

**Discover: What is going well at St. Matthew?**

- † St. Matthew is a strong community that is kind and welcoming. It feels like home (this was also a predominant theme in the adult focus groups)
- † Good food in the cafeteria
- † Chili Supper (This is an event that matters to the parish community)
- † Fun School Events (Pep rallies, dress down days) The students like that they are brought together through these events.
- † Sports Program with many options for students. Coaches are excellent.
- † Teachers are understanding, supportive, and caring.
- † Fr. Bill is awesome. They especially like his homilies.

Student comments that reflect these statements are highlighted below.

<b>BUILDING and FACILITY</b>	<b>Responses</b>
It is clean	1
Access to technology	1
<b>COMMUNITY (people, volunteers, descriptors)</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Treat us like family; feels like a big family	2
Getting more diverse over the years	1
The church community is nice and respectful; people are so caring and have open arms; there is a sense of community; great community; community is strong and large; the community; a community of friends	9
Nice and welcoming; has a very welcoming atmosphere in church and in school; everybody just wants you to be there and you feel at home; kindness; friendly; positive environment; feel welcomed/St. Matthew is chill	7
Helpful students; caring classmates	2
Everyone is trying to accommodate everyone's needs	1
<b>LITURGY and WORSHIP</b>	<b>Responses</b>
We come as a school to mass; great mass; we get to go to mass once a week	4
Fr. Bill is kind and interactive; great priest; Fr. Bill's homilies are extremely well said; priest is awesome	5
Saturday evening mass has great musicians; 9:30 mass also	1
lots of participation opportunities in mass such as cantoring and serving	1
Mass is interesting and interactive	1
<b>RELATIONAL/SOCIAL</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Fun school events; pep rally, haunted hallway, dress down days	4
We have recess; one of few middle schools that have recess	2
Sports; great sports program; allowing kids to play sports	5
Friends; friendships we have with each other; individual personalities are brought out; seeing friends	3
Parish picnic	1

Wide range of after school activities	1
Chili Supper	5
Coffee and Donuts on Sunday morning	1
Lots of events outside of school	1
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Education for kids	1
Food in the cafeteria is good; great lunches	6
Access to different supplies	1
8 <sup>th</sup> grade privileges, 8 <sup>th</sup> grade greeting, musical	3
We do fun projects and games	1
Everyone has time during the day to catch up on work	1
<b>SERVICE and OUTREACH</b>	<b>Responses</b>
There are fund raisers for 8 <sup>th</sup> grade DC trip	2
Mass servers are doing a great job; serving with friends	2
Kids have an opportunity to serve God	1
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Teachers are very nice and caring; teachers; teachers are nice, caring and understanding about what is going on in our lives; nice middle school teachers; all of the middle school and elementary teachers are amazing; great teachers; helpful; The teachers are always willing to help and want the best for all their students; dedicated teachers; teachers are kind; teachers encourage us to do better; the teachers constant support and help in and out of school	20
Good school staff; they are kind. They know everyone's name, and I think that is important	2
Nice lunch ladies	1
Mr. Smock is the best; very interactive	1
Fr. Bill does a great job interacting with students; I like Fr, Bill's jokes; Fr. Bill is the best; Amazing priest	4
Specials class are good	1
Coaches are excellent	1

### Dream: How can St. Matthew become even better?

- † More prayer/mass time. They suggested using flex time for an additional mass during the week. Perhaps you could do communion services and teach the students how to do them.
- † Different ways to be connected with others like the chili supper, but not the chili supper. They also mentioned more club opportunities that could accomplish the same goal. It may be a good way to engage parish volunteers through club sponsorship.
- † For our community to grow in understanding and accepting a diverse community.
- † Prayerful Bonding experiences, like class retreats.  
In my past, I have planned several middle school retreats. It goes a long way for building class unity and a relationship with teachers and administration.

- † Review the dress code policy.  
It would be good to involve student leaders in some genuine discussions around the reason for uniform policies and then have them help create an improved policy. It may also be important to involve parents for some tweaking of the policy. It will go a long way in cooperation.
- † Brain Breaks during the school day

Student comments that reflect these statements are highlighted below.

<b>BUILDING and FACILITY</b>	<b>Responses</b>
New gym; additional gym	2
New turf field for soccer, baseball	1
We need more air freshener; the school doesn't always smell good	1
Expand the hallways so we have more room to pass	1
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Add positive quotes around the school	1
Improve the bias dress code so that girls don't have to feel the repercussions of boys – recognize that girls bodies are different and clothing may fit differently; boys sexualize the girls for what they wear and that shouldn't be; improve the dress code; we should be allowed to wear our SMS hoodies during the day; less oddly-specific dress code regulations, like no brass studs on school pants	4
Improve the discipline policy	2
The grading scale could be better	1
More strict about people wearing their mask regardless of vaccination status	1
Allow student council more input; More freedom and decision-making to students	2
<b>COMMUNITY (people, volunteers, descriptors)</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Improved communication tools between students and teachers; sometimes things don't come out as they should	1
We could be better at not seeing color in the community as a whole	1
Less hate/drama between students	1
More diversity	1
<b>FINANCIAL</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Sometimes we spend money on stuff we don't need, like new chromebooks	1
The school begging and not using the money toward useful things to support the school	1
<b>LITURGY and WORSHIP</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Have mass more than once a week; in place of flex time; more mass during the school week; more mass (maybe twice a week)	3
St. Matthew could probably put the choir for Saturday and Sunday masses	1
<b>MINISTERIAL/SACRAMENTAL</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Have more religious activities inside of school	1
We should learn to be more reverent and respectful both in and out of church	1
<b>RELATIONAL/SOCIAL</b>	<b>Responses</b>

More events like the chili supper and fish fry, so we can connect outside of school	6
More clubs for students	2
More bonding/retreat type things; class retreats; 8 <sup>th</sup> grade bonding retreats	6
Take bullying more seriously	1
More support for our activities outside of school like sports or clubs; audience	1
St. Matthew could have more activities/fund raisers to benefit the church	1
Getting more non-school people at events	1
Instruction on hygiene in middle school. Can it be directed to specific students?	1
Could be better by doing more events and fun things. We do the same 5 events every year and I think we should add some	1
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Have all school books on Chromebooks	1
More breaks during the day (recess?); allowing time to give your brain a break; more recess, brain breaks; more recess even if shorter length of time	6
Get chromebooks for students to take home	1
Less complicated book reports and projects	2
More flexes	1
Give 8 <sup>th</sup> graders more privileges	1
Could have more engagement with the parishioners, like coffee and donuts and volunteering opportunities	1
More research opportunities and projects	1
Make sure the teachers understand that we have other homework outside of and in school (subject to subject); how much homework is right? We can be better by not giving out so much homework	3
More in-school events	1
More hands-on activities	1
More field trips	1
Students could use their phones at the end of the day; usage of phones at school	2
Later school start time	1
Better school lunches	1
More class options like electives	1
<b>SERVICE and OUTREACH</b>	<b>Responses</b>
More fund raisers for people in need	2
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Some teachers could be more understanding	1
Have the teachers be more aware of favoring/picking certain students	1
Handle students with kindness instead of meanness (name removed)	1