

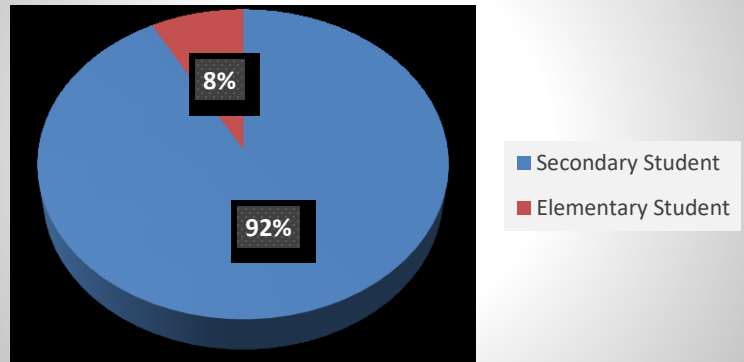
## Student Survey Results

### a) What is your age?

#### Summary:

Ninety-two percent of the surveys were completed by secondary school students. The student survey questions were primarily intended for secondary school students as many questions were concerned with issues more apt to apply to an older student population, such as course option selections, after-school work and extra-curricular opportunities, and school team tryouts and ability to take part on school teams.

### What is your age?



### Question 1: What were your feelings at the time of your school's closure?

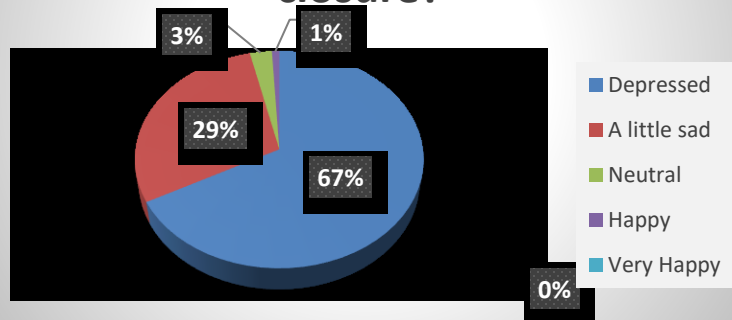
#### Summary:

More than two-thirds of the students expressed feelings of anxiety, worry, fear or depression. Students expressed feelings of alienation, inability to fit in, isolation and fear of bullying. There was an almost unanimous feeling of sadness or depression with only 3% expressing feeling of "neutral" and 1% "happy".

#### Student Comment:

"Felt betrayed by the school board, and unimportant in their decision-making."

### What were your feelings at the time of your school's closure?

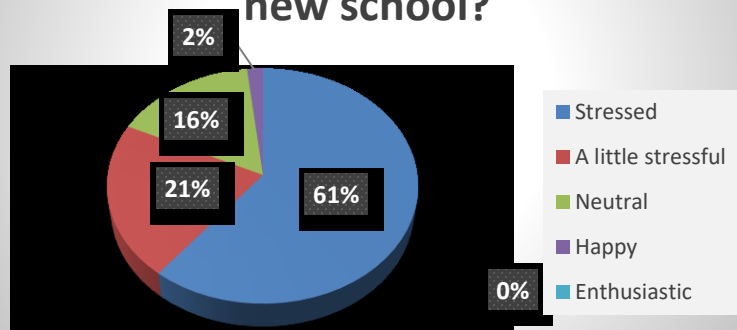


### Question 2: What were your thoughts/expectations about entering a new school?

#### Summary:

Responses revealed that 82% of respondents felt "stressed" or "a little stressed" as they anticipated entering the new school. Only 2% of students stated that they felt "happy" at the prospect of the move.

### What were your thoughts / expectations about entering a new school?

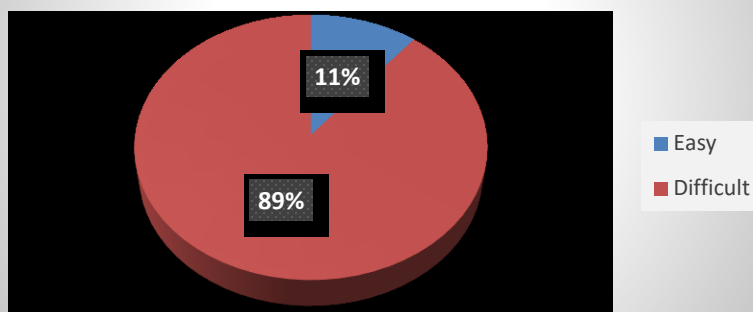


### Question 3: Did you find the move easy or difficult?

#### Summary:

Consistent with the previous responses regarding student expectation and state of mind, almost 90% of students found the move "difficult".

### Did you find the move easy or difficult?



### Question 4: Do you feel that the move has affected your academics?

#### Summary:

Although one-third of students reported academic results that were the "same" or "a little better", two thirds of respondents associated a negative academic outcome associated directly with the effects of the consolidation or relocation. Many students spoke about a decline in academic outcomes and many indicated a lack of enthusiasm for school following the move.

#### Student Comments:

"Specialty teachers not teaching their subjects."

"At my previous school, I was happy. I never wanted snow days. It was like a family. Super friendly and welcoming. Now, I never want to go to school. I hate it, (it's been a year and a half)."

