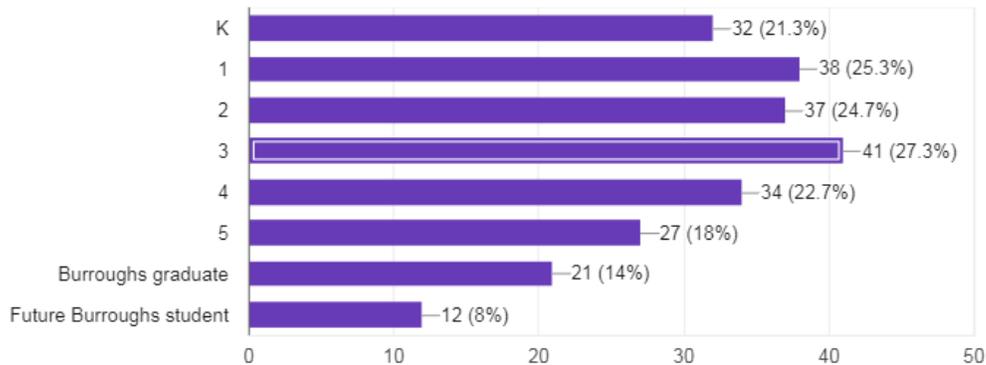


Burroughs Parent Survey

What grades are your children in at Burroughs? [check all that apply]

150 responses



What is being done at Burroughs that makes you feel a part of the school community?

- FEJ, PTA
- Strong communications from teacher and principal, variety of events for kids of multiple grade levels and interests
- Engagement opportunities
- I like the parents Facebook page
- All-school events, volunteer opportunities
- FB page keeps me up to date and I like the community volunteering opportunities. We could use more community building.
- Not much
- Organized social gatherings i.e. great gatherings
- Charity events, great communication,
- Great gatherings
- Things like the school picnic
- The weekly bulletins are very helpful.
- classroom events (music concerts, classroom specific events - peace prize festival)
- Community service events are planned. Welcome events were planned for Kindergarten families. Facebook Group for Parents and Facebook Group for Diversity Group. Teacher/Staff emails to parents about events.

- Picnics, special events, etc.
- My involvement at school and relationships with staff make me feel like part of the community.
- Parent involvement and volunteering opportunities
- Unsure. I think various events that occur are sufficient.
- Bulletin and volunteer opportunities
- parent involvement - volunteering in the classroom, attending events
- A lot of conversations about making things more inclusive, school picnic, PTA newsletter - this are things that I feel are focused on the broadest community. For our family, fundraising events have brought us into a specific subset of the community but that is mostly because we can afford to participate and are networked with those who are part of that subset.
- To be honest feelings are between people and reasons are part of the school. So if you are asking about the people there I like them as they are pleasant and kind. The school itself has a good curriculum and that is why I am there, coupled with the attitudes of the teachers. I don't necessarily believe that I should have a huge impact on the curriculum but should with the teachers and leadership there...perhaps I don't fully understand what the question is also.
- Weekly emails, both from the PTA and my daughter's teacher, events like the all school picnic
- Weekly emails, both from the PTA and my daughter's teacher, events like the all school picnic
- Picnic, pta meetings (but I'm not able to attend pta meetings bc have a special needs kid who can't do childcare)
- There are many activities for families and parents at Burroughs that I would love and enjoy participating in, but my work schedule doesn't allow. I'm hopeful that someday I can join in and be welcomed when I'm finally able.
- Our new equity and racial justice committees, lots of translated materials coming, the new welcome to kindergarten flyers with great descriptions of things like RAT, great gatherings, etc, good bulletin email communication with more actual info & links
- Integrative events...school picnic, bike to school day, etc
- School-wide FREE events such as the school picnic
- We were only here one year, and I didn't really feel connected.
- visioning sessions
- Class parties but honestly, not much really... it just seems to be the same group of moms that all know each other steamrolling the others.
- The Bulletin, Facebook posts, PSWE/Equity teams
- Many volunteer opportunities
- Equity and justice group, PTA, parent involvement in classroom, community service events
- Hosting multiple events like book drive, request to volunteer in classrooms
- Recent community visioning, PTA communication, FB parent page, Great Gatherings, invites to whole school events (spring picnic), call to action for Families for Equity & Justice groups, several volunteer opportunities.
- Many Opportunities for volunteering, good communication
- Great gatherings, school events, communications
- School events like the picnic and great gatherings; invitations to student performances

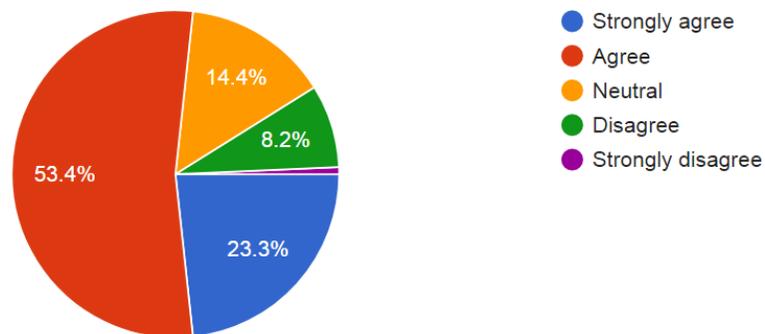
- Lots of opportunity for involvement at school and the community. Thank you, PTA members!
- Kept up to date via email and FB parent page.
- Volunteer opportunities, picnic, pta meetings
- Equity program
- Lots of communication and seeking input.
- Visioning events, outreach re: equity and justice
- events - committees, get-togethers, etc
- Invited to attend events at school, readathon etc.
- email updates from the school and teacher
- Many opportunities to volunteers, morning and afternoon interactions with staff and other parents
- Events - Fall book fair, read-a-thon, family fun run, school picnic, etc.
- Open house
- FB group, community engagement/service committee & events, school picnic, PTA meetings
- Emails notifying me what's going on. Invitations to volunteer
- Communication from the PTA, Great Gatherings, the individual teachers, volunteering opportunities
- Newsletters and emails from teachers
- Great communication
- Kindergarten meet ups were nice. Having Ana and Kelly outside in the morning was nice.
- Lots of communications about various events, etc. I appreciate all the information
- Picnic, Bike to School
- Quality communication from leadership and PTA.
- School wide events, parents taking the lead on organizing happy hours, dinners, and get-togethers, Fall for Burroughs auction, read-a-thon, and in Venera encouraging parent participation in the school activities
- Weekly newsletter
- I don't think there is anything else that needs to be done. There is high involvement and it is easy to connect with other parents.
- Many things, but especially good teacher and newsletter communication about events I can participate in
- Great Gatherings! Love them!
- Great Gatherings, Community service events, Parent volunteer opportunities, Burroughs Facebook group updates, Burroughs bulletin updates
- Communication via bulletin is very nice.
- Principal and Vice Principal, as well as teacher have been available and responsive to communications. PTA repeatedly invites all to attend meetings. Race and equity program. Small groups of parents in classroom organizing get together a.
- Honestly, I think Burroughs is lacking here.
- I enjoy the Facebook page news

