

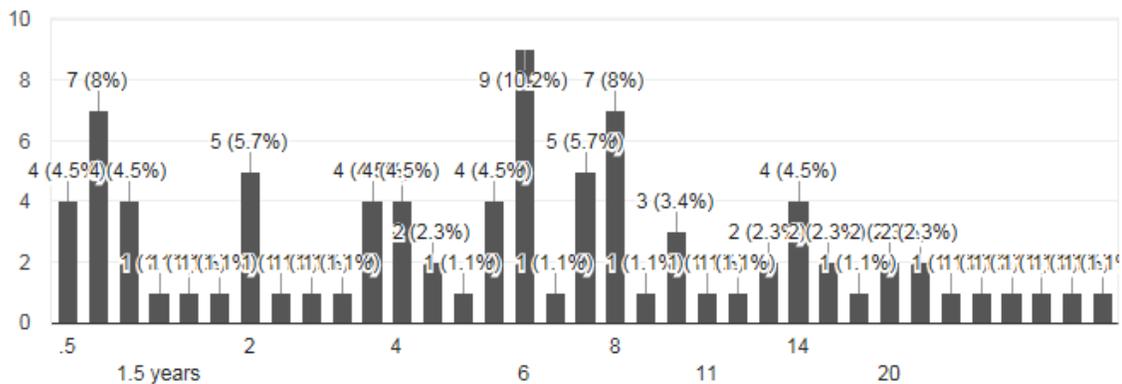
Sawtooth Elementary Parent Survey Results

Thank you to all who participated to help us assess our programs for this year and moving into next year!

Question 1: How many years have you been a parent in our school district?

Responses ranged from less than a year to over 20.

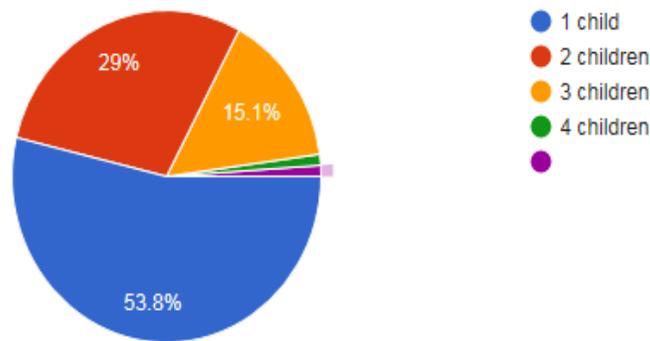
How many years have you been a parent in our school district?



Question 2: How many students do you currently have enrolled at Sawtooth Elementary?

Responses ranged from 1, to over 4 children.

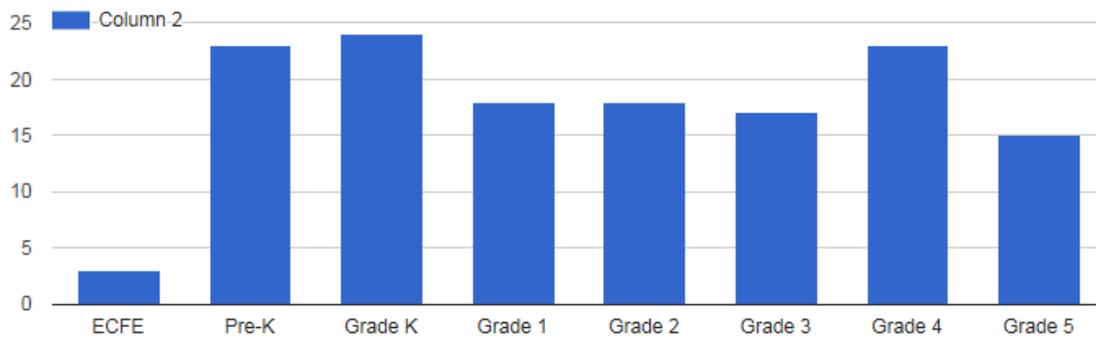
How many students do you currently have enrolled at Sawtooth Elementary?



Question 3: What grade/s is your child in?

Most response rates were similar from parents across all grades, with preschool, kindergarten and grade 4 responding slightly higher than most.