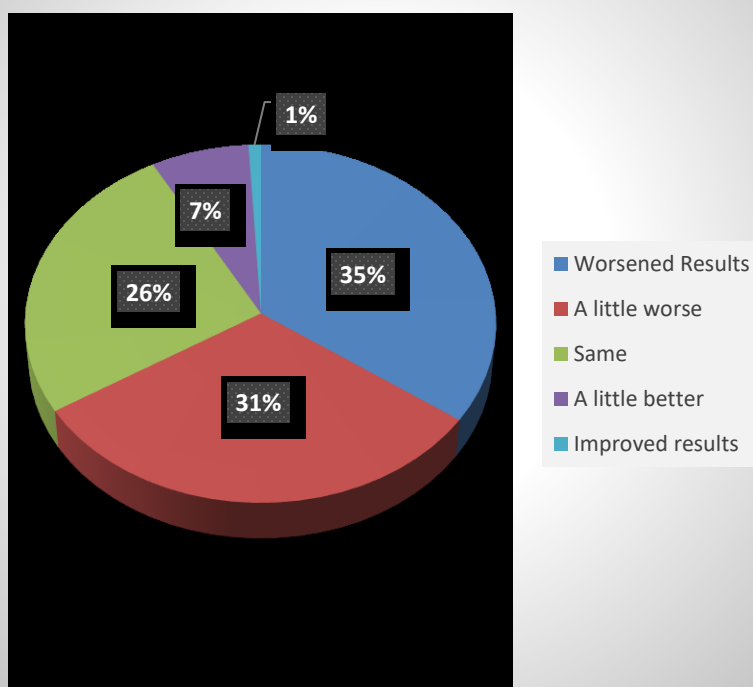
"My grades dropped significantly as I as unable to attend school more than twice a week due to severe social anxiety." / "Average dropped 20%"

"Was not able to complete high skills major, AP physics was not an available option..."

"I don't feel teachers know me when I am stressed like my teachers at my old small school. Teachers have so many students they can't focus on the kids who need that extra help."

"My grades went from all academic classes with 70+ marks with the odd low mark in a class to all applied classes with 60 or lower marks." "Was not able to complete high skills major, AP physics was not an available option."

### Do you feel that the move has affected your academics?



### Question 5: How has the consolidation of the schools affected course selections for you?

#### Summary:

Many students complained about i) long waits in guidance to make course selections ii) 52% reported some options not available at new school and iii) many others reported that classes were over-subscribed and unavailable. In addition, students from the closing school commented on a problem of not having the prerequisite for courses at the receiving school. This exposed a problem of incompatible curriculums that are insufficiently flexible to accommodate new students into their programs.

#### Student Comments:

"Can never get in to see the guidance teachers. They are too busy."

"No more musical theatre."

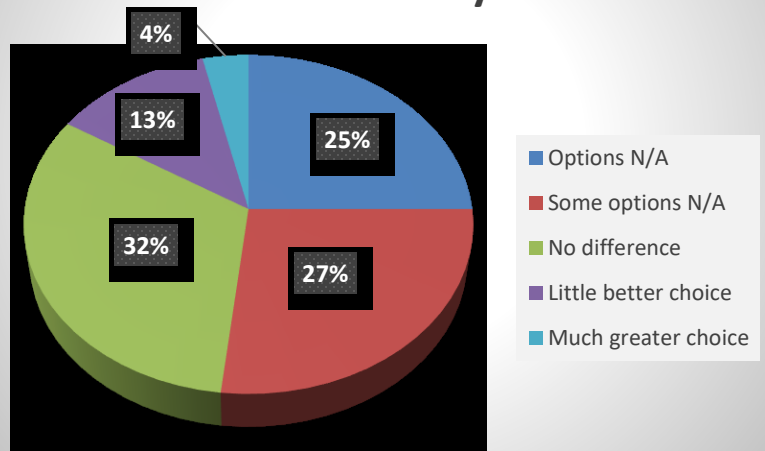
"A lot of my arts programs have been cut and it saddens me."

"We were promised greater course selection.

However, the institution we were moved to could not accommodate several of our courses."

"Many more people were wait-listed for classes they wanted due to the increasing number of students when the schools merged."

### How has the consolidation of the schools affected course selections for you?



**Question 6: How has the school consolidation affected your involvement in extra-curricular activities?**

**Summary:**

Seventy-five percent of respondents expressed a sense of hopelessness and depression regarding extra-curricular participation. Most felt that too many students were now competing for too few spots, that the receiving school athletes had a built-in advantage and had secured their spots prior to try-outs and, most frequent, was the issue of bussing and the inability to now stay after school to take part.

**Student Comments:**

"..just didn't want to participate or feel like it, lost my school spirit!"

" No more band."

"The school is too far away for me to partake in anything."

