

A young child with dark hair and blue eyes is wearing a black head-mounted display (HMD) with a small screen on the side. The child is wearing a yellow and grey striped zip-up hoodie over a blue shirt. They are sitting at a wooden table, reaching into a bright orange plastic basket. In the background, there are shelves with various toys, including a colorful mobile and a pink toy car. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a classroom or playroom environment.

TUCKER MAXON

SCHOOL

EVALUATING IMPACT JANUARY 2018

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TUCKER MAXON SCHOOL: WHERE EVERY CHILD HAS A VOICE

1. ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Tucker Maxon School was founded in 1947 by five Portland families who dreamed of providing their children who were deaf with the gift of speech. For 70 years, we have helped children with hearing loss learn to listen, talk, and fully participate in the hearing world. In the 1980s, we created a more mainstream environment by adding typically hearing students at the school.

In contrast to American Sign Language or sign/speech combination programs offered through public schools, Tucker Maxon is the only spoken language program in Oregon and SW Washington. While we focus on helping children with hearing loss build mainstream lives, approximately two-thirds of our students today have typical hearing.

Tucker Maxon has helps children who are deaf or hard of hearing learn to listen and talk, connecting them through speech to their families, friends, and communities. Our mission is to teach children who are deaf and hearing to listen, talk, learn, and achieve excellence together. Children with hearing loss use hearing aids and/or cochlear implants to help them hear. We excel at helping our students develop spoken language skills on par with their hearing peers.

Tucker Maxon School is one of 40 schools in the US, and the only program in Oregon, to focus on spoken language education for children who are deaf, and one of only four schools in the country to exceed the OPTION Schools association's standard of excellence. We are a nonprofit school that receives no government funding, which requires us to fundraise almost half of our revenue from foundations, businesses, and individuals.

According to the National Deaf Education Project (NDEP), on average, students who are deaf or hard of hearing graduate high school with a third grade reading aptitude. At Tucker Maxon, 91% of Tucker Maxon student in 3rd-5th grade who took the Smarter Balanced Test (State Common Core exam) met or exceeded the literacy benchmark. That means that 91% of our third graders are already reading at (or above) a 3rd grade level. According to NDEP, on average only 8% of children who are deaf go to college. A 2017 survey of Tucker Maxon alumni showed that 87% went to college, 77% received a college degree (with an AA or BA), and almost 23% earned a graduate degree. In contrast, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, the US average is a 59% college graduation rate for typically hearing students.

Throughout its history, Tucker Maxon has been a pioneer in Listening and Spoken Language. In 1965, we implemented sound field (loop induction) technology to enhance our student's ability to hear from anywhere in the classroom. In 1976, we partnered with Providence Hospital to offer Early Intervention services to children who are deaf from birth to age four. In 1985, we established the world's first school-based cochlear implant program in conjunction with the House Ear Institute in Los Angeles.

In 2002, we began formally co-enrolling deaf and hearing children together at the school. Co-enrollment allows students with typical hearing to benefit from our highly-qualified teachers, low student-teacher ratio and intimate classroom environment where individual attention is the norm. It provides deaf students with an opportunity to learn and communicate with their hearing peers, mirroring the experience they would have at mainstream schools. Deaf students receive additional support on campus, including audiology, speech therapy, and specially-trained teachers of the deaf. All students learn to value differences, develop social-emotional intelligence, and demonstrate empathy and respect for each other.

2. PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

We operate three primary programs (Early Intervention, Preschool, and Elementary school) that seamlessly build each child's language capacity from birth through 5th grade:

- **Early Intervention (EI):** Ninety percent of children born deaf in the United States are born to typically-hearing parents with no experience with deafness. Our EI program for infants and toddlers helps children with hearing loss develop pre-literacy skills necessary for future school success. We teach families to create language-rich environments at home and to use technology to introduce their children to sound during their early (0-3) years. Parents of children with hearing loss learn strategies to help their child adapt to hearing technology and communicate during sessions twice per week (on-site and at home). Our Early Intervention specialist provides families of children who are deaf with education, support, and assessment. We provide Tele-Intervention (Early Intervention through video-conferencing) for families of children who are deaf in rural Oregon.
- **Preschool:** In Preschool, deaf children transition into a classroom with hearing peers. We use an age-appropriate, child-directed curriculum in which children learn through play and stimulating hands-on activities. We use FM systems (microphones worn by teachers that transmit their voice wirelessly into hearing aids and cochlear implants) in the classroom and pass-around microphones that help children with hearing loss hear each other and their typical-hearing peers. Students with hearing loss spend at least 100 minutes per week with a teacher of the deaf working specifically on listening skills and language development.
- **Elementary School:** Our K-5 program offers curricula in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies that meets or exceeds Oregon's benchmarks. Our students learn about the environment and sustainability by caring for our chickens and goats and growing vegetables and flowers in our garden. Children participate in PE daily and have music and art classes once per week to foster creativity and confidence. We provide Chromebook laptops for every student to use in class. Students with hearing loss spend at least 100 minutes per week with a teacher of the deaf working specifically on language development. Elementary classrooms are also equipped with FM systems to provide access to sound.
- **Speech/Audiology Services:** Throughout their time at Tucker Maxon, students benefit from frequent visits with our on-site audiologist and speech language pathologist. Our audiologist regularly monitors hearing aids and/or cochlear implant functioning to ensure each child receives the highest quality auditory input possible. She also monitors our digital FM systems, which are used in every classroom. Each child with hearing loss spends 60 minutes per week one-on-one with our speech language pathologist to develop his or her speaking skills.



INTENDED IMPACTS

Approximately 65% of our students have typical hearing and 35% are deaf or hard of hearing. When we began this evaluation, we listed the following direct impacts we intended to measure.

DIRECT IMPACTS

1. Our students become exceptional communicators.
2. Our students become socially and emotionally intelligent.
3. Our students develop the confidence to face challenges and take risks.
4. Our students develop resilience to persevere when life is difficult.
5. Our students become effective advocates for themselves and others.
6. Our students become successful and resourceful learners.

SECONDARY IMPACTS

We also compiled a list of secondary, less direct impacts:

1. Students develop friendships and have connection with others.
2. Students develop good relationships, are well-liked, empathize with other people.
3. People respond positively to our students and they become leaders.
4. Students are willing to take risks, able to get knocked down and get back up.
5. Students are vocal about what their needs are.
6. Students succeed academically, are at grade level or above by 3rd grade, meeting academic benchmarks.

TERTIARY IMPACTS

We also listed the following tertiary impacts that may result from our direct and secondary impacts:

1. Students are happy, thriving, and fulfilled.
2. Students make successful social transitions.
3. Students understand that positive thinking can lead to better results. They become leaders in their communities.
4. Students have positive mental health and self-image.
5. Students have their needs met and obtain necessary resources.
6. Students have a successful transition to their next school and other social settings.

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

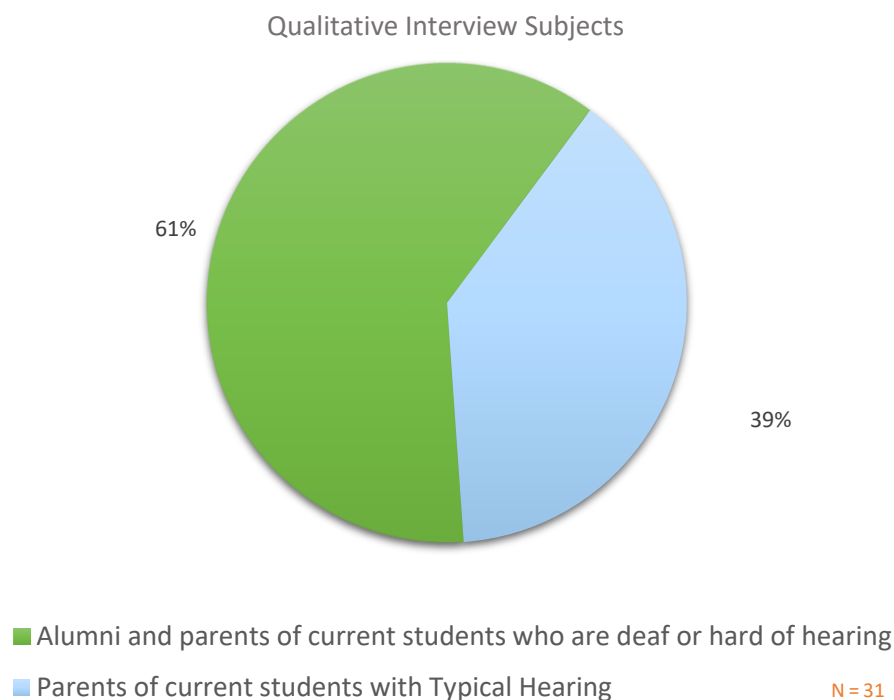
The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact we are having in the population we are serving. Over the course of the project, we

- (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators
- (b) designed and implemented both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data
- (c) identified findings and considered the implications of those findings for future program adjustments.

This project began with a focus on the work of identifying and clarifying the intended impact of each of one of our signature programs. Once we had developed the ideas, and identified indicators, we then designed a survey to collect data about quantitative measures and a qualitative interview protocol to collect qualitative data. We analyzed the data, identified themes, and then translated those themes into findings. From the findings, we developed program responses.