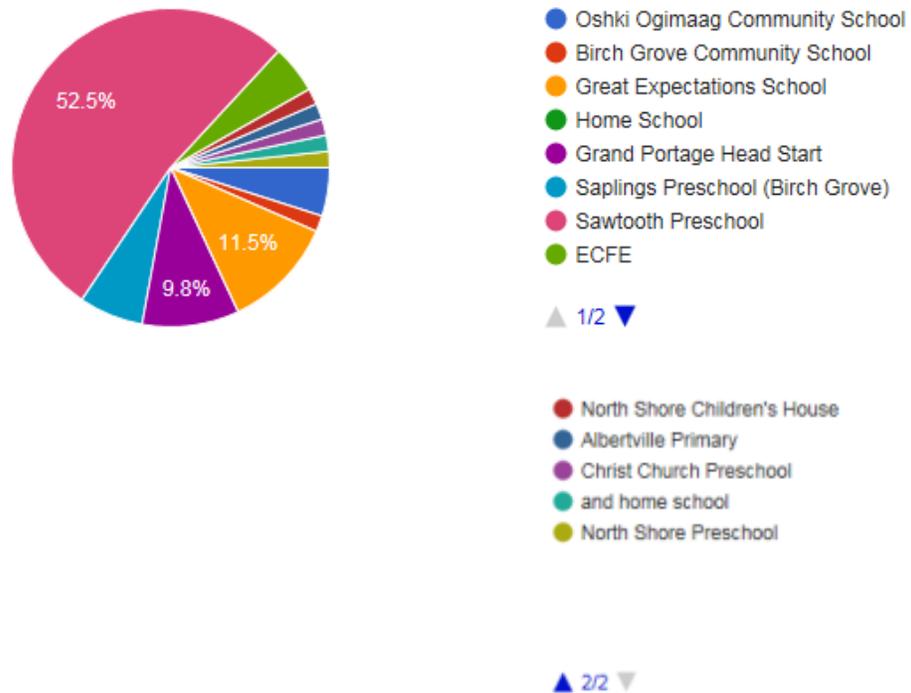
What grade/s is your child in?



Question 4: What other Elementary schools or programs has your child/children been involved in within our school district?

Over half of our parents attended our Preschool, followed secondly by coming to our Elementary School from Great Expectations School, and then Grand Portage Headstart. Other programs and schools were at lower rates (1-4%).

What other Elementary schools or programs has your child/children been involved



Question 5: In your own words, please share why you chose Sawtooth Elementary School for your child/children.

Responses below (names/ references deleted for confidentiality)

We recently moved to the area and after touring the school we knew this would be a great choice. The quality of teachers and programs seemed to be of a high level. The warmth and friendliness of those that we initially interacted with created a positive feeling for us. It's been a great experience so far.

We moved to the county in June of 2016. We knew the charter school only went up to 5th grade. We wanted our son to have stability after moving and didn't want him to have to transition to more than one school. Our daughter is in High School at Cook County and we did not want our children in separate locations. It is very convenient to have them at our property. We have been impressed by Sawtooth thus far and happy with our decision.

I believe in the public school system and have always lived in Grand Marais

This was the only public school system when my oldest started school. Our family came from an area that had multiple school districts. The preschool program was wonderful and inviting. But the way I really got to know the school is through the ECFE program. Teachers and staff are welcoming. The communication was outstanding when my children and my fifth grader now has been outstanding. So much better than middle school and high school.

Spouse works for the district, there was only one school to choose from when our oldest started K, we have been happy with the teachers, staff and programming at Sawtooth (no reason to look elsewhere), the school has made efforts to improve offerings for high achieving kids (thanks for the CLIMB program)

I went there, they can go there

Lack of other options

To get more help

We have a student enrolled in 6th grade. It is very convenient to have 2 students in the same school. This school provides more programs and options than BGCS, as far as music, art and Spanish...

Brothers, sisters, cousins attended this school

We value the integrated curriculum and social interaction emphasized by SES, as well as the small class size and student/teacher ratio

We live in Grand Marais

Because we wanted our kids to attend public school. I don't agree with GES which is our only other option.

We believe Sawtooth provides the most well-rounded education in our county. It is small enough to be nurturing, but big enough to provide diversity of people and programs. The teaching and administration at Sawtooth is excellent. We love Sawtooth!

It's a public school.