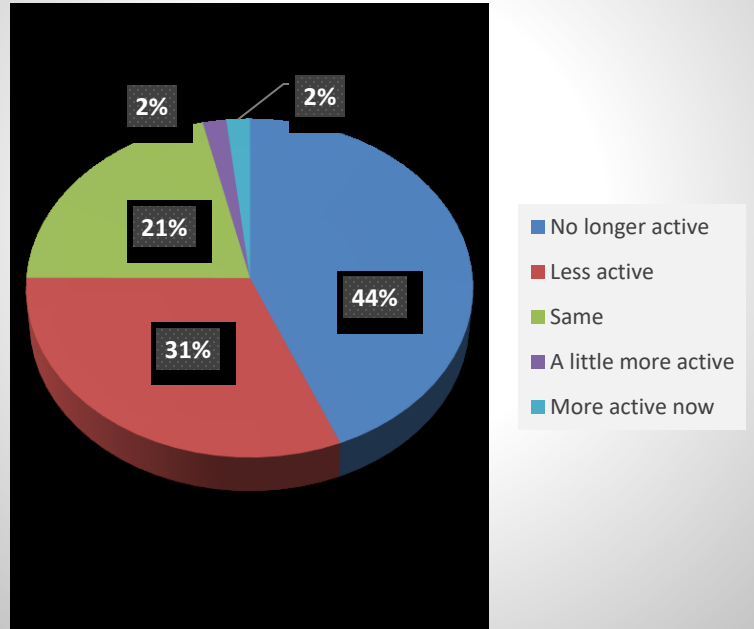
" Too many students want to play the same sport."

"Moved to a new school board where everybody had been on the teams for their entire school career so..."

" I hate my new school and don't want to join anything. I just want to get out."

" Was on a number of teams. None at the new school. Why bother I would never get on." "Our school was simply closed and kids were sent to 5 different schools." "The time spent on a bus and the too long distance from home has made it too hard to do any afterschool activities... I had to quit my part time job I had after school where I could walk and be there right after school for a couple hours as well, as now I don't get home till 5."

**Has the school consolidation affected your involvement in extra-curricular activities?**



**Question 7: Has the school consolidation affected your friendships & social interactions at school?**

**Summary:**

The feeling of acceptance and belonging appears to have been negatively affected by school closure. While many students made new friends and social groups, 60% described a feeling of loss of friends/ friend groups. Their responses reveal a low level of integration with the receiving school student body. Some of the complaints refer to established social groups and the difficulty in breaking into such groups and others reported the difficulty presented with the bussing schedule which makes it difficult to stay after school for socializing or participation.

**Student Comments:**

"I had to say good-bye to some friends, while others I have no classes with and rarely speak to, even outside of school. I have yet to make any new friends. "

" have made a few friends but none are as close as my old ones."

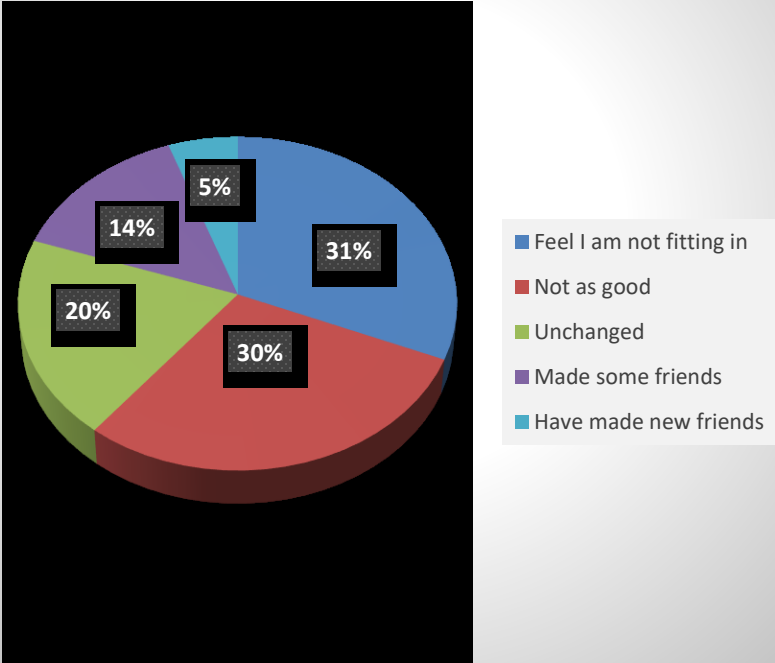
"A lot of my good friends ended up dropping out or moved away."

"I had few friends to begin with, and now I rarely see them."

"I have personally moved 14 times and been to 10 different schools. And this transition was certainly the hardest and worst. I have never in my life had issues making friends until this switch happened."

"I was friends with everyone at my previous school. Upon amalgamating, it became far more difficult to maintain healthy relationships. I was reduced to having only 1 person I could spend time with. This was detrimental to my mental health."

**Has the school consolidation affected your friendships & social interactions at school?**



### Question 8: How do you feel about the size of the school?

#### Summary:

This question elicited almost unanimous condemnation of the lack of space per student and the sense of over-crowding. Ninety percent of respondents referred to the receiving school as over-crowded, with complaints of i) difficulty navigating the halls between classes, ii) no room in the cafeteria at lunch-time and iii) over-crowded classrooms

#### Student Comments:

"Not big enough for all of us."

