

Listening to Our Community: Participant Feedback Summary

West Seattle ES | March 31, 2026



What Is Going Well

Summary:

Participants highlighted strong, caring educators, robust arts and enrichment opportunities, positive school culture, and improved communication and leadership as key strengths.

Key points raised by participants:

- Teachers, specialists, and staff are described as dedicated, caring, and committed
- Strong arts, music, dance, PE, theater, and CTE offerings across grade levels
- Educators pay close attention to individual student needs and learning levels
- School-based communication from principals and teachers is valued and effective
- Strong parent involvement, PTSA/PTO advocacy, and community partnerships
- Students generally feel safe and supported at school
- SEL initiatives are contributing to kinder behavior and improved climate
- Superintendent emails are viewed as transparent, consistent, and human

Example quotes (from posters):

- *“Amazing teachers ★★”*
- *“Specialists are great – caliber of art, dance, PE.”*
- *“Dedicated caring adults in our schools.”*

What Is Not Going Well

Summary:

Families expressed concern about overuse of technology, inconsistent policies and supports, staffing instability, class size pressures, and lack of transparency and urgency around safety and district decision-making.

Key points raised by families:

- Too much screen time, especially in elementary grades
- Reliance on digital programs at the expense of hands-on learning
- Lack of a districtwide cell phone policy; inconsistent enforcement across schools
- Safety incidents not addressed with urgency or clear accountability
- Large class sizes and insufficient staffing (nurses, aides, counselors, SPED)

- Teachers experiencing burnout and being asked to meet too many needs without support
- Inconsistent programs (HC, SPED, arts, music, safety protocols) across schools
- Budget volatility, enrollment uncertainty, and disruptive October “shuffle”
- Lack of transparency around closures, enrollment projections, and future plans
- Barriers to volunteering and confusing communication systems

Example quotes (from posters):

- *“Too much screen time at schools (too much!).”*
- *“Unsafe behavior impacted students. Wasn’t addressed. Continues to escalate.”*
- *“Lack of transparency around future plans.”*
- *“End October staffing shuffle; use accurate enrollment projections.”*

Ideas for Improvement

Summary:

Participants offered clear, student-centered ideas focused on consistency, transparency, reduced reliance on technology, equitable staffing and resources, and stronger communication and trust.

Key points raised by families:

- Establish clear, districtwide policies on technology, AI, and cell phone use
- Reduce screen use in early grades; return to books and hands-on learning
- Invest more in student-facing positions (nurses, aides, counselors, interventionists)
- Ensure equitable distribution of resources and baseline services across schools
- Improve safety protocols, escalation paths, and accountability
- Increase transparency around budget, enrollment, closures, and decision-making
- Simplify and centralize communication platforms
- Expand HC and advanced learning services within neighborhood schools
- Strengthen dual language and multilingual learner supports
- Improve volunteer processes and family engagement pathways
- Plan facilities and consolidation with clear rationale and early communication

Example quotes (from posters):

- *“Limit technology use.”*
- *“Clear channels of communication.”*
- *“Fund student-facing positions over non-student-facing roles.”*