

BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE

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BY: ABIYA J, DEVIKA V, NIDHI J.

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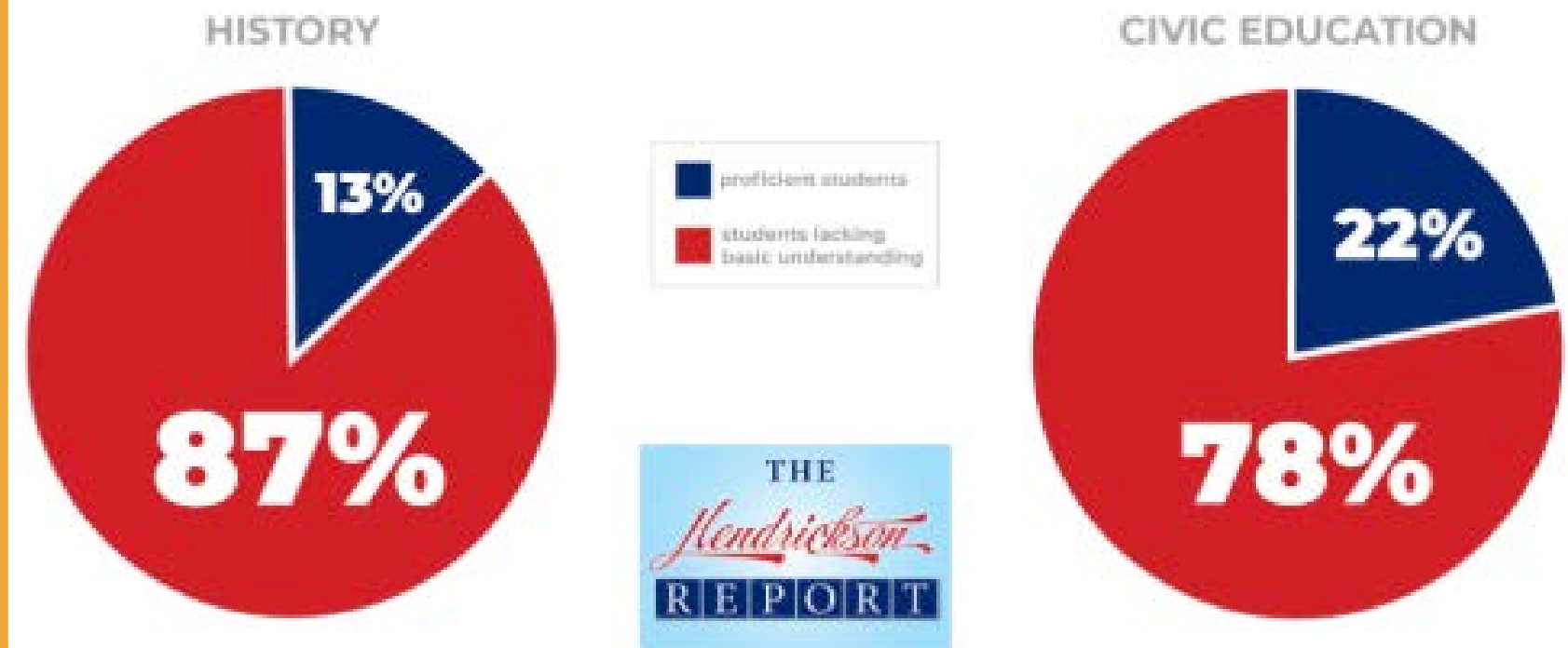
CIVIC ACTION PROJECT

THE PROBLEM: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & CIVIC LITERACY

Across the U.S., civic engagement and literacy are declining.

PEOPLE CARE. THEY'RE JUST NOT IN THE ROOM.

Rapid Decline of Historical and Civic Knowledge Amongst our Youth



The survey finds more than 70% of Americans fail a basic civic literacy quiz on topics like the three branches of government, the number of Supreme Court justices, and other basic functions of our democracy. Just half were able to correctly name the branch of government where bills become laws.



“THE SEATS ARE EMPTY.
THE DECISIONS KEEP
HAPPENING. IT’S TIME TO
CHANGE THAT.”



Effects of the problem:

- Fewer people vote or attend public meetings, reducing community input.
- Limited awareness weakens the citizen-government connection.
- Youth voices are excluded from decisions that impact them.



