

College Access Challenge Poll Results



THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH LAB

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About the Survey



- **The Sample**
 - Targeted parents with a child between the ages of 13 and 19 in public school
 - Oversampled households below the median household income that also had a child between the ages of 13 and 19 in public school
 - Added random digit dialing to ensure that no segment of the population was excluded; screened for children between the ages of 13 and 19 in public school
- **N = 806**
- **Margin of Error = $\pm 3.4\%$**

Even More About the Survey



- **Income**

- 74.4% above m.h.i.
- 25.6% below m.h.i.

- **Region:**

- Upstate = 43.1%
- Low Country = 12.7%
- Midlands = 32%
- Pee Dee = 12%

- **Race**

- White = 83.7%
- Non-white = 16.3%

Recap of the Preliminary Results



- Parents have high hopes and expectations
- Children expect to attend college
- Parents lean on schools for information; most say that schools have been helpful
- Most do not initiate conversations with school personnel
- Most suggest that they are saving money but are relying on traditional savings accounts
- A plurality see 2-year schools as a cost-saving alternative
- If low-income students are going to get to college, then their parents will need help from educators, counselors, and others

Overview

Thinking about College

Getting In

Paying for It

Two-year Schools vs. Four-year Schools

Getting Help

Region

Upstate

Abbeville
Anderson
Cherokee
Greenville
Greenwood
Lancaster
Laurens
Oconee
Pickens
Spartanburg
Union
York

Low Country

Allendale
Beaufort
Charleston
Colleton
Dorchester
Georgetown
Hampton
Jasper

Midlands

Aiken
Bamberg
Barnwell
Calhoun
Edgefield
Fairfield
Kershaw
Lexington
McCormick
Newberry
Orangeburg
Richland
Saluda
Sumter

Pee Dee

Chesterfield
Clarendon
Darlington
Dillon
Florence
Horry
Lee
Marion
Marlboro
Williamsburg

Region



Oconee
Pickens
Anderson
Greenville

Spartanburg
Cherokee
York

Hampton
Jasper
Allendale
Bamberg
Orangeburg
Clarendon
Williamsburg



Florence
Marion
Marlboro
Darlington
Lee
Dillon

Thinking about College



What is the highest level of education that you hope this child will attain?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non-White
Less than High School	---	---	---	---	---
H.S. Graduate / GED	2.0	1.0	6.6	2.0	2.3
Some College	1.2	0.4	4.8	1.1	2.3
Two-year Tech College Grad	4.4	2.9	9.0	4.3	5.4
Four-year College Degree	50.1	46.9	51.8	50.4	48.1
Post Graduate Degree	40.6	47.5	24.7	40.5	41.1
Don't Know / Refused	1.7	1.2	3.0	1.8	0.8

What is the highest level of education that you hope this child will attain?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Less than High School	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
H.S. Graduate / GED	2.0	2.0	3.0	1.6	2.1	2.1	2.9
Some College	1.2	1.4	---	2.0	---	1.0	---
Two-year Tech College Grad	4.4	4.6	5.0	3.5	5.2	5.5	5.8
Four-year College Degree	50.1	52.6	48.0	48.0	50.0	51.0	44.9
Post Graduate Degree	40.6	37.0	42.0	44.1	40.6	37.7	44.9
Don't Know / Refused	1.7	2.3	2.0	0.8	2.1	2.7	1.4

What is the highest level of education that you actually expect this child will attain?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Less than High School	0.1	---	0.6	0.2	---
H.S. Graduate / GED	4.4	2.1	13.8	4.3	5.4
Some College	1.1	0.2	4.2	0.9	2.3
Two-year Tech College Grad	6.3	5.8	9.6	6.5	5.4
Four-year College Degree	52.0	51.0	47.3	53.2	46.5
Post Graduate Degree	34.0	39.5	21.6	33.3	36.4
Don't Know / Refused	2.1	1.4	3.0	1.7	3.9

What is the highest level of education that you actually expect this child will attain?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Less than High School	0.1	---	1.0	---	---	---	---
H.S. Graduate / GED	4.4	3.8	4.0	5.1	5.2	3.8	4.3
Some College	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.8	2.1	0.7	2.9
Two-year Tech College Grad	6.3	7.2	5.0	7.4	2.1	5.8	5.7
Four-year College Degree	52.0	54.9	55.4	47.7	52.1	56.5	44.3
Post Graduate Degree	34.0	31.2	29.7	37.9	34.4	31.5	40.0
Don't Know / Refused	2.1	1.7	4.0	1.2	4.2	1.7	2.9

Does your child expect to attend college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Yes	93.8	96.1	84.3	93.9	92.1
No	3.0	1.9	7.2	3.3	1.6
Not sure	3.2	2.1	8.4	2.7	6.3