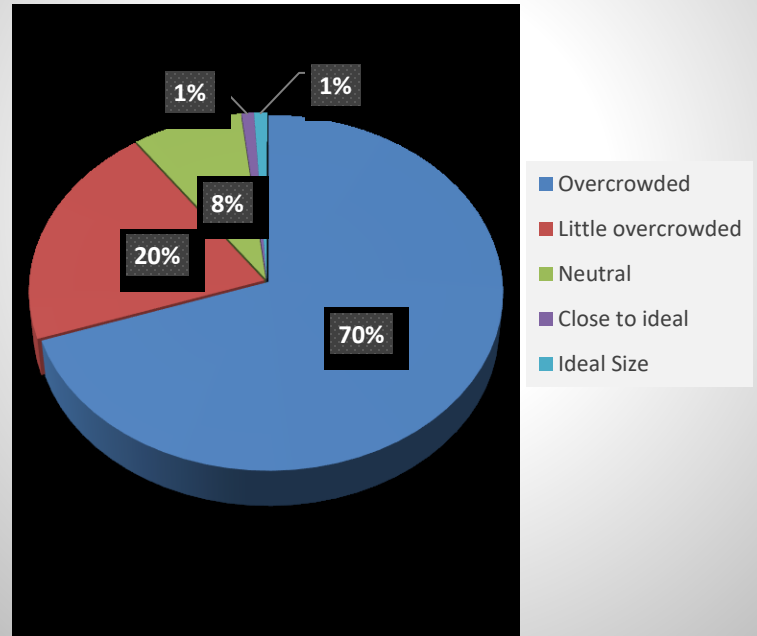
"Extremely over crowded."

"Overcrowded is an understatement, it's almost impossible to get anywhere because there are so many people. My co-op class have 90 people in it and that affects how the teachers help the students."

"I can't even get to class on time because of how crowded it is. But it doesn't matter because the BWDSB doesn't care about students !"

"Can't even walk down the hall without getting shoved or hit." / "I have to eat lunch in the library because the cafeteria is being used as a classroom."

### How do you feel about the size of the school?



### Question 9: How has travel-time to and from school affected you?

#### Summary:

Students reported a 77% "longer" to "much longer" travel time to and from school. The most frequent complaint concerned the inability to now walk to school. Students who previously walked to school became dependent on school bus transportation. The respondents criticized the length of time involved in bus travel, the bullying behaviour on buses, and the inability to continue to be active in after-school activities or to have after-school jobs. A frequent comment concerned the lack of student parking which curtailed the ability of students to provide their own transportation.

#### Student Comments:

"It's an HOUR LONG!!! I used to be able to walk to my old school!" "Now I have to take a 40 min bus, used to walk."

"2 minute walk to 50 minute bus ride"

"I live on the opposite side of town and I needed to leave extremely early to get a parking spot at the school."

Moved 2 hours away from my parents so yeah....

"Parking was an issue at the new school before ours joined so it only got much, much worse with the new students."

"bus is over-crowded, kids are bad."

"I used to have a 5 min walk now I have a 45 min bus ride." / "went from 5 minutes to almost an hour."

"MUCH longer."

"The west side of town is so busy and you cannot get a parking spot in student parking because there is not enough room for all."

"I now take the bus. I used to walk. I actually liked walking and miss it."

"Loss of after school job, can't do the school activities after school because too far for my parents to come get me.. loss of my dance class that was right after school as well."

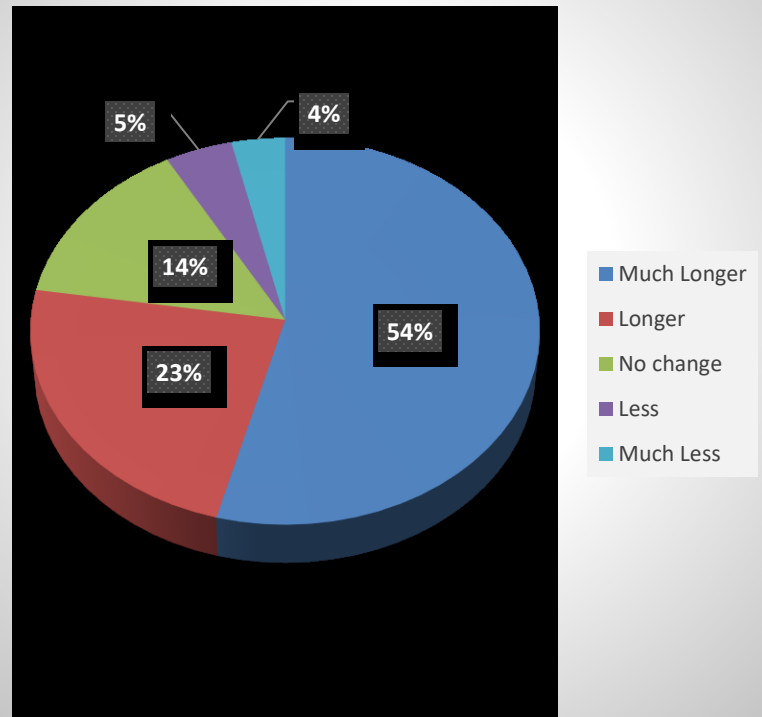
"My bus ride was 25-30 minutes before depending on the day and now it's well over an hour"

"I could walk to school before now I have to bus to the next town."

"My 20 minute ride went to a 90 minute ride." am on the bus an hour longer. I HATE It

"I have to take a bus now and it takes a long time to get to school and get home. The bus is always late and we are late for school a lot. There is also a lot of bullying going on the bus and when we tell a teacher or principal about it nothing happens."

