

# **Barrington Parents United**

## **Teacher Mandate Survey**



**March, 2022**

# Background

## Who is Barrington Parents United?

- Barrington Parents United (BPU) is a peaceful, issue-based, non-partisan, and authentic grass-roots network of private citizens, united by the love of our kids, encouraging healthy public discourse, and dedicated to transparency around policy-making that shapes how children are treated in school and in their communities.
- We are a diverse and inclusive group, recognizing that parents' ability to act as the primary decision-makers in matters that impact our children's physical, mental, social-emotional, and educational well-being is at risk of being crippled by government overreach from the Barrington Public School system and beyond.
- We strive for elevated and more productive communication with elected officials to ensure that parents' rightful role in having dominion over their children's lives is restored.

# Background, cont.

## Why A Survey?

- In August, 2021, the Barrington School Committee quietly and unanimously voted in favor of the Covid-19 Policy to mandate the medical injection known as a Covid “vaccine” as a term of employment for all teachers and staff.
- While two teachers, whose medical exemptions to the vaccination are accommodated, the school committee voted in October, 2021 to terminate employment of three teachers whose religious exemptions were denied.
- Brittany DiOrio was a special education teacher at Sowams Elementary, Kerri Thurber was the music teacher at Barrington Middle, and Stephanie Hines was a reading specialist at Hampden Meadows. Not only were their own lives and children affected, the students in their classes immediately lost their teachers, creating educational, and in some cases, social-emotional instability and upheaval.
- With the teachers’ appeal hearing finally confirmed after several postponements by the school committee and administration, BPU wanted to give parents and the public a chance to be heard on how this has affected their children and families.

# Summary

## Total Responses, Residency, and Student Placement

- The survey was open for approximately one week from March 23-31, 2022\*.
- Respondents were required to provide an e-mail address and indicate residency.
- A total of 79 unique respondents indicated being either a Barrington resident with at least one school-aged child, a Barrington resident, or a non-resident.
- 43 respondents were Barrington residents with at least one school-aged child.
- Most of the total respondents did not indicate where their child(ren) currently attend or where they are planned to attend for the coming school year. However, there were 35 instances of a parent indicating a school of current placement and 21 instances of indicating a school of planned placement.
- Except for one, all other respondents supported the teachers.
- 60 respondents provided free-text comments, and 26 of those opted in to allow their comments to be published.

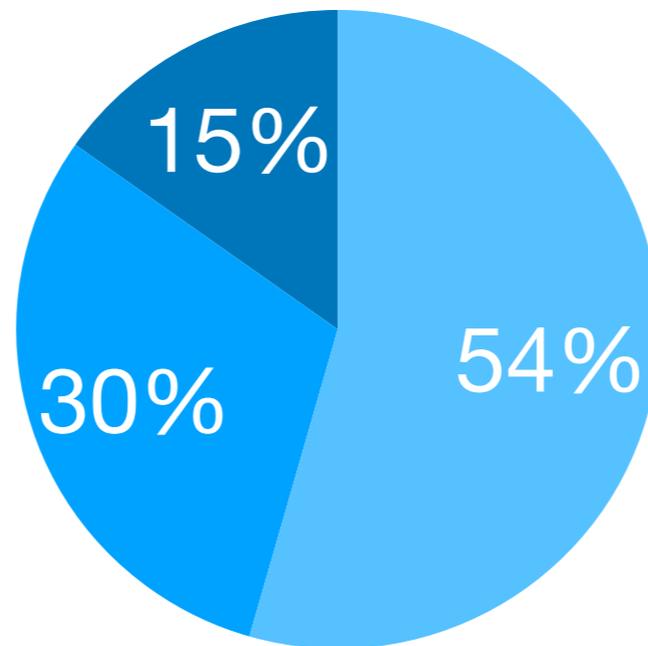
\*At time of publication, additional responses were still being received, and an update will be published at a later date.

# Quantitative Results

## Residency

I am a...

- Barrington Resident and Parent/Guardian of school-aged child(ren)
- Non-resident of Barrington who supports the teachers and this survey.
- Barrington Resident

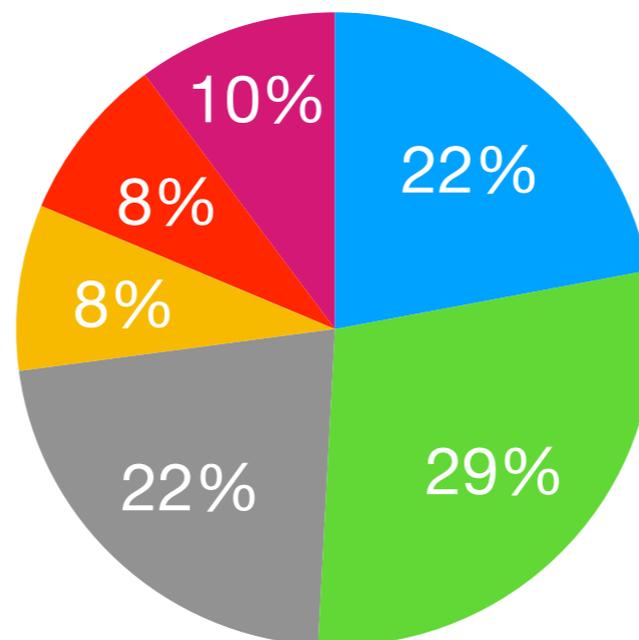


# Quantitative Results

## Current 2021-2022 Student Placement

I'm a legal guardian of (a) child/ren CURRENTLY enrolled in the following Barrington school(s).  
(Answer may not represent all of my children.) [n=31]