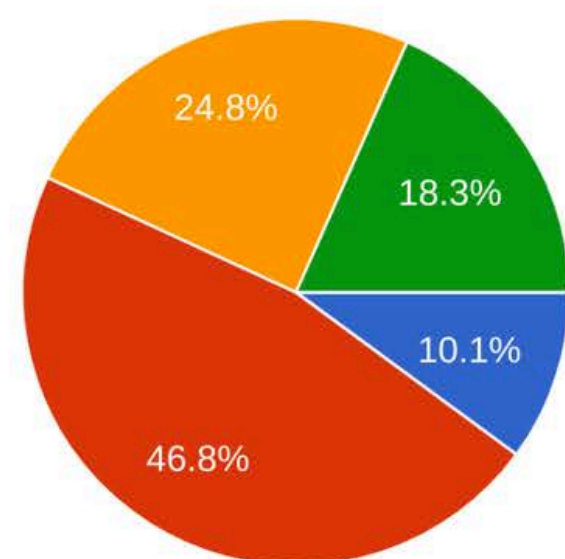
ACTIONS: SURVEY

ASKING THE COMMUNITY

We saw the problem nationally, so we decided to focus on our community:
here at Mountain House

Do you feel informed about when and where local decision-making meetings (ASB, School Board, City Council) happen?

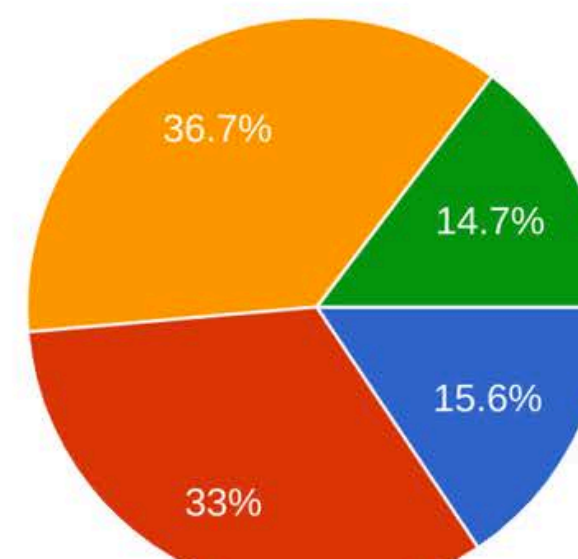
109 responses



- Yes, I always know
- Sometimes, but not consistently
- Rarely or never
- I didn't even know I could attend

Do you know how to speak, comment, or share ideas during those meetings?

109 responses



- Yes, I know exactly how
- I kind of know, but I'm unsure
- No, I don't know how
- I didn't know that was allowed



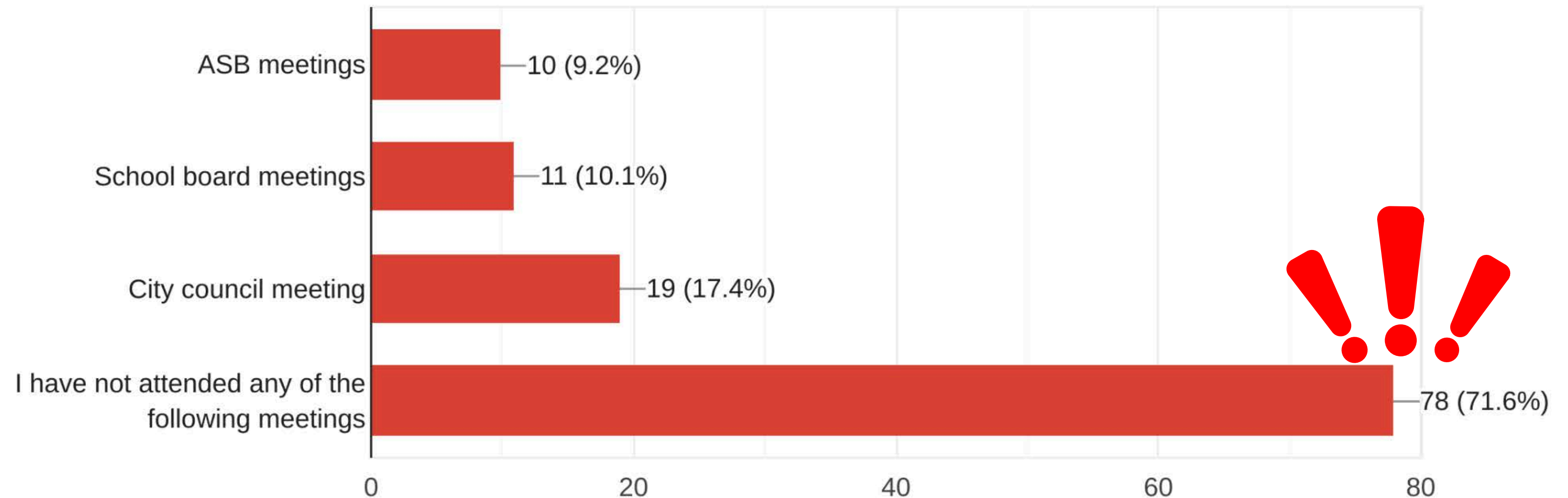
ACTIONS: SURVEY

ASKING THE COMMUNITY



Which of the following meetings have you attended or participated in before? (Check all that apply)

109 responses



71.6% of people who took our survey indicated that they have never attended an ASB, School Board, or City Council meeting here at Mountain house



ACTIONS: SURVEY

SCHOOL BOARD



Saw the problem within the community, so we reached out to community leaders to gather data.