- General feel of the community, meeting families after school on the playground, attending great gathering events, volunteering at PE field trips.
- annual school picnic. newsletters.
- Lots of volunteer opportunities. I especially like the community service opportunities---that is fantastic!
- Just an awesome welcoming atmosphere!
- Fundraisers
- Great Gatherings and Fall for Burroughs
- Picnics
- Not much
- PTA driven communication and buy in from administration
- Community meetings are helping
- The kindness of the staff has been wonderful as we adjust to the new school community!
- Parents Happy Hour, Picnic, Fundraising
- Teacher emails and the bulletin and teacher personalities
- The families and their love of Burroughs
- Events at school, playground meet ups, great gatherings, chalk welcome, Facebook group
- Bulletin and teacher updates
- provided with lots of info
- Loved the chalk art when the kindergarteners started.
- Plenty of ways to be involved but you have to take the first step yourself
- All the things
- Lots of opportunities to volunteer and be involved, different school/community events throughout the year.
- PTA. Volunteer opportunities. Positive staff. Awesome kids.
- Teachers are good at communicating with families. Principal is present and available for families. Lots of volunteer parents helping with things like Kindergarten meet-ups, lunch room waste management, and social justice conversations.
- I don't know
- A very friendly, welcoming and professional atmosphere
- volunteering opportunities and conversations with the staff
- Lots of volunteer opportunities and I like the coffee with the principal event.
- We are just entering the Burroughs community, but the Kindergarten meet ups, family Facebook page, open house, and first day reception have all been appreciated.
- Communication and events!
- I really appreciate the efforts made during the last school year. I he family volunteer opportunities, the book club and other similar events are great.
- The parents in my grade level make the most impact on my sense of community
- Plenty of ways to volunteer and avenues to know what is going on at the school.
- Frequent communication from district, principal, teachers; Parent Facebook page

- Excellent teachers and high principal involvement
- Opportunities for involvement, Principal greetings at beginning of day
- Asking for input and Community engagement workshops! P.E. Events!
- I am not sure. I guess, this Facebook page if anything.
- events throughout the year (book fair, school, picnic, etc.)

Please rate how much you agree with the following statement: My child's academic needs are being met at Burroughs.

146 responses



What gaps do you see in meeting your child's academic needs?

- Literacy
- Severely under challenged in math, despite having asked for more challenge. Very poor teacher match leading to lack of confidence in attempting to write. Being told, "Figure it out" or "You'll figure it out" is not a solution for mentoring or facilitating growth in learning.
- Reading
- Lack of reading specialists and on the other end, lack of advance learner instruction
- Space/time in the classroom for movement breaks. It would be better to have less rigid academic teaching for lower grades and instead learn academics through alternative methods of song, chant, dance, etc.
- The lack of a clear plan for working with advanced learners is glaring. Eschewing the opportunity to cluster these kids with trained--or in training teachers--was a failure of leadership and may, actually, violate MPS policy.
- I would love to see a stronger math and science curriculum.
- Math, handwriting, social emotional

- Accommodations and extra help for a learning disability (dyslexia)
- My child has special needs as an advanced learner. It is not just about the education, but about the emotional and behavioral support where the gap exist. This in my opinion has more to do with teachers who were completely spoiled from the last principle and are challenging all that our new principle is trying to accomplish. The superintendent has been notified of this situation.
- I do not feel like my daughter who is entering 4th grade is adequately challenged and does not receive the year's worth of growth that all students deserve with each academic school year.
- I'm disappointed that there will not be an AL specialist next year and that the STEM specialist will only be working with the upper grades. I'd hoped that that would provide a new level of challenge to her.
- understanding of whole child - advanced learner and needs, uniqueness, strengths and weaknesses, teaching in a way that my child responds to. Small group differentiation is not consistent from class to class. Telescoping doesn't happen. Science curriculum is severely lacking. Enrichment in reading/math in a meaningful way is not happening in most classrooms. Too many worksheets. 2nd grade was better but that was due to a wonderful teacher - that hasn't been the experience in K-1 and we have doubts that 3-5 will meet child's needs either.
- My child has dyslexia. We tried to initiate a 504, but we were told she did not qualify for accommodations (per MPLS public schools guidelines). She struggles, but luckily we can get private Orton Gillingham tutoring outside of school. It is very expensive and time consuming. We would like to see some services available for her during the school day.
- too many students per class and not enough time to help or even assess kids who are doing okay (not failing, but also not meeting their potential)
- Math- I was quite frustrated with my child's teacher who kept reassuring us that our daughter didn't need a tutor or additional support with her math learning and that she was at the appropriate learning level for her grade (we even talked about this at conferences). However, her last grade for the end of year reflected otherwise and we did end up getting a tutor for her. Not quite sure if this is negligence on the teacher's part, she simply didn't care, or something else. Needless to say, we're still quite upset about this and feel that she failed our daughter and our trust in her ability as a teacher, to be attentive to our daughter's needs as a student.
- I'd like to see a stronger focus on math and science
- Large class size
- The teachers are not adequately trained or empowered to identify learning disabilities as they emerge. You have to wait for it to explode into a significant problem. They also need to know how and feel empowered/engaged to create a solution for diagnosis and accommodations
- Fewer students in class, or more support staff to help teachers cater to individual students strengths and weaknesses
- Smaller class sizes and more individualized instruction opportunities.
- Would like her to be receiving foreign language study.
- Reading for 1st grader. We have been using a tutor this summer whose approach has been huge In helping him understand basic things. My K will be in a level 2/3 special ed setting. I am concerned about how her learning needs will be met. For instance, track and field day - how will

the events be adapted so she can full participate, not be forced to only participate in some of the events? Also, the read-a-thon last year emphasized many hours of reading for a full month. My K will likely not be able to do that. Will she still be considered a valued contributor to the readathon? Will the whole thing build on and emphasize reading skills, or will it be a chore and turn off to reading?

