

Half of C.R. students feel peers don't respect them: Survey

70 percent said adults made them feel welcome at school

By Kristina Gleeson
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CEDAR RAPIDS — Nearly 90 percent of Cedar Rapids school district students said last year they understood the rules for appropriate behavior, but just more than half felt that other students cared about and respected them.

Associate Superintendent Jay Marino presented the second Student Satisfaction and Enthusiasm survey to the board last night. Third graders through high school seniors were surveyed last year.

Board President Keith Westercamp said he was "really concerned" that only between 50 percent and 60 percent of students said their peers care

for them, and the same percentage said peers treat them with respect.

Westercamp expressed concern that though elementary schools particularly stress the importance of respect, "it's still the lowest-scoring area."

The data shows that "we're working in the right area," Marino said.

More than 70 percent of students surveyed, meanwhile, said adults treat them with respect, make them feel welcome, and that they get help when they need it. Around 88 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I am learning in school."

Around 64 percent agreed or strongly agreed that "The rules in my school are fair for all students."

Both years, between 40 percent and 50 percent of the district's third through 12th graders responded "I like it" when asked about math and language arts on a survey. Other options were "It's OK," and "I don't like it."

A slightly greater percentage of students, around 53 percent, said it liked science.

Board member Ken Childress suggested the survey prod students for what they do not like about the subjects. "I don't know a person in the world who doesn't have to use (math) every day," he added.

A slightly lower percentage of students who receive lunch for free or a discount, because of their parents' earnings; older; special needs; and black students agreed with the questions indicating they were satisfied and enthusiastic about school.

New board member Judy Goldberg was seated, and Westercamp and Childress re-seated. Westercamp is now president, and Melissa Kiliper-Ernst is vice president.

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