Of the ~25,000 community residents of MH, only 1-5 people attend School Board Meetings.

On average how many members of the community, attend School Board Meetings?

2 responses



- No one, other than Board members, attend these meetings
- 1-5 people
- 6-10 people
- 10+ people



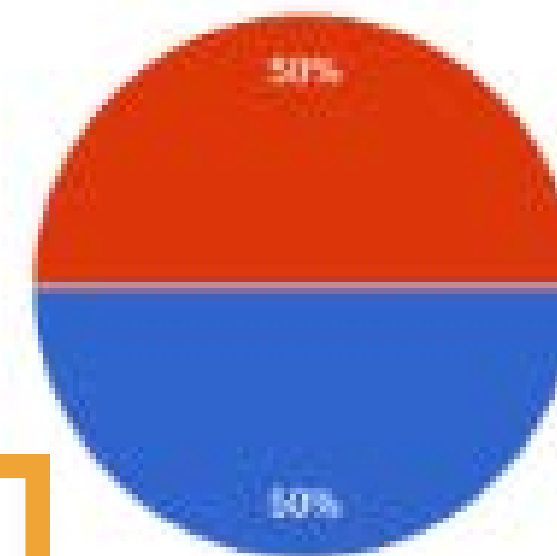
ACTIONS: SURVEY

SCHOOL BOARD



How often do members of the community in LUSD reach out to you with concerns?

2 responses



- Very Frequently (Daily/Weekly)
- Occasionally (Monthly)
- Rarely (A few times a year)
- Never

On average, of these people who attend, how many community members raise concerns during the meeting?

2 responses



- No one raises concerns
- 1-2 people per meeting
- 3-5 people per meeting
- More than 5 people per meeting





ACTIONS: SURVEY

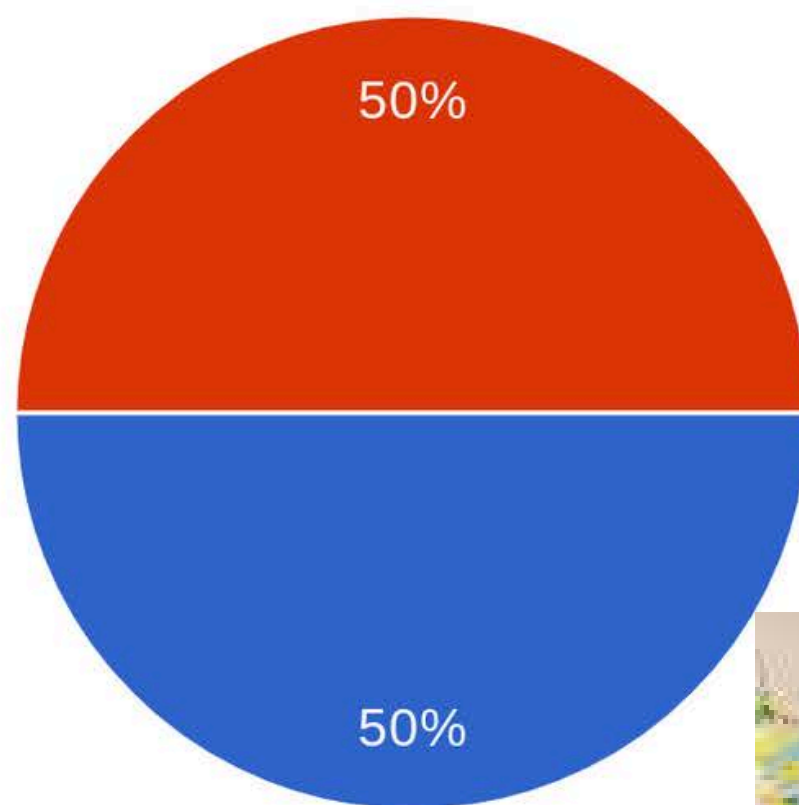


THE ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY (ASB)

Of the ~2,500 high schoolers at Mountain House, only 0-5 people attend ASB meetings.

On average how many students, (other than ASB members), attend ASB meetings?

