



Washoe County  
School District

# Incline Schools Focus Groups Notes

**Group:** Community

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Summary Comments / Notes:

## 1. Are you satisfied with the level of education students are receiving?

Enrichment from the community for elementary school was greater in the past. Had a science teacher. Foreign language was available. Not happening today.

We are better than most WCSD schools, but still could improve.

Used to have excellent schools. Our students had great AP classes. These days we are not educating "the cream of the crop." That changed five years ago. We used to be "college prep."

Currently, students have changed. If you are not an AP student, you are most likely not college-bound. We need vocational-technical.

Writing skills have deteriorated due to the coming of the computer. But, in general, I think the level of education is pretty good.

Two-thirds of our graduates require remedial English and Math in college. Not satisfied with the current level of education.

We have lower expectations.

**Consensus:** Improvement is necessary.

## 2. Do you believe you/your children are actively engaged and enjoy the learning process at school?

Only 40% are engaged.

Students seem stressed. Not enjoying school and not engaged.

Computers are a distraction.

**Consensus:** Generally, no. Higher achieving students aren't getting enough stimulation.

## 3. If you could change one thing in Incline school to improve student learning, what would that be?

We need "empowerment" schools. A strong principal. Not satisfied with the current leadership.

AP students are not engaged. Middle school population seems to be more differentiated.

Need more career and vo-tech information. Start in elementary school, but especially in high school.

Definitely need more vo-tech in high school.

Bring TMCC courses into the high school. This will make the transition to college easier. (Dual credit courses can be taken as a senior, but it's an elective.)

**Consensus:** Need empowerment schools and vo-tech.

**4. How important is it to have a challenging learning environment? What does this mean to you?**

**Consensus:** Very important.

Great teachers are here, but our population has changed.

G&T program has inherent problems. The testing is not good.

Teachers are not given the practical support of curriculum to support high expectations.

**Consensus:** G&T students are being served and remedial students and ELLs get plenty of attention, too. Students in the middle (silent majority) are not being served.

**Consensus:** We need effective teacher evaluations.

**5. Respondents to the recent survey identified instruction in science as critically important. What are your thoughts on that?**

Science is more important than a foreign language. Absolutely necessary. It's the way of the world.

Middle and high school have science. Elementary school desperately needs science. Used to have it, but don't now. Science sets them up for success in middle and high school.

ELLs not doing well in the sciences starting in middle school. We have low expectations.

We've had three science teachers in the last three years. Not good.

**Consensus:** We must have science and, definitely, in elementary school.

**6. Respondents to the recent survey identified instruction in innovation/technology as critically important. What are your thoughts on that?**

Technology needs to be taught starting in elementary school. It's being taught a little. Can help in the teaching of science and math. Start in first grade.

The middle "silent majority" needs to be served more.

Really like the Hug HS model – identifies students into vo-tech or college or etc., but doesn't pigeonhole them. Allows for change.

Incline used to have AutoCAD, etc. but not now due to the change in the student population.

WCSD is a national backwater regarding online learning opportunities. I won't offer WOLF at the Learning Café. WOLF is not sufficient for most college entrance. WOLF is just a "digitized textbook."

There's no oversight/accountability for students using these programs (PLATO, WOLF, BYU online) to ensure that they are being successful.

**Consensus:** Very important. Technology is part of the equation – but not all of it.

**7. How important is it to have a vertically aligned curriculum among the three Incline schools?**

The curriculum between grades within a school isn't even aligned!

Hiring of administrators is not top-notch. [REDACTED] has good leadership. Other principals are not allowing alignment.

Departments are not aligned.

The leadership is not good about alignment.

Vertical alignment is good, but to what end? Students must still be able to move at their own pace.

**Consensus:** It's important and is non-existent here.

**8. As you know, the Incline Great Schools committee is focused on making Incline Schools great. Do you have any closing thoughts on this?**

The committee is insufficient [REDACTED].

No information is coming out of the committee.

They are not broad-based in the questions and information.

What are they doing? What's the point? What are the results? What are the goals? Ineffectual.

What is the feeder program from elementary to middle to high school? Alignment again.

We need to be an empowerment district. Please look at the success CCSD has had with their empowerment programs.

How about a tax break for local businesses who give vo-tech workshops?

**Consensus:** Great AP program with great teachers. Something is going right in middle school.

**Consensus:** Want a working empowerment program.

**Consensus:** Incline Great Schools Committee = not enough public input

**Other general comments:**

Agree that "life skills" classes would be good in elementary school.

Better evaluation of teachers. We can't get rid of bad ones.

Push hard for an understanding of our vertical alignment goals.

The illegal population has watered down the instruction.

WCSD shouldn't allow illegal immigrants into schools.

Need an AVID program in the middle schools.