



FALL 2015 NORTH WARD SURVEY  
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES  
ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND RESEARCH

JAN 2016

## North Ward Survey – Government Employees

### Executive Summary

#### Purpose

The department of Assessment, Accountability, and Research (AAR) conducted an online survey in the Fall of 2015, to assist the office of Student Demographics, Assignment, and School Capacity in determining a potential educational use for the North Ward Elementary School facility. The survey was made available to all employees of Pinellas County and the City of Clearwater, and aims to capture their overall attitude towards re-opening the North Ward Elementary School. The data collected from this survey will serve as a foundation from which Pinellas County Public Schools can make informed decisions relating to the future use of the North Ward Elementary School facility.

#### Methodology

The Fall 2015 North Ward Survey contains a total of 8 items. Respondents were asked to identify whether they were an employee of the City of Clearwater or Pinellas County. Respondents were then asked to identify whether or not they had any children who were less than 11 years old. Respondents with children under the age of 11 were then asked to indicate where their child currently attends school. Respondents who did not have children under the age of 11 skipped this question. All respondents then answered 4 additional questions specifically relating to re-opening North Ward Elementary School. The final survey item was open-ended and asked for any additional comments relating to this topic.

The survey was administered over 5 days (December 14<sup>th</sup> through December 18<sup>th</sup>) via a secure, non-district website and was completely anonymous. No responses were excluded from the analysis.

#### Results

The survey received 466 responses. 62% of respondents identified as employees of the City of Clearwater and the remaining 38% were employees of Pinellas County. 38% of the respondents reported having children under the age of 11, while 62% of respondents did not.

Of those respondents with children under age 11, the majority (63%) attend their currently zoned school. 2% attend Sandy Lane Elementary, 19% attend a charter school, 12% attend private school, and 4% are home-schooled. No respondents indicated that their child attends a virtual school.

89% of respondents said they would support the reopening of North Ward as a small elementary school of choice. Furthermore, 77% of respondents said they would send their child to a “partnership school” where government employees are given priority to enroll their child near their place of work instead of the zoned school near their residence.

The response patterns for employees of Pinellas County did not differ significantly from responses given by employees of the City of Clearwater. This is also true when comparing respondents with children under age 11 and those without children under age 11. Support for re-opening North Ward Elementary is ubiquitous and not concentrated in one particular group of respondents.

There is strong evidence to support the idea that the availability of before and after-school programs is a crucial factor that parents consider when deciding where to send their child for school. 85% of respondents said that before and after-school programs would be either very important (69%) or somewhat important (16%) . This is compared to the 5% who responded that these programs would not be very important (1%) or are not needed at all (4%). 11% of respondents had no opinion on before and after-school programs.

There is also strong evidence to support the idea that a rich variety of before and after-school programs (extended learning, STEM clubs, Robotics, Art/Music, Foreign Language, etc.) is preferred by parents over traditional before and after-school programs. 78% of respondents were supportive of a rich variety of programs, while 22% were supportive of traditional programs. The strong respondent support for a rich variety of programs was expected for this item. The question provided several examples for a rich variety of programs, however no examples were given for traditional programs. This may account for some of the difference seen between the answer choices.

The final survey item was an open-ended question asking for any additional input on the topic. Each individual response is listed below. The open responses vary somewhat, however there is significant support for the re-opening of North Ward Elementary. A few responses suggested using the site for retail or restaurant establishments instead of an elementary school due to its desirable location. Others stated that while they themselves do not have school-aged children, they would still support re-opening for the benefit of their colleagues.

The data collected from this survey demonstrates that employees of Pinellas County and of the City of Clearwater strongly support the re-opening of the North Ward Elementary school as a partnership school. Additionally, the responses indicate that a rich variety of before and after-school programs is an important consideration for parents in deciding where to send their children to school.