- PLAY! Kids learn the most through play and it is painfully absent for the vast majority of their day. Recess isn't enough. Also, kids need more opportunities to socialize and lean that way. Emotional skills are more necessary than memorization skills.
- My son has reading challenges and not only was our reading specialist let go but our class sizes are way too large.
- Social emotional coaching and problem solving
- Need more specialist time and options. PE should be daily. More art classes, for sure. A language option would be nice. An outdoor/natural specialist (like they are piloting at Dowling) would be great.
- I feel my child is receiving academic instruction, but not in the most age appropriate ways. There is too much sitting, too many worksheets, too much curriculum. There should be more projects, more movement, more imagination and creativity. School should be playful and fun at this age. Burroughs feels heavy and serious.
- Slow to unable to hone in on learning disabilities as they begin to present themselves
- We are new and figuring out the answer; stay tuned!
- Our child has only been in school, 3 days... is this question appropriate at this time
- Reading and math support
- In general I find MSP to be lacking in math & science
- It's very early but based on last year - class size. He wasn't the "worst off" so he wasn't eligible for tutoring though he clearly needed/s it. And struggled throughout the year.

What are particular strengths in the academic programming?

- I think Burroughs does a nice job at differentiating for learners at all levels.
- Attention to kids' varying ability levels
- So far, the very strong teachers we've had: Lasser and Templeton are STANDOUTS!
- Good math instruction and emphasis on reading in classroom and at home
- Actually, it's too academic, if that's a thing. Our family would like more time for play, for celebrations, for field trips.
- Great teachers
- Literacy
- Teachers
- Singapore math
- All units.
- Reading and Math
- access to great programs in math and science

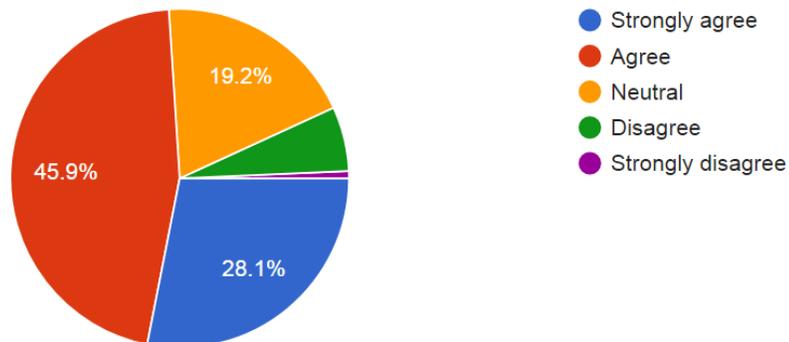
- I think the content is adequate and, in general, kids are pushed into curriculum that is too advanced anyways.
- Singapore math, excellent teachers
- Resources
- Sensitivity to each child's needs, teacher knowing the ability level of their students,
- We've just done K but I feel for reading at least, there was strong differentiated learning principals incorporated in the classroom. My child was engaged, loved learning and her teacher.
- The one particular thing that is a strength is the work. I don't believe that any skill is learned or mastered without putting in the raw time to try and fail at a task until you have confidence in your skills. I have seen the school demonstrate in a few ways that they value the time in the work. I wish they would spend less time on other activities outside of these endeavors but we have to pick our battles.
- Differentiation for math and reading, engaging projects and field trips
- All the specialists,
- Math
- Differentiation for math and reading, engaging projects and field trips
- Advanced learner specialist
- I love when all levels of kids are represented in groups such as Melissa Favero's lit circles/readers theatre
- Teachers and focus on reading
- Singapore math curriculum
- Consistently good for most
- Math
- The math program.
- Math curriculum
- Singapore math, working in peer groups
- Advanced learning, reading, math, art, library
- Singapore math and a commitment to challenging AL learners - hoping this continues with AL specialist position cut.
- Math program
- My kiddo just finished K, and he advanced a lot in reading, writing and math! We had Mrs.Z and she did great stimulating his brain to learn.
- The teachers, special classroom projects, field trips
- Interesting projects and challenging work
- Math, reading leveling & programs
- Advanced math classes for older grades
- Great teachers
- Rigorous curriculum, great teachers
- Math
- reading specialist

- Keeping arts important
- Committed & experienced teachers, good curriculum
- I'm not sure. It's hard for me to speak to that. I don't feel like I received a lot of information last year about what my son specifically was excelling in regarding academics or struggling with, and how the teacher was meeting his particular needs.
- The individual teachers and the tools that they use
- Reading and nature science
- Teachers
- Math and writing. Literature analysis with Mr. Templeton
- strong teachers.
- Leveled reading
- All subject areas really
- Teachers teaching more than kids teaching themselves
- Great teachers, Singapore math, amazing field trips and art, music, cultural activities
- It depends on the individual teacher
- Math levels , Projects- float parade, cereal box, reports
- Great kindergarten teacher last year
- Differentiated reading.
- Excellent teachers who differentiate well
- Singapore math and excelled reading.
- math. teacher engagement.
- Treating children as individuals and not “tracking” them.
- reading
- Singapore Math, reading groups, ec programming like LEGO, chess,...
- Emphasis on reading - although I hate that money is involved.
- Math
- The involvement of parents, Extracurricular activities.
- Great teachers
- Quality education and caring teachers and commitment to meeting students where they are at and taking them to their highest potential.
- Math
- Having specialists as needed
- Love math breakouts in upper levels
- Not sure yet
- Literacy, math
- Don't know yet, just started.
- Math and I'm excited about the STEM program
- Rigorous, interesting, flexible.
- Literacy. Math.

- The school tries to address kids along the full learning spectrum (not just teaching to the middle of the class). It's too bad we lost funding for our AL resource, but my child is currently in the Janssen/Templeton setup and I'm hopeful that will allow for the challenges to continue.
- Identifying and teaching to kids who are advanced learners
- Personal interest and customization
- Qualified and experienced teachers.
- Math encourages critical thinking.
- Singapore math; Advanced Learner programming
- Strong for a range of students
- Math and literacy
- My child seems inspired and loves to learn.
- Not sure
- Singapore math
- Singapore math
- Literacy, math, social/emotional
- The outstanding teachers.
- Great teachers, Singapore math
- Singapore math, emphasis on reading and integrating reading in all areas of the curriculum

Please rate how much you agree with the following statement: My child's social and emotional needs are being met at Burroughs.

146 responses



What gaps do you see in meeting your child's social and emotional needs?

