

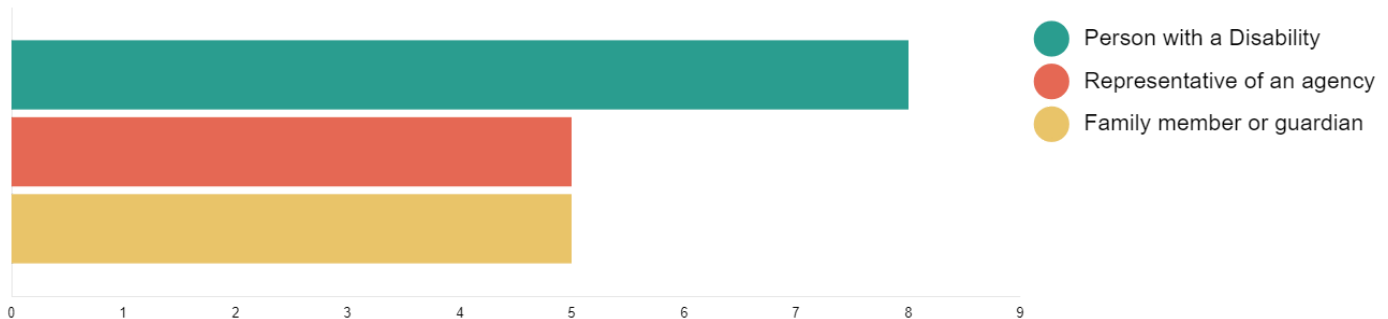


January 2024 DD Council Member Survey

During the January 2024 Council meeting, Council members were given the option to take an anonymous survey to provide feedback about their experience being on the Council. The survey collected data from 14 council members on a variety of topics related to their experience. Questions included multiple choice, rating scales, and text fields. Data collected is summarized in this report with any answers that could personally identify members excluded.

14
Total
Members
Surveyed

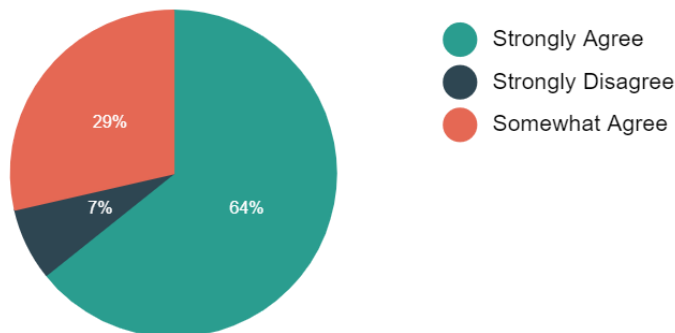
Who Took the Survey



Council members self-identified as a person with a disability, a representative of an agency that serves people with disabilities, and/or a family member or guardian of a person with a disability. Of the 14 people that took the survey 8 identified as having a disability, 5 identified as a family member, and 5 identified as being a representative of an agency. Some members selected more than one category to identify themselves.

Feeling Respected at Council Meetings

I feel respected by other council members.

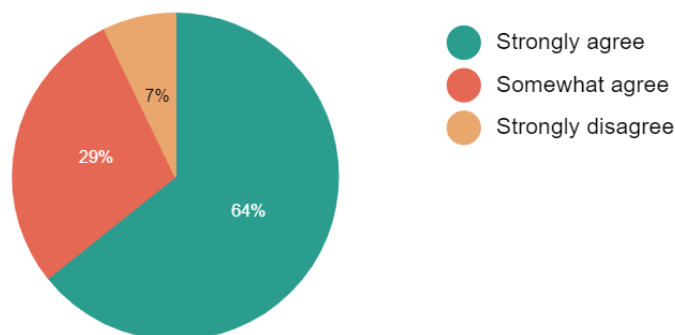


Here's what council members had to say:

"Sometimes I feel that my experience as a parent is not valued as much as other professional or self-advocate perspectives."

"It's clear to me that Council members have good intentions; however, Council members frequently make unintentionally offensive statements and engage in behaviors that are othering."