**Question 1:**

<b>I am an employee of:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
The City of Clearwater	<b>287</b>	<b>61.7%</b>
Pinellas County Government	178	38.3%
Total	465	100.0%

**Question 2:**

<b>Do you have children under the age of 11?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	<b>176</b>	<b>37.8%</b>
No	289	62.2%
Total	465	100.0%

**Question 3:**

<b>Please indicate where your child currently attends school.</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Current zoned school	<b>83</b>	<b>63.4%</b>
Sandy Lane	3	2.3%
Charter school	25	19.1%
Private school	15	11.5%
Virtual school	0	0.0%
Home school	5	3.8%
Total	131	100.0%

**Question 4:**

<b>Would you support reopening of North Ward as a small "elementary school of choice"?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	<b>347</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
No	45	11.5%
Total	392	100.0%

**Question 5:**

<b>A "partnership school" is a school in which children of employees of nearby government offices and/or business receive a priority to enroll their child in the school near their place of work rather than a zoned school near their residence. Would you, as an employee of the City of Clearwater or Pinellas County Government, choose to send your child to such a partnership school?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	<b>295</b>	<b>77.2%</b>
No	87	22.8%
Total	382	100.0%

**Question 6:**

<b>If North Ward were reopened as an "partnership school" it would be a small traditional elementary school with a full complement of electives like Art, Music, Gifted, and clubs like STEM, Robotics, Foreign Language, etc. If you were to send your child to such a partnership school near your work, how important will before or after-school programs be in your decision?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Very important	<b>267</b>	<b>68.6%</b>

Somewhat important	61	15.7%
No opinion	41	10.5%
Not very important	5	1.3%
Not needed at all	15	3.9%
Total	389	100.0%

**Question 7:**

<b>Would you support a traditional before/after-school care program or a program that provided a rich variety of after-school programs and clubs like extended learning, STEM clubs, Robotics, Art/Music, Foreign Language, etc, in the form of a:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Traditional before/after school care program	<b>83</b>	<b>21.8%</b>
Rich variety of clubs and programs before and after the scho	298	78.2%
Total	381	100.0%

**Question 3:**

**Please indicate where your child currently attends school.**

**Other (please specify)**

and Preschool  
Assignment  
Belcher Elem.  
Curtis Fundamental  
Day Care  
Day care/Preschool  
daycare  
Daycare  
fundamental  
Fundamental  
fundamental choice  
fundamental school  
Fundamental school  
Garrison Jones  
I have a son that will also be entering kindergarten in 2017  
Kings Highway Elementary  
kings highway magnet school  
magnet  
magnet elementary  
Magnet Program  
Not in school yet, too young  
Not in school yet.  
Not school age yet  
not school aged  
Oldest child starts next year  
Only 6 months old  
other county  
Out of zone school  
Partnership School  
Plumb Elementary  
Plumb Elementary as a special request  
Ponce DeLeon  
Pre-school  
Preschool  
PRESCHOOL  
Preschool - starting kindergarten in Fall 2016  
Preschool/Daycare  
Ridgecrest - Gifted Magnet  
SAFETY HARBOR MIDDLE  
South county magnet

Under 4 years old  
VPK  
VPK- kindergarten next year

**Question 8:**

**Feel free to provide any additional input on this topic.**

1. I feel this survey is a bit biased towards answers that the surveyor would like to hear. Question #7 uses the term "Traditional" vs. "Rich variety" of after school programs makes it seem like "traditional" is the "old fashioned" way of thinking and "rich variety" connotes "new, fresh and cosmopolitan." I think you should drop "rich" from the question. 2.) I think the Pinellas County School Board should be focused on how to provide better educational opportunities, a "rich variety of after school programs" and more equitable education to lower income neighborhoods instead of exclusive opportunities to city and county employees. North Ward is a perfect location to offer a special educational opportunity for children living in the North Greenwood neighborhood.

Although a nice-to-have facility for children of city employees and/or invited others, the cost would outway the benefits. Our taxes pay for public schools and they offer a wide variety of programs and curriculum.

Although I do not have children now, I will in the future and love this idea!

Although I do not have children under 11, as an employee of HR, we hear from other City employees looking for programs or resources to help with childcare. This would seem like a good option for those who do not live in Clearwater, but would benefit from having their child in a school close to work.

Although I don't have any children in this age group, I wish a program like this with after school programs had been created when my child was at the stage. I feel it would benefit and help City employees by having a safe and productive place for their children. Happy employees make for more productive employees.