- BHS
- BMS
- Hampden Meadows
- Nayatt
- Primrose
- Sowams

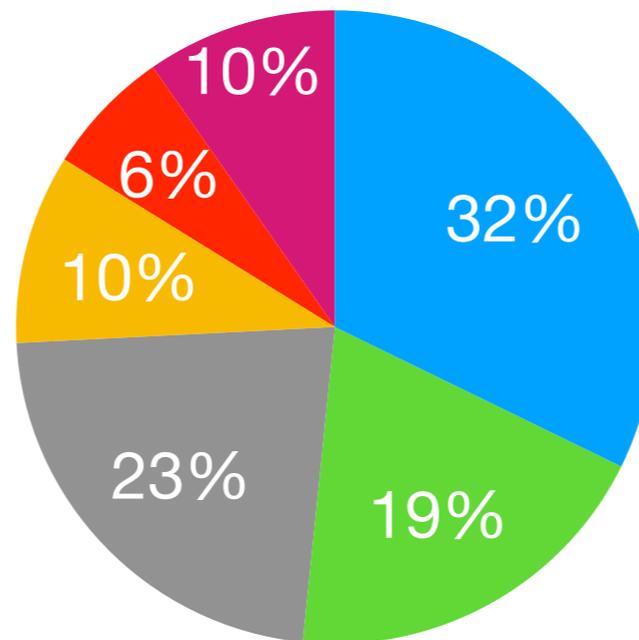


# Quantitative Results, cont.

## Current 2021-2022 Student Placement

I'm a legal guardian of (a) child/ren PLANNED to be enrolled in the following Barrington school(s) for 2022-23. (Answer may not represent all of my children.) [n=21]

- BHS
- BMS
- Hampden Meadows
- Nayatt
- Primrose
- Sowams



# Qualitative Responses

## Un-edited comments from free text field:

**Q: Please tell us, in your own words, how the teachers' terminations have affected you and/or your child(ren):**

- No one should have to decide between religious belief and their job. My children and I will stand for religious and medical freedom.
- Supporting Teachers - Supporting Parents - Supporting Students
- This goes against our constitution and no one NO ONE has the right to force any medical procedure on another person!!!! I support and love these teachers that have stood their ground!! You can state my name
- It's not up to anyone else what people medically decide for themselves
- I believe strongly that vaccine mandates are wrong. Science tells us that Covid 19 is not dangerous to young people. Adult staff should have the right to make their own decisions and or precautions when it comes to health care. Firing the teachers for not complying is wrong.
- My two girls went through Barrington with my youngest graduating in 2018. We need to support our teachers. Firing any teacher because they will not adhere to a school mandated medical procedure, for any, reason, is flat out wrong.
- My 7th graders' music class (which was awesome, she was learning the guitar and LOVED it!) abruptly ended when the teacher was fired, no sub ever, the last 2-ish months of class spent in the cafeteria during class. As my kids have said to me, segregating (via different rules for vax/unvax) and firing people based on a medical choice is the opposite of inclusion. Not allowing unvaccinated parents in the school to volunteer is segregation.
- My child is in high school so she is not directly affected but I am sure that the morale of the teachers are affected and therefor it impacts the students.

# Qualitative Responses, cont.

## Un-edited comments from free text field:

**Q: Please tell us, in your own words, how the teachers' terminations have affected you and/or your child(ren):**

- It's been sad to watch our kids and community be separated by the politics of Covid. "My body, my choice" seems only to apply to women who aren't teachers. So many rules and regs seemed arbitrary and capricious, in retrospect, including forced vaccinations, (or face the guillotine of job loss!). How sad that society in general and the Barrington School committee in particular allowed fear and panic to control the response narrative. Respect for individuals and their medical or religious preferences has turned into genuflecting to majority rule and power plays to force conformity with zero tolerance.
- These terminations go against basic human rights for medical freedom and privacy. This vaccine does not protect against transmission or infection and never should have been mandated. These teachers were terminated and not granted exemptions and now, just a few months later, BPS is offering exemptions for the booster. These terminations did not benefit a single child, teacher or Barrington resident and creates further mistrust in the school committee.
- I know that the special needs children especially being without a familiar qualified teacher is a huge problem.
- While these terminations have not directly affected my children. One of the teacher's terminated, Kerri Thurber, was one of my daughter's favorite teachers while a student. She had a huge impact on my daughter's middle school experience and served as a valuable mentor for her at this crucial period in her development. My daughter was devastated when she heard about Mrs. Thurber's termination. I am not in favor of a vaccine mandate, but if there is one then all religious and other exemptions must be considered and treated with respect rather than summarily denied. The vaccination rate amongst teachers would have been high enough to provide protection without a mandate, and is high enough now without these 3 teachers so allowing their exemptions would not be a health risk.
- My children fell behind in all subjects, especially math

# Additional Qualitative Responses

## Other points cited as negative outcomes\*:

- “Loss of continuity of care”
- “Disruption to routine and structure”
- “Loss of these teachers is a disservice to BPS.”
- “This is not putting children first.”
- “Financial impact from lawsuits”
- “Lack of a stable teaching environment”
- “Going to a private school next year”
- “Barrington has failed my kids”

\*There was one comment from a respondent not in support of the teachers, which said there is religious justification for the mandate.

# Conclusion

## Thank you for participating

- BPU is grateful to have offered this small communication tool as way to reach out to the local and broader communities in acknowledgment of the wrongful actions taken toward trusted teachers in Barrington Public Schools.
- Thank you to all who are engaging in this process of coming together to advocate for children's health and well-being. BPU hopes this is only the first of many opportunities for future participation by parents and families in having their voices heard.