We wanted to have all our kids in one school, we felt the pre-k teacher would be very helpful and have more patience for our 3 year old.

School for all aged kids

Best choice in the county:), Great teachers, great curriculum, great administration

More help for my child

Good institution, life skills developed (PE,music, art etc.), we believe in public school-including relations to all.

I graduated in 1998, my son and my daughters dad graduated from here! Guess it's the only school in Cook County to graduate from! Next will be my youngest son:)

It was the only school available at the time when our first child started school. The school has the resources and quality teachers to provide a good education. We have great relationships with faculty and administration.

Sawtooth Elementary is a good place for my daughter to grow and learn to be the awesome girl she is. She comes home everyday with something new.

We like the public school over the charter school.

It's where I went. and where my husband went. I/we don't agree with some of the ways things are approached and or done at Sawtooth, but for the most part it seemed a better fit than the other choices. We do hope we weren't wrong in our choice. We'll see I suppose.

We moved here, believed in public education system. Felt the best system for our kids between here and GES.

I think Sawtooth is a great school. All 4 of my kids have gone/do go to Sawtooth. I went to Sawtooth.

Brothers, sisters, cousins attended

It was the public school we found when moving here.

We like the resources like everyday physical education as well as music, art, computers and world language.

It is the "main" school. My husband and I both attended Cook County main school, we like that they are going to a school we have a personal tie to. Our child created bonds w/kids in preschool and they attended Sawtooth.

After a comparasion day between the two schools, we eagerly switched over to Sawtooth and have been thrilled with the education and attitude of the school.

Great reviews and a curriculum (Spanish, etc.) I like:) I hear nothing but positive and my sons behaviors have reduces since transferring.

Lots of friends, plus Grandma and Grandpa work there.

I appreciate the staff, the new leadership with Mr. Dewitt, and the variety of classes offered VS. GES. The school is spacious, clear and boasts school spirit. It reminds me of my experience in the Stillwater MN school district. Keep up the good work.

No other options, we don't agree with GES philosophies.

Sawtooth has many options for children, excellent teachers and paras. The current principal is wonderful and welcoming. Ultimately every child's needs are different. I love that our small community provides so many options for children. We have good schools with different approaches to education. I chose Sawtooth because it has a wider range of programming.

Still a toss up between GES and Sawtooth for my child.

We chose to send our children to ISD166 for small class sizes, our oldest child was a part of ECSE, as parents we grew up in large communities with "traditional" schools and programs, Sawtooth had excellent teaching staff, ISD166 has strong connection/identity to the overall community.

Charter schools didn't appeal to us. We like gym space and adjoining YMCA

Her friends are there and I like all of her teachers.

Once our oldest was middle school age we moved the grade school kids over in order to have all children at the same school.

I grew up here, attended elementary-high school, graduated, have always loved our small school.

good instruction, Life skills development (PE, music, art etc), we believe in public school, inclusion and relationship for all.

It is close, provides safe transportation and the teachers and staff are committed to a safe, quality education. I also appreciate the open communication between teachers/staff and myself.

Because we only have two schools and all of my child's friends and cousins go there.

Moved here within the year-have a child in middle school-wanted to keep both kids in the same school

The main reason we switched from BG to Sawtooth was because of ease with the kids being closer to us while working. Also there was a free pre-school offered. However, we have been so pleased with Sawtooth. The teachers have been engaging and the kids have thrived at Sawtooth. We are happy we made the change.

Generations of family have attended there

It is the school I went to as a child and it worked well for me. I feel it is important to support one sustainable independent school district. I believe it promotes bringing all kids together in our small district to develop community.

Wanted to experience the variety of special classes-art, music, foreign language, etc. In communications with other parents, also learned of the wonderful library and media center, the great staff and improvements within the school the last two years. Physical education class-very much needed I feel for all kids.

class size, specialists, not allowing early entrance into kindergarten, developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction, positive peer interactions

Good teachers and staff, we think our children will and are getting a good education.

Our child enjoyed preschool at Sawtooth. We felt strongly about the curriculum and routine/structure would be great to continue.

We are no longer able to home school. Sawtooth seemed like our best option available.

Because it's a good public school and my boyfriend went there.