Although I don't have small children, I voted for it because it would be a HUGE benefit for many parents to have their child go to school close to where they work. Parents could share lunch with their child and for those parents who live outside Pinellas or drive long distances to get to work would be beneficial too. Win win solution! And I used to go to North Ward when I was a child and have fond memories of it. Encourage this please!

Although I have no school age children, I support opening N Ward. As a govt employee in the area, I would look forward to mentoring possibilities.

ALTHOUGH MY CHILD IS TOO OLD NOW TO ATTEND, I WISH THIS OPTION WAS AVAILABLE TO ME WHEN HE WAS OF AGE. I KNOW A FEW PEOPLE WHO REALLY WANT THIS OPEN FOR THEIR CHILDREN TO ATTEND

Anything to help the working parent/minor child relationship and to be accessible in case of emergency I'm all for.

As a foster parent, the ability to have a quality school near my employer would be wonderful.

As a life long resident of Clearwater I think that opening North Ward would be a great idea. I use to work the before and after care program with the YMCA when the school closed and I loved that school. By reopening the school it would alleviate some of the over crowding at surrounding schools. Also, I wish that it could be turned into a middle school, this is my daughters last year of elementary and I would remain in the area if that was to happen, but I am very happy to see that there is a possibility that the school will reopen. The community needs it. And if there is anything I can do to help out in being a ""VOICE"" I am willing to speak up for the school reopening.

As checked in question #2, I dont have young children, however this opportunity should be given to those that do.

aside from being an elementary school, consider using the building or part of (if using this for a partnership school) for a museum, education of the history of Clearwater-central Pinellas County.

At this time we are happy with our zoned school near home. However, it may make more sense for others to have that option. I am indifferent.

Bad neighborhood for a school. Sell it to the Scientologist

Because i live in another county, this may not be truly beneficial to me. However, think it would be a great benefit to a lot of folks.

Considering it is a prime piece of real estate, it seems as though the site could be better suited for some type of public/private partnership that would enable daily commerce and on weekends.

do not live near the school

Education is of critical importance, not only for our children but for the future of our country.

Even though I do not have children, I am in favor of this concept because I think it would make things easier for those of my co-workers who do have kids.

For the sake of the kids, get back to ""old school"" teaching.

Great Great Idea!



Great school - North Ward ! Would love to see it reopened and more ideas come forth like small athletics programs for kids, healthy programs to teach cooking and nutrition for kids, etc...

Having a quality school near my place of employment offering before and after school activities would be fantastic!

I do not currently have children but my boyfriend has a 7 year old and maybe one day we will have a child so I am interested in this.

I do not have any children

I do not have school age children and I do not work downtown, but if I did I would view this as an important partnership.

I do not have school age children but I do think it is a wonderful idea.

I do not have school age children. however my daughter went to North Ward when employees were allow to enroll their children in North Ward 18 years ago. Even without the programs you are proposing, it was a wonderful experience to have my daughter in a small ""family"" school close to work in case of emergencies.

I do not know where the Ward school is located nor do I know the cost of such an undertaking so I did not answer the first question

I favor not reopening the school but prefer turning it into a business incubator that could lease space. The kitchen could be turned into a contract kitchen for small batch food production and for catering. Classrooms could be used for collaboration areas. GED classes could be offered. Partnerships with SPC/USF for adult continuing education certificate programs could be offered. A prototype area with 3-D printing and production equipment. Classes and events hosted by the SBDC and business leaders regarding business operations and regulations. Meeting spaces with video conferencing, copiers, faxes and high speed internet. If there is space, you might look at an onsite daycare or adult day care.

I feel this is a great idea

I had sent my 2 children thru North Ward. I am a County employee. I was not readily aware of the school until someone told me. There needs to be more advertisement so that County and City employees are aware of this Great service. Hopefully you will open North Ward again. We loved the experience.

I have 2 children and would love to have them attend a school near my work.

I have grandsons that live near this school and they would be interested in attending.

I have no school age children or grandchildren, but if I did, I would send them to North Ward if it reopened.

I have participated in North Ward partnership before and it was a great help.

I personally do not have school aged children but I think this is a very good idea.

I personally don't like the teaching of common core, FCAT so for that reason I would not put all (2) my children in the public school.

I support this idea, but I do not live/work in Clearwater so it would not benefit me personally.

