

SAVE WHITTIER

PPS Community Input Sessions Game Plan

- You do not need to attend each one, but we would appreciate the most attendance on Wed, Sep 4th (our regional meeting location)
- If you are able to offer a ride to any concerned person, please do so. There's power in numbers. Wear blue if possible. We want to stand out from the crowd as a united front.
- Please write any extra thoughts/concerns/questions you have below and on the back of this paper so you can remember your thoughts/feelings. We need to keep our cool and show how prepared we are for these meetings.

Meeting dates are as follows:

Tue, Sep 3rd 6-8pm: Allderdice HS, 2409 Shady Ave, Pittsburgh 15217

Wed, Sep 4th 6-8pm: Carrick HS, 125 Parkfield St, Pittsburgh 15210

Thu, Sep 5th 6-8pm: Arsenal MS, 220 40th St, Pittsburgh 15201

Wed, Sep 11th 6-7 PM: Must register to attend by clicking here: [Virtual Registration Link](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Pp7_uRp_TayUrTVMehgsKw#/registration) or https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Pp7_uRp_TayUrTVMehgsKw#/registration

SAVE WHITTIER

The Facts...

Whittier is improving and evolving

<https://www.ourschoolspittsburgh.org/report-to-the-community>

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Chronic Absenteeism	40%	25%	23%	21%
Suspension Rate	2%	N/A	1%	1%
Capture Rate	48%	42%	39%	52%
Diverse Population*	51%	48%	44%	45%
Teacher Happiness	No Data	No Data	96%	100%
Student Stability	97%	96%	96%	91%**

*Diverse Population = African American, Multi-ethnic and Hispanic

**Transient families attended Whittier

- Chronic absenteeism has decreased by almost 50%
- Whittier is consistently a safe school
- Our capture rate is increasing due to satisfied families and students, and is above the District Average of 31%
- Our teachers like working at Whittier which means teacher retention
- Our student retention is in the 90th percentile
- We have a diverse student population with many multiracial families and have increased our ESL enrollment and provided services to support them

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE EMAIL ME AT: WHITTIERPPSPTO@GMAIL.COM

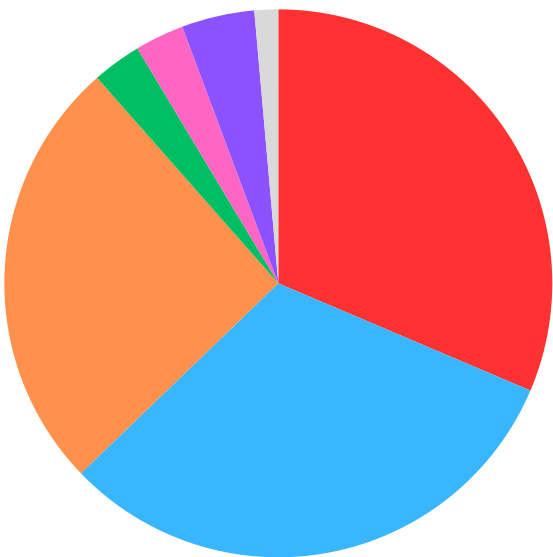
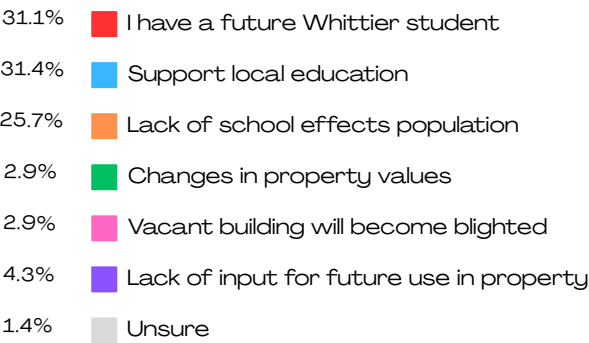
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The Facts...

