

Marketing Research since 2012

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Farber Research
320 Diamond Spring Road
Denville, NJ 08734
September 15, 2013

Dear Valleyview Middle School Administration:

A high-quality school can have a positive impact on the future of its students. The strengths of a school serve as a magnet to attract the best and the brightest to this town. As a result, Denville's Board of Education is assessing the "brand" of Valleyview Middle School.

A school's brand includes tangible items, such as the mascot, logo, colors, and song. A brand also encompasses intangible elements, such as the school's history, culture, vision, athletic legacy, and/or academic reputation (Black, 2008). The students and teaching staff become the brand's "trust agents," transmitting the message through actions, such as wearing official school apparel or hosting community service events (Black, 2008). Notre Dame is an example of a college that cultivates a branded image by marketing its slogan, its football team, and its core values. Similarly, Valleyview Middle School's brand should symbolize its culture, history, and values.

Denville Township's Board of Education has decided to assess the current status of Valleyview Middle School's brand. Your participation will help the Board determine the feasibility of pursuing a marketing plan.

Please complete the attached observation form during homeroom any day this week and return it to the main office no later Friday, September 20. The answers that you provide are completely confidential. No one will be informed how you answered. The observed teacher's homeroom will be randomly assigned and will also be anonymous and confidential. Your answers will be combined with others from similar homeroom grade levels.

Thank you again for your time helping your school continue on its path toward excellence.

Sincerely,

Matthew Farber

Matthew Farber, President

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Enclosure

OBSERVATION–VALLEYVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL HOMEROOMS

Date of Observation: _____

Homeroom Grade Level: _____

Instructions: You are to randomly choose a number from the fishbowl in the main office. The number in the fishbowl corresponds to a homeroom class number at Valleyview Middle School. Next, you are to visit your assigned homeroom during the week of September 15, no later than September 20. Your objective is to observe how this school's "trust agents" are delivering the school's brand (Black, 2008). The answers to this survey will help the Denville Board of Education assess the current state of Valleyview Middle School's brand.

1. Student Display

a) Number of students wearing school non-sports apparel _____

b) Number of students wearing school athletic apparel _____

2. Classroom Display

a) School motto is displayed in the classroom Yes _____ No _____

b) School mascot is displayed in the classroom Yes _____ No _____

c) School logo is displayed in the classroom Yes _____ No _____

d) School vision statement is displayed in the classroom Yes _____ No _____

3. Student Engagement

a) Students are heard discussing academic activities Yes _____ No _____

b) Students are heard discussing extracurricular clubs Yes _____ No _____

c) Students are heard discussing sports and athletics Yes _____ No _____

Please return this checklist immediately to the main office. Your name, and the name of the teacher whose homeroom is being observed, should not be written anywhere on this form. The answers that you provided are completely confidential.

Thank you for participating and helping Valleyview Middle School continue on its path toward excellence.

References

Black, J. (2008, January). *The Branding of Higher Education*. Retrieved August 7, 2013, from

http://www.semworks.net/papers/wp_The-Branding-of-Higher-Education.pdf

Blankenship, A. B., Breen, G. E., & Dutka, A. F. (1998). *State of the art marketing research*

(2nd ed.). Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Business Books.

Kuiper, S. (2010). *Contemporary business report writing* (4th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western

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Dear Valleyview Middle School Student:

A high-quality school can have a positive impact on the future of its students. The strengths of a school serve as a magnet to attract the best and the brightest to this town. As a result, Denville's Board of Education is assessing the "brand" of Valleyview Middle School.

A school's brand includes tangible items, such as the mascot, logo, colors, and song. A brand also encompasses intangible elements, such as the school's history, culture, vision, athletic legacy, and/or academic reputation (Black, 2008). The students become the brand's "trust agents," transmitting the message through actions, such as wearing official school apparel or hosting community service events (Black, 2008). Notre Dame is an example of a college that cultivates a branded image by marketing its slogan, its football team, and its core values. Similarly, Valleyview Middle School's brand should symbolize its culture, history, and values.

Denville Township's Board of Education has decided to survey the current student population of Valleyview Middle School. The goal of the survey is to assess brand awareness, appraise the school's reputation, and determine the feasibility of pursuing a marketing plan. The Board feels that students have a deep understanding of what the school currently represents and delivers. The answers that you provide are completely confidential. No one will be informed how you answered. Your answers will be combined with others from your population segment (e.g., other 7th grade students). Upon returning the questionnaire to the main office, the school secretary will take your name and phone number to enter you into a drawing to win a \$50 iTunes gift card.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it before Friday, September 20. For your convenience, you will find enclosed a confidential, return envelope. This survey is voluntary. Thank you again for your time helping your school continue on its path toward excellence.

Sincerely,

Matthew Farber

Matthew Farber, President

xx

Enclosure

VALLEYVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL

BRANDING QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Only seventh or eighth students should answer this questionnaire. The answers provided should reflect the opinion of the person answering this questionnaire. This survey is confidential and completely anonymous.

1. What is your current grade level?

Seventh grade

Eight grade

2. As of September 1, I have lived in Denville Township for 24 months, or longer.

Yes

No

If you answered "Yes," then please skip to question 4.

3. Valleyview Middle School is meeting my expectations.

Yes

No

Please describe why it did or did not: _____

4. What do you think about first when you hear Valleyview Middle School?

5. How would you describe Valleyview Middle School?

6. What are Valleyview Middle School's strengths?

7. I recognize the Vallyview Middle School mascot. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. I recognize the Vallyview Middle School logo. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. I have noticed Valleyview Middle School's branded elements on school and teacher websites. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. Branded elements give me a deeper sense of belonging when I am at school. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. Branding is essential to Valleyview Middle School building a reputation as a high-quality school. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. Branding preserves Valleyview Middle School's memory for its alumni. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. I am proud to tell people that I attend Valleyview Middle School. (Check one.)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. When you talk about Valleyview Middle School with friends and family, what attribute of our school are you the proudest to discuss?

15. Please rank the following 10 characteristics of our school that you believe should be a part of our brand (1 representing the most important, 10 representing the least important).

- ___ High academic standards
- ___ Athletic program
- ___ Sense of community
- ___ Sense of teamwork
- ___ Core values and beliefs
- ___ Technology integration
- ___ Art and theater program
- ___ Diversity
- ___ School history
- ___ Teaching staff

17. I would like to be on a committee to review the branding Valleyview Middle School.

- Yes
- No

Thank you again for completing confidential, anonymous questionnaire. Please return the survey to Valleyview Middle School's main office in the enclosed envelope no later than September 20. If you would like to enter the drawing to win a \$50 iTunes gift card, give your name and phone number to the school secretary upon turning in the questionnaire.

References

Black, J. (2008, January). *The Branding of Higher Education*. Retrieved August 7, 2013, from

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