I think as a parent this is a very good idea that gives parents options to traditional child care hurdles. I love my current elementary school but would use this if I needed something better for my children

I think having the programs such as stem, etc. is great learning experience for children. We attend a fundamental school and are involved in the programs. These programs are well recieved by the students.

I think this is a great idea. I would definitely send my child to a school like this as long as a before and after school program was offered on site.

I think this is a wonderful idea. I currently have to drop off my children at 6:30AM in order to be at work on time. To have a closer school resource, would be a blessing to both the children and myself. It would save on travel time, gas, and offer the children a little more time to sleep. And since I work 10 hour days, we might also be able to get home before 6:30-7PM at night with having a closer school option.

I think this would be an outstanding benefit for employees. If not this school, perhaps explore partnerships with some of the private schools in the area for reduced fees for County Employees.

I want more arts for kids

I work and live in St Petersburg, so this school would add travel time to my commute

I would be in favor of elements that an arts magnet school would include.

I would be interested if Grandchildren are eligible.

I would definitely send my kids there. But I don't have any kids under 11 any more.

I would enroll my child at this school IF it provided the best opportunities for their education without excessive tuition fees.

I would like my children to have more exposure in order to excel their knowledge. This ""traditional with electives"" program would be ideal.

I would like to see more opportunities offered for children with special needs

I would love it even more if it were through Middle School as I have 2 kids - one going to MS next year.

I would love to enroll my child in north ward school provided it good school with programs and before/after care.

I would love to send my daughters to a school that is full of so much history  
I'm all for the reopening of the school however I would not choose to send my child there only because it is out of my way and not in Saint Petersburg where I reside.

If I were a resident of the North Greenwood area, I would greatly resent having this type of elite school take over what had once been a neighborhood school. With preference to workers, more affluent, neighborhood kids would be out of luck.

If it were a private school strictly for govt employee children I would consider it.

If my kids didn't attend the Gifted Magnet, we would definitely take advantage of a local school by my work.

The North Ward school is beautiful and small, which I think elementary school age children would thrive in.

Having low-cost opportunities for after school programs would be great. I would love to have that as an option for my children even if they don't go to North Ward for school because having them near me after work would be wonderful.

If the school isn't reopened for the aforementioned purposes, then the unoccupied school building could be used as a training facility for first responders in preparation for a school shooting scenario or similar situation.

information on partnership middle and high schools would be great to know

It is a shame to see such a diamond in the rough be left to weather away. Its proximity to the docks/waterways as well as the access to downtown opportunities for hands on learning provides an excellent opportunity for quality learning . The environment surrounding the school also provides the users a relaxing view and is provoking to the imagination. Any opportunities to have our children closer for quick drops and pickups would be a great asset to all parents who chose this option. Daycare would also be a great addition. The City of Tampa provides this service and it helps reduce sick leave and gives parents a piece of mind not to mention the savings for the parents.

It looks like a wonderful school. I am very happy with my fundamental school but would definitely consider.

Offering after school programs.

IT WOULD BE AWESOME TO HAVE SMALLER GROUPS OF CHILDREN WORKING TOGETHER ...I FEEL THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE OVER CROWDED & KIDS ARE NOT GETTING THEIR NEEDS MET

It would be extremely nice to include grades through 8th.

It would be great to be able to have our children close who are in ES age. Traditional after school care is very important to all parents who work full time jobs.

Love this idea but would also like to see one for middle school as well at South Ward.

Make it a Plato academy school

Make this happen

My child does not attend public schools.

My child has the potential in doing so much better and there are not a lot of activities offered at her currently Zoned school.

My child is 12 and would not qualify presently, but I am a foster parent and would consider enrolling my children there if I foster younger kids in the future.

My child went to North Ward many years ago. It was a great school then. Let's reopen the doors of North & South Ward again!:)

My child will be in Middle School, but this would have been a nice option.

My children are Autistic and would not utilize this option.

my children are high school age, this does not apply to me.

My daughter attended this school before it closed and, while she attended there, I volunteered twice a week there. I love the school and, even though I do not have any more elementary age children, I would volunteer there at least once a week.

My input was purely based on what I would have preferred had my children still been elementary school aged.