- They need less pressure, more fun, more play, more breaks, more recess and more time outside.
- Not enough support staff
- Classroom friendships, needs social skills class through SPED
- I don't see any effort beyond what's learned being in a group setting; some extras are good, like mindfulness and Bravo!
- Speaking more generally, there should be flexibility in dealing with challenges with classroom behavior. Each child's unique experiences should be considered when addressing discipline. Punishing a student for not following the rules by having them sit out of physical activity events is not helpful when that student's challenges may come from not having enough body breaks during the school day.
- I think with such large class size, it is hard to have teacher meet students social and emotional needs
- I felt this area was strong K-2, but dropped off in Third. I felt the third grade team did not seem as engaged in developing strong social emotional skills and relationships at this level. It felt like a "transitional" year with many missed opportunities to guide the children at their level. I also feel that overall there needs to be better recognition that social emotional skills and needs will vary based on many factors, including the often over looked wide range of age maturity levels at each grade level due to the age cutoff and parental practice of "red shirting."²
- My child could use more direct support for social emotional learning...
- Kindergarten should be less focused on academics, and/or all students should start K at age 6
- Teacher encouragement, facilitation of friendships for new students, conflict resolution assistance
- few teachers offer personal support for social emotional needs after kindergarten
- classrooms are too big to address her needs- teachers are overwhelmed and can't really see what is going on with individual kids. I feel like this is a district issue that budgets keep class sizes growing.
- I think the emphasis leans more towards academics and less towards social/emotional. Some teachers are better at managing social/emotional learning than others. My daughter had a rough year socially in 2nd grade. Fortunately her teacher managed it well. I've heard there are other teachers who are not in tune with that area of learning, and that concerns me.
- My child has autism and has an IEP, I am neutral on this factor because his needs are addressed separately by the autism program
- See last response
- Classroom teachers as whole need better training and help to assist with SEL. Some are wonderful, some are terrible. IEP/504 accommodation implementation was spotty and teachers were not held accountable.
- None
- Large class sizes. Hard for teacher to really know my child
- There are some incidences that have occurred in and outside of the classroom, where it really seems that a teacher or some other adult should have stepped in and offered support. Overall, emotional and social safety is okay, but a lot more can and should be done and there needs to

be consistency in how teachers respond to more serious incidences that threaten my child's emotional and social safety. Another issue is MPLS Kids is not part of Burroughs per se, but is a program housed within the school- there are a lot of emotional and social safety concerns there, that should be addressed. Information about serious events isn't always communicated to parents or addressed.

- Needs to be cultural competency taught to teachers so when kids of colors are tainted with racial slurs they know how to handle the situation with compassion and education!! More teachers of color!
- Too many kids in one room, naughty kids influence others
- Class sizes are large. A few kids tend to take a lot of attention and the others just get by
- I am very concerned for my K. As a child with special needs, I worry that she won't fit in with all the "high fliers" which is how Burroughs has been described to us by a staff member. Also, my 1st grader is Black. He's faced challenges social and emotional challenges relating to being brown, not the least of which has been being teased about his hair.
- Kids need to go outside as part of their academic school day in order to refresh and recharge AND learn better. Recess isn't what I'm talking about. Play needs to be heavily incorporated into the school day. Classroom celebrations (WITH food!) need to happen. We need to focus less on tests and curriculum and focus on emotional learning---kindness, acceptance, tolerance. They also need a less stressful lunch room.
- MPS curriculum is NOT developmentally appropriate. Young learners need more time playing. They also need specific ways to learn and practice skills like kindness, empathy, compassion. We should have curriculum around this just like we do around math and literacy. Also, the lunchroom is a disaster, from a social-emotional perspective. It's so stressful and unpleasant. I'm shocked every time I go for lunch with my child. Lunch should allow enough time for kids to have some socializing---that is part of learning and growing, too.
- They need time to be kids! More time for play! More time for fun and silliness and joy! Burroughs needs a much more child-centric, whole-child approach. More focus on growing good, healthy people.
- We are new and figuring out the answer to this question; stay tuned!
- Again, our child has been in school for 3 days
- I wish I knew more about what the teachers do to support the children's social/emotional needs. I also wish that more of this was shared at conferences. Each and every conference I try to get our (amazing) teachers to talk about my children's SE development and they never want to go there. They seem to have very little to share on that topic and want to hurry back to their assessment data.
- My younger daughter is pretty socially/emotionally resilient, but my older daughter is more sensitive to social dynamics. Last year she felt like she didn't have friends she knew she could play with for the second half of the year (she'd been close with some boys but then the girl/boy divide surfaced). As a parent I've tried to work with her on changing her perspective, providing things she can do by herself on the playground if she feels alone, etc. Social wellness is

important and impacts learning. I may reach out to the school social worker this year if it remains an issue (not sure if that's the purpose of our social worker though).

- Many
- Not familiar w social emotional programming

What are particular strengths in the social and emotional learning programming?

- I think most of this happens in the classroom. We have had teachers who are strong in this area, but I know not all are. I think more could be done to support students social emotional needs across the school. Creating a culture that ensures all kids feel cared about and included is a big part of that.
- Variety of activities in which kids can make friends
- Culture of students and teachers inclusive attitudes
- Kindness and respect are heavily featured.
- Mindfulness program
- Mindfulness, Our teacher is excellent in creating community and individual needs
- We have had great teachers thus far
- I have not been aware of the social and emotional learning that is held within the school. Not familiar with our social worker and her role with this learning.
- Attempts are made to be consistent throughout the school with behavior expectations
- My son with special needs is getting support in advocating for himself and building self esteem, love the reading buddy program in kindergarten, would like more teacher focus in helping develop closer social relationships.
- I don't actually see any "programming" around this. The teachers are largely lacking in innovation. His social/emotional needs are met by his own personality and cadre of friends.
- There are Some great teachers
- The teachers' ability to meet the individual needs of their class in the moment it is needed.
- A focused curriculum. I will say that while my child's needs are being met, that is definitely not true for all children. I've been surprised and disappointed to learn how kids who struggle with self-regulation issues are dealt with if they don't have a diagnosis that warrants additional support (they're regularly sent home). I have heard similar things from parents at other MPS schools as well so don't know how specific it is to Burroughs.
- This school has a social worker on site every day, that is one of the key people missing from my school when I was growing up. Burroughs works at having adults there invested in the children and outside of the normal teacher relationship.
- My daughter and her friends are very welcoming and inclusive, and know specific ways to combat bullying