Does your child expect to attend college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Yes	93.8	93.6	95.0	94.1	92.7	93.8	95.7
No	3.0	3.2	3.0	2.7	2.1	3.4	1.4
Not sure	3.2	3.2	2.0	3.1	5.2	2.7	2.9

Getting In



Source: Google Images

Has anyone from your child's school or school district spoken to your about college entrance requirements?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Yes	80.8	85.2	67.1	82.1	73.6
No	18.4	14.4	31.1	17.1	24.8
Don't Recall	0.9	0.4	1.8	0.8	1.6

Has anyone from your child's school or school district spoken to you about college entrance requirements?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Yes	80.8	78.4	88.2	81.3	80.2	80.9	74.3
No	18.4	20.5	10.8	18.4	18.8	17.7	24.3
Don't Recall	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.0	1.4	1.4

Other than people associated with your child's school, have you ever spoken with anyone else about college requirements?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Yes	39.5	43.9	31.1	39.4	39.5
No	60.0	55.7	68.3	60.2	59.7
Don't Recall	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8

Other than people associated with your child's school, have you ever spoken with anyone else about college requirements?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Yes	39.5	40.6	40.2	39.1	35.4	41.6	37.1
No	60.0	59.1	57.8	60.5	64.6	58.0	62.9
Don't Recall	0.5	0.3	2.0	0.4	---	0.3	---

Paying for College



Has anyone from your child's school or school district ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Yes	35.9	36.9	31.1	35.6	37.2
No	63.6	62.3	68.9	63.8	62.8
Don't Recall	0.5	0.8	---	0.6	---

Has anyone from your child's school or school district ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Yes	35.9	33.4	37.3	35.9	40.6	33.4	38.6
No	63.6	65.7	62.7	63.7	59.4	65.5	61.4
Don't Recall	0.5	0.9	---	0.4	---	1.0	---

Who made the first contact about financial aid?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
I made first contact	19.7	17.3	23.1	20.4	16.7
They made first contact	69.9	73.2	65.4	69.4	72.9
Don't Recall	10.0	9.5	11.5	9.8	10.4
Refused	0.3	---	---	0.4	---

Who made the first contact about financial aid?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
I made first contact	19.7	19.0	18.4	20.7	20.5	20.4	25.9
They made first contact	69.9	72.4	73.7	69.6	61.5	71.4	63.0
Don't Recall	10.0	7.8	7.9	9.8	17.9	7.1	11.1
Refused	0.3	0.9	---	---	---	1.0	---

Have you started saving money for your child to go to college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Yes	71.7	79.0	43.1	72.4	65.1
No	27.5	20.4	55.7	26.7	34.9
Don't know	0.1	0.2	---	0.2	---
Child not going to college	0.2	---	1.2	0.3	---
Refused	0.4	0.4	---	0.5	---

Have you started saving money for your child to go to college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Yes	71.7	70.3	69.6	76.6	66.7	70.0	67.1
No	27.5	29.4	29.4	21.9	33.3	30.0	32.9
Don't know	0.1	---	---	0.4	---	---	---
Child not going to college	0.2	0.3	1.0	---	---	---	---
Refused	0.4	---	---	1.2	---	---	---

Two-year Schools vs. Four-year Schools



Source: YorkTech.com; Winthrop.edu

Which of the following best describes your opinion about the cost difference between two year and four year colleges? Taking courses at a four year college costs...



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Much more than taking courses at a two year college	62.6	60.0	63.5	61.9	67.5
Somewhat more than taking courses at a two year college	20.7	23.5	17.6	22.2	13.0
About the same as taking courses at a two year college	5.9	6.6	5.0	4.8	10.6
Somewhat less than taking courses at a two year college	2.6	2.5	3.1	2.0	4.9
Much less than taking courses at a two year college	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.4	---
Not sure	7.1	6.3	9.4	7.6	4.1

Which of the following best describes your opinion about the cost difference between two year and four year colleges? Taking courses at a four year college costs...



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Much more than taking courses at a two year college	62.6	65.6	64.6	56.5	65.6	65.9	65.7
Somewhat more than taking courses at a two year college	20.7	19.6	16.2	25.2	18.3	19.9	20.9
About the same as taking courses at a two year college	5.9	5.0	8.1	5.7	7.5	4.2	7.5
Somewhat less than taking courses at a two year college	2.6	2.4	4.0	2.4	2.2	2.4	3.0
Much less than taking courses at a two year college	1.2	0.9	3.0	1.2	---	1.0	---
Not sure	7.1	6.5	4.0	8.9	6.5	6.6	3.0