QUALITATIVE DATA AND ANALYSIS

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative impacts that result from our programs. We identified a sample of subjects using a purposeful stratified technique to select a representation of the population we serve. We chose interview subjects from the parents of 109 students for the last academic year, 2016-17. For parents of former students and alumni, we chose from approximately 100 people. For our qualitative interviews, our sample size was 31 and we drew our sample from the following strata of our population:



Five staff members, one Board member, and one former staff member conducted interviews that included 28 questions. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from 45 minutes to one-and-a-half hours in length. Of the 31 people we interviewed, 19 were deaf or hard of hearing, or were responding about their deaf/hard-of-hearing child, and 12 were responding about their typically hearing children. While the majority of our current students have typical hearing, we were most interested in learning the impact we have on deaf students, as this is our primary mission. We collected data and applied a four-step model of response analysis to each of the interviews. This process allowed us to interpret the meaning and significance of the interview data. We then examined the overarching themes that emerged from the full scope of our data analysis to illuminate the primary insights and discoveries.

QUANTITATIVE DATA AND ANALYSIS

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a 21-question survey to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We sent a questionnaire to 149 parents for the 109 students we had at the school last academic year, asking that only one survey be filled out per child. Forty-four parents responded giving us a 45% response rate. We analyzed the data primarily using median measures. The respondents were answering questions about their child, which broke down as follows:

IS YOUR CHILD DEAF/HARD OF HEARING OR TYPICAL HEARING?

DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING (40%)

TYPICAL HEARING (60%)

N = 44

Our qualitative and quantitative evaluations produced data which led to findings. The most significant findings are described in the following narrative.



4. FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

FINDING #1: COMMUNICATING TO LEARN, LIVE, AND LOVE

“[SHE] UNDERSTANDS THE POWER OF WORDS, HOW TO BE ARTICULATE, AND HOW SHE CAN USE LANGUAGE CREATIVELY. SHE IS USING THESE SKILLS WITH WORDS SHE LEARNS IN THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT OF SCHOOL, AND TAKING THEM OUT INTO THE WORLD, BECOMING PART OF HER INTERACTIONS WITH ALL PEOPLE.”

DESCRIPTION:

At the core of everything Tucker Maxon teachers do, inside and outside of the classroom, is a focus on learning deliberate and intentional communication skills. When one alumna became such a good listener, she connected more with adults than children even when she was a child. Since adults speak more clearly than children do, it made it easier for her to hear them. Both her teachers and her parents exhibited a strong commitment to teach her how to listen and talk from a very early age. Her mom, now a teacher of the deaf at Tucker Maxon, recounts how she wore holes in all of her jeans in those early days because she spent so much time on the floor so her daughter could see the words coming out of her mouth when she was little. Her daughter is now going to college at the University of Puget Sound studying political science.

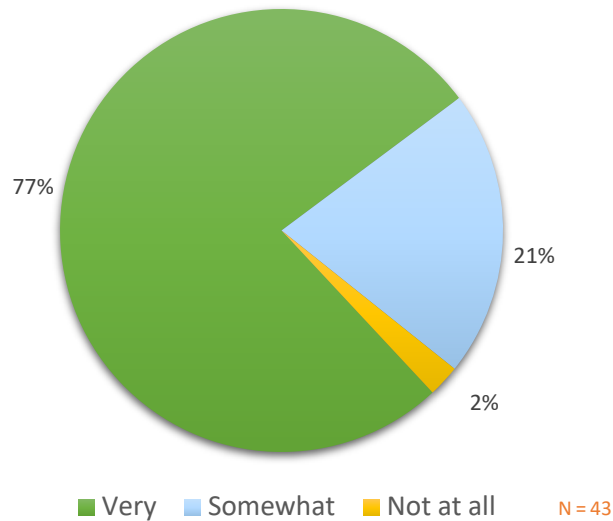
Another student who is typically hearing has learned exceptional communication skills by demonstrating what her mother describes as a “love of language.” Her mother said her daughter understands the power of words, how to be articulate, and how she can use language creatively. She is using these skills with words she learns in the safe environment of school, and taking them out into the world, becoming part of her interactions with all people. She is working hard to succeed in school and, with support, is overcoming barriers she has faced in achieving academic success.

A Tucker Maxon alumna, from the early days of co-enrollment, said she developed language soon after undergoing surgery for an early cochlear implant. Her story helps others understand the impact that the school can have on children with hearing loss. As a young child, it took an incredible amount of work for her to develop spoken language. She remembers coming home exhausted every day after working so hard at school. Her parents encouraged her non-stop to keep on talking and working on her skills. They took a risk getting her cochlear implants when it was a very new technology and did not have a lot of proven success. *The teachers of the deaf and the audiologists at Tucker Maxon encouraged them to not think of this new technology as limiting, but limitless.* This alum now works for the company Cochlear Americas and lives with her husband, whom she met at Tucker Maxon.



The quantitative survey we administered asked:

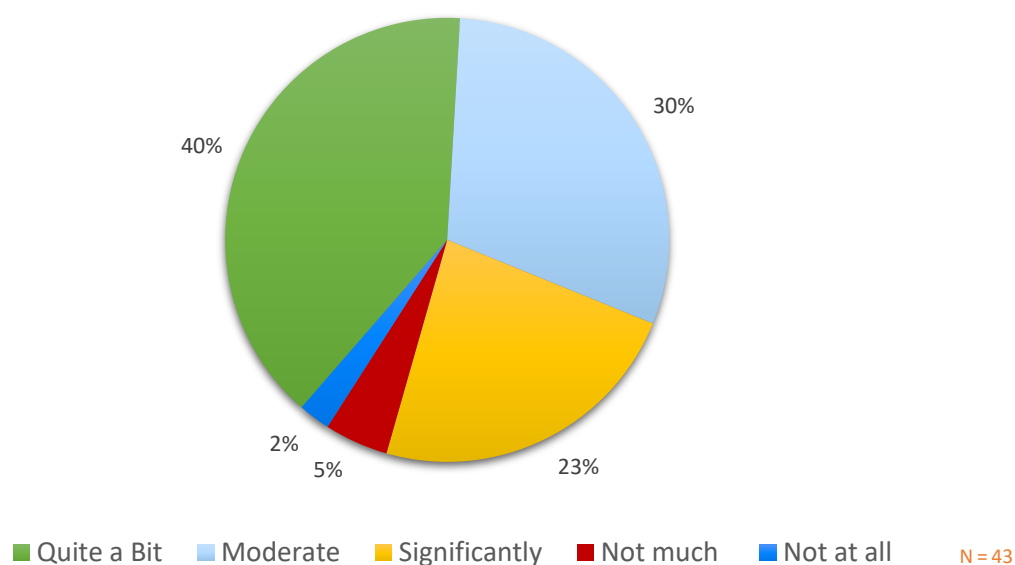
How important is the focus on communication for your child?



A strong theme from the interviews indicates that language skills gained at the school are critical to success in relationships. The mother of a child who is deaf said that Tucker Maxon enabled her and her daughter to have a very positive relationship because the school taught her daughter to listen and talk. The child's communication skills were transformational for the family, especially because the mom, who is not deaf, had been afraid she would never be able to communicate with her child. A former student who is profoundly deaf (and just graduated from high school) said that he learned to engage with people at the school because of his ability to use language. This link between communication and the connection necessary for friendships was evident in many interviews. The vast majority of parents and students are grateful that the school teaches children to communicate in the larger hearing world, so that they are not limited in potential friends and life.



To what extent did your child develop more effective communication skills?



The interviews included many descriptions of the impact that learning to communicate had on the lives of Tucker Maxon students and their families. The survey question showed that 98% of parents feel that the focus on communication is very or somewhat important and 93% saw moderate to significant gains in their child's communication skills.

SIGNIFICANCE

For children with a hearing loss, a primary focus of their education is to learn to use their hearing aids or cochlear implants to improve their listening skills and to use spoken language. Tucker Maxon is very successful in its mission to make deaf children comfortable and competent in a predominantly hearing world.

Communication is the focus of everything at Tucker Maxon. From the annual school play, to PE, to discussions in class, teachers and staff are constantly encouraging communication. It is a guiding principle for every child's education. Communication skills are very much the same for deaf and hearing children. The emphasis on learning these skills at Tucker Maxon helps all of the students become effective listeners and self-advocates. The skills they learn, and their ability to ask for what they need, help prepare Tucker Maxon students to transition to their next stage of education and life.

RESPONSES

- Teachers and staff will continue to model good communication skills and encourage each child to advocate for their hearing needs in class and out in the world. Our unique services such as speech therapy and audiology and well-trained teachers of the deaf provide a very conducive environment to acquire these skills, but students need to be more prepared for places that do not have all of these supports once they leave the school.

FINDING #2: BEING PART OF A SMALL, NURTURING COMMUNITY

“TEACHERS SLOWED DOWN WHEN I NEEDED IT AND CHALLENGED ME WHEN I NEEDED IT.”