4 responses



- No students, other than ASB members, attend these meetings
- 1-5 students
- 6-10 students
- 10+ students





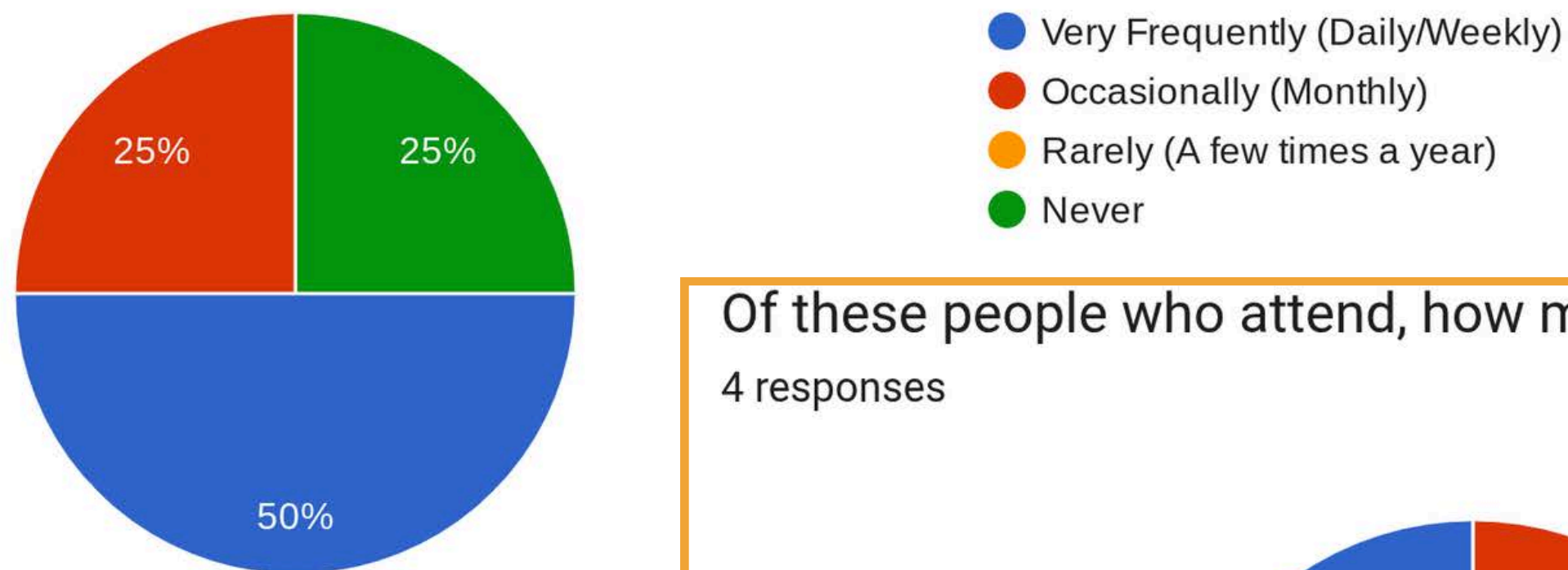
ACTIONS: SURVEY



THE ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY (ASB)

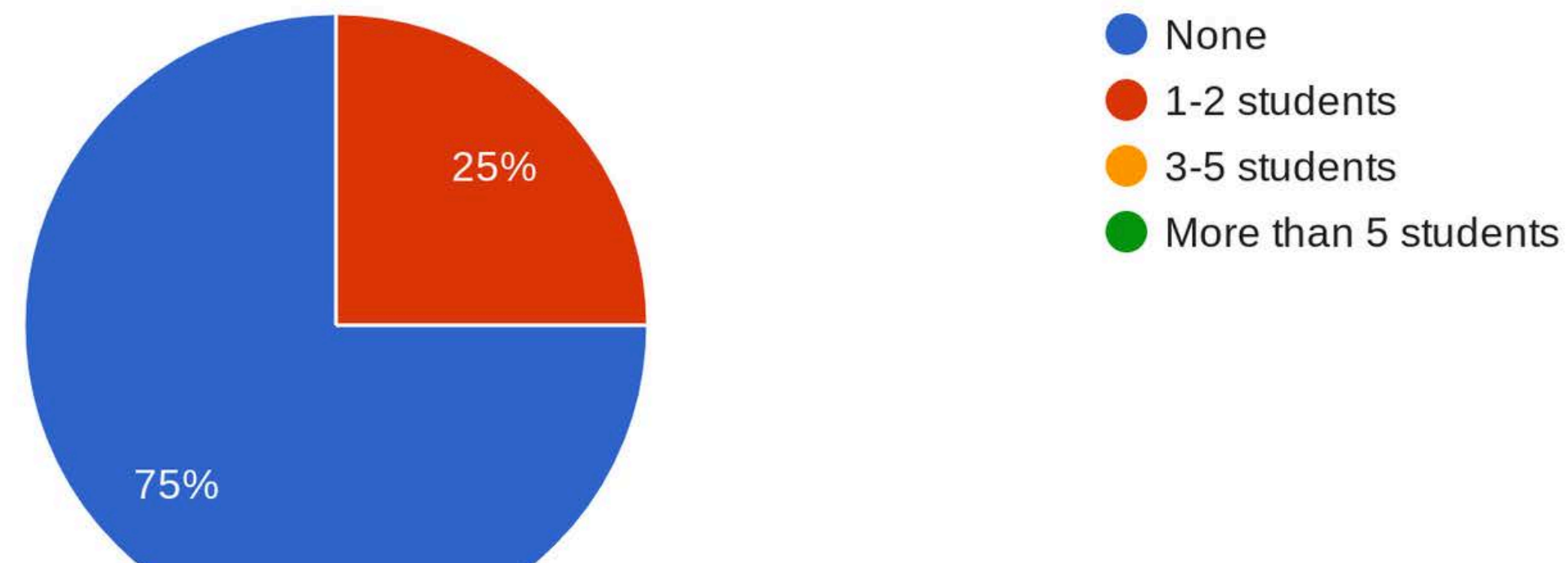
How often do students/parents at MHHS reach out to you with concerns?

