushed academically too fast and too soon. At least I feel that Nixon is sympathetic to those complaints, even though you can't do much about it.

[982175](#)) Friendly teachers and office staff because we need to contact them also in difficult moments and they are extremely competent and helpful.

[982179](#)) The sense of community that we experience at Nixon is what we value the most. We love getting to know the children and parents in our child's class. We also greatly appreciate the competence and loving care of our child's teacher.

[982234](#)) The closeness of the parent community. Quality of individual teachers.

[982241](#)) Direct Appeal is simpler and can raise almost as much money as the auction without all the countless hours of work. Money will need to be raised to keep the computer lab running and ongoing upgrades to computers can be expensive. Most parents find it less complicated to just write a check at the beginning of the year. While the auction is a fun, social event, it only includes about 20% of the parent population. Now that ASF will fund personnell, which was the main focus of the auction, the auction should be dropped.

[982274](#)) The computer lab with Barbara Vana and Sue Chakos as reading specialist are the two most valuable personnell expenses Nixon has.

[982696](#)) international, diverse community

[982699](#)) Good atmosphere. Lots of content.

[982733](#)) The teachers are good

[982832](#)) The quality of parental involvement.

[982968](#)) The friendly environment. I feel Nixon is warm and welcoming. The office staff always has a smile. I really enjoy coming to the school. I was worried about camping out at Garland but it has been just fine, thanks to the efforts of the principal, staff and teachers.

[982972](#)) Teachers who are very keyed in to the needs of each of their students and respond to them appropriately. Also, she lets them know how much she appreciates what they do well and how much effort they make at least that has been our limited experience). It is teachers and administrators and support staff) who can combine their depth of knowledge and experience with a fresh and flexible attitude towards teaching and learning who make the learning environment at Nixon so special. Also, I have been extremely impressed with the writing program this year and actually the last two years.

[982980](#)) We value the cultural diversity of Nixon. It is a reflection of our society. We all can learn from each other.

[982993](#)) The community and ability of the parents to be an integral part of that has been very valuable to me.

[983024](#)) Great sense of community. Friendly staff.

[982927](#)) Very open to parental involvement, especially dropping in on the classrooms. Principal makes herself readily available for meetings with concerned parents.

[983634](#)) The communication from school to home is great. Keeping in touch with teachers through email is also a plus.

[983755](#)) Great teachers Involved parents, families

[983788](#)) Small and friendly community generally high achieving students

[983802](#)) Nixon is a good community school. I like the zero tolerance on bullying. A child needs to feel safe and protected at school.

[983869](#)) Nice computer lab. Nice playground.

[983873](#)) academic and multi -cultural environment

[984503](#)) I think the staff is fantastic, and the environment at the school is very welcoming and warm. I especially value the openness with which parents are received at the school -it is a place I want to be.

[984901](#)) Academic is highly valued and that what it should be in an educational institute.

[984904](#)) -- Involved parents. -- Caring teachers. -- Warm office staff who understand and like children.

[985463](#)) The quality of the teaching staff The diversity of our community

[985629](#)) I appreciate the Nixon parent community very much. I think, for the most part, the community expects an excellent education experience for its children.

[985721](#)) I think the quality of instruction is very high. The teaching staff are skilled and caring professionals.

[985722](#)) Parents participation and the feeling of belonging to the Nixon community.

[986233](#)) Even though we have a 2 working parent household, we do feel a sense of community with the school.

[986238](#))

[988268](#)) Staff. Size classes.

[988889](#)) Our family has had the privilege to have some of the most wonderful teachers. They have been motivating and inspiring to our children as well as approachable to a parent.

[988993](#)) Caring teachers who always make time to meet with parents. Patient teachers who help nurture kids as they learn, and who value conscientious students.

[988997](#)) A teacher who is committed, who brings to the classroom a uniqueness, who takes his/her job very seriously, and who loves being at school teaching kids, is what I value most at Nixon. The math and computer specialists. They appear to be highly committed to their students and their efforts affect all kids.

[989075](#)) 1. Open, friendly, committed staff. 2. The variety of learning environments within the overall school environment i.e. advanced math opportunities, specified library time, math night, international night, ymca noon sports)

[989100](#)) The friendly reception to the school by all. The well coordinated system. Everybody knows their duties well and perform them adequately.

[989108](#)) 1. Academic standards 2. Community spirit

[989178](#)) Great staff and community.

[989703](#)) Strong parental/volunteer community; wonderful staff

[990244](#)) We think Nixon offers a great curriculum and has great teachers. These ought to be givens at any school - but we're glad we have them. Parent involvement very important also.