DESCRIPTION

The data shows that parents value the small size of our classes. In the interviews, they express a positive sense of community. Each student needs different supports, and the school is able to provide those in part because of our small size. No one gets lost in the classroom. The parent of two students at the school, one who is typical hearing and the other who is deaf, said there is greater flexibility at Tucker Maxon that may not be available at other schools. Since the community is so intimate, there is an ability to cater to each individual student. One parent recounts an example in which her deaf son was particularly nervous about going on a field trip to a farm. This child has food aversions due to receiving an incorrect dose of a medication as an infant. He was anxious about the field trip because the class was going to make soup from the produce they picked at the farm. Because he was able to anticipate in advance, articulate his anxiety, and advocate for his needs, he was allowed to stay at school and not go on the fieldtrip. It is hard to imagine such a scenario playing out in a public school class of 30+ students.

Parents were asked the following question:

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU VALUE THE SMALL SIZE OF THE COMMUNITY AT TUCKER MAXON?



N = 42

The small class sizes at Tucker Maxon allow teachers to meet the needs of each student’s learning level – both academically and socially. An alumnus who graduated high school with a 4.2 GPA and is studying engineering at the University of Portland, said he felt supported when necessary and challenged when appropriate during his time at Tucker Maxon. *He began attending Tucker Maxon when he was 3 1/2-years old and was not speaking at all, except for “momma” and “poppa.”* His parents worried about his speech delays, but he caught up quickly. He developed a love for math and science in elementary school, which he credits to teachers who tailored their instruction to his level and offered tangible incentives. “Teachers slowed down when I needed it and challenged me when I needed it.” When I wasn’t being challenged, they’d give me a harder lesson.” Another example of this tailoring of instruction to the specific needs of a student comes from the parent of a 4th grade student who has autism and attention issues. When he first came to Tucker Maxon in the 3rd grade from a school that only enrolls children on the autism spectrum, he wasn’t at kindergarten grade-level in math. He started “walking down” to the 1st and 2nd grade math groups. As his mother recalls, “when he started here, he hated math; he was scared of it. Mrs. Humphrey (former teacher) made him love it... He’s almost up to grade level now... [He’s] more interested in math now... [and] asks math questions like “how many more days til....?”

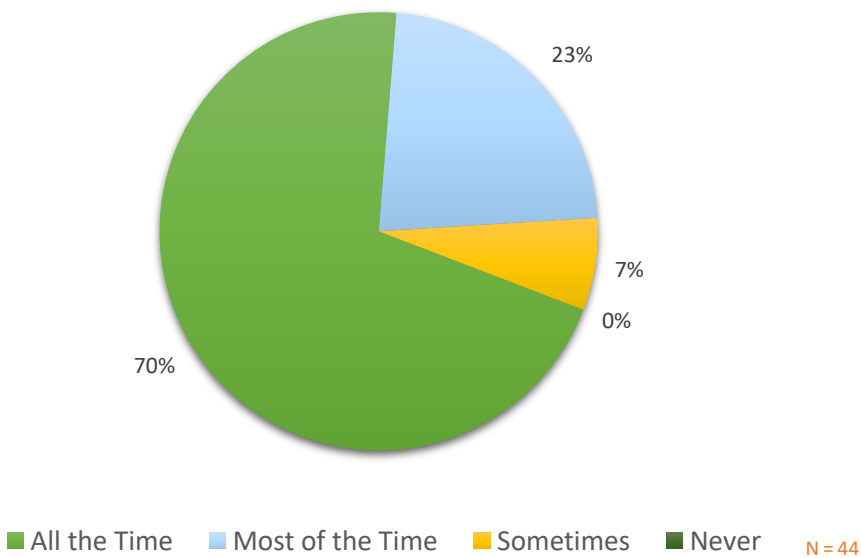
Students feel accepted and encouraged to participate in being a member of the school community. One mother said her son wants to be a part of every play and assembly, no matter the event. During the past school year, he memorized the teachers’ schedules so he could know which teachers he would get to see during recess. Another mother said her son feels “pure joy” in the school community. He loves and takes pride in activities like the annual Spring Concert and the Oregon History Play. The parent of 2nd grade student said *her daughter feels a sense of belonging, safety, security, and validation at school.*

The feeling of safety at this school was a common theme parents discussed during interviews. This sense of safety goes beyond physical safety to the security of being able to make mistakes and learn from them, to having the courage to take risks and feeling accepted despite having a hearing loss or other differences. Of the parents surveyed, 93% felt that Tucker Maxon provides a safe environment for their child all or most of the time. Students have positive relationships with teachers and staff and they know they can trust them. The parent of a 4th grade student stated that his son knows people are looking out for him here. An alumna and current teacher at Tucker Maxon said the school “created a safe environment to accept [her] hearing loss.” The parent of a current student and a Tucker Maxon graduate referred to the school as a “safe place for kids to learn and take care of each other.” Both of her children feel safe to be who they are at Tucker Maxon. Her older daughter was not afraid to get messy or take risks. This helped her learn how to be a leader and to gain and give respect.

The parent of a 2nd grade student spoke about her daughter’s experience with classmates who have behavioral challenges. Despite the challenges, her daughter spoke about all of her classmates with kindness. Her teacher ensured everyone had a safe place in the class. When there were conflicts, her teacher had honest conversations with students about ways they could help.

Parents were asked the following question:

To what extent did Tucker Maxon provide a safe environment for your child?



SIGNIFICANCE

The data shows that parents value the small, intimate community at the school and the individual attention given to each child. Parents expressed in the interviews and in the survey that the safe and nurturing environment at Tucker Maxon encourages growth and risk-taking. Students are not afraid to make mistakes because they know they are supported, which facilitates learning, and helps students enjoy being at school.

RESPONSES

- Tucker Maxon will continue to create a safe and nurturing environment for students.
- We will continue to create inclusive events, clubs, and groups for all students and families.
- Teachers will have discussions with students and staff about safety, both physical and emotional. In the past, Tucker Maxon has always done a good job creating safety for students, but perhaps hasn't always been as cognizant of extending that safety to staff. For instance, because we are so small, we don't have a formal Human Resources Manager.



FINDING #3: LOVING TO LEARN

“ONCE MY DAUGHTER WAS AT TUCKER, SHE WAS LESS FRUSTRATED AND SAW HERSELF AS A TOP STUDENT. SHE LEARNED FROM HER MISTAKES. SHE ROSE TO THE HIGH EXPECTATIONS.”

DESCRIPTION

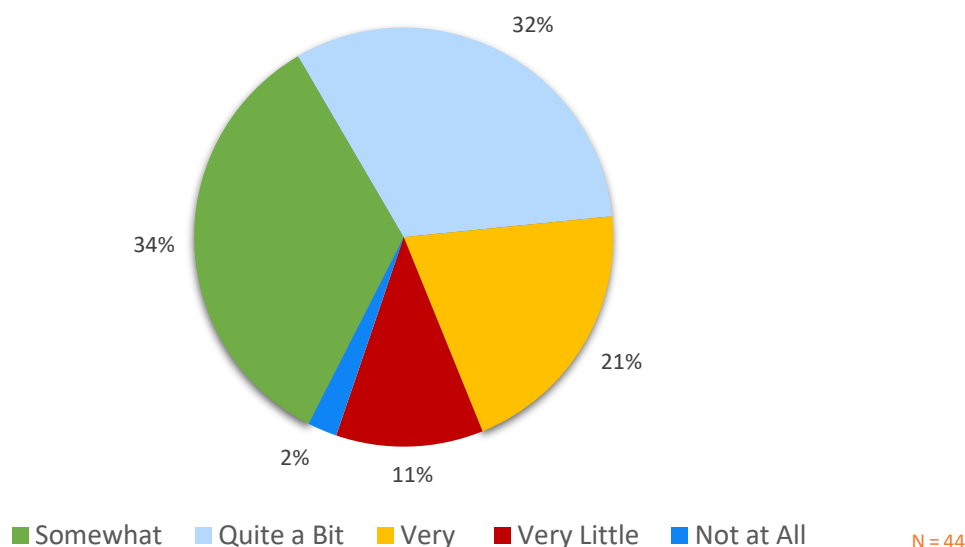
In interviews, parents commented often on their child’s enthusiasm for learning. One parent said, “*Tucker Maxon taught her [daughter] that learning is essential to living. It is what we are here to do!*” Another parent stated “Once my daughter was at Tucker, she was less frustrated and saw herself as a top student. She learned from her mistakes. She rose to the high expectations.” A parent of a deaf child felt that, “the teaching at Tucker Maxon is flexible and follows the child’s lead. Public school is very rigid in their teaching.” Many parents commented that their child loves to come to school. An alumna who is deaf and headed to college said, “Tucker Maxon teachers taught me academics (which I was good at), but also other parts of school like friendships, sharing, and helping others learn.” Many parents said they liked that the school emphasizes the individual child, that teachers were innovative and creative, encourage higher level thinking, emphasize good study skills, and teach their child that there are several ways to solve a problem. A number of parents whose children have transitioned out of the school discussed the love of learning their child now has in specific subjects such as math and reading, and they see these as hopeful for the future to the point of describing possible college majors and professions.



One hundred percent of respondents on the survey sent to parents rated the teaching staff as excellent.

Respondents also gave high ratings to questions about their child's enthusiasm for learning and their belief in their own ability to learn.

To what extent did your child become more enthusiastic about learning?



SIGNIFICANCE

Parents and alumni indicate that excellent teachers who focus on social and emotional growth continue to influence their lives today. Respondents credit Tucker Maxon with teaching not only the child, but the family as well.