4 responses



Of these people who attend, how many students raise concerns during the meeting?

4 responses





CIVIC ACTION PROJECT

WE INTRODUCE TO YOU OUR PROJECT “BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE”

“By the People” means we have the power to shape our communities through voting, speaking up, and showing up.

“For the People” means our government exists to serve us, not operate without us.

If this is truly for and by the people...

Where are the people, and why are they not taking charge?



WHY IS NO ONE INVOLVED?

Participation remains low due to three key barriers:

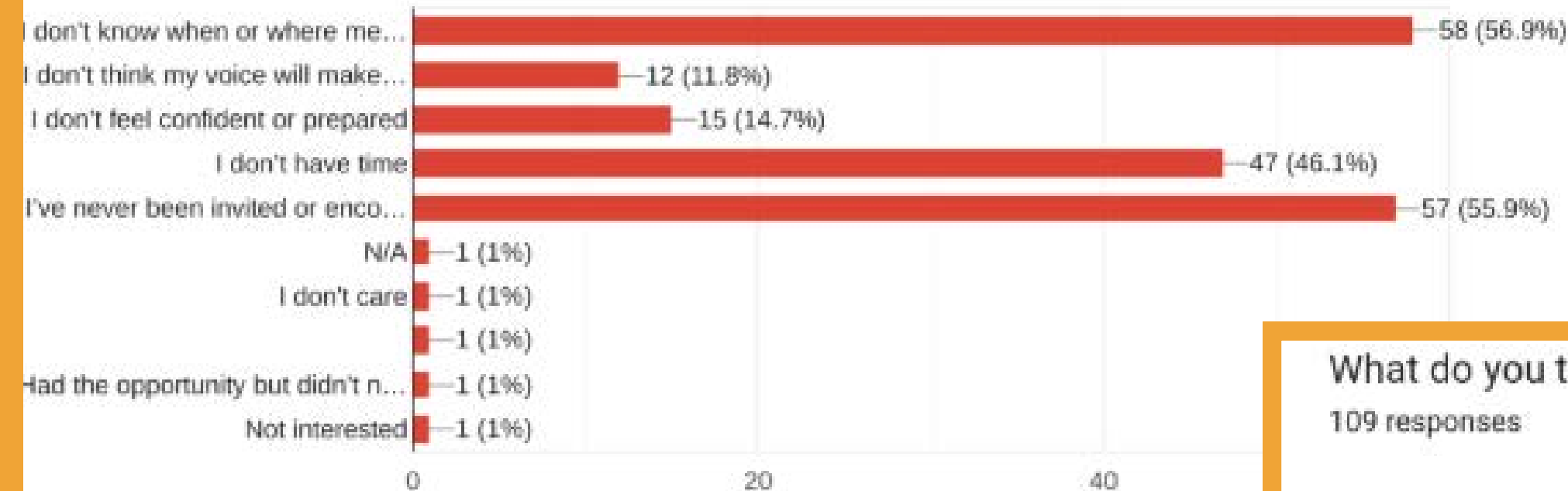
Lack of awareness of when and where meetings occur

Limited outreach or personal invitations to attend

Insufficient understanding of how these meetings work or how to contribute effectively