### How has travel-time to and from school affected you?



### Question 10-a: Where do you eat your lunch?

#### Summary:

Although there are no comparisons available to lunch-time behaviour at the vacated school, the low numbers of students that use the school cafeteria as a lunchroom seems unusual. Only 12% of students stated that they ate their lunch in the cafeteria. Forty-one percent ate on the hall floors of the school. Many said that they ate in a classroom with a few friends but more often by themselves. Some also ate lunch in the library; and one quarter of the students ate off school grounds.

#### Student Comments:

"Often eat quick snacks in the hall",

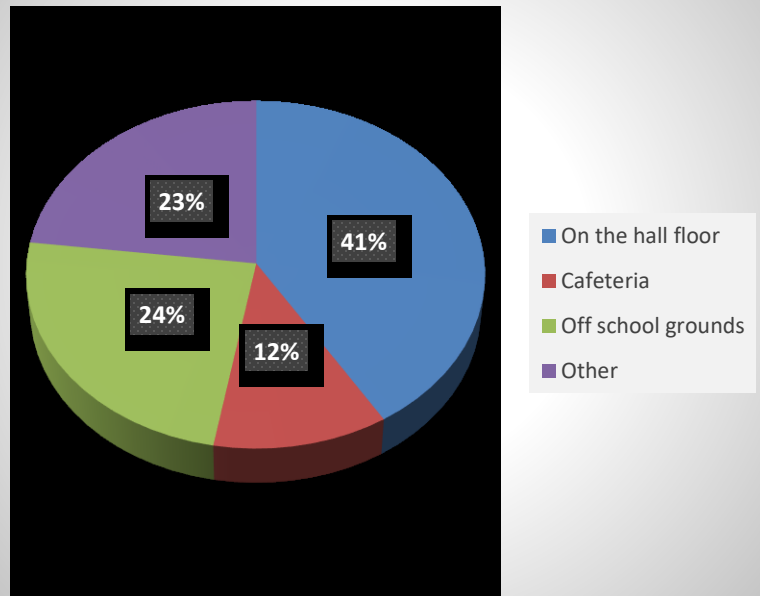
"sit in a classroom by myself",

"at a bench with my old friends from the previous school",

"for the first two months I sat under the stairs because I have no friends at this school or many in general."

"I find the most empty classroom. I do not enjoy eating my lunch with a bunch of people I don't know".

### Where do you eat your lunch?





**Question 10-b: If you have a cafeteria, how accessible is the cafeteria for lunchtime seating?**

**Summary:**

Over-crowding in the cafeteria at lunch-time was a common theme. Eighty percent of students reported that the cafeteria could not accommodate the school population at lunch time. Many complained of the noise, lack of space and no reasonable alternative space to eat lunch.

**Student Comments:**

"People literally sit everywhere."

"many eat lunch in the hallways on the floor"

"The cafeteria is very over-crowded so I tend to not go in."

"Very crowded, too loud"

"too many students, too loud, not enough seats. I don't go there hate it."

"The halls are crowded with students and there's some hallways that we aren't allowed to be in at lunch and are not allowed to sit and eat in our cars."

"The cafeteria can only hold about 200 of the 900 students."

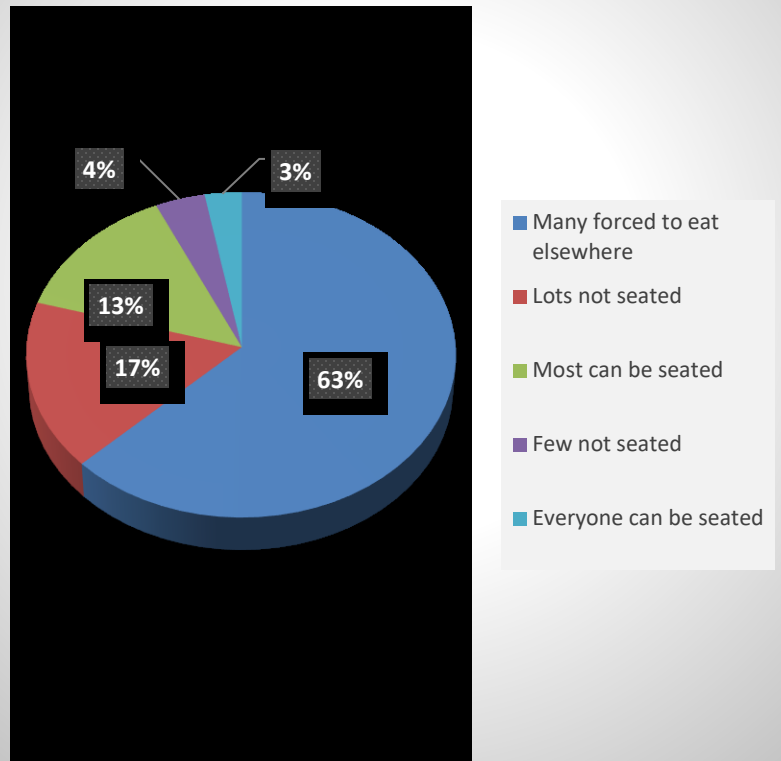
"Never a seat in the cafeteria except on a spare"

"The cafeteria can hold a big group of people but not enough for how many students are in the school"

"There isn't enough room during lunches."