School parents went to as children

I felt like a 1/2 day program was perfect for my xxxxx year old xxxxx. It's nice that they can still be in the same classroom, but get a break from each other. I also enjoy knowing that they are socializing, learning letters and numbers, being read to and getting exercise.

We live in Grand Marais and wanted her in pre-school. Only one option.

When we moved we considered GES and Sawtooth. Although it seems bullying, wild behavior, and administration problems were worse at Sawtooth at the time, they were not terrible. Sawtooth had far more academic rigor and the teacher reputations in the younger grades were stellar. Our child has been extremely successful at Sawtooth, and we feel the administration is now excellent, and have especially been impressed with the faculty and paras as well. Diversity in programming is also a plus.

At this point, Pre-K is only offered at ISD166.

Because that is where I went to High School and I believe in public education.

Firmer boundaries-less grey area, specialist classes (art, music, etc.), No transition to different school come High School, At the time of Kindergarten application time there were no slots available @GES (I'm so glad there weren't! Love Sawtooth Elementary. Small class sizes in elementary and amazing teachers!)

I chose Sawtooth because that is the school I went to and to me it is the only choice. I do not want my kids to have to switch schools in Middle School.

Extra activities @ younger age (sports), I like that my children were around more kids, develop friendship within the school doing many different activities.

When we moved to Cook County, I asked my husbands co-workers about our school choices. We heard a lot of positives about GES and ISD166, but ISD stood out to us because of sports programs, being connected to the YMCA, and the warm welcome we received (we were given a private tour during the summer!) Also, we liked that all three of our children would be in the same school and wouldn't ever have to switch. The garden was a huge plus

too. We just felt that our kids would excel at Sawtooth, and 3 years later, I am happy to say we made the perfect choice.

I feel like all children are receiving an excellent education. All staff are so helpful and nice.

I believe in public education. Like all other rights/privileges, when you stop utilizing them, they will be taken away.

I chose this school because my husband graduated from this school and his father was a teacher there. The other reason is that the size of the school is perfect for our daughter. She is very social and loves making friends.

I went to school there. I am getting fed up with the politics at --- so I decided Sawtooth.

I needed all three of my kids in the same school.

Perceived firmer boundaries, less grey area, specialist classes (art, music, etc.), no transition to different school come High School

At the beginning, no other choices. Now I have a trusting relationship with each teacher my child has had. I feel we are a team. Teachers have created relationships with my children and our family. (in the past, administration has done this as well)

They have a great parent/teacher communication with the teachers, positive behavior incentives, we have had a great experience so far and feel that all children are receiving an excellent education

We wanted our child to be in a public school with general classes.

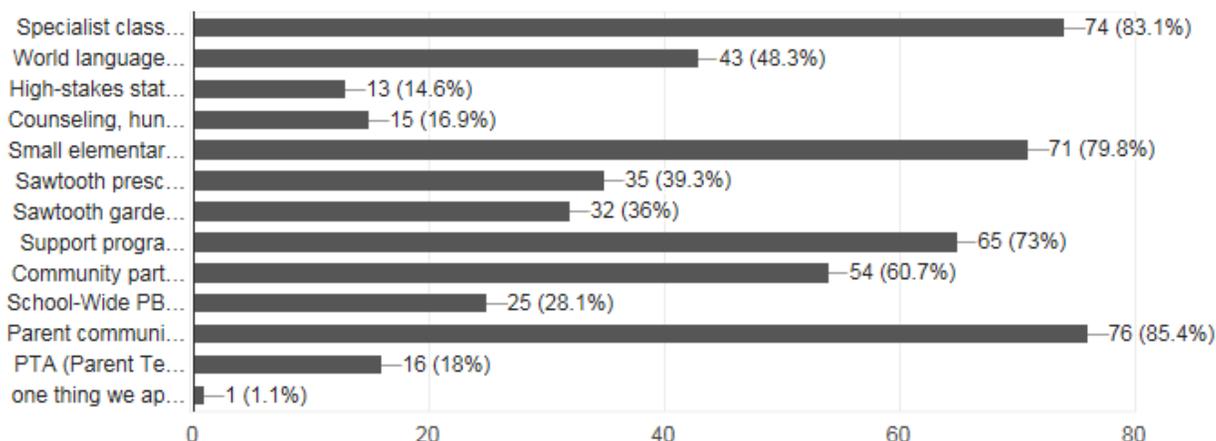
Question 6: Please check the Sawtooth Mountain Elementary programs that you value most. Please choose the 6 that are most important to you as a parent.