One thing that stood out after reading all of the comments by the interviewees was that few parents or alumnae talked specifically about the academics or curriculum at Tucker Maxon. Instead, they focused more on the social and emotional growth of their children. Strong academics were not lacking, but seemed to be a given. Former students said they learned to love school and identify themselves as learners, and shared that learning is a part of their lives today. Parents who feared for their child's future began to trust that their child will be a success.

RESPONSES

Tucker Maxon will continue to focus on social and emotional development. We might participate in formal research to show how this focus can produce significant results. We would share this information by designing or adding to a curriculum, presenting at conferences, etc.

- Tucker Maxon will continue to purchase academic curriculum that supports individualized learning based on learning style and a child's strengths, and that emphasizes hands-on learning.
- We could do more to show a child's progress, based on accomplishment of their specific goals that they and their parents help determine.
- We may attempt to conduct follow-up assessments after students leave Tucker Maxon to determine how well they are doing, academically and socially, in their new schools.

FINDING #4: FEELING ACCEPTED AND MAKING FRIENDS

“SHE FEELS... LIKE A LEADER IN THIS COMMUNITY... LIKE AN AMBASSADOR OF THE SCHOOL.”

DESCRIPTION

With its small size/community and emphasis on individual support, every child is known at Tucker Maxon. The data show that this intimacy allows teachers and staff to truly know the needs of each student. A parent of a boy with typical hearing, but other significant challenges (autism, attention deficits), reported, “Teachers here are masters at identifying what strategies work for each child.”

The staff go to great lengths to make students feel included. 89% of parents surveyed said that Tucker Maxon provides an inclusive environment. A parent recalled how our speech language pathologist worked with her son who, in addition to wearing cochlear implants for profound hearing loss, has autism. In order to make him more attractive to his peers, she named Fridays “Stomp Rocket Day,” and made that child keeper of this attractive toy, encouraging his peers to have to come to him if they wanted to play with the stomp rocket. This provided a bridge to this boy, who is very interested in sports. He moved him from being alone on the playground unable to participate in parallel play, to making friends and playing sports with other kids every day at recess.

Our interviews illustrated that kids are excited about coming to school because they feel they are an integral part of the community. This same child wanted his mom to sign him up for a *Frozen* sing-along party, even though he hates the movie *Frozen*, because he wanted desperately to participate in every aspect of belonging to the Tucker Maxon community. An alumna recalled “Tucker Maxon was my home,” adding she “loves to see and reconnect with old classmates,” and remembering “We had our own culture.”

The school has zero tolerance for bullying and children also learn to stand up for themselves and one another. A father observed, “Tucker Maxon stands up to bullies.” That intolerance translates to the students. The mother of the typical hearing child with autism and attention deficit issues reports that *her son “has no tolerance for leaving someone out.”* He will include them or get an adult.” Another parent mentioned the importance of inclusion in learning to make friends. Her child made the difficult decision to include a classmate who she was afraid would ruin her birthday party because of challenging behaviors, because she “wanted to try to make it better.” An alumnus who just graduated high school recalled “feeling included,” calling “Tucker Maxon a community inclusive of everyone.”

Teachers and staff at Tucker Maxon set a tone, actively modeling what inclusion and belonging look like, and signaling that the school community does not tolerate any forms of bullying. This contributes to the sense of safety that parents and alumni often expressed in interviews. A mother of a deaf daughter extended the reach of this lesson in inclusivity beyond the school community: *“Tucker Maxon helped her find her place in the hearing world. She feels included. By teaching her language, she can be included in the larger world.”* That is an important goal of the school.

Tucker Maxon sets up children to be successful by teaching them how to have positive relationships. 67% of parents surveyed said their child had become more adept at making friends. One parent reported that her child works harder for a teacher who likes and believes in him. She said her children feel loved at the school and know that people care about them.

Several interviewees mentioned school staff as positive role models for their children in making friends and being kind to others. Another parent said that Tucker Maxon "teachers saw through.... [her] son's tough exterior to his tender heart." And another parent mentioned the importance of inclusion in learning to make friends. Her child said that "everyone has a place" at the school, regardless of their challenges in life. In many cases, former students and their families remained close with professionals at the school many years later.

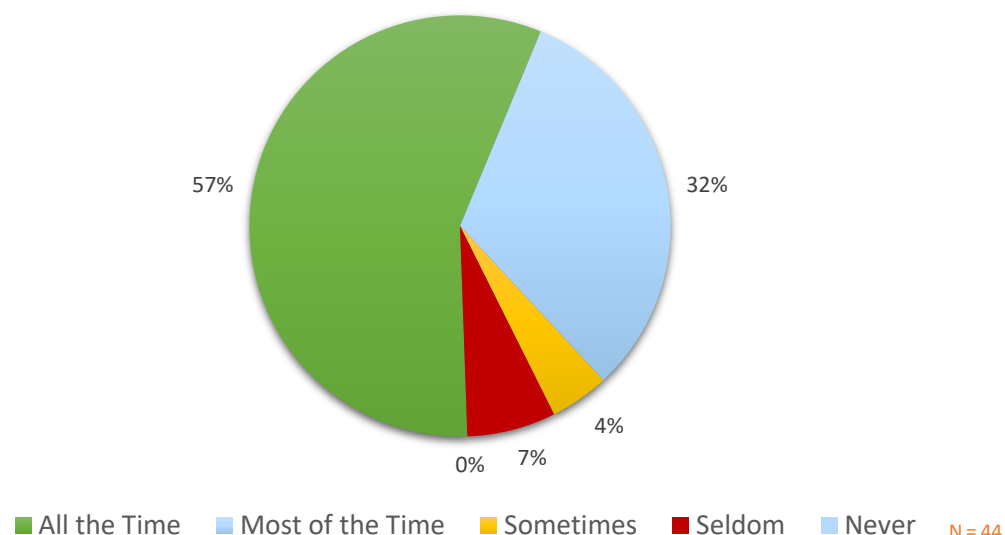
The school's focus on relationship skills and emotional intelligence carries over into how children interact with one another and understand friendships. One parent mentioned that her child learned to make friends at the school, but also learned that friends can come and go in your life. Another mom said her daughter was "the best fan a friend could ever have, and that her friends' joy became her own." Her daughter, who is deaf, now sets goals for meeting new people on a regular basis, in part due to her time at the school.

These lessons about friendship serve students well after they leave Tucker Maxon. One alumna said *her classmates were like brothers and sisters to her and they remain friends 30 years later*. Another former student said that she learned to value friendship at the school and to not give up on friends. She said that she learned to build and, at times, rebuild relationships at the school. This alumna pointed out that not all relationships have to be the same, and that "not everyone has to be your best friend." She referred to this in terms of acquiring resiliency. Similarly, a parent said her son was very good at relationships after leaving the school. She said he was well-liked at his new school, despite being the only new student in his class. She attributed this to his confidence and ability to like himself, in large part because he was loved at the school.

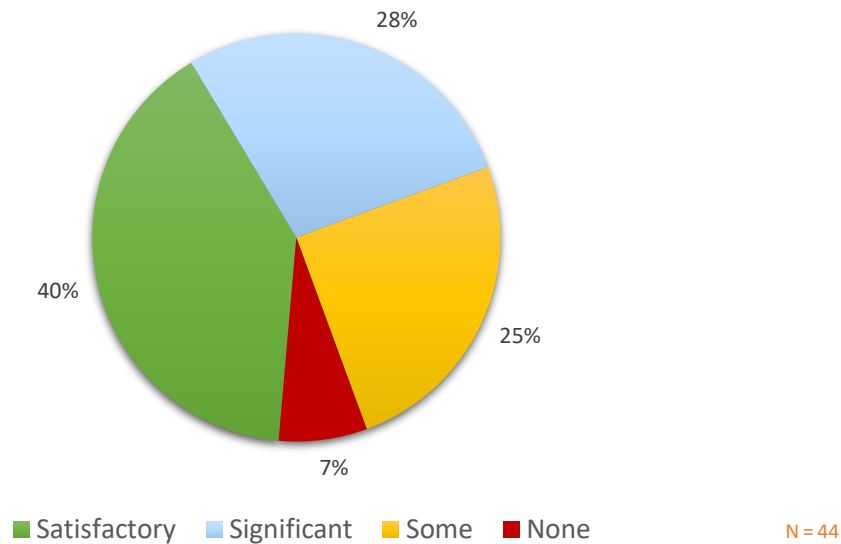
Teachers and staff help children learn how to have positive relationships by intentionally teaching emotional intelligence. This Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) highlighted at the school includes teaching empathy, compassion, patience, and tolerance.

Parents answered the following questions about inclusion in the quantitative survey:

To what extent did Tucker Maxon create an environment of inclusion and belonging for your child?



To what extent did your child become more adept at making friends?



SIGNIFICANCE

Families place a high value on the school's safe and inclusive environment. The school culture helps children gain confidence and allows them to thrive. This sense of belonging also helps them develop a sense of leadership, of ownership of the community. As one father of a typically hearing girl put it: "She feels... like a leader in this community... like an ambassador of the school."