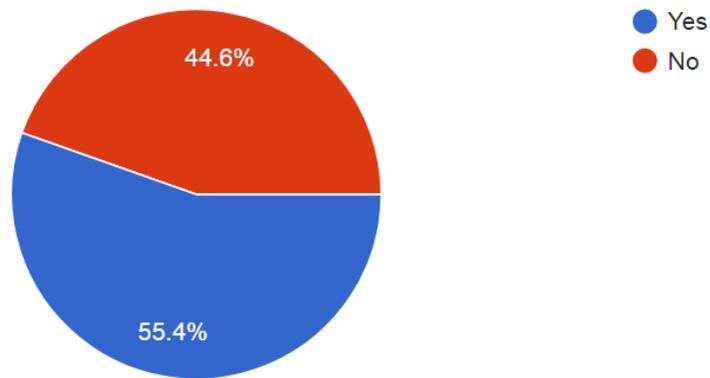
- My daughter and her friends are very welcoming and inclusive, and know specific ways to combat bullying
- My son has the option to interact with a variety of children & discussion is encouraged
- Mindfulness, meetings about how recess went in lower grades (do this in all classes please!) SEL language used in skits over PA system by kids, good RAT book as example this year too.
- Mindfulness
- The mindfulness program.
- Mindfulness training
- Mindfulness was fantastic, and the again Mrs. Z did a lot to develop a cohesive group who became a family in class!
- I think overall Burroughs has a good climate of respect and belonging for all children.
- Teachers have emphasized standing up for others and conflict resolution
- I don't think it's programming per se. it's the people, the caring, the outreach, the values that are shown throughout the school & community
- I think that we have been lucky to have teachers who provide good social emotional learning (definitely Mrs. Kuhlman and Mr. Moen). I don't believe all of the teachers do this, though.
- Classroom meetings, mindfulness
- Ability to commingle with different kids
- ? But I have no concerns
- Mindfulness; messages throughout school on being part of the "Burroughs community."
- Love the work with meditation... Hope it continues.
- mindfulness sessions, field trips, art and music
- Staff and families seem interested in the well being of the kids at Burroughs, they teach kindness and acceptance
- Teachers are in tune with this, having an on-site school social worker
- I like the Ms. Jen's mindfulness program. I don't feel like the specialists are necessarily well-trained in understanding this aspect of their students. And, unfortunately, I wish my son's kindergarten's teacher had been more communicative with us about this aspect of my son.
- The programs like Mindfulness, intelligent food choices, focus on doing the right thing, field trips, etc.
- Mixed classrooms and individual and group activities
- Mindfulness, teaching respect
- Mindfulness
- Na
- I loved mindfulness with jen- my children talk about it all the time!
- Access to social workers and licensed psychologists offered through Canvas Health
- The first year could have been better. We were in a classroom in which there was a long term sub and the knowledge transfer could have been better.
- Teacher involvement when needed and appropriate

- Not sure, haven't used any additional services. But glad to know we have a social worker and full time school nurse!
- To the extent that there are any, I think it depends on the individual teacher
- My kids really benefit from the kind, mindful atmosphere.
- it is very teacher dependent. For some grades, we've had teachers really on top of this and for others, not so much. More universal teacher enrichment on this topic is needed.
- great teacher experience last year. mpls kids.
- Loves Mindfulness Training. Plus, overall, the Burroughs kids seem so welcoming and kind.
- Teaching kindness
- Brave
- Growth mindset teaching
- Do not know much about the social emotional learning portion of Burroughs community. I would probably like to know a little more
- teaching social values like respect, inclusion, equality
- I feel the biggest strengths are engaged teachers who listen to student needs and parental input and pay attention in the classroom, social worker who cares and is approachable, an overall focus of character, I've noticed a VERY effective and strong focus in the physical education program on character and how to treat others
- Mindfulness
- Ms. Zitur is very welcoming
- Mindfulness, no bullying, safe environment to be authentic self and explore
- Too early to say, but she's happy so far!
- Teachers who care.
- Mindfulness practice
- Forms sent by the kindergarten teacher to understand my child's personality, strengths and areas of concern
- personal attention
- I really liked the meditation and mindfulness program.
- Mindfulness program, physical education
- LOVE the mindfulness programming and the 30 minutes of recess.
- Bucket filling and agreeing class rules.
- Not sure
- Not sure
- The teachers. They are well tuned to our kids needs.
- Empathy for students with different experiences, teachers
- Focus on cooperation, mindfulness, and respect.
- Integration of mindfulness into classroom
- Support SERTs
- Variety of activities.

- Paper flyers are particularly important for many who don't utilize Facebook
- Comment - I don't think the FB Page is the best way to get info to parents (I think it isn't a very inclusive means of communication), but I use it because I feel like that is where lots of important communications are. I didn't know about it until about 6months in to my oldest child's first year.
- Not sure how I feel about the Parents Facebook page- the tone has become increasingly negative toward admin and I don't like that.
- seems we rely heavily on the weekly Burroughs Bulletin for news/updates, while I read it consistently I hear from many others who don't and thus don't feel connected or in the know
- How do we make sure everyone is aware of these outlets??

Have you attended a Burroughs PTA meeting?

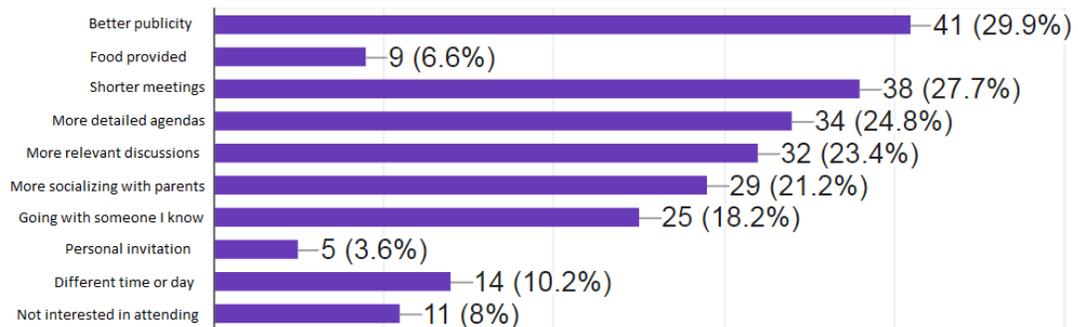
148 responses



What would make it more attractive to attend PTA meetings and participate in discussions about overall PTA direction and activities?