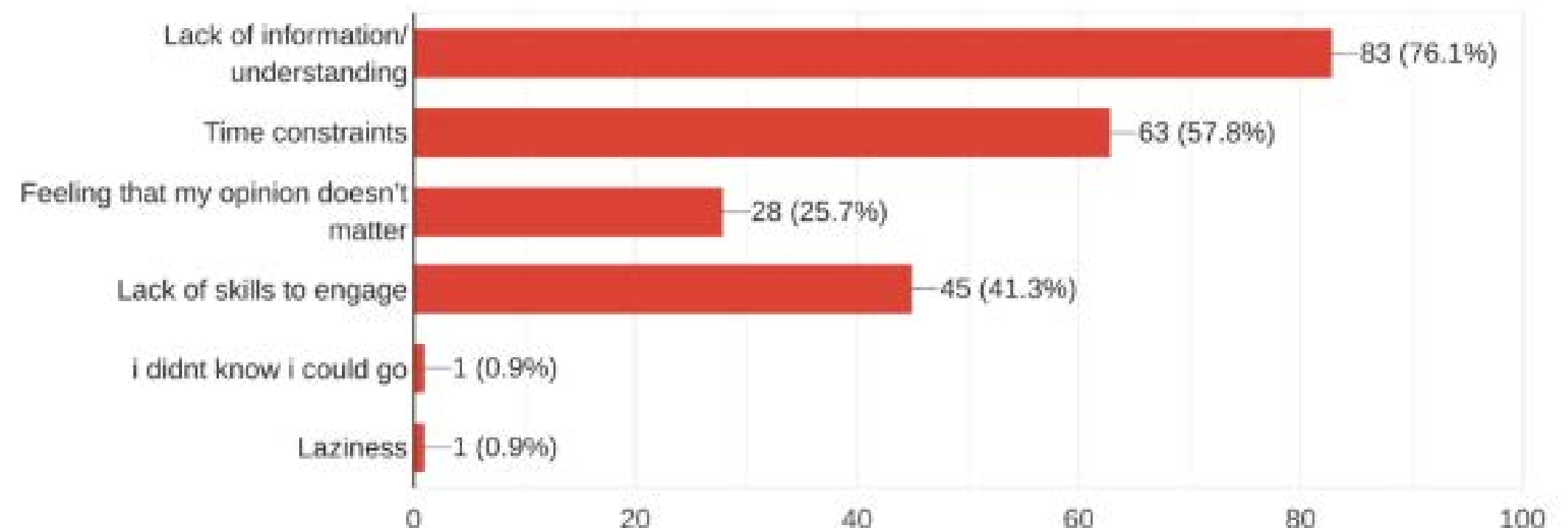
If you haven't attended or only attended once, why not? (check all that apply)

102 responses



What do you think are the most significant barriers to participating in these organizations?

109 responses





SOLUTION



A user-friendly website that brings together:

- Meeting schedules and agendas
- Guides on how to attend, speak, or submit comments
- Contact information for elected officials and student leaders
- Definitions of key terms and roles, so even first-time participants can understand what's going on