I feel respected by Council staff



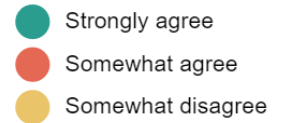
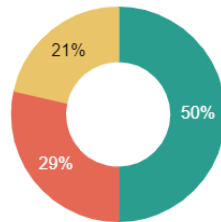
Here's what council members had to say:

"I feel that staff acknowledge my lived experience and systems/DDA knowledge and that my contributions are welcomed."

This varies by staff member, but some basic things, such as the lack of prompt responses (sometimes no response) to emails can feel disrespectful."

Understanding Roles and Responsibilities as a Council Member

I know what my roles and responsibilities are:



Here's what Council members had to say:

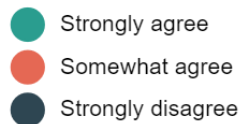
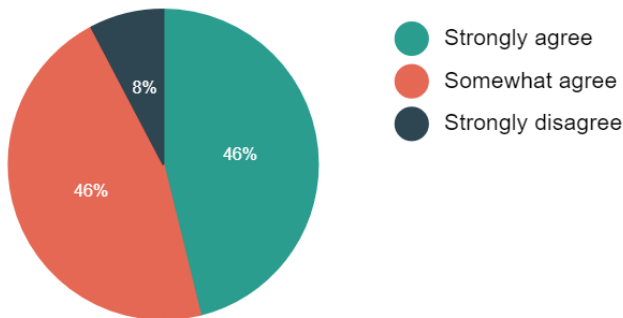
"I'm still at a bit of a loss in understanding the decision-making and directive roles of the council versus that of the staff. I hear staff say, "the council directs the work of the state plan," but I don't feel the council has had much of a say in directing those contracts or keeping the contractors accountable to the state plan."

"I would have liked more guidance heading into the legislative session. I would like to know what the expectations are for me between council meetings."

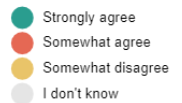
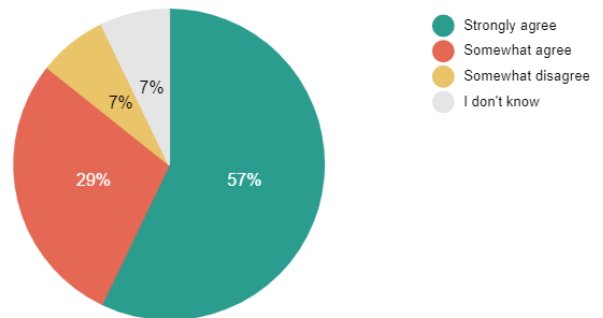
"Council members receive very little onboarding support and expectations for participation in meetings are unclear and unenforced. We are really left on our own to learn about our roles and responsibilities."

Recognition of Strengths

I feel that Council members recognize my strengths



I feel that Council staff recognize my strengths



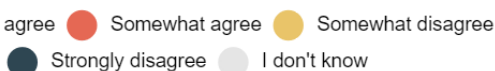
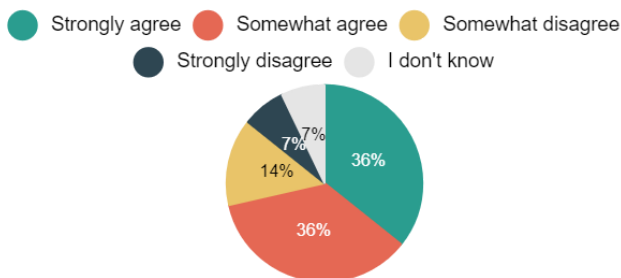
Here's what council members had to say

"I'm not asked by council members to contribute. I think many don't have any idea what I do or what I know."

"Council members have few opportunities to learn about each others backgrounds, skills and strengths. I feel that Council members recognize the strengths that I've had opportunities to share in Council meetings, but these opportunities are scarce."

Opportunities to share about background, culture and community

I have opportunities to share about my background, culture and community as part of my Council work.



Here's what council members had to say:

"Would appreciate more time to hear from others."