[990581](#)) Great community, both parents and teachers/staff, good interactions between parents and teachers/staff, and of course, really great kids who are not too bratty or too mature for their age.

[990601](#)) 1. The teachers and staff are wonderful-very caring 2. Warm, friendly atmosphere for students and their family.

[990804](#)) The quality and dedication of the teachers. The kindness of the students.

[990815](#)) Ethnic diversity Administration, staff

What one or two aspects of the school would you like to make a priority for improvement efforts next year? Briefly explain if necessary.

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191

31.94% (61 respondents answered)

[978979](#)) Far too much emphasis on administrative issues - traffic control bus procedure, etc., at the expense of what is truly valuable life and learning lessons. The politic correctness factors are out of control - no number grades, no differentiation of students based on ability, and other apparently experimental educational methods - are doing a disservice to our children and to society. I fear that public education is failing us, and it is not related to inadequate funding. A priority for Nixon: math, reading, science, and relevant history. Leave the social engineering to the home.

[978982](#)) safety and supervision during recess and after school (walking kids to bus)

[978993](#)) More emphasis on keyboarding. This is as essential today as learning to write.

[978995](#)) 1. Keeping all families involved in school 2. Insuring the liberal arts education of including culture, arts

music) as well as reading, writing, math. To foster the love of learning and the ability to learn in all aspects of life.

[979039](#)) Physical Education is lacking at Nixon. I'd like to see our children more motivated and involved in physical exercise.

[979041](#)) Empowering families to make a direct impact on their children's own classrooms in a tax-advantaged manner. While contributions to the PTA are tax-deductible, the allocation of those resources is not controlled by the families and as a result they are not incentivized. Given ASF's responsibility to fund staffing, parents should be empowered to direct their additional charitable financial support to the classrooms where they can see the effect of their generosity.

[979044](#)) 1. landscaping - including Amy's garden on some scale, even if the "memorial" goes elsewhere 2. traffic safety - make sure that we get it right as we return, including practices for on-campus and near

Tollman for example).

[979052](#)) Selfishly, because my child is going into 4th grade, I strongly hope that we can keep the math specialist program.

[979108](#)) Encourage teachers to a) plan field trips that relate to the curriculum, and b) to provide some relevant instruction prior to the trip. I have been on some field trips that seemed more like outings just for fun instead of a means for enhancing some curricular area.

[979382](#)) Getting back more of our parent community that seemed to somewhat disappear with the move.

[979404](#)) In my child's evaluations

report cards) I would love to understand both how my child is performing compared to objective grade level standards AND how they perform compared to their Nixon peer group. I would love my children to be more challenged when they have already met the grade level expectations. I think differentiated education is a good goal, hard to do well, and could stand some more work at Nixon.

[979437](#)) I think we could be challenging our kids more in the curriculum. For example, more segmentation in reading and math for the different levels. More visibility to the parents of areas of improvement for your child and parents being given tools to teach their children at home.

[979489](#)) Social and emotional learning

[979521](#)) new computers, more art, PE, and music classes

[979651](#)) Differentiated instruction in reading and math in all grades, allowing for between grade rotations as needed. Children's skills are not lock-step with their ages. Ability grouping helps all, the student needing more time, as well as the student requiring more challenge at a faster pace. I do not want to see Nixon be part of the "No Child Gets Ahead" as they work at the "No Child Gets Left Behind"

[979690](#)) I wish art was a bigger priority. Also, I wish that addition and multiplication tables were the subject of rote learning. My child is finishing 5th grade, and is only recently 100% sure of all her addition and multiplication facts.

[979694](#)) Don't cut staff

[980193](#)) 1) Aiming higher with respect Math/Logic skills and targets 2) The progress reports are focusing on the level of the child with respect to the end of the year. However it is important to know how the child is doing relative to what was expected at present. Just 'expected progress' is not sufficient. For example: if the child learns about science - 4 subjects were covered and 2 were not covered presently - it's not enough to know 'expected progress' because two subjects were not covered - we mainly want to know how the child was doing on the previous subjects: Not so good, good, very good, ...

[980226](#)) More work on social/emotional development More consistency in addressing behavior issues Spend more time on math computation practice/drill

[981987](#)) More art in the school. More creative curriculum.

[982089](#)) More direct lines of communication with the principal.

