

January 23, 2018 – Whittle Springs Middle School

Group 1 – Adults/Parents:

1. In what areas is Knox County Schools doing well?
 - Communication from leadership
 - Students are well prepared for post high school
 - They make sure students don't fall through the cracks
 - Owning the areas they are not good at
 - Communication from various mediums
 - Transparency
 - Embraced the security issue. Taking it serious
 - Good job of staying ahead of initiatives (front end of education)
 - Inclusion of students with disabilities (especially in the arts)
 - Stretching the dollar
 - Taking parents seriously (take parents' input)
 - Individualization with meeting needs of students
 - A lot of teachers that care about kids

2. In what areas does Knox County Schools need to improve?
 - Various areas of equity (e.g. preparation, opportunities, expectations)
 - Increase the pace and urgency of Disparities Task Force
 - Resources for social and emotional needs (broader problem for community)
 - Need to expand Community Schools
 - Need for more interpreters (also expand for family needs)
 - Elementary curriculum needs to be deeper not broader
 - Recruitment of teachers to reflect diversity in classrooms
 - More opportunities for career and technical paths (and communicate the ones they already have)
 - Make sure every student knows they have opportunities post high school (e.g. TN Promise)
 - Giving students opportunities to attend things in the community (money to go to plays, etc.)
 - Maintain all school facilities
 - Foreign language instructions could be improved
 - Promote the integration of all kids (levels) in all classes
 - More parental involvement (either through communication or current opportunities)
 - Technology and maintenance of technology
 - Collective response between values of education and money spent

3. What would you like to see initiated in the future?
 - Dual emersion foreign language schools
 - More students using our public transportation system
 - Partnership with KAT to help with above
 - District-wide emphasis on healthy life (getting off technology at times)
 - KCS budget to reflect they are covering more than academics

- Expand B-K program
- When students are young, spend more time with social skills (not just academics)
- Revisit K-6, 7-9 (Jr. High), 10-12 gradeband structure
- Attract, train, recruit teachers. Better pay. Support if needed, but autonomy if not needed
- More opportunities for student to experience life after high school
- More community wide support for public schools

Group 1 determined themes:

- Gap between what we want and what we are able to support
- Need to expand Community Schools
- Schools do a lot more than academics
- More community-wide awareness of the need (beyond academics)
- More opportunities for parental support

Student Group:

1. In what areas is Knox County Schools doing well?
 - Math, science, social studies
 - Classes are good, teachers will help and make sure you understand
 - Good length for class
 - Counselors for each grade that you can talk to , talk about problems
2. In what areas does Knox County Schools need to improve?
 - Better locks on bathroom stalls
 - Stalls need to be higher
 - Protected urinals, better dividers
 - Food, spoiled milk, have seen hair in food
 - Better vending machines; protein bars and shakes
 - Heating on the buses, riders have to sit in the middle to keep warm
3. What would you like to see initiated in the future?
 - Fence around the track; see people walking while you're having activity time
 - A newer track, better steps to get to the track
 - More field trips; students have to raise money for band to travel to away games
 - Bathrooms cleaner
 - Upgrade locks for lockers
 - A band program that travels outside of local area for competitions
 - Access to computers that students can take home
4. Is there anything else Knox County Schools needs to know?
 - Students unable to complete some projects on computer because they didn't have computer at home
 - School start later (10-20 minutes) due to other family commitments
 - Hand rails are old and need repair around campus

Student determined themes:

- Upgrade of facilities
- Counselors for each grade makes a difference
- Schools start time could be later due to a lot of late buses
- Funding for extra-curricular programs; travel and equipment