The positive relationships the staff models, and the skills the school teaches are essential in creating a safe and trusting place for children to learn. Children also learn social and emotional intelligence skills that are essential for healthy relationships and may be more important than acquiring knowledge or what is typically referred to as "intelligence." One mom said in an interview, "We put a high value on being happy," and she thought the school did too.

There's a bumper sticker that states, "The best things in life aren't things." At Tucker Maxon, we teach children that the best things in life are relationships and experiences. While being good at school and getting a job are obviously very important, they may not necessarily make you happy. The challenge to find meaning and be happy is even more difficult for children who are deaf and struggle with the communication that is essential to friendships. Tucker Maxon helps children learn to communicate and to be good friends.

RESPONSES

- While Tucker Maxon provides many community events, the school might experiment with more social groups after school. For instance, Lego Club is another way for students to practice relationships. This fall we began a first ever American Sign Language Club for both deaf and hearing children.
- The school may purchase a curriculum for Social and Emotional Intelligence to standardize how we teach those skills. This might help new teachers get oriented more quickly.
- Tucker Maxon should add information about our inclusion efforts to grant proposals since many funders focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

FINDING #5: ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES AND LEARNING EMPATHY

“EVERYONE HAS A PLACE, AND EVERYONE IS SAFE.”

DESCRIPTION

Many interviewees reflected that differences and disabilities are normalized at Tucker Maxon so they are not barriers to friendship or learning. One parent told us that her son felt more comfortable with his deafness, knowing that there were other children all around who were also different. Another parent said that her child felt it was "OK to be different." The same mom said that her child believes that “everyone is equal” because of what he learned at the school. This is a wonderful benefit to the co-enrollment of deaf and typically hearing children in the same classrooms. A parent said that her daughter now accepts that we are all different and she appreciates everyone as they are. At Tucker Maxon, families see this diversity as a strength of the program. Parents who were interviewed often said they believe their child can achieve anything now that they have attended the school.

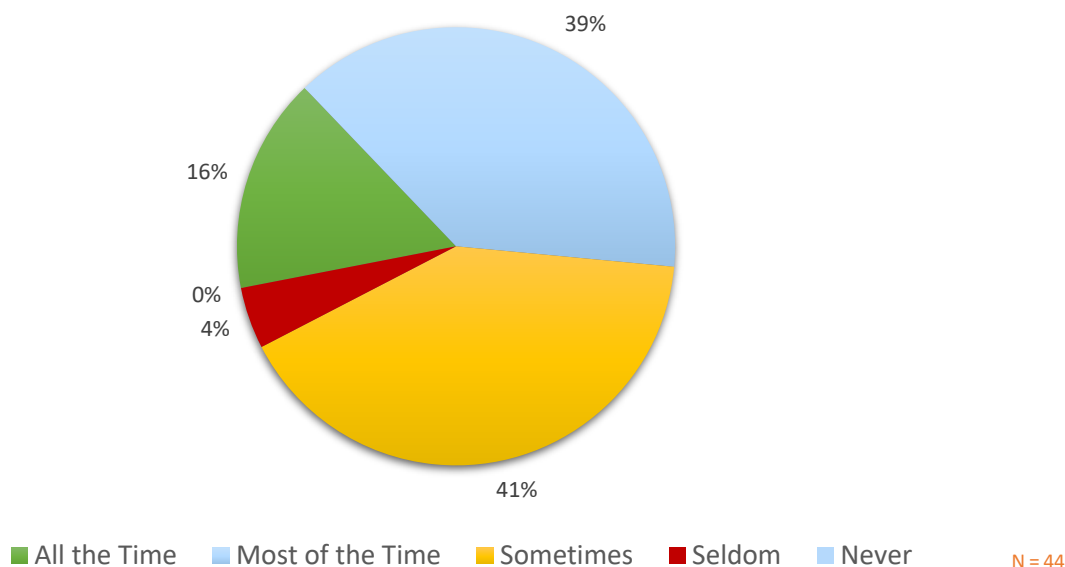
The data suggests that deafness and disability are normalized at Tucker Maxon. Another way of putting this is that children learn not to equate differences or disabilities with limitations. One of the school’s goals is to help all children achieve their full potential in school and life.

The data also indicates that an outgrowth of this belonging/sense of inclusion may facilitate the development of empathy. 55% of the parents reported that their child was empathetic all or most of the time. Because Tucker Maxon is such a small community and everyone is known as an individual, students learn to accept that everyone is different, everyone has his/her challenges, whether s/he has typical hearing or hearing loss. One former student with hearing loss remembers: *“I was convinced I could communicate. At Tucker, I was just a normal kid.* At other schools, you’re the kid who’s different, you know?” One parent noted that when there were severe behavioral issues with one elementary student in the class, the teacher enlisted the children to help create a safe and inclusive environment for the child, and all children in the classroom. The teacher emphasized that “everyone has a place, and everyone is safe.” The mother of a son who has autism but with typical hearing notes how her son “has empathy for others,” which is extraordinary, given that lack of connection to others is generally a defining factor in autism.

A father notes that his son “can’t stand when people are bullying,” providing the following example: when his son noticed a homeless person, he said, “I bet most homeless people are nice.” Another father interviewed noticed his typically-hearing daughter starting to pick up on the emotions of others: “At Tucker Maxon... [she] has interacted with all types of kids. She socializes with students who are deaf or hard of hearing and some kids who are on the [autism] spectrum. She’s empathetic and really good at playing with all types of kids. She definitely learned that here.” One father observed his son “developing confidence through developing compassion for other people.” Another mother noticed her typically-hearing daughter exhibiting signs of respect for the struggles people face. The girl demonstrates empathy by using the communication skills she learned at Tucker Maxon.

Parents responded to the following question in the survey:

To what extent did your child become more empathetic towards others?



SIGNIFICANCE

While we are a small community, we have a lot of diversity in the classroom but only one class per grade, so students grow up going to school with the same small cohort for years. Students see everyone struggling, whether with hearing loss, attention difficulties, autism, learning disabilities, family problems, etc. This allows them to see difference without necessarily identifying it as a weakness or fault, and to develop empathy for others' struggles. One father attributed embracing differences specifically to teaching Social and Emotional Learning: "Teaching Emotional Learning at school with such different personalities helps her express herself at an empathetic level. When another kid does something, she's able to discuss that maybe they were just having a bad day, and not that they're a "bad kid." One mother attributed this development of empathy in hearing students to the co-enrollment model itself. She simply states, "Tucker Maxon taught my daughter to be empathetic."

Tucker Maxon teaches students to accept that we are all different, whether we wear hearing equipment or not. The teachers work on having their students recognize that we all have both strengths and weaknesses, and that having these differences is "normal."

RESPONSES

This finding can be used to market the school to increase enrollment. As a private school that receives almost no state or tax-supported funding, tuition drives 55% of our revenue needs. The school has struggled in the past financially. Finding a differentiating factor regarding the school's offerings beyond deaf education could help draw more potential students, and one day even necessitate having a waitlist to enroll.

While all teachers focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Tucker Maxon could choose to make this focus more explicit. Currently, the preschool teachers all teach values from the same book, *Fill My Bucket*, while elementary teachers focus on character traits, values, as well as *Zones of Regulation*. The school might make the transition between preschool and elementary school curriculum regarding this topic more seamless with one curriculum. At the moment, it is not clear how what the children learn in preschool about values gets carried forward into Kindergarten and the lower elementary grades. It is also unclear whether the curriculum used to teach values is the same as teaching Social and Emotional Intelligence. When discussing this previously, teachers had many different ways of speaking about SEL. While across the board, teachers do a terrific job teaching these skills to our students, we should decide whether consistency matters in this area and if so, whether purchasing a particular SEL curriculum would be helpful.

Acceptance and normalization of difference could also be a topics at the annual all-staff offsite retreat, and weekly teacher or monthly all-staff meetings. Parents could be invited to a symposium on social and emotional learning held at the school.

RESPONSES

- Tucker Maxon leadership and staff should decide whether to purchase and implement a Social and Emotional Learning curriculum for the entire school that consistently teaches subjects such as relationships and acceptance of differences. A single SEL curriculum could also teach empathy, resilience, compassion, and conflict resolution. The curriculum could also teach diversity, equity, and inclusion. It's not clear a single curriculum exists for both preschool and elementary school stages of development. The school principal is researching options.
- Leadership and staff need to clarify the difference between values, manners, politeness, civility and emotional intelligence. Though related, these topics are not the same thing.
- The school might add a day where kids actually walk in someone else's shoes, or have a day where all the blue-eyed kids are in charge, etc. to focus on Social Emotional Learning. We have Cultural Studies month. Perhaps we could add Social and Emotional Learning month. Teachers could tally acts of compassion, empathy, and kindness. Students could also write and talk about issues of difference and acceptance explicitly.



FINDING #6: ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

“...SHE WAS REPRESENTING OTHERS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING.”

Tucker Maxon focusses on teaching students to advocate for their needs. One parent said her child learned early on at the school to advocate for her hearing needs, telling teachers and her mom what she needed to hear them, and this skill has helped her be successful. One of the alumnae, who has a successful business career, credits the teachers and professionals at Tucker Maxon for instilling in her the need to speak up and advocate for herself when she could not hear in class.

