

## School Board Mailing List: Use and Gratifications Obtained

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In November 1999, James Klagge in collaboration with Andrea Kavanaugh, Director of Research for the Blacksburg Electronic Village, distributed a questionnaire to the approximately 860 members of Dr. Klagge's electronic mailing list for School Board activities and issues. Sixty-eight members returned completed questionnaires (7% response rate). Three years earlier, in 1996, we distributed the same set of questions to the membership (369) of the School Board mailing list. In the 1996 round, seventy-six members returned completed questionnaires (20% response rate). Below the results for both rounds are summarized.

### 1. How long have you been on this mailing list?

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
1 to 6 months	23.0%	7.4%
7 to 12 months	70.0	22.1
more than 12 months	7.0	70.5

### 2. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the helpfulness of the communication via this list in clarifying issues?

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
not at all helpful	4.2%	1.5%
only a little helpful	1.4	0
somewhat helpful	11.3	10.3
helpful	31.0	26.5
very helpful	47.9	61.8
no answer	4.2	0

### 3. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the helpfulness of the communication via this list in keeping you up to date with school issues?

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
not at all helpful	4.2%	1.5%
only a little helpful	4.2	1.5
somewhat helpful	1.4	4.4
helpful	23.9	22.1
very helpful	63.4	70.6
no answer	2.8	0

**4. Would you say that having school issues communicated to you via this list has made you feel more involved in these issues than you felt prior to subscribing to this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
yes	81.7%	91.2%
no	12.7	7.3
no answer	4.2	1.5

**5. On a scale of 1-5, how do you rate the reply function of this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
not at all important	2.8%	7.4%
only a little important	2.8	7.4
somewhat important	11.3	14.7
Important	19.7	19.7
very important	56.3	39.7
no answer	7.0	5.9

**6. Would you say that your participation in public meetings regarding school issues has increased, decreased or stayed the same since you became a member of this mailing list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
increased	12.7%	20.6%
decreased	2.8	5.8
same	78.9	66.2
no answer	5.6	7.4

**7a. If you answered "increased" to Question 6, would you attribute an increase in your attendance at public meetings on school issues to the communication from this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
yes	12.7%	25.0%
no	38.0	1.5
no answer	49.3	73.5

**7b. If you answered "decreased" to Question 6, would you say that replying to Jim Klagge's email is substituting for face-to-face participation? [ 1999 only]**

Yes	11.8%
No	17.6
no answer	70.6

**8. How many times have you called a public official or school administrator as a result of communication exchanged via this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
None	59.2%	54.4%
1 to 5 times	31.0	33.8 (25% called one or two times)
6 to 10 times	2.8	7.3
More than 10	0	4.5
no answer	7.0	0

**9. How many times have you written a letter to an elected official or school administrator as a result of communication exchanged via this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
None	42.3%	45.6%
1 to 5 times	50.7	45.6
6 to 10 times	2.8	4.4
More than 10	0	4.4
no answer	4.2	0

**10. How many times have you spoken at a public meeting as a result of a communication exchanged via this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
None	85.9%	72.1%
1 to 5 times	4.2	23.5 (13.2% have spoken once)
6 to 10 times	0	4.4
no answer	9.9	0

**11. Have you told other people whom you thought might be interested about this list?**

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1999</u>
yes	53.5%	79.4%
no	36.6	17.7
no answer	9.9	2.9