[982118](#)) These two opinions have negatively affected my direct appeal participation: There is no math support for at-risk kids, just like we have reading support for at-risk kids. My personal belief is that it's a waste of school money to teach kids applications on the computer during school hours. It takes away from instructional time, costs money to maintain the computer lab, and redirects the kids attention away from the curriculum.

[982121](#)) - academics - social skills

[982135](#)) I don't understand placement in math and reading groups.

[982139](#)) I would love to see more parental involvement, from different parents. It seems like it's the same parents doing just about everything. I know there are lots of groups actively working on this issue and hopefully it will be successful.

[982143](#)) Include more qualitative information on the progress report. Some Spring Conferences I have been to with my child was just my child showing me his/her work. Teacher handed my a copy of my child's progress report at the end. I think it is nice to see my child's work and self

evaluation but it is also important to know whether his/her teacher agreed with the assessment and whether there are any concerns or issues that needed my attention.

[982144](#)) The recess supervision has been improved from previous years and I feel that is still probably the biggest area for continued effort.

[982148](#)) I know it's difficult, given all the academic requirements, but I'd like to see more physical activity. It good for their bodies AND minds.

[982158](#)) I would really like for the PTA to hold meetings and the school to hold parent events at times that work for families with two employed parents. It is very difficult for my family to participate in PTA and principal coffees etc when they are all during the work day.

[982175](#)) safety in the playground and school surrounding.

[982234](#)) The math specialist is very effective. Writing also seems to be very difficult to teach and to learn. At Nixon, writing seems to be taught by writing, writing, writing. We have gone to tutors to help our kids learn this skill. I would like to see a more systematic approach to teaching writing at Nixon. Perhaps a writing specialist would help.

[982241](#)) Considering the large B4E effort, there doesn't seem to be any physical efforts necessary. A continuation of the great events & programs Nixon has provided should be the focus; Back to School Night, Fall Frolic, Gift Wrap Sales, Book Faire, a school play, Martin Luther King Assembly, Ice Cream Social, Curriculum Night & Spring Picnic, May/Spring Festival. A science fair might also be a good idea.

[982699](#)) Some kind of assembly that gives all kids a chance to perform publicly.

[982733](#)) More playground supervision!

[982785](#)) There is no vehical in place where ones opinion can be expressed anonymously. This survey is the first time it is possible. And this is once a year. A suggestion box outside the office would be nice.

[982972](#)) I think we still have a long way to go in adequately differentiating the math instruction for Nixon students at all grade levels. There is a lot of brain power laying fallow, especially at the lower grades, because the standard curriculum is nowhere near challenging enough for a portion of these primary students.

[982980](#)) We would like to see more involvement from the school to meet the needs of advanced students. It is sad that some students are not challenged at school, and that they are bored. This is not only our own children's situation; we often hear friends complain that their children at Nixon are in the same situation.

[982993](#)) I would like to see the basics (reading, writing and math) taught more fully before the critical thinking is taught. I think the kids aren't ready for the more abstract tasks unless they are very comfortable with the basics. Over the years I have seen the critical thinking/abstract tasks take priority over basics.

[983024](#)) Writing.

[982927](#)) The jungle gym/monkey bars make me nervous. Could we have better durable) padding underneath portions of it? I am not sure if there are ways of making it safer by design. It strikes me as one of the more dangerous spots of the campus for the younger kids. I know next year we will be in the regular campus. The jungle gym/monkey bars there outside CCLC) make me even more nervous than the set at Garland.

[983755](#)) Social development

[983788](#)) I hope that instrucion in non-core subjects such as music, physical education etc. will not suffer any further erosion.

[983802](#)) - Hire specialists for Math and Reading for Grades K-3. - Provide more in terms of Music/Theatre and activities for younger kids.

[983869](#)) Somehow get the teachers to be fairer and friendlier. It makes a huge difference. Get all students in the computer lab to work on the same program.

[983873](#)) safety and supervision on nixon site - especially after school for children going to cclc. too often there are children "wandering around" without adequate supervision.

[984503](#)) Continued education about fundraising issues and importance of supporting ASF. Also, continued emphasis on inclusion of families of all cultures - I think the International evening is a wonderful idea.

[984901](#)) Auction should not be done in an social show off. It is educational institute and not place for social show off. Parents children connection should consider minority. It is diverse place.

[985463](#)) Helping parents understand the necessity of supporting the PAFE/ASF Foundation financially More activities to include all segments of our international community

[985629](#)) I find in fourth grade that the math curriculum should be changed to involve more practice in class with each new concept. I think that a child should be required to master whatever math concept is being studied before being allowed to participate in the POW pull out.