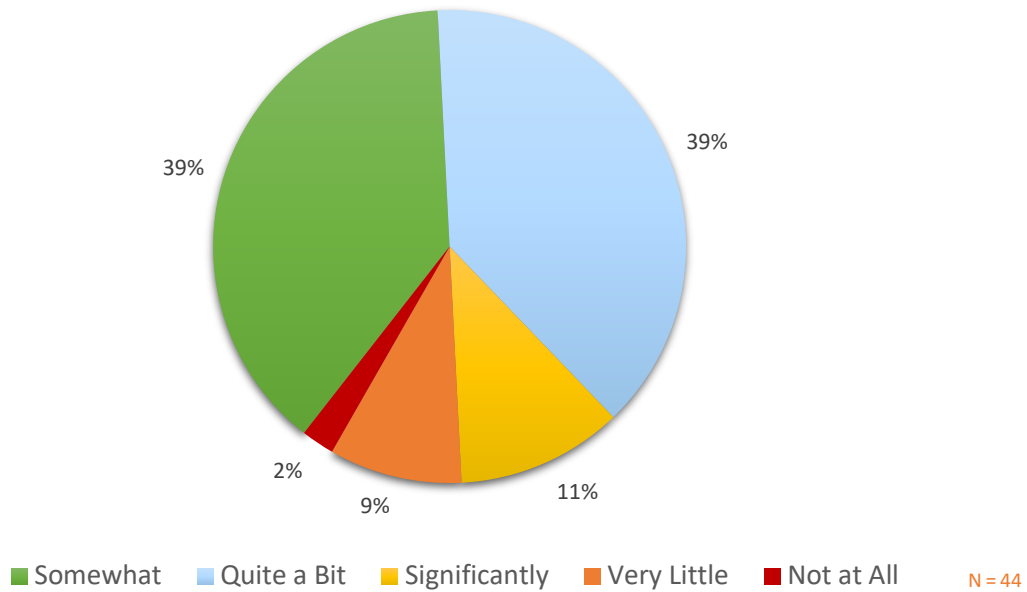
A mother of a current student, who is both deaf and has autism, says her son is very self-aware and advocates for his needs. He will tell his teacher he needs to take a break and go to the sensory table, or will tell her, “Hey, I need to chew on something.” His mother *says this sense of self-advocacy is “huge.... Just him knowing, ‘if I use my words, people will know what I need and help me.’”* She explained, he knows he will get his needs met if he can anticipate his needs and ask in advance. He knows things can’t always change at the last minute, but that his ability to anticipate and self-advocate in advance builds in the opportunity for flexibility. A mother of a hearing child with autism and attention problems has noticed that her son has fewer meltdowns now that that he is better able to advocate for himself; his ability to self-regulate has also improved as he’s become more adept at articulating his needs.

Another deaf alumnus heading to college to study engineering recalled taking the initiative to ask questions in class, asking questions that others might have been too timid to ask. This example showed that Tucker Maxon students advocate for themselves, but also extend advocacy to others. An alumna who now runs the Early Intervention Program at the school remembers the power of having words to say, knowing what to say, and doing so politely, made her a better advocate for herself and others. She remembers being acutely aware of her role educating others about hearing loss, that she was representing others who are deaf/hard of hearing. She recognized from an early age that she was more likely to have people accommodate her when she asked them nicely to make the changes she needed.



Parents were asked about this issue on our quantitative survey:

To what extent did your child become more of an advocate for his/her needs?



SIGNIFICANCE

The survey showed that students become advocates for their own needs at Tucker Maxon School. The data indicated that students are also able to extend that sense of advocacy to others. Some even become advocates for others outside of school in the larger community where they live.

RESPONSES

- Tucker Maxon will continue to focus on teaching students to be strong advocates for themselves and others.
- We will discuss how successful deaf adults use advocacy to achieve their goals.
- We might extend the lessons of self-advocacy into a civics lesson/discussion of political action and civil disobedience.
- We could hold a classroom exercise in which students can't ask for someone to meet their own needs, but must rely on non-verbal communication to communicate to classmates who can help them. This might also be an interesting exercise to do at the school's all-staff retreat. We could hold a discussion about how it felt to not be able to advocate for your own needs, but instead be responsible for helping someone else get their needs met.

FINDING #7: GETTING READY FOR THE NEXT STEP

“TUCKER MAXON SCHOOL TAUGHT ME WHAT ACCEPTANCE FELT LIKE SO I COULD LOOK FOR IT OUT IN THE REST OF THE WORLD.”

DESCRIPTION

In interviews, parents described feeling that their children are safe, cared for, accepted, and comfortable at Tucker Maxon. They portray the school as a “home away from home.” They know that their children are excited, successful, and love to come to school, and they see that their children make friends easily. They also feel that their children have a deep sense of community at the school.

The parents whose children have not yet left the school have fears, some specific and some generalized, about their child’s transition to public school. These fears include difficulty in adapting to a mainstream classroom with a much higher student-to-teacher ratio, and losing the services they have received at Tucker Maxon, including assistance with hearing aids, speech therapy, and communication skills. They know that public schools may not offer the same comfortable, accepting, and nurturing sense of community experienced at Tucker. They are concerned that their child might be placed in an inappropriate special education classroom, and *they are worried that their child might have more difficulty making and sustaining friendships.*

Parents whose children have already left Tucker Maxon to attend public school have had both positive and negative experiences. One parent described the move as very hard. Her child was scared to go to school, was bullied at school, and there were no resources for dealing with his deafness. He had a hard time. Another parent recounted how his child’s academic and social skills regressed after leaving the school.

Other parents described the transition as seamless and positive, with their children being well-prepared, both academically and socially, and able to advocate for any special needs related to their deafness. One former student, who successfully transitioned, stated, “Tucker Maxon School taught me what acceptance felt like so I could look for it out in the rest of the world.”

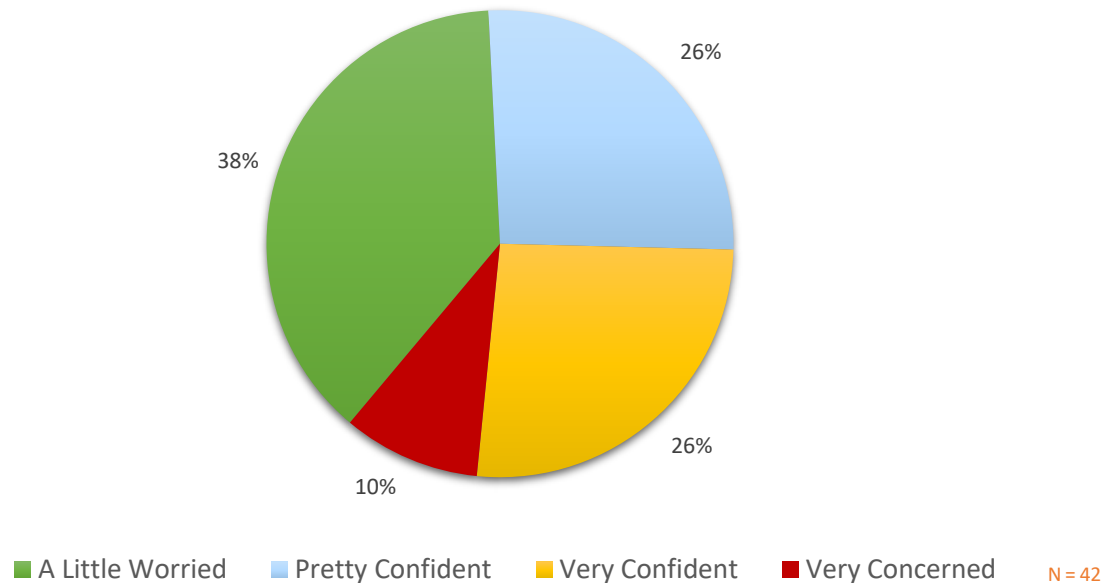
One parent of a child still at Tucker Maxon said, “I believe that she is learning everything she needs to know at this age (3rd grade) and I am hopeful that she will get a good education. I worry about public school, but not about her.” Another parent said, *“We believe he can be anything he wants to be. Before we were terrified parents. Now we have hope and he has confidence.”*

Alumni have experienced the transition to public school. They described adjustments that included others seeing them the first time as “different” and “disabled.” They talked about having a difficult time being in an environment that was less kind and nurturing than Tucker Maxon, as well as having trouble getting used to the larger class sizes. One person said, “I never saw myself as different until I went to public school. I struggled with mainstreaming, but learned I could adapt.”

Overall, alumni felt they were academically prepared and had learned to be good advocates for themselves. They said they had the skills, confidence, and perseverance to overcome the challenges they faced with the transition, and that they had done very well in public school and in college.

On the survey, nearly half of the parents expressed some concern about transitioning to another school.

How confident are you about your child's eventual transition to another school?



SIGNIFICANCE

Tucker Maxon provides a unique and excellent educational setting for children with hearing loss and their families. The extraordinary qualifications of the teachers, audiologist, and speech pathologist working together in a setting with hearing and deaf children is rare in the U.S. Not only do the deaf children have models for good speech from their teachers, but also from their classmates, and the hearing classmates learn valuable lessons about acceptance of differences in an environment that exemplifies these principles.

That all of this will likely change when these students move to their next educational environment is a challenge that parents expressed and alumni validated. With some exceptions, these students appear to be academically well prepared and able to advocate for themselves, but students and their families could benefit from better preparation for the eventual transition to public or other schools.