ACTION OUR WEBSITE



<https://sites.google.com/view/by-the-people-for-the-people/home>





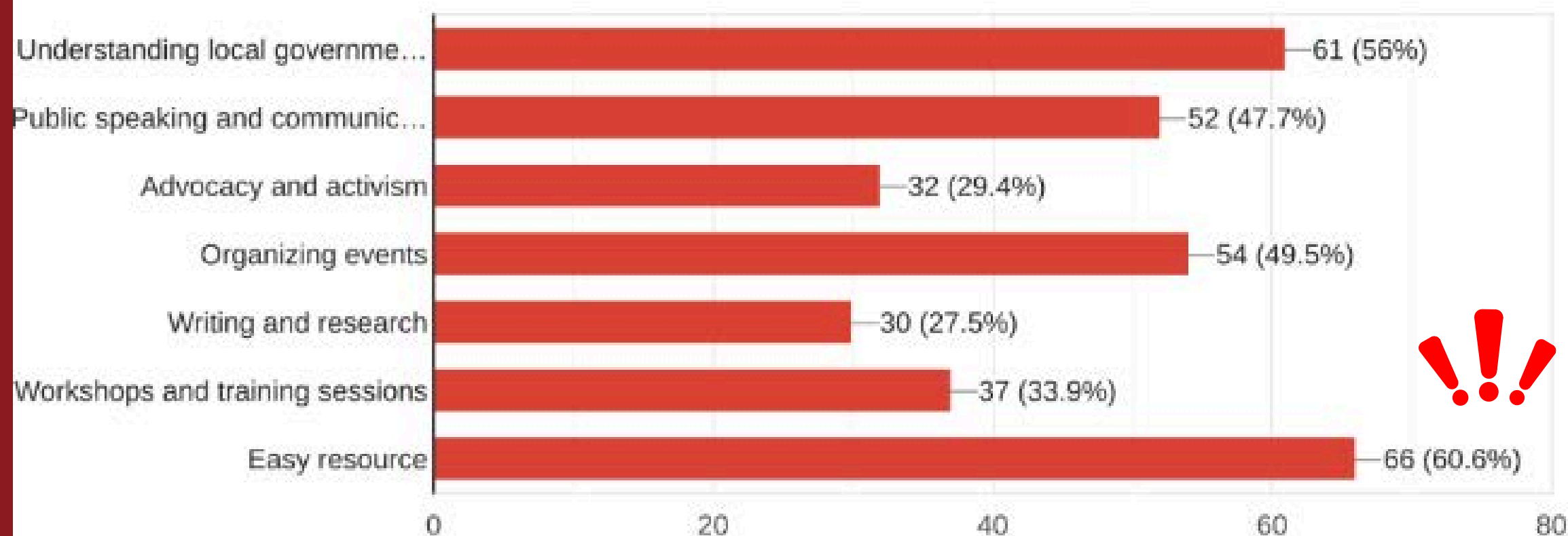
DATA

We found that the top two choices to increase participation would be:

- An easy resource
- A website with all meeting information and dates

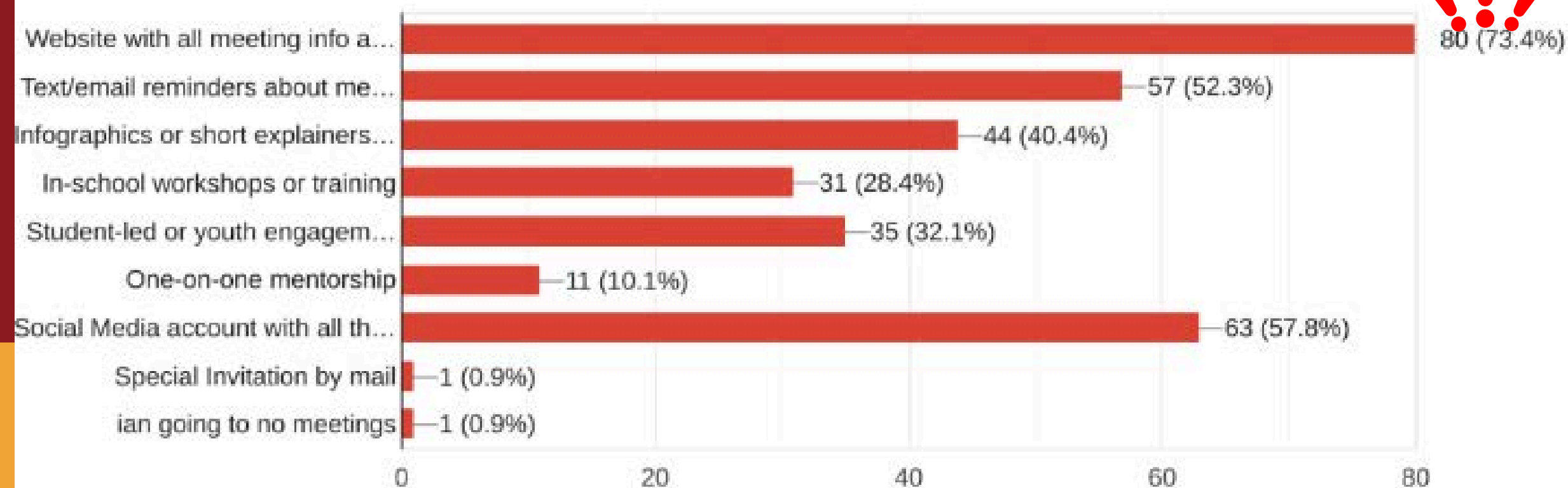
What would help you feel more confident in participating in civic meetings?

109 responses



What type of resource would make it easiest for you to get involved? (Choose up to 3)

109 responses





DATA SUPPORTING THE SOLUTION

Low Awareness: Most students and community members don't know about City Council, School Board, or ASB meetings.

Community Survey (109 responses):

- Only 10.1% know when and where meetings happen
- 78 have never attended a meeting.

ASB & School Board Survey:

- Only 0–5 people attend on average.
- Just 0–2 people raise concerns.



EFFECTS OF SOLUTION

Boosted Participation: More people engage in local meetings.

Increased Awareness: Clear info empowers informed decisions.

Better Transparency: Local processes become more accessible.

Community Empowerment: Residents feel confident to act.

Long-term Engagement: Encourages sustained involvement.

Support for Leaders: More input for better representation.

Time Savings: Easy access to key information.





PROS & CONS OF THE SOLUTION

Pros:

Increased Accessibility:
Improved Engagement:
Comprehensive Information:
Encourages Civic
Responsibility:
Convenience

Cons:

Dependence on Technology:
Potential Information Overload:
Ongoing Maintenance:
Lack of Personal Interaction:
Limited Impact on Non-
Engaged Individuals



ACTION: SPREADING AWARENESS



PBS KQED

We started spreading awareness on the declining rates of civic engagement and literacy, specifically at Mountain House.