My kids are now grown, however my oldest went there 17-18 years ago and we loved it!! We also loved the teacher that taught her class. We loved it all!!

My kids are too old for this, but if i still had young kids i really would appreciate a service like this! I took this survey in favor of all young co-worker families that are already working here or will be working for county/city in the future!

My kids currently attend Plato Academy of Clearwater. Superior Schools manages the schools. Though this would be for a partnership for City and County employees, would it make sense to consider contracting with Superior Schools to manage and run it?

<http://www.superiorschools.com/>

My son has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. He is on medication for the disorder and currently has a 504 plan on file, should the need arises. He does well in school. Please keep in mind that this condition may be applicable to multiple families. Thank You

My son is not yet at the age to attend public school, but when he is, I would love to have him go to school near my office rather than at the other end of the county.

My Son went to that school when he was in Kindergaten. I loved the Staff, Teacher and the school. When it closed it was a Sad Day :(

n/a

N/A

need more schools Art and music

no additional comment

None, I don't have kids; however, I support working parents and any educational opportunities for the children.

north ward was a very productive school within the community it can be so again I think

Not only would this be a great school and great location, but it would preserve a structure rich in history and a historical monument.

Please Consider another Option for the use of this historic and valuable building: Open it as an Art Center for working Artists and include Art and Music programs for Children to enroll in. Under no circumstances should this building be empty. In fact, all the North Ft. Harrison Avenue corridor could be an Art and Music destination and change the perception that downtown Clearwater is just for a certain organization which shall be un-named here.

Please consider reopening the North Ward School for some type of educational or cultural use. It is a beautiful building and it could provide so much for the North Marina Area.

Please tear down that school and make something really nice for the marina. This could be boat storage and possibly a restaurant on the water. Look at our neighbors and see that we don't have anything of that nature in our City. It could be a destination like Ozona where you can enjoy the water, a meal, and generate revenue from boat storage.

Suggestion to provide child care services for younger children.

The breakfast should include healthy proteins, not cereal and poparts.

The reopening of North Ward would be a key part in revitalizing that area of Clearwater. I wholeheartedly support such an endeavor and I applaud your efforts in making the right decision for our children.

The school should be made available through lottery for those who are not employed by the City or county.

The would be great for employees like myself. I have 3 children. Two will be in elementary and 1 in middle school. I live in Clearwater but at the mid point of the county where my school options are not that great. In order for my child to have every benefit of her education I drive her to a charter school in north county.

These are complicated questions. We have more than one child, so perhaps one could go near work and the other could go to a charter school farther away. Parents usually interview numerous schools, programs, aftercares, etc., a year before enrolling. They review school scores to see how well the school is doing. Just having proximity to one's work is not good enough reason to have your child attend that school. These days, it is all about school choice and what would be best for the child.

This area is in dire need of revitalization. The school needs to go to make it available for an anchor store/food establishment. This would serve as the vehicle for change in the area.

This is a brilliant plan. As the parents of two elementary school children, this would be an ideal program for my family .

this is a great idea but I live in St. Pete so it has no value for me.

This is a great idea!!

This school would be a blessing for me! I currently work for the City of Clearwater and live in Pasco County. I live in a nice subdivision in a gated community, but unfortunately my child is zoned for a D rated elementary school near our house. My son is only six months old, but it is in the back of my mind ""Which elementary school will I send him to?"" My husband and I both work for the City and have a 90 minute commute to work each day.

This would help us with getting our son to a school near our work on time instead of relying on family members to pick him up and drop him off from a school in Pasco. This option would give me such a peace of mind and allow for my son to have a better education.

Very Important please re open!

We need more school based opportunities to keep children engaged and energized while I do not have children, I would think that this would be a wonderful benefit to city/county employees, and a much better use for a beautiful historic school and property

While I think it would be a great opportunity for children who may be at a non-performing elementary, I am very happy with San Jose, their staff, and the overall 'feel' of the school. Since SJES is a smaller school than many of the elementary schools that I've visited in the area, perhaps that would be a good model to follow for North Ward.

Will ESE students be able to enroll? Also, any dual language programs?

will this be extended to grandchildren of employees?

would like more information on this issue