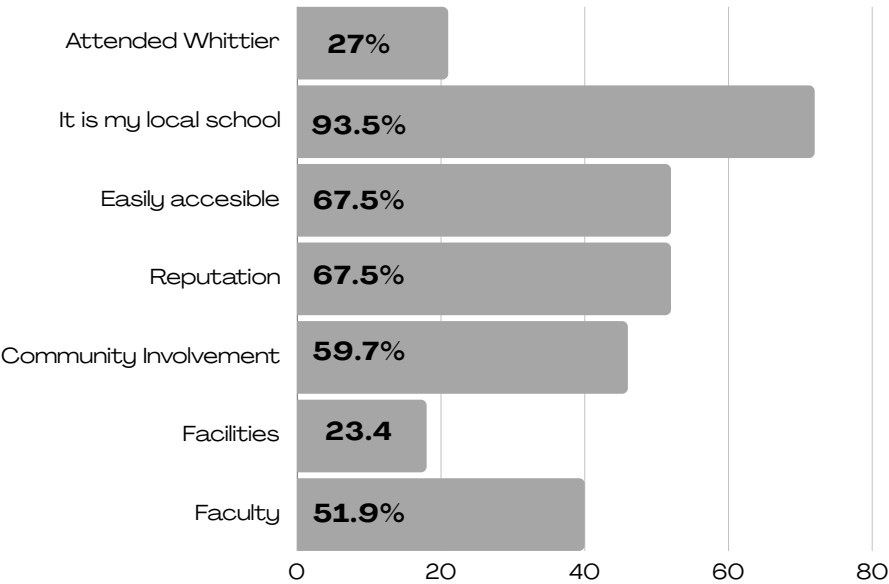
Input from citizens and school families

Responses taken from 3 Google polls posted to the community from 08/25/24-09/01/24

COMMUNITY CONCERNS



WHY FAMILIES CHOSE WHITTIER



SAVE WHITTIER

TALKING POINTS FOR WHY WHITTIER MATTERS

- Whittier is a hidden gem in the city of Pittsburgh. Our community and family engagement create the personalized education many pay for with private school.
- We are a welcoming school and would gladly accept other students from another school. Our kids and families are helpful and have created supportive environments for many! We would love to make our school family larger.
- We are a safe school. We have had 2 suspensions each for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years.
- Our teachers have on average 25 years of teaching experience, with a majority of it at Whittier. Our teacher retention shows that they believe in the school and their expertise provide guidance and coaching for new members.
- With the lack of a local school not only is PPS discouraging new, young families from moving to Mt. Washington, but we are creating an education desert and a dying neighborhood. This will have a financial impact on potential incoming residents and potentially decrease the home values of current ones.
- The current lack of transportation available to those attending any PPS school will be strained even more. PPS is expecting young children to walk the hills of Mt. Washington if they live within 1.5 miles of the school. This is not an option for those without a car. Langley and Westwood are located 3.5 and 3.2 miles from Whittier's location. During COVID, many families graciously gave up their child's bus seat to help those more in need. Families having a doctor appointment will need to rely on public transit after, and might not be able to return their child(ren) to school easily. This will lead to an increase in rate of absenteeism. Attendance is crucial for a high poverty area for a child to succeed in their education.*
- Whittier used to have an afterschool childcare program run by the YMCA until COVID. Post COVID Whittier reached out to families and had the 25 children needed, but the YMCA had staffing issues and was subsequently dropped. This reflects poorly on Whittier, but is out of their control.
- Families and children will have undue stress put upon them breaking into two schools. PPS is literally asking for Mt. Washington to separate a community that works well together. It is unfair to have families be placed in two very different school settings based on their streets.

*<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/the-problem/10-facts-about-school-attendance/>

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What's next...

- The PTO is working with our city councilwoman and the Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation on how to get the most attention and community response for PPS to realize their mistake.
- The virtual Public Hearing is scheduled for Mon, Sep 23rd. Information on how to watch and potentially speak at the virtually session will be given at a later date.
- We have invited PPS board members and district personal to our Fall Festival. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase our family. If they show up, please treat them as guests because it is the right thing to do.
- Spread the word with neighbors about the potential closure. Not everyone is on Facebook and we don't have the time or money to canvas the neighborhood, but we can spread the word in general.
- Spread the word about enrolling with Whittier! PPS does not make it easy to apply online (which is the only method now), but the school will gladly help anyone that shows up at the office and help you complete the application process.
- We need to keep positive energy in this fight. **Please be mindful of the words you say and post.** Negative attitudes and comments not only set a bad example for our children on how to handle stressful situations, but it gives the impression that we are volatile community, which we all know we aren't. We are all passionate about this school and the family we've created with it. And finally...
- Still support Whittier, the children and the PTO. Not only are we working on saving the school, but we're still providing the quality extras that the kids experience. Please participate in fundraisers and our events. Please show up!

Thank you!

Theresa Cammerata
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