"The cafeteria only accommodated a hundred people, however our school had a population of over 1300"

**If you have a cafeteria, how accessible is the cafeteria for lunchtime seating?**



**Question 11: How has the number of portable classrooms been impacted with the consolidation?**

**Summary:**

Most respondents indicated that, at the former school, no portable classrooms existed. Seventy-two percent stated that "more" or "many more" portables are now in use. Students objected to the smell and the inconvenience of attending classes in a space outside the main building. In most cases the number of portables added were few; however, one respondent stated that the number of portables at his/her school is over forty.

**Student Comments:**

"We did not have them before."

"There was no need for portables when we had two public high schools in my town."

"My previous school had 0 portables."

"We now have three portables"

"In my previous school, there were none. Last year there were 6 portables and this year there are none."

"no portable at either school"

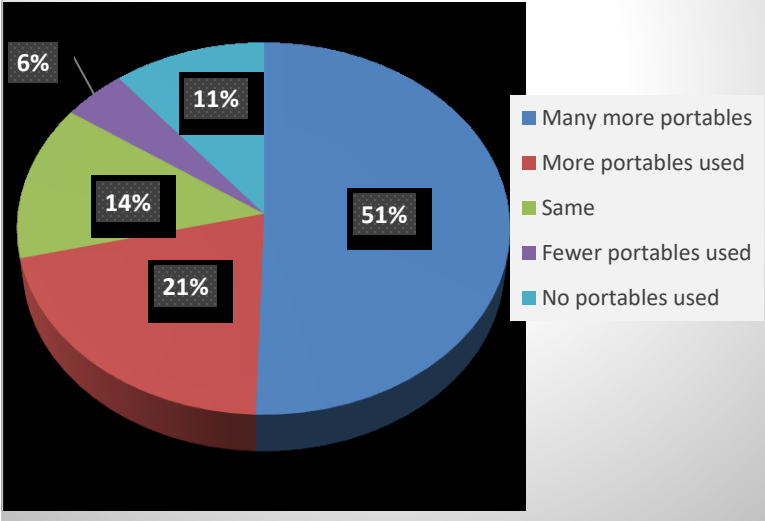
"There are 3 portables and most of the time in winter people would skip class because they didn't want to walk to class in a blizzard!"

"They smell!"

"We had no portables before and now we have 3"

"Two or three more portables were added to accommodate the many students whereas our previous school had none."

**How has the number of portable classrooms been impacted with the consolidation?**

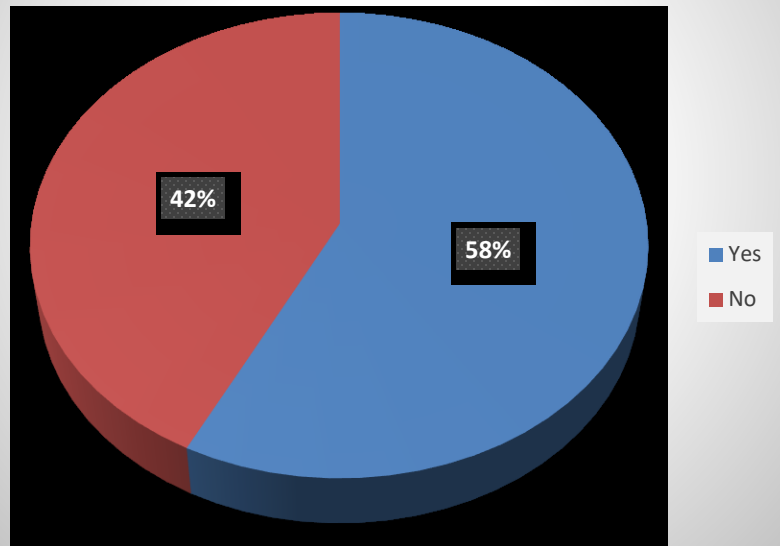


**Question 12-a: Did you feel you needed mental health support following the closure of your school?**

**Summary:**

Fifty-eight percent of students stated that they felt a need for mental health support following the closure of their school.

Did you feel that you needed mental health support following the closure of your school?

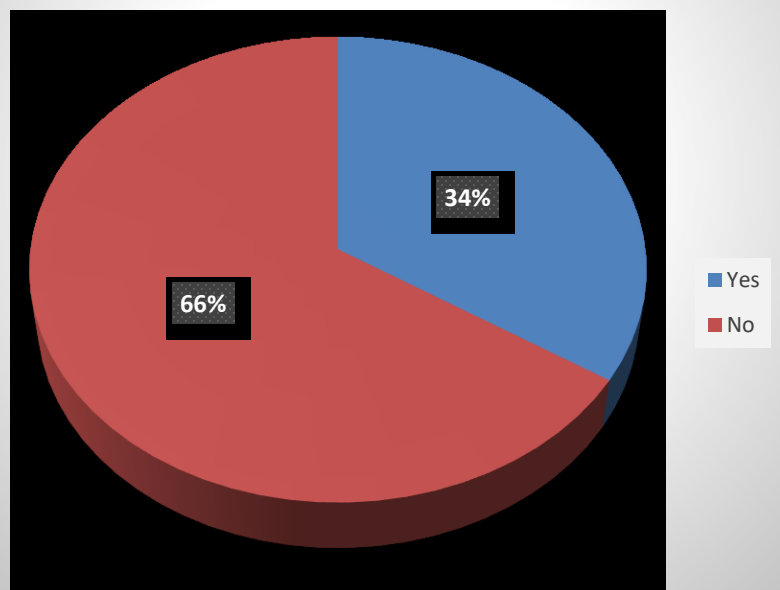


**Question 12-b: If you answered yes to the previous question, was mental health support available for you at the new school?**

**Summary:**

Two-thirds of the students who expressed a need of mental health support in coping with the stresses of the school closure and consolidation felt that such help was not available or was insufficient.