Here's what we did:

- Gained televised attention from **PBS: Public Broadcasting Service** for their *Inside California Education* segments

Our work is scheduled to air in early August, helping spotlight the importance of student civic participation to a broader audience.

INSIDE California
Education

<https://www.pbs.org/show/inside-california-education/>



ACTION: SPREADING AWARENESS



- Each team member presented this civic engagement slideshow to a minimum of 5 to 7 class periods at our high school.
- **In total, we reached approximately 15 classes, impacting around 450 students (based on 30 students per class).**
- We encouraged peers to get involved, understand local issues, and *use our website as a tool for participation.*



ACTION: PETITION

Petition: To add civic engagement website to School, District, and City Website.		
NAME	SIGNATURE	EMAIL
Yusif Khalil		1070806
Regina Morcas		1066705
Hudson Little		1070725
Sofia Garcia		1070050
Shravya Ilag		1072571
Michael Gassingan		1070805
Aliza Raqui		1072130
Iksha Allam		1073429
Alondra Romero		1068006
Aashitha Vuyyuru		1077596
Heera Santhosh		1071804
Zoe Tibule		1072680
Joshua Morgan		1073839
Sarah Shravya Panchanani		1083368
Fouad Fadhil		1078176

After sharing our issue, we created a community-wide petition to include the website we created on the school, district, and city sites

Petition: To add civic engagement website to School, District, and City Website.		
NAME	SIGNATURE	EMAIL
Jacob Berhane		1069976
Audriene Kenney		1071455
Shravya Pulivarthi		1071514
Echal Jamal		1077226
Shravya Mishra		1079173
Manasa Nuvkala		1080461
Rohin Prashanth		1068097
Oluwatise Folayan		1073667
Mathias Genio		1069588
Abiga Saleeza Aziz		1077670



ACTION: MEETING WITH DR. AUERBACH

- Plan on meeting with our high school principal to present our findings and gain support. Our goal was to move forward with the process of integrating our civic engagement website onto the official high school, school board, and City Council websites.
- This step was essential in ensuring that the platform becomes a widely accessible

Request for a Meeting to Discuss Our Civic Action Project



Nidhi Joshi <1080027@lammersvilleusd.net>

to Adam, Devika, Abiya, Surekha ▾

10:00 PM (0 minutes ago)



Dear Dr. Auerbach,

I hope you're doing well!

My teammates and I were hoping to schedule a brief meeting with you to discuss our CAP (Civic Action Project). Unfortunately, due to having technical difficulties you were not able to see our presentation in class last week. Our project, titled *"By the People, For the People,"* addresses the decline in civic engagement and literacy within our school and broader community.

After conducting surveys and gathering data from students, the School Board, and ASB, we identified a major barrier: lack of awareness and accessibility around public meetings.

We now aim to close this gap at our school by ensuring that ASB and School Board meetings are easier to access and more welcoming to all students.

Would you be available sometime next week to meet briefly? We're flexible and happy to work around your schedule.

Thank you for your time and support!

Best regards,

Nidhi Joshi

On behalf of the CAP Team (Abiya J., Devika V., Nidhi J.)



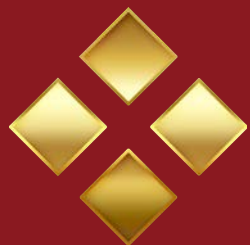


OUR INITIATIVES

What did we do to achieve our goal?

Our GOAL:

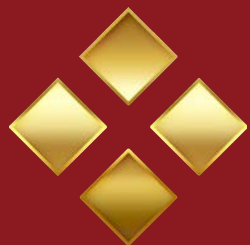
Help the community have a better understanding of City Council, School Council, and ASB meetings, as well as encouraging people to use their voices.



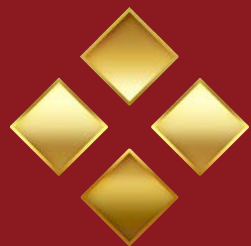
Sent surveys to students, staff, community, and local officials



Launched a civic engagement website



Raised awarness on national television, mountain house classes, created a petition.



Next Steps: meet with the admin, share the website through advisory, school site, and social media

REFLECTION

Abiya: Through our civic action project, we learned that a lack of civic engagement often stems from a deeper issue: limited civic understanding.

Devika: By conducting surveys and engaging with our community, we realized the power of accessible information and the importance of meeting people where they are.

Nidhi: This experience taught us that meaningful change starts with awareness and collective action.



PEER REVIEW CLASS FEEDBACK



Changes made:

1. Added transitions between the slides and additional pictures
2. We made our slides more readable and straight forward
3. Compiled and removed slides that were repetitive
4. Made our statistics portion more concise
5. Included proof/screenshots of our next plan of action





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THANK YOU!!!

FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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