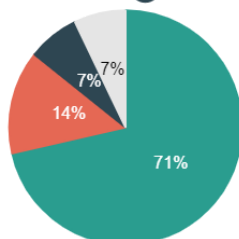
"I feel a bit of hostility from some council member when I speak on behalf of parents and parent-providers and try to advocate for the needs to those MOST impacted by DDA."

"Opportunities to share about ourselves are scarce and the Council culture does not encourage discussions about differences of ethnicity and race. Most of our white Council members stop participating when race and ethnicity are mentioned in our discussions, which suggests it is a taboo subject."

Support and Accommodations

I have the support and/or accommodation I need to fully participate in Council meetings

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Strongly disagree I don't know



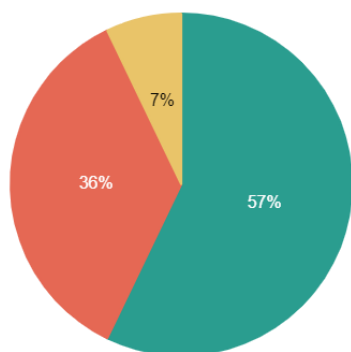
Here's what council members had to say:

"We do not receive enough information to be empowered to fully participate in Council meetings. We receive very few updates from staff and the updates we receive are vague."

Meals and Travel Options

I feel that Council members recognize my strengths

Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Somewhat disagree



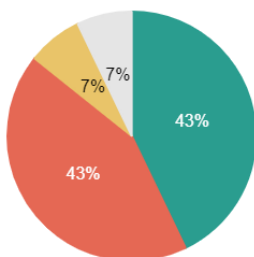
Here's what council members had to say:

"For meals that are on our own, it would be helpful to have some idea of what is in the area, what is walkable if we don't have a car, etc."

Feedback about Inclusion

Council members are open to feedback about how they can be more inclusive

Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Somewhat disagree
I don't know



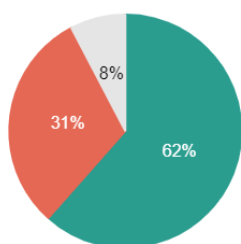
Here's what council members had to say:

"I hear some great ideas about accessibility from council members."

"It depends on the subject. Council members seem open to feedback about how to be inclusive of types of disability. Other forms of inclusion, such as inclusive practices to support trauma survivors, people of color, LGBTQ folks elicit a less receptive response."

Council staff are open to feedback about how they can be more inclusive

Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
I don't know



Here's what council members had to say:

"Staff are always willing to improve."

Council members were asked to tell us about a time where they felt included at a council meeting and what someone did or said that made them feel included.

What Council members had to say:

"I always feel as though I am listened to when expressing my input at meetings."

"Council members are truly a great community to collaborate and network with. I have had great conversations with amazing advocates."

"(I felt included) During the small groups."

"I felt included when people ASKED about my professional and personal perspective and lived experience. I felt included when asked to help solve a problem."

"I feel included in every council meeting."

"I feel included when Council members and staff take the time to ask about my family."

Council members were asked to tell us about a time where they felt unsure or confused at a council meeting and how they got through it.

What Council members had to say:

"I was unsure of my role with the council when I first joined, but I have learned a lot about it to be able to give input and feedback during meetings."

"I have never felt confused and unsure."