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137 responses



- The PTA meetings are tough because they tend to go long and get into the details, Robert's Rules, etc. They don't feel like a great way to really engage with the school.
- I showed up for a meeting, and the child care was a big mess and provider had not arrived yet. I waited for a few minutes and then left, rather than leave my child there unattended.
- Better facilitated discussion and a sense that PTA is responsive to the desires of parents and staff, not just executing what's been done in the past or listening to the small group of parents to most involved
- the last meeting I attended didn't have very good seats; something a little more comfortable makes the time go easier.
- I didn't return because the cliques were off-putting and I figured I could make a bigger difference elsewhere
- Staying on task and on topic. Also, while most parents are positive and stay on agenda, there are a few who are negative and make the PTA look bad. It's unfortunate that the PTA works so hard to provide programs for our school and there are just a few parents who cloud the good nature of the PTA community.
- More structure so the few vocal parents are managed by the PTA leadership. PTA audience seems very much a click of friends who think alike and try to steer decisions. The PTA leadership should focus on minimizing this and encouraging others in the audience to have a voice.
- Sometimes the conversation gets off topic and ends up being more complaining versus productive conversation.
- I try when my schedule permits, even if the meeting is 1.5 hrs.
- Sticking to set agenda schedule and having technology ready. Think about topics that could be handled outside of meeting. Share budget in advance and ask for questions during meeting.

- I feel like the PTA and other opportunities for parent involvement need to find ways to invite a more diverse array of voices into the discussion. This means not only making meetings convenient, but also making it possible for people who may be hesitant to talk to speak up: perhaps in smaller groups, or in other formats. There are some very strong voices and personalities in the room that have a stultifying effect on people who are less comfortable speaking publicly. It is even a little intimidating to me, and I'm an affluent white woman with a background in education.
- The timing has just not worked with travel, no particular issue
- Ensure it is accommodating time & care for families who have two professionals as parents
- PTA seems cliquy. I also don't like the tone of negativity toward admin. We are a privileged school community within MPS and we need to own that.
- Opportunity to participate or give feedback without attending a meeting. Record them or I would send input via email or a survey.
- Less talking more doing
- Opportunity for parents to put things on the agenda that they want to have discussed at the meeting.
- Well run meetings - on time, move thru agenda orderly, respectful tone and discussion from parent attendees
- Opportunities to learn about best practices in education to see if Burroughs is where it should be. Currently, we are very behind the times with a drill-and-test philosophy and not enough play or project based learning.
- I tried to go but the childcare person was late. I was very uncomfortable leaving my 5 yr old unattended, so we went home.
- N/A as I already attend.
- Online - allow to attend via Webex Enable chat during meeting
- Evening meetings
- school year just started
- Don't know yet
- If the same 3 people didn't dominate the whole meeting with negativity and angst
- I'm currently very involved with my neighborhood association and don't have bandwidth for much more volunteering. I would be willing to lend my expertise and work on things that are of interest to me personally (environmental sustainability), but don't have time for topics that are lower on my priority list.
- Currently have no time to attend due to other commitments.
- My schedule makes it difficult to be more involved, but I would like to attend when able
- Attempted to attend seems like a private club
- Possibly two meeting times or a live broadcast for when kid activities/work travel cause conflicts.
- I've heard they can be gossipy with some "outlier" opinions taking up valuable time. Not interested in that.

- Sign outside school on day of meeting saying, "PTA Meeting Tonight! All are Welcome!"
Everyone who speaks--please introduce yourself and say what year your child(ren) are in school and teacher--that would feel more welcoming

What do you believe should be the main role of the PTA? Does it currently fulfill that role? Why or why not?

- I feel like the PTA's role could be to serve as a strong liaison between the school and the parent community. Right now, the main role seems to be fundraising.
- Encouraging and facilitating parent involvement in school, raising money to supplement school needs, organizing activities for families
- Setting priorities and directing initiatives
- I think it does a great job!
- Connecting parents to the school
- To advocate for our kids, to be the voice of parents in how we want our schools to look.
- It needs to NOT feel like a clique-y popularity contest.
- Too much conflict and politics. It should be more about creating community.
- Get parents involved and fundraise as well as hell determine school climate.
- Accountability for school staff; I don't feel the staff feel accountable to anyone.
- Collaborating with school objectives. It seems like the PTA has its' own agenda at times that does not develop the students in the way that it could (i.e. buying cross country skis when they could rely on the district skis and allocate those funds for something else that might be utilized year round)
- Coordinating between parents and administration on school issues. Better communication on outcomes of PTA meetings would be helpful.
- Help decide how the school can advance for the sake of the children. .Yes, I do believe our PTA currently does a great job
- In the absence of a change in school funding decisions or the formula, it's main purpose should continue to be utilizing the funds needed to operate Burroughs at the level of quality we've all come to expect. Additionally, it should either serve to bring together a diverse viewpoint of parents and staff or help facilitate an additional group to do so.
- Unsure
- Promoting parent relationships among each other and supporting teacher needs
- 1. Amplifying the voice of the parent population to make Burroughs a welcoming place for all students to learn, 2. Raising \$ to support point #1. PTA is strong on fundraising but I often feel the scramble for raising dollars and staffing volunteers to maintain the bottom line is so all encompassing it doesn't have time to engage parents to really understand priorities for fundraising and volunteering - what really matters to families today? I'd also add that it would be so great if PTA adopted equity and inclusive goals and outcomes to help push forward a more diverse board/chairs. I know it is all volunteer work and it is a lot of work but if you're raising

your hand for a seat with power within the school, I do think you have a responsibility to push for a more equitable school. One thing that means is recognizing it is usually the same people making decisions within the PTA structure and saying “we want to change that” and then working to change it.

- The main role is to facilitate the connection between the teachers and parents for the express purpose of educating our children and preparing them for middle school. Generally speaking I think people have been focusing on aspects of education outside the norm of giving them the specific skills necessary to advance in reading, writing, math, and history; but they feel more like a soapbox subject.
- Support the school
- To build relationships between school community and its staff. It sounds like there is much "business as usual" push back from the old school regular attendees which is why I'm not a frequenter of these mtgs.
- Giving parents the opportunity to provide input about school culture, curriculum, programming, and community events
- Teachers and parents supporting and enriching the student experience together.
- Great at fundraising and communication. It seems like many parents go to meetings to be heard about school issues. I don't think that pta is the place for that. Maybe there should be other meetings for that.
- Yes- I think it has been very effective and I feel informed when I attend meetings. They feel long, but part of that is the amount of items to discuss.
- I think the PTA does a great job of raising money & supporting classroom needs. I do however think the auction & great gatherings are very cliquy and it can be very intimidating, so we don't usually attend. It would be great if there were a more inclusive alternative.
- Providing funding, community events, connection between parents and faculty, and helping provide a positive culture for our school. PTA could go further in being that connection point between parents and faculty and also being a positive impact on the culture of our school. I believe that is now the main objective of the PSWE? However, I'm not clear on how the two groups are working together other than the PTA providing funding for PSWE events.
- Connecting parents and administration, could improve in this area
- Supporting teachers and providing families and students with academic and social opportunities to learn and grow
- Serve all of the student population around needs, not wants. Again, the few times I've attended was focused on use of PTA use of funding to support one or two classes on insignificant field trips. PTA funds should address not one classroom, but all.
- To support the teachers and school in the multiple learning opportunities for our children and build positive community among all involved.
- I think the PTA fulfills the role of advocating for student needs and being able to offer opportunities (and basic needs).
- The PTA should serve as a link between parents and the school, building a sense of community and providing support to teachers. I think it does not fully do this yet primarily because not

enough parents attend - I am not sure if they are not interested or are worried about getting over-committed or feel unwelcome.