If you answered yes to the previous question, was mental health support available for you at the new school?



### Question 12-c: If you took advantage of mental health support, did you find it helpful?

#### Summary:

Three-quarters of students who sought mental help support felt that it was not helpful. Students who did access counselling, commented that counsellors often were too busy to deal with their concerns, that meetings were infrequent or insufficient or that it didn't help.

#### Student Comments:

"I went to school counselling as a result of this closure. This was the first time I felt my mental health seriously effected by my education. I found my counsellor friendly and helpful, however I had to meet with them during class time, which detracted from my learning."

"Didn't seem welcoming."

"I had just been through a traumatizing and nearly fatal experience not long before it was announced that the school would be closing which just rubbed salt in my wounds."

"no one knows us enough to know if we need it. Too many kids they have to worry about they don't worry about us who are not the "really bad ones" or kids with severe anxiety or depression."

"Didn't know it was available"

"Absolutely no support whatsoever"

"It didn't help. It's been 3 years since OSCVI closed and I still feel sad about it and it still makes me very angry."

"no one knows that I needed it as no one seems to care about me or know me"

"Didn't have any available to me"

"I got someone sent in to help with my anxiety and stress about moving schools in about October. I've only seen her about 4 times and I'm supposed to see her every Tuesday or Wednesday. Not helpful at all of you're like me and feel left out and lonely or stressed about school..."

"Not enough support to get around to help everyone"

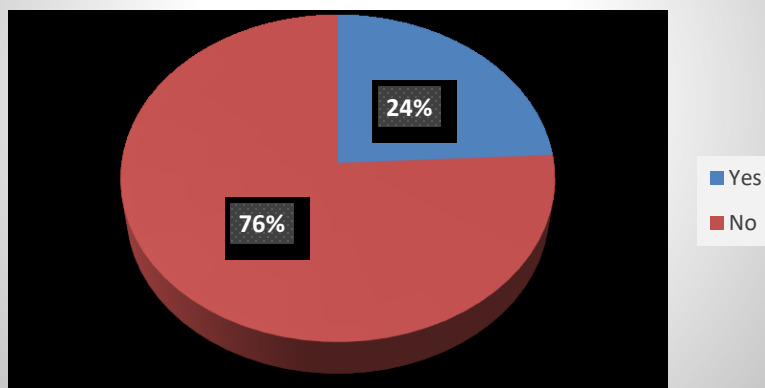
"St. Mary's set me up with a councillor for free. It truly did help. But I do not think that it should have been necessary. I was doing fine before the switch. Before everything was uprooted. I should not have needed counselling"

"Reaction of the school after a student suicide was completely inadequate. The administration dealt with it extremely poorly and only acted after extreme pressure

"There is help available but she's so busy that there isn't time for me."

"I have a good family to support me, but this past 2 years. sucked."

### If you took advantage of mental health support, did you find it helpful?



"Other than the teachers support there was no other support offered. In fact the kids had to live amongst packed boxes because the teachers were given no time to pack up the school."

"I don't think we have mental health help at our school my mum tried to get something set up for my older brother and the school never followed through."

"I did need mental health support."

"Didn't have any available to me"

**Question 13: How would you describe your overall experience at your new school thus far compared to your old school?**

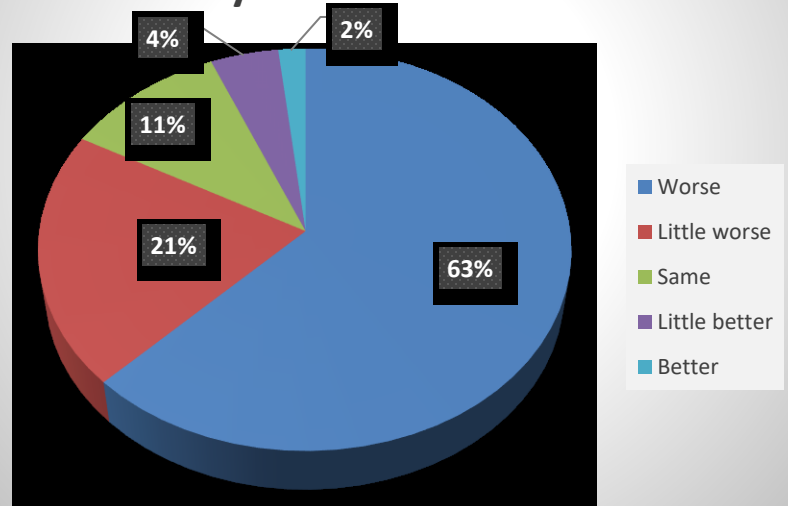
**Summary:**

Eighty-four percent of students indicated that their experience has been "worse" or "a little worse". Six-percent answering indicated their experience was "a little better" or "better".