The top 6 responses in order were:

- 1) 85.4% of parents value parent communication including folders, conferences, daily phone calls and emails.
- 2) 83.1% of parents value specialist classes (Physical Education, Art, Music, Library, Computer Science and Digital Citizenship)
- 3) 79.8% of parents value small elementary class sizes.
- 4) 73% of parents value the support programs for individual needs (Junior Vikings After school, CLIMB –High Potential Gifted Student Program, Multiple Intelligences Scheduled time, Title 1 Reading and Math Support, Reading Corps, Special Education, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech, and ADSIS tutoring)
- 5) 60.7% of parents value the community partnerships with the YMCA, North House Folk School, Grand Marais Public Library, and Wolf Ridge.
- 6) 48.3% of parents value our World Language (with emphasis in Spanish) and Cultures Class.

Please check the Sawtooth Mountain Elementary programs that you value most. Please ch

89 responses



Question 7: In what ways could Sawtooth Mountain Elementary Improve? *This was not a specific question – but we received responses asking for the below improvements specifically.

4 Responses were received – listed with our initial actions.

Review school's hot lunch program: In the past, Sawtooth had a menu with more items made from scratch. Can we see that again? (soup, quesadillas, spaghetti and meatballs), Also concerned with recess/amount and time of day. Last year there was more time before school due to start bell and when buses arrive. Right now buses are too late for kids to play.

**Thank you for this response: We have heard this from others, and so will review the lunch program prior to next school year. We will also review the schedule to find efficiencies to ensure the most outside time and still reach curriculum goals.*

Not all Sawtooth teachers are experts licensed in their fields. I'd like to see that MN standards of hiring licensed teachers be followed. Variances should not be the first direction headed. I would like more things communicated through email.

**Thank you for this response: Administration will be reviewing establishing email distribution lists (without eliminating the current communication families enjoy using). The district follows the MN standards of hiring, and places the best educators in front of our kids – there have been recent changes to our hiring practices many may not be aware of – any are invited to contact the district to review these and their own children's teacher's credentials.*

A frustration is lack of communication with current administration. If a parent emails (even as a CC) a respectful, honest reply is appropriate...always, could there be a more appropriate alternative activity than sitting in the halls if it is too cold to be outside before school? Kids will be sitting for the majority of the next 7 hours.

**Thank you for this response: Teachers and Administration will review the morning plan for next year. We should always respond to parent communications. We apologize for this. Please let us know anytime we make a mistake.*

STEM: (computer doing pattern or shape methods, science experiments hands on, building with electric circuits with small batteries/voltage, need more Ojibwe anishanabemowin, management natural resources, biology, forestry, land use, water/air quality)

**Thank you for this response: Some new items implemented that many may not be aware of are:*

- 1) The brand new updates to our Elementary Science Curriculum through the FOSS system – including an integrated electric circuits unit, telegraph development, electromagnetism, and hundreds of other hands on, and environmental/ nature based components through all of our elementary grades approved this year.*
- 2) The recent work in incorporating the Ojibwe Language and Culture through all curriculum areas of our school. Currently Ojibwe is being provided as a class to all levels of MS students, as well as some HS students.*

3) Our brand new CLIMB program with a STEaM focus in the elementary – this is new this year – please contact Ms. Barras for more information- the kids have been doing some really neat coding, writing, building, etc!

However, we recognize we can never be doing ‘good enough’! To that end, we adopted a structured curriculum review cycle to continually assess and improve. We will give these comments to our curriculum committees. If there are other thoughts on our curriculum we invite all folks to contact the administration who can put you in touch with the various curriculum reps or take your comments to include in the continued reviews.

*Question 8: Thank you for completing this survey.
Do you have any other questions or comments?*

6 Responses were received –listed below:

Thanks for all you do!

We feel the school has been heading in a much better direction, very proud to send our child here.

Thanks (to everyone) for all the help and encouragement!

I would appreciate ISD 166 placing the maximum amount of resources at the student level.

It was hard to select from the above list – wish we could choose more than six! Cook county is such a great place to live – as alumni we are proud of its uniqueness.

How to review the results of the survey once completed?