- To involve the entire community. We've got a good start. Need broader involvement (not necessarily at meetings, but at events, just being informed)
- I think our PTA is outstanding.
- Fill the gaps for the school with money or volunteer time - it takes a village and the PTA helps facilitate much of this activity
- Impacting the school in a meaningful way besides just funding. No it doesn't fulfill the role. I feel that very few teachers participate. Would like to see them in person for special budget requests. Don't know that we are able to provide input that administration listens to.
- I appreciate the hard work of the PTA and the time that its members put into it. If the above were addressed, I would have no other comments.
- To get all parents involved not just some, to be more welcoming and open minded, more diverse
- Fundraising to add programs for our kids.
- Seems like same people doing all the work.
- Helping fund programs or extra things not covered by the regular school budget.
- ?
- Ensuring that the parents and administration are aligned toward common goals, ensuring that raised funds and taxpayer funds are maximized, communicating. Yes, I think it does those things.
- Seems exclusive. It would be better if more parents of color were there. More focus on race and equity.
- Budgeting, student advocacy, parent inclusion. Yes, I feel the PTA is currently fulfilling its role.
- Fundraising
- Advocate and partner for the leadership
- Seems like PTA is run by just a few strong personalities- but at the same time I fully acknowledge that I do not attend regularly. I feel strongly that PTA should support admin and teachers. This is a difficult time for public schools- let's do our best to remain positive and supportive.
- to learn about what is happening at Burroughs and to support the schools policies
- Support all aspects of our school. Yes!
- I think the PTA does a great job providing necessary supplementary funding, but should hold the administration more accountable for the way the funding is managed and accounts are set up.
- Allowing parents to advocate for the needs of the students at the school and have discussions around this with other parents and school staff.
- Not sure. Still new to kids in school, so still learning. But, noticed that attendance at meetings seems to be mostly the same group of parents and not very reflective of the full Burroughs community.
- Moving our school forward, together, and bringing back some fun! The PTA should be the backbone of Burroughs and should lead the way for what we want our school to be. PTA leaders should also be a part of an annual review of the school principal.
- Connecting parents/families and raising money.

- The PTA should help determine where parent raised funds go for things like field trips and enrichment programs, support teachers, work with the administration to help flush our school climate and in general promote school spirit and community building.
- Raising money and promoting a school environment that is more joyful and purposeful.
- Sharing diverse voices of parents - not just the squeaky wheels!
- Fundraising but be mindful about showcasing these achievements outside of school community.
- Advancing a school culture that our community desires. Raising funds to support those desires and community goals.
- Supporting teachers and curriculum
- As far as I know, the PTA is strong and very effective
- looking to find out and be pleasantly surprised
- Inform parents on activities, challenges, needs in our children's school. Offer insight, opinions, guidance, and services to our children's education and socialization.
- To support the school in a positive way. To work closely with Ana and the staff to determine the most creative and effective ways to support financially during this difficult time. Additionally to support the community with a few events per year to encourage a strong community.
- Fundraising for better quality school
- I don't really know what the role of PTA is. I see dollars being spent on things that I don't personally value (as well as on things I do value). That's okay, we all value different things. But, I'm not likely to get involved or donate if I think the focus doesn't match my values. I like spending money on math, not so much on cross country skis, etc.
- New parent to Burroughs so unable to provide meaningful input
- Help to guide and structure the school.
- Supporting the academic mission of the school, building community.
- Support the teachers and school admin with resources and policy guidance. Yes it currently fulfills that role.
- Bringing parents together.
- It should be more inclusive and welcoming to new parents
- To connect and build relationships between parents in order to support our teachers and staff for the benefit of our children.
- PTA does a great job of supporting teachers and students, funding programming that should be covered by public funding.
- Fundraise. Yes.

Anything else you want us to know about improving the parent involvement experience at Burroughs?

- I would love to see more free events where parents can actually get to know each other. I also wonder if there's a way to help parents connect at pick-up every day. There are a ton of parents

who stand awkwardly day after day and it's not a very inviting culture. Thanks for doing the survey!

- No
- I feel like there should be much more cooperativeness between ALL of Burroughs parent groups and the administration.
- We love Burroughs. Our concerns are with class sizes
- Administration needs to get on board with promoting the need for parent volunteers as well supporting and thanking current volunteers.
- I appreciate what you're doing. The district is in rough shape.
- Burroughs is a great school. The atmosphere of the school is wonderful for the kids. For parent wise- working parents are often not always in the "loop" about everything. There are separations between the working parent and the stay at home parent. Would like more of a unity. Also, please let our school know having concerts and events at night would greatly help families! Taking off time for work and all to attend concerts can be challenging with meetings! I know the school staff is not paid at night for these events, but it really needs to be an option so ALL are included.
- The teachers just don't seem to have enough support in the classroom (high student numbers, rare if ever educational assistants). This can contribute to a chaotic learning environment for students. When you volunteer in Burroughs, you can really see the seriousness of this issue. I am happy to continue volunteering my efforts but it is a band-aid for a much bigger issue.
- Do more to integrate the Kindergarten parents in the early fundraising events like the silent auction. Maybe pairing those interested in attending up with parents of older children so that they meet other parents through experienced parents.
- I think/hope that a continuing effort to reinforce the openness of PTA, parental involvement and our school community will help improve things. A focus on the many different types of involvement and ways to be part of our community and the importance of each would be good. No one way is right or best. I believe it is simultaneously possible to be both aware of the concerns surrounding feelings of a lack of inclusivity, while trying to improve it, and while also feeling frustrated that those efforts seem to not work. I believe it's possible to feel that all the work is left to a few but also that it might be that way because others feel left out or simply don't want or have time to be involved. No one way to view it is right or wrong. I would most like to see an openness to viewing issues, money, School direction, etc. through the lens of many different types of families.
- When we got to 3rd grade, the teacher did not seem open to in-class parent volunteering. Not sure what the PTA can do to advocate for this, but if you can, great!
- As parents, we need to see the bigger picture, rather than "just" the needs of my child. Trust that the school has the best interest in mind, not just for my child, but for ALL children.
- I love That this survey is happening and urge PTA to continue to keep trying to: engage families on specific strategy and priorities outside of the PTA meetings themselves through a variety of methods that reach lots of voices; make PTA meetings feel more productive and fun! Better facilitated discussions with clearer outcomes, chance to get to know others; more social, no-cost

events that feel inclusive and target a wide range of families; not sure how to say this but my general sense when I've volunteered on school wide stuff (don't have this experience w classroom specific) is that the other parent volunteers are unhappy and not enjoying what they're doing. I think this is part of a culture issue at Burroughs but want to call it out as I believe a more positive, fun feeling amongst parents at the school would help a lot w volunteer engagement. I know I'm not in charge of other people's moods :).