RESPONSES

Students leaving Tucker Maxon, with its nurturing and supportive environment, are stepping into a different and somewhat unknown environment. To reduce some of the concerns of the parents, and uncomfortable experiences described by alumni,

- Tucker Maxon should prepare both parents and students for what to expect (large class sizes, being with others who have little or no information about deafness and hearing equipment, having to advocate for services and classroom supports) in a larger, more complex education setting. One way of doing so might be to invite alumni and parents of alumni to a transition workshop each year for those who will be leaving Tucker Maxon. Parents who are not yet leaving, but are anticipating and want to prepare for their child's next school, could also benefit from this information. We held our first such workshop this past spring for our deaf/hard-of-hearing students, as well as their parents, in which an expert on IEPs presented. We received feedback that parents of typical hearing students who have IEPs for other disabilities, such as Autism, ADHD, learning disabilities, etc, would also benefit from such a meeting.
- Tucker Maxon could develop a manual for the parents and students to use in their new school. It might include how to explain to teachers and classmates the issues of deafness and the benefits of hearing aids and cochlear implants. It might also include effective strategies for education planning meetings and self-advocacy. Our principal, Linda Goodwin, recommends a book that is both parent/student-friendly on how to navigate the transition at their new school called *Building Skills for Independence in the Mainstream: Developing Independent Hearing Aid Use and Self-Advocacy Skills* by Gail Wright and Karen L. Anderson, but it is not an in-house publication specific to Tucker Maxon.
- The school should invite education planning teams from the transfer school to have a meeting at Tucker Maxon so they can see the level of support provided here and have a better sense of the child's needs for the next year. Again, this is something we currently offer, but not every transitioning student takes us up on the offer. We might also expand this offer to hearing students with IEPs who will also be transitioning out of the school.
- If we are able to secure funding and implement a new Tele-Intervention program, deaf/hard-of-hearing students who move out of the area could continue to receive services from Tucker Maxon remotely, perhaps easing their anxiety about "cutting the chord" from the school completely.



FINDING #8: FINDING HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

“SHE CAN BE ANYTHING SHE WANTS.”

DESCRIPTION

Many of the parents interviewed talked about the devastation they felt when they first learned that their child was deaf. Some had only heard “deaf” speech, had little-to-no information about cochlear implants, and worried about what the future would hold. Could their child complete school, have friends, get married, have a career? Could their child learn to talk? *Many parents did not hear their child talk until their child was in school at Tucker Maxon.*

After being at the school, parents were far more hopeful about the future of their child. They described the simple joy of talking with their son or daughter about the school day and of hearing the words, “I love you.” *After their initial fears about the future, they now see their children as having “no limits,”* and believe they can be successful in the future. Even parents with children who have additional disabilities such as autism, expressed their belief that their child will be fine and have opportunities for a normal, satisfying, and productive life. “She can be anything she wants” was a common refrain.

The alumni interviewed reflected on their experiences at the school and the impact it has had on their lives. They give their early educational experiences at the school significant credit for the success they have had in higher education, in satisfying social lives, and in their professions.

Two of the alumni, who are both in their 20s and are preparing to go to graduate school (law and education), said that Tucker Maxon made a major difference in their lives, and that they became who they are today because of the school. Both describe themselves as being confident, successful, and having a passion for learning.

SIGNIFICANCE

Despite fears about the future of their children at the time of diagnosis, and some short-term concerns about moving from Tucker Maxon to other schools, the hope for successful long-term outcomes for those who have been at the school is very strong.

RESPONSES

Both parents of students who had left Tucker Maxon and alumni, who were older, expressed a desire to stay connected with the school and to return to see classmates and teachers. They are clearly strong models for deaf children and their families.

- Tucker Maxon could arrange reunion meetings for alumni and their families to gather success stories for new families. These stories could also be used for fundraising, for grants, and for marketing the school.
- The school currently invites alumni who are graduating from high school to come back and speak at the school’s graduation ceremony every year. Informal groups of alumna currently have a Facebook group, and meet once a month at a different Starbucks location.
- The school should research capacity building grants to hire an Alumni Coordinator in the future. Such a capacity-building grant recently awarded by the MJ Murdock Trust has allowed Tucker Maxon to hire our first Major Gifts Officer, and among the MGO’s prospects to explore will be alumni. If we had the funding to hire an Alumni coordinator, that person’s role would be to coordinate more alumni events to connect alumni to the school, while simultaneously increasing donations from alumni to benefit the school.

5. STEPS FORWARD

Tucker Maxon will explore whether to purchase a formalized Social and Emotional Intelligence curriculum for the school. To that end, a subset of teachers, the Principal, and the Executive Director could meet once a month for six mos. to explore different curriculums available, determining which would best meet the needs of the school. We will use the CASEL list of SEL curriculum as a starting point for our research. We will also invite consultant Ken Hill, who wrote a book that focuses on Social and Emotional Learning, back to an all-staff meeting to discuss this topic.

Tucker Maxon will also explore a staff training on the issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) based on the Inclusion/Belonging Finding. To that end, leadership has already explored partnering with the Center for Equity and Inclusion. The Center's training may be cost-prohibitive, so we will also explore other consulting firms offering this type of training, such as the August Wilson Red Door Project, among others. Major area foundations, such as Meyer Memorial Trust and Spirit Mountain Community Fund are requiring agencies they fund to enact DEI policies as a requirement of funding, but DEI training is expensive. Tucker Maxon may seek grant funding to pay for training.

We could also add a new Transitions workshop, held in the spring for students and families who are graduating from, or otherwise transitioning out of the Tucker Maxon community. We will invite former parents and students back to speak about their experience leaving the school, to help ease current student and parent concerns. We may also invite alumni to provide advocacy training for departing students to serve as role models. We will also explore more informal venues for students who have recently transitioned from Tucker Maxon to return to the school for informal get-togethers, pizza parties, etc, to help ease the transition and maintain their connection to the school. In the future, we will research capacity building grants to fund an Alumni Coordinator to focus on outreach and keep us connected to our graduates.

Our Project Impact interviews showed that alumni and parents appreciated the opportunity to reflect of their Tucker Maxon experience. To that end, we plan to implement exit interviews to those families we know are leaving, whether through graduation, or to mainstream into other schools earlier than 6th grade. Leadership will also exit interview staff who are leaving. The Principal will conduct the exit interviews for parents of students leaving the school, as well as for Education staff, and the Executive Director will conduct exit interviews with administrative staff and Board members who are leaving the organization.



APPENDICES

EXERCISE 3 - INDICATORS OF IMPACT

EXERCISE 6 - QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

EXERCISE 7 - QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

EXERCISE 3 - INDICATORS OF IMPACT

Description	Take each of your primary ideas of impact and “what we mean”, and build a more fully developed version of your intention by identifying E3 (quantitative) and E4 (qualitative) indicators. For your E3 indicators, make sure you have considered aspects of all three dimensions of human development (know, feel, do). For your E4 indicators, make sure you are framing these in terms of the structural changes you intend to see among those you serve (believe, love, become).
Purpose	To articulate the indicators for the primary ideas of impact

IMPACT #1 – STUDENTS BECOME EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNICATORS.

What we mean: Students become excellent listeners, speakers, conversationalists, writers and presenters.

E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)

*What do people **know** now that they didn't know before as a result of your program?*

Students know how to read and understand grammar.

Students know how to listen and talk.

*What can people **do** now that they couldn't do before as a result of your program?*

Students can express themselves clearly.

Students can read and write at grade level.

Students can successfully converse with give and take.

*How do people **feel** now that they didn't feel before as a result of your program?*

Students feel confident communicating.

Students are happy to engage in conversation.

Students feel understood and in control.

E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)

If you add up the E3 indicators, what deeper level changes would you see in people?

*What might they **believe** about themselves or others that they didn't believe before?*

Students believe their voice matters.

*How might they **become** different (operate or show up differently) as a result of your program?*

Students become advocates for themselves and say what they want and need.

*What might they **love** (be more committed to and stick with even when it's difficult) as a result of your program?*

Students are able to speak their truth.

Students tell their own story.

Students become authors of their own futures.

IMPACT #2 – OUR STUDENTS BECOME SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT.

What we mean: Students develop empathy, compassion, and respect for differences. They are able to regulate their emotions and appreciate the importance of positive relationships.

E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)

Know:

Students know others matter.

Students know they can impact others.

Students recognize and empathize with others' feelings.

Do:

Students treat others as they want to be treated.

Students read social cues.

Students can negotiate and resolve conflict.

Students can manage feelings, delay gratification, and control impulses.

Feel:

Students relate to others' feelings.

E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)

Believe:

Students believe they can make their world better.

Students believe they can make a difference for others.

Become:

Students become a good friend.

Students become someone other people want to be around.

Love:

Students love who they are.

Students are connected to others.

IMPACT #3 – OUR STUDENTS DEVELOP THE CONFIDENCE TO FACE CHALLENGES AND TAKE RISKS.

What we mean: Students develop self-esteem and self-worth, learn humility, and have the ability to face challenges and fears. They are willing to take risks.

E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)

Know:

Students know they are capable.

Students know their strengths and their weaknesses.