Opinions Toward Two-Year Colleges



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Two-year colleges are best for getting a 2 year degree or certificate related to occupation	31.1	28.8	37.7	30.4	34.1
Two-year colleges are best for an inexpensive alternative before transferring	39.2	40.2	37.7	38.5	41.5
Both equally	27.2	29.2	22.0	28.5	22.8
Not sure	2.4	1.7	2.5	2.3	1.6
Refused	0.1	0.2	---	0.2	---

Opinions Toward Two-Year Colleges



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Two-year colleges are best for getting a 2 year degree or certificate related to occupation	31.1	30.0	28.3	32.5	34.4	31.7	37.3
Two-year colleges are best for an inexpensive alternative before transferring	39.2	40.9	39.4	38.2	34.4	39.7	35.8
Both equally	27.2	27.0	30.3	26.0	28.0	26.8	23.9
Not sure	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.8	3.2	1.7	3.0
Refused	0.1	---	---	0.4	---	---	---

Getting...



Source: Google Images

Ease of Accessing Information and Making Decisions



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Very easy	31.3	32.6	26.3	30.6	34.1
Somewhat easy	40.3	41.4	40.7	40.3	41.1
Somewhat difficult	16.1	14.2	20.4	15.8	18.6
Very difficult	2.9	2.5	3.6	2.7	3.1
Not sure	9.4	9.3	9.0	10.6	3.1

Ease of Accessing Information and Making Decisions



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Very easy	31.3	31.4	35.3	30.5	28.1	31.7	27.1
Somewhat easy	40.3	36.9	44.1	41.8	45.8	36.9	40.0
Somewhat difficult	16.1	16.7	13.7	15.2	17.7	17.1	20.0
Very difficult	2.9	2.9	1.0	3.5	3.1	2.7	8.6
Not sure	9.4	12.1	5.9	9.0	5.2	11.6	4.3

School Helpfulness in Assisting



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
Has been helpful	59.1	61.9	50.9	59.8	55.0
Has not been helpful	25.8	23.7	32.9	24.4	33.3
Not applicable	8.4	8.7	7.8	8.8	6.2
Not sure	6.7	5.8	8.4	7.0	5.4

School Helpfulness in Assisting



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
Has been helpful	59.1	54.8	72.5	62.1	53.1	53.9	50.0
Has not been helpful	25.8	27.7	16.7	25.0	29.2	28.0	37.1
Not applicable	8.4	8.1	7.8	9.8	7.3	7.8	7.1
Not sure	6.7	9.5	2.9	3.1	10.4	10.2	5.7

Barriers



If it turns out that your child does not go to college, what do you think the most likely reason would be for them not going to college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Above MHI	Below MHI	White	Non- White
They couldn't afford to go	31.6	26.9	46.1	29.5	43.4
They couldn't get in (poor grades / low entrance exam scores)	5.7	5.8	4.8	5.6	6.2
They didn't want to go (their choice)	28.7	31.2	25.7	28.9	27.9
That they didn't finish H.S. (dropped out)	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.8
Some other reason (vol.)	8.2	7.4	10.2	8.7	6.2
Nothing would keep them from going (vol.)	19.8	21.1	10.8	21.0	12.4
Don't know (vol.)	5.2	6.8	1.8	5.8	3.1
Refused (vol.)	0.4	0.4	---	0.3	---

If it turns out that your child does not go to college, what do you think the most likely reason would be for them not going to college?



<i>Response</i>	TOTAL	Upstate	Low Country	Midlands	Pee Dee	I-85	I-95
They couldn't afford to go	31.6	33.5	26.5	26.7	41.7	33.9	38.6
They couldn't get in (poor grades / low entrance exam scores)	5.7	5.5	6.9	5.5	6.3	5.5	5.7
They didn't want to go (their choice)	28.7	28.6	34.3	30.6	19.8	27.7	22.9
That they didn't finish H.S. (dropped out)	0.4	0.3	---	---	2.1	0.3	2.9
Some other reason (vol.)	8.2	9.0	8.8	7.1	8.3	8.6	5.7
Nothing would keep them from going (vol.)	19.8	18.8	20.6	21.6	17.7	19.9	21.4
Don't know (vol.)	5.2	4.3	2.9	7.8	3.1	4.1	1.4
Refused (vol.)	0.4	---	---	0.8	1.0	---	1.4

Conclusions



- Even when accounting for a number of factors, SC parents still have high hopes for their children and their kids expect to attend college.
- While SC parents lean heavily on schools for information, most do not initiate conversations with school personnel about college requirements or financial aid.
- Most parents report that schools have been helpful.
- Most parents say that they are saving money for college. This is not as likely, though, with persons living below the m.h.i.
- Most parents see two-year schools as a cost-saving alternative.
- If low-income students are going to get to college, then their parents will need help from educators, counselors, and others. It also seems that they would benefit from a “one stop shopping” site with information about the college process.