- More family events
- It have a fifth grader and it has felt hard to make any inroads. It can feel like there is an "in" group of parents and not sure how to be included.
- I believe many of us are overwhelmed with volunteering.
- Maybe teach some of the parents kindness & empathy. They bully more than the kids!
- More clear direction from school leadership on the vision for our school, with the PTA being a communications hub. I believe this is being worked on by Ana Bartl. If we have a clear vision on where our school is going then we can have more clear direction and conversation in PTA meetings around school objectives and PTA expenditures.
- Encouraging and supporting more diversity of views and experiences and fewer parent cliques.
- It's great you're asking these questions! I hope you're getting +++ responses. Please consider sharing relevant info with the Class Champs sect of FEJG, similarly focused on building communication & community among all families. Thank you!
- Find ways to involve more parents... hoping this survey went to all parents versus just ones who came to a PTA meeting.
- I think it is important to be clear about all the ways to be involved because the many options are confusing and a little overwhelming to new parents.
- I want to make sure we balance ALL kid/ family needs. Let's keep focusing on inclusion!
- I think there's a big opportunity to help welcome new Burroughs families – it's a big school and can be overwhelming as a new family
- Still feels very political and cliquish. Want it to be more inclusive. More openness about funding and budget impacts.
- Yes make fund raising events more open to other parents and ethnic groups
- Involve teachers at the start of the year to get email addresses for ALL parents to make sure all parents/families get the weekly Bulletin. That is the best way to connect with & share information with all families.
- I like that there was the book discussion/authors present about the race book in the spring. I wasn't able to attend but wish there would be more events like this to promote justice and educating us all on what we can do to increase our own awareness/teach our children differently. Also, would like more programming one just general kinds/building empathy in our kids (and in parents!). Perhaps even breaking this down by grade-level or the younger grades versus older grades.
- How can we get more parents to participate. It seems to be the same ones at every event. Perhaps a volunteering-a-thon with some type of benefit associated. Hit X hours, get X.

- I am not a fan of the rotating classes when a specialty is not provided like art. Not having art the end of the school year was incredibly hard on our daughter
- Not all parents can volunteer or attend PTA- it would be good to come up with events that don't cater to the wealthier parents. Also it would be good to be more inclusive for the gatherings. Instead of gender binary events, have a Fancy Family formal dance for all parents and kids instead of just dads and daughters. Leaves out a lot of others and could generate even more funds if all were included.
- Overall it is skewed for the stay at home parent. Needs to be more inclusive for two professional families beyond accepting our donations to the fund.
- I attended one PTA Meeting when my kid was in K. Lasted > 2 hours. This is too much
- Sometimes I feel out of the loop, as if I have missed so much by not attending past meetings. I often think of issues or concerns, but then think that maybe it was previously discussed and I shouldn't bring it up. Not sure how to change that, other than just start attending meeting :)
- It doesn't feel like parent voices are heard by the administration. So many parents are asking for change and for a more developmentally-appropriate, child-focused environment. Change needs to happen sooner and faster. Elementary school is only a few short years.
- I wish at the Fall Gala, that everyone would stop mingling and listen better during the speeches. It's upsetting how rude some are.
- parent involvement has been strong at Burroughs but we need to engage new parents coming in. I think the best way to do that is through intentional personal connections.
- I feel like a lot parents are not included in key decisions. For example, there was not a broad-base discussion about what our new specialist class should be---it was just announced that we'd have a STEM class. STEM is great, and perhaps that's what parents would have chosen, but it should have been a joint decision.
- More "virtual" engagement opps for working parents
- Building leaders need to interact with parents more---both in planned/purposeful ways (meetings, discussions, speakers) and in informal casual ways (being in the lobby to chat at drop-off and pick-up, working with parents during lunch, attending and participating in events like the all school picnic or campus clean up).
- I know money pays for things, but it's very stressful when almost everything involves donating money at Burroughs. Not all families are wealthy and since this is a public school, I don't expect to pay an arm and a leg for curriculum the district should provide through tax dollars. I'm not naive and I realize Minneapolis has some issues, but we do have a higher tax base than most communities. I work in a school district with a low tax base, yet we seem to survive and not pressure parents to give money left and right. Burroughs is a great school, but maybe rethink how often you ask for money?
- I like the coffee with the principal concept and I LOVE helping in the classroom and assisting with gym classes and also enjoy the classroom events like writers workshop and float parade and track and field day. Love it!!!!
- nope

- As a new parent to a Burroughs student, I'd like to know: how to get updates on volunteer activities, where to find updates, etc.
- Was not connected prior to the Facebook page. Need additional ways outside of Facebook to figure things out
- I've volunteered a handful of times where there are too many volunteers and you just end up being worthless. If you ask for volunteers one person needs to be directing and leading those volunteers.
- Its great
- If you ask people what they're passionate about and would be willing to contribute time to, you might uncover new ideas, and could group people around those topics.
- Being a working mom, it would be nice to have a variety of options that allow us to participate too (outside of just donating money).
- We have loved Burroughs and appreciate all the PTA brings in terms of volunteer engagement, organizing, funding and community. It is an asset many schools could use and we should never underestimate the impact it brings to the quality educational experience we all have come to expect here. Thank you!
- It's challenging for working parents to be involved due to scheduling issues. Ways to participate outside of school hours and in other formats than meetings (like this survey!) are great. Thanks for all that you do
- PTA isn't improving parent involvement. Parents and families are. Stick to budget planning.
- More inclusive and better outreach to those that are new and/or are introverts and also to those that may not have the means to contribute to the PTA.
- Thanks to all the parents who make Burroughs a special place for our kids.
- Childcare for PTA meetings should be better - seems a little spotty.
- more opportunities for parents/families to meet--especially within classrooms would be great and improve "community feel" of Burroughs.
- I think the website could be cleaned up a bit. I would like to know more about tutoring options - or what other help is available?