[985721](#)) Do whatever we can to support the wonderful staff.

[985722](#)) Parent-teacher relationship. I feel that my participation is not considered valuable.

[986233](#)) I think that we really need to look at the educational and social offerings for the 5th graders. I am unsure of the status of the campus at "old Nixon". I want to make sure that the construction has left the site "safe". No nails, building materials, sharp corners, unfinished work, trip hazards, electrical hazards. etc. I can do this walkthru if necessary as I have experience in this area.

[988953](#)) Healthier lunch items for children. Organic foods should be the focus

[988993](#)) Music program - keep it going.

[988997](#)) Tables and shade as mentioned. Having gate options for students required in each classroom, not at the descretion of the individual teacher.

[989100](#)) None

[989703](#)) Fewer soical activities; between auction items and other events, I am feeling overwhelmed by number of things to participate in beyond the class room

[990244](#)) As parents who have used the Tolman Ave. entrance, we think the way people drive there, too fast and impulsively, has the potential for disaster. Big SUVs backing up, U-turns, etc.

[990581](#)) Making playground more inclusive at the old) Nixon site...after the Garland site we realized how nice it is to have a "confined" space...very hard to do at the old site, so must brainstorm.

[990804](#)) To withstand the economic hardships with as little diminishment in programs, materials and staff as possible.

[990815](#)) We will not be at Nixon next year, but if we were, I would want to improve playground/recess supervision and lunch recess programs.

If you have any additional comments, please provide them here.

Number of respondents answering at least one part of this question: 191
7.33% (14 respondents answered)

[\(979044\)](#) It would be nice to feel that the superintendent is truly engaged but I don't think so and too much money is being spent on that office pay, benefits, positions/consultants that directly support it)

[979521\)](#) I wish EVERY family would participate in ASF or direct appeal. The budget would be funded if so. I wish every family sent in their 10.00 to PTA membership.

[979642\)](#) 1. Most families are paying to enrich our students outside of school, be it music lessons, sports, or social events. And we're already paying a lot for those experiences. Don't stress out about providing everything to everyone at school. 2. Charge each family \$100 or \$50) per month per school year. That's not a lot for most families I've observed. If it's tax deductible, that's even better. And let people choose to pay or "Work it off." Many schools do this. 3. Idea: After-school clubs, perhaps parent-run. Even if it's book clubs, play clubs, art clubs, science, math, Yu-Gi-Oh, whatever. A smaller, select group can encourage social interaction. If everyone was a member of at least one club, and it was run/supervised by a parent, perhaps the costs would be negligible, or could be deducted from the \$100/\$50 mentioned above...

[982089\)](#) Thanks for a great job.

[982143\)](#) There are too many "items" to pay for individually at the beginning of the school year - PTA membership, NixonName, T-shirts, classroom funds, Direct Appeal. Is there anyway to streamline/consolidate? I like the eNews format. It is a very effective vehicle for me to find out what events are coming up.

[982980\)](#) We find the principal's attitude to be unhelpful. She seems unwilling to listen or engage with our concerns. Instead, her attitude is always defensive and combative. Her default position seems to be that she should never concede anything. Also, a number of Asian parents have commented that she does not give us a welcome feeling -- she does not greet us or thank us when she sees us volunteering in the classroom.

[983024\)](#) Instruction in fifth grade seems routine-NO inspiration. Needs to be addressed since kids seem to be checking out.

[982927\)](#) I am concerned about the cost of the proposed garden that could be added to the school. In a time of budget cuts, I am concerned that donors to the school might focus their contributions on the proposed garden. This could diminish contributions for instructional materials, supplies and other necessary school materials that have a more direct impact upon the children's academic progress.

[983788\)](#) great school!

[983873\)](#) while fundraising is crucial there are times that the pressure is too heavy. nixon encompasses some extremely wealthy families - and some middle and working class families who cannot possibly keep on giving. please be more sensitive to this issue

[985722\)](#) My long experience with Nixon school has been positive. Of course there are always aspects that need improvement. My major concern, this year, is that my child is not been provided with the best learning experience and a more open attitude from the administration could have solved the problem in a more satisfactory way.

[986233\)](#) thank you for the survey, it is a very good idea. you need to track the data from year to year and show progress to the key areas of improvement. this should be shared at beginning and end of school year, every year and should be posted on web site.

[989100\)](#) Keep the wonderful job!

[990244](#)) We love Nixon but lament the trend away from PE everywhere. Kids should have PE like they have reading. Healthy mind in a healthy body.