Students know the difference between confidence and arrogance.

Do:

Students face their challenges and fears and take risks.

Feel:

Students feel they can face fears and it's okay to fail.

E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)

Believe:

Students believe they have self-worth.

Become:

Students are grateful for their gifts.

Students are also humble.

Love:

Students accept and learn from their failures.

Students love to try new things.

IMPACT #4 – OUR STUDENTS DEVELOP RESILIENCE TO PERSEVERE WHEN LIFE IS DIFFICULT.

What we mean: Students develop determination and perseverance. They are persistent; they learn and grow from mistakes.

E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)

Know:

Students know that life isn't always easy.

Students know the sun will rise tomorrow.

Students know it's all going to be okay.

Do:

Students pick themselves up when they get knocked down.

Students demonstrate flexibility and adaptability.

Feel:

Students feel able to face the day.

Students feel they are going to be okay.

E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)

Believe:

Students believe they can overcome challenges.

Become:

Students become persistent and resilient.

Love:

Students learn from mistakes and challenges.

Students love and embrace mystery.

IMPACT #5 – OUR STUDENTS BECOME EFFECTIVE ADVOCATES FOR THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

What we mean: Students learn to speak up for their needs. They are assertive and don't let people walk all over them.

E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)

Know:

Students know they can make a difference for themselves.
Students know what they need.

Do:

Student appropriately asserts him/herself.
Students speak up.

Feel:

Students feel self-respect.
Students feel their needs are valid.
Students feel others' needs are valid.

E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)

Believe:

Students believe they have value and worth.

Become:

Students become willing to lead.
Students become advocates for themselves and others.

Love:

Students stand up for what's right.

IMPACT #6 – OUR STUDENTS BECOME SUCCESSFUL AND RESOURCEFUL LEARNERS.

What we mean: Students develop a love of learning. They are curious, resourceful, and knowledge-seeking. They set goals, take actions to reach them, and achieve academic success.

E3 (Quantitative Indicators of Impact)

Know:

Students know learning matters.
Students know they can learn.

Do:

Students work hard to learn.

Feel:

Students feel the joy and wonder of learning.
Students feel satisfaction and pride in the process of learning.

E4 (Qualitative Indicators of Impact)

Believe:

Students believe that learning is fun and exciting.

Become:

Students become curious.

Love:

Students love exploration and discovery.

EXERCISE 6 - QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

(INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO CURRENT AND FORMER PARENTS)

1. Know → Believe

1a. What life lessons do you see your child learning that s/he might not get at another school? What you believe they still need to learn that they haven't yet?

* How has that changed his/her outlook? How has it changed what you believe about him/her? What or how has it changed what you believe about yourself as a parent?

1b. How is your child thinking differently about learning than s/he used to?

* How has this changed his/her perception of who s/he is?

1c. What words would your child use to describe him/herself as a student before? What words would s/he use now?

* How has that changed his/her perception of what s/he is capable of doing? How has that changed your perception of what s/he is capable of doing?

1d. What words does your child use to describe differences in others?

* How does s/he react differently than s/he used to?

1e. What did you think your child's future would hold before s/he came to Tucker Maxon School?

* What do you think it holds now? How has this changed his/her perception of who s/he is?

1f. How has your child shown you that s/he is enjoy learning now?

* What topics is s/he interested in now that s/he wasn't before? How is this helping to build his/her sense of discovery?

2. Do → Become

2a. What skills has your child developed that has helped him/her express him/herself clearly?

* How has that changed his/her ability to face communication challenges?

2b. What words has your child started using to ask for help?

* How has that helped him/her to become a better advocate for him/herself? For others?

2c. What new communication skills have you seen your child exhibit? How is s/he using them more effectively in and out of school?

* How have these skills improved the kind of person he or she is becoming/growing into?

2d. What new social skills have you seen your child exhibit since coming here?

* How has that changed his/her ability to make friends? How has that changed his/her ability to develop other supportive relationships?

2e. What challenges have you seen your child take on recently at TM?

*** How has that changed his/her ability/approach to deal with challenges in daily life?**

2f. When your child is bored, what activities do you see him/her gravitate towards now as a result of being here?

*** How is that helping him/her become more engaged in his/her learning? In what ways are you becoming more engaged along with him/her?**

2g. What does your child do when faced with difficult situations? What do you do when your child is faced with a difficult situation?

*** How has s/he become a more confident risk taker?**

3. Feel → Love

3a. What is your child more excited about since s/he's been here? What still frustrates him/her?

*** What keeps him/her going when things are frustrating?**

3b. What emotions does s/he associate with coming to/being at school? What emotions does your child express about being a part of this community?

*** How has that helped him/her become more dedicated to developing new friendships inside and outside of school?**

3c. What emotions does your child experience when s/he fails? When s/he succeeds?

*** How is that shaping his/her commitment to keep trying when things get hard?**

3d. Does your child celebrate group accomplishments?

*** Does your child feel joy when s/he sees others succeed?**

3e. What are you most proud of? When does your child feel most proud?

*** How has being at Tucker Maxon helped him/her find joy or inspiration in the process of learning?**

EXERCISE 6 - QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

(INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO ALUMNI)

1. Know → Believe

1a. While attending Tucker Maxon, what life lessons did you learn that you might not have gotten at another school?

* How did those lessons change your outlook? How did those lessons change what you believe about yourself?

* What life lessons did still you need to learn after attending Tucker Maxon?

1b. How did attending Tucker Maxon change how you thought about learning?

* How did it change your perception of who you are?

1c. What words would you use to describe yourself as student before attending Tucker Maxon? What words would you use to describe yourself upon graduating from/leaving Tucker Maxon?

* How did your time at TMS change your perception of what you're capable of doing?

1d. While attending TMS, what words did you use to describe differences in others?

* How did you react differently to differences than you did before attending TMS?

1e. What did you (or your parents?) think your future would hold before you came to Tucker Maxon School?

* What did you think your future held upon graduating from/leaving TMS? How did that change your perception of yourself?

1f. How did you show that you enjoyed learning while attending TMS?

* What topics did you gain interest in while attending TMS that you hadn't been interested in before? How did that help to build your sense of discovery?

2. Do → Become

2a. What skills did you develop at TMS that helped you express yourself clearly?

* How did those skills change your ability to face communication challenges?

2b. Did you start learning different ways to ask for help while attending TMS?

* How did that help you become a better advocate for yourself? For others?

2c. What new communication skills did you learn while at TMS? How did you use them more effectively in and out of school?

*** How did those skills improve the kind of person you grew into?**

2d. What new social skills did you learn while at TMS?

*** How did those social skills change your ability to make friends? How did they change your ability to develop other supportive relationships?**

2e. What new challenges did you take on while at TMS?

*** How did taking on new challenges change your ability to deal with challenges in daily life?**

2f. When you were bored, what activities did you gravitate towards?

*** How did that help you to become more engaged in learning?**

2g. While at TMS, what did you do when faced with difficult situations?

*** While at TMS, did you become a more confident risk taker?**

3. Feel → Love

3a. What did you grow more excited about while being at TMS? What frustrated you while you were here?

*** What kept you going when things were frustrating?**

3b. What emotions did you associate with coming to/being at school? What emotions did you feel about being a part of the Tucker Maxon community?

*** Did being a part of Tucker Maxon help you develop new friendships inside and outside of school?**

3c. While at TMS, what emotions did you experience when you failed? When you succeeded?

*** How did that shape your commitment to keep trying when things were hard?**

3d. While at TMS, did you celebrate group accomplishments?

*** Did you feel joy when you saw others succeed?**

3e. What were you most proud of while at TMS? What are you most proud of now?

*** How did being at Tucker Maxon help you find joy or inspiration in the process of learning?**

EXERCISE 7 – QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE



Tucker Maxon School Parent Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. A group of 6 staff and board members have been participating in a 9-month program called Project Impact to evaluate the difference the school makes in the lives of the students and families we serve. We've conducted 30 interviews with both parents of current students, as well as alums, to gather qualitative data, and are now asking you to participate to gain required quantitative data. We ask that only one survey be filled out per child. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Is your child:

- ☐ Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- ☐ Typical Hearing

Which grade was your child in last year?

- ☐ Early Intervention
- ☐ Preschool
- ☐ Kindergarten
- ☐ 1st Grade
- ☐ 2nd Grade
- ☐ 3rd Grade
- ☐ 4th Grade
- ☐ 5th Grade

How many years total has your child attended Tucker Maxon?

FOR ALL QUESTIONS BELOW, PLEASE ANSWER BASED ON THE LAST SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17.

1. To what extent did your child develop more effective communication skills?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Not much
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Significantly

2. To what extent did your child become more adept at making friends?

- ☐ None
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Satisfactory
- ☐ Significant

3. To what extent did your child develop more confidence?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Significantly

4. To what extent did your child develop more resilience to bounce back from disappointments?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Significantly

5. To what extent did your child become more of an advocate for his/her needs?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Significantly

6. To what extent did your child become more enthusiastic about learning?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Very

7. To what extent did your child work hard/persevere to learn a new skill?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Very

8. To what extent did your child become more empathetic toward others?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Most of the time
- ☐ All the time

9. How would you rate your child's belief in their ability to learn?

- ☐ Non-existent
- ☐ Low
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Good
- ☐ High