**Comment:**

Under "further thoughts, comments or personal experiences" students expressed a wide range of feelings and opinions regarding how the school closure has affected them. Comments were heartfelt and personal and frequently spoke of depression and stress that is ongoing.

**How would you describe your overall experience at your new school thus far compared to your old school?**



**Question 13: How would you describe your overall experience at your new school thus far compared to your old school?**

**STUDENT COMMENTS**

"... I moved during a crucial time in my high school year - it ruined it for me! Grade 12 was the worse! I would have stayed for victory year but hated it so much I left for university even though I was not ready. I felt that the school system did not care about its youth. The trustees did not listen to the consequences because they had no family affected. I cried all summer and then for six months of my grade twelve year. My parents counted down with me!"

"No more quality music or band. Everything is gone. Too many new people, sharing lockers, no room in caf"  
"They really need to reopen [our old school], our community is dead without it."

"I feel the closure of [ my school] had no benefits and only led to heartache and longing for my old home."

"School closures are detrimental to the well-being and spirit of students and community. It felt criminal, witnessing the closure of my 150 year old high school, despite the huge volume of student and community push-back. This has greatly impacted my high school experience, including learning opportunities and mental well-being."

"I feel like there was so much history ...that has all disappeared. Not to mention the overcrowds of students and class sizes... none of our voices were heard."

"After moving out of the board, my mental health improved drastically along with a 10% bump in my grades."

"My old school was perfectly designed as a high school and this "new" school feels like maze inside a prison. My former school was filled with natural light and even the gloomy days were bright. I hate that it was closed and I miss it very much."

"Absolutely no parking got \$220 in parking tickets just trying to go to class."

**Question 13: How would you describe your overall experience at your new school thus far compared to your old school? Student Comments Continued:**

"The consolidation was inconsiderate to students, staff, and the overall history of my school. I have been very negatively effected by this. The new school doesn't come close in comparison .OSCVI felt like a home, a family, everyone knew each other, OSDSS feels like an over-crowded prison."

"I used to be so happy. Now I'm depressed. I don't want to get out of bed most of the time. It sucks."

"this was the worse decision that could have been made. I lost friends, the school is too big, It has affected my love of school.. KEEP the small schools OPEN.. STOP bussing kids out of town.. MAKE them stay in their small town CHARGE for bussing past their own small town school"

"Overall the "new" school has made me feel robbed of my last two years of high school. I would have been much happier staying at my school."

"... the [former] school was cleaner, nicer and there was parking. [It] just had a much more positive atmosphere."

"This has by far been the worse school experience in my short life. I have been so much more stressed, and have struggled with mental health issues since the amalgamation. It was so poorly done and I really can't wait to be done high school and get out of this horribly managed school. More kids are able to slip through the cracks of the education system and it's because the board does not care."

"I don't understand the BWDSB. They hurt so many people with this move. "

"This move was hell. Going into my final year of high school I was FORCED to move."

"An old, decaying building with no air conditioning completely overcrowded with students. Disgusting."

"I wish we could have stayed. We were so happy there and we did lots of fun things (mudding for terry, Friday night lights, etc.) and the teachers were fun and engaged. These teachers now are constantly talking about how stressed they are and how they hate their jobs. You can tell they hate it and they get paid to be there we don't. I had a grade 11 science teacher tell us she hated this place. How are we supposed to feel with talk like that!"

"Combining a school like chesley, such a high rate in academic success, with walkerton, listed 500th in Ontario for academic success, seems pretty downgrading. This was a mistake, and the board will regret it ."

"So glad it was my last year of high school or I would have went to the catholic high school because the Midland high school was the worst."

"Again at a different board and school that treats students with respect."

"Our school was my second family, and the board took that away for money, sitting in those meetings made me feel very angry at the comments and how the board staff adults behaved. it is sad they are our leaders."

"I would say that it is slightly better only because there are more facilities then previous and it made me closer with the people at my old school. But a lot of my old friends I will never see again. As they moved to different schools. But I would still choose my old school apart from this one. It was one where you knew everyone, and everyone knew you."

**Question 13: How would you describe your overall experience at your new school thus far compared to your old school? Student Comments Continued:**

"At my old school, we were like a family. Anytime we would get bullied, we'd tell each other and tell the teachers and it would be dealt with. Since I've moved to the new school, I haven't told anyone except for one of the five friends I have that transferred to the new school with me. It (bullying) is a daily and constant thing."

"Our old school was always welcoming, whether you were new or not they always welcomed you with open arms. Our school spirit was everywhere you went in the school. Even though our cheer was corny, I always had pride shouting that cheer no matter where I was, whether it was school sports, or assemblies."

"I am very sorry to everybody that has been thrown into these situations unwillingly, and I hope that soon we will be able to end this horrible trend."

"I want to go back to my old school where the teachers and principal cared and we felt safe."

"You closed my school and you didn't care about us kids. We were happy, and well taken care of. We had more one on one time to help us learn. My grades are getting bad because I can't focus on anything, other than which kid is going to come at me today. I had to go into Kung fu just so I can try to defend myself. If I won money in a lottery I would open my old school and hire all my teachers back."

"Just ok! So big! Only one water filling station."

"I left the public school system because I felt like they did not listen or care about its youth."

"It was my last year of high school and it was my worst year ever. I hated it. So sad that this was my experience for my graduation year."