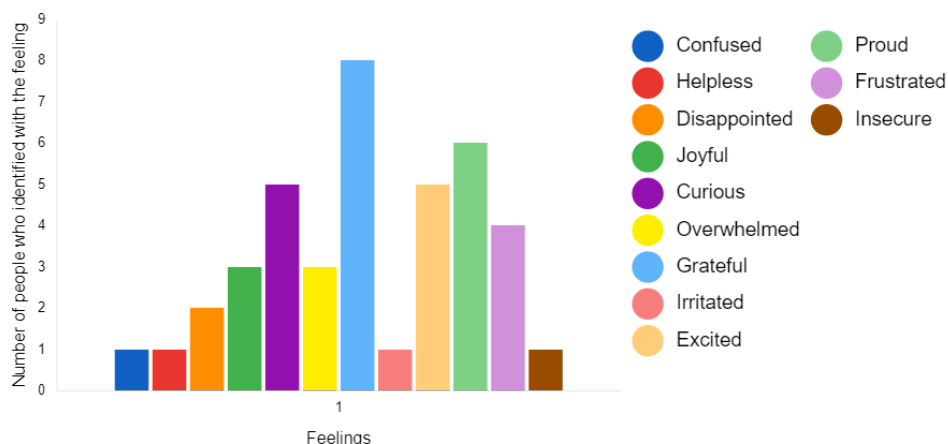
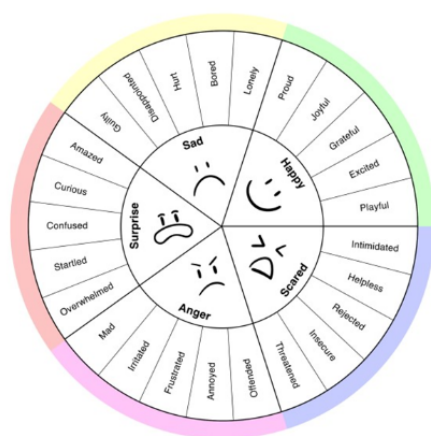
"Talking about the state plan."

"I felt confused when it came to how money was budgeted and allocated. I also felt confused when visiting the Policy Committee because no one could explain how the committee went about developing priorities or discussing current legislation. For the budget, I got through it by asking clarifying questions. For the policy, I am still confused."

"I stepped out and had a conversation with a fellow council member that felt the same way as I did. We stepped back in the council meeting and voiced our concerns. The council agree about our concerns and moved on with the meeting."

"I often feel that agency representatives monopolize our discussions, because they have ongoing opportunities to explore the topics we discuss and we only get to engage in them quarterly. It feels confusing and disempowering. I commiserate with other Council members about it and have spoken to staff, but haven't seen any changes."

Council members were asked to select three words that describe how they typically feel at the end of a council meeting from a list and image.



Council members were asked to share anything else they wanted to share about their experience with the Council.

What Council Members had to say:

"Love being a part of this important work that we're doing to implement change for persons with disabilities."

"I like be on the Council"

"I feel like I have been enjoying my time in here"

"Let's make an effort to get to know all the individuals who are generously volunteering their time for the Council. It's important to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities to share and receive information. Let's create an environment where everyone feels genuinely welcomed and valued."

"I'm still confused about what the council members actually do. What is our objective? I hear that we help develop the state plan, but other than that? It seems most of the real decisions are made by staff and automatically approved by a council that doesn't really understand how all the pieces fit together. And how do we agree to disagree without de-valuing anyone's point of view? Many staff decisions and discussions are not presented to the council in a way that council members can understand and can give informed feedback. I also feel that there is a general lack of systems knowledge amongst some of the staff and most of the council. I feel that there needs to be some accountability in contracting and in staff/council decisions, regarding how decisions are made and how the millions spent will impact/benefit the person with a disability that relies on the council's guidance. How do we accomplish this only four times a year? How do we make real meaning of our work? How are we accountable, not just to Commerce, but to our community members with DDA support needs? How does the millions we spend in contracts benefit the person with IDD at the end of the day, or does it mostly benefit the same few vendors/contractors? How can we broaden the contractor pool? How can we do real, meaningful, and resource-conscious collective and collaborative decision making? How does that factor into staff hiring decisions and council member recommendations? These are all concerns from someone with professional and lived experience who is very conscious of the people benefitting or languishing from for our work at the end of the day - individuals with IDD and their caregivers."

"I feel that I would have benefitted greatly from a robust onboarding."

"I feel frustrated by my experience with the Council. I was so hopeful when I applied and was appointed, because I thought the Council would be an effective way to improve outcomes in my community. Unfortunately, I have found the experience disempowering. Council members don't get to shape the agenda, Council staff don't seek direction or feedback from Council members, and it doesn't feel like we really DO anything but sit through meetings each quarter. We don't even receive legislative updates, so we can engage in the legislative process on behalf of our communities. It's been a disappointing experience and I sincerely hope it improves."

The Washington State DD Council thanks our members for providing valuable feedback!