

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

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



<i><b>Response</b></i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
Less than High School	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
H.S. Graduate / GED	<b>2.0</b>	2.0	3.0	1.6	2.1	2.1	2.9
Some College	<b>1.2</b>	1.4	---	2.0	---	1.0	---
Two-year Tech College Grad	<b>4.4</b>	4.6	5.0	3.5	5.2	5.5	5.8
Four-year College Degree	<b>50.1</b>	52.6	48.0	48.0	50.0	51.0	44.9
Post Graduate Degree	<b>40.6</b>	37.0	42.0	44.1	40.6	37.7	44.9
Don't Know / Refused	<b>1.7</b>	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>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
Less than High School	<b>0.1</b>	---	0.6	0.2	---
H.S. Graduate / GED	<b>4.4</b>	2.1	13.8	4.3	5.4
Some College	<b>1.1</b>	0.2	4.2	0.9	2.3
Two-year Tech College Grad	<b>6.3</b>	5.8	9.6	6.5	5.4
Four-year College Degree	<b>52.0</b>	51.0	47.3	53.2	46.5
Post Graduate Degree	<b>34.0</b>	39.5	21.6	33.3	36.4
Don't Know / Refused	<b>2.1</b>	1.4	3.0	1.7	3.9

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



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

## Does your child expect to attend college?



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

# Does your child expect to attend college?



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

# Getting In



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



<i>Response</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
Yes	<b>80.8</b>	85.2	67.1	82.1	73.6
No	<b>18.4</b>	14.4	31.1	17.1	24.8
Don't Recall	<b>0.9</b>	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><b>Response</b></i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
Yes	<b>80.8</b>	78.4	88.2	81.3	80.2	80.9	74.3
No	<b>18.4</b>	20.5	10.8	18.4	18.8	17.7	24.3
Don't Recall	<b>0.9</b>	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>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
Yes	<b>39.5</b>	43.9	31.1	39.4	39.5
No	<b>60.0</b>	55.7	68.3	60.2	59.7
Don't Recall	<b>0.5</b>	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><b>Response</b></i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
Yes	<b>39.5</b>	40.6	40.2	39.1	35.4	41.6	37.1
No	<b>60.0</b>	59.1	57.8	60.5	64.6	58.0	62.9
Don't Recall	<b>0.5</b>	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>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
Yes	<b>35.9</b>	36.9	31.1	35.6	37.2
No	<b>63.6</b>	62.3	68.9	63.8	62.8
Don't Recall	<b>0.5</b>	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>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
Yes	<b>35.9</b>	33.4	37.3	35.9	40.6	33.4	38.6
No	<b>63.6</b>	65.7	62.7	63.7	59.4	65.5	61.4
Don't Recall	<b>0.5</b>	0.9	---	0.4	---	1.0	---

## Who made the first contact about financial aid?



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

## Who made the first contact about financial aid?



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

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



<i>Response</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
Yes	<b>71.7</b>	79.0	43.1	72.4	65.1
No	<b>27.5</b>	20.4	55.7	26.7	34.9
Don't know	<b>0.1</b>	0.2	---	0.2	---
Child not going to college	<b>0.2</b>	---	1.2	0.3	---
Refused	<b>0.4</b>	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	<b>71.7</b>	70.3	69.6	76.6	66.7	70.0	67.1
No	<b>27.5</b>	29.4	29.4	21.9	33.3	30.0	32.9
Don't know	<b>0.1</b>	---	---	0.4	---	---	---
Child not going to college	<b>0.2</b>	0.3	1.0	---	---	---	---
Refused	<b>0.4</b>	---	---	1.2	---	---	---

# Two-year Schools vs. Four-year Schools



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>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
Much more than taking courses at a two year college	<b>62.6</b>	60.0	63.5	61.9	67.5
Somewhat more than taking courses at a two year college	<b>20.7</b>	23.5	17.6	22.2	13.0
About the same as taking courses at a two year college	<b>5.9</b>	6.6	5.0	4.8	10.6
Somewhat less than taking courses at a two year college	<b>2.6</b>	2.5	3.1	2.0	4.9
Much less than taking courses at a two year college	<b>1.2</b>	1.1	1.3	1.4	---
Not sure	<b>7.1</b>	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><b>Response</b></i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
Much more than taking courses at a two year college	<b>62.6</b>	65.6	64.6	56.5	65.6	65.9	65.7
Somewhat more than taking courses at a two year college	<b>20.7</b>	19.6	16.2	25.2	18.3	19.9	20.9
About the same as taking courses at a two year college	<b>5.9</b>	5.0	8.1	5.7	7.5	4.2	7.5
Somewhat less than taking courses at a two year college	<b>2.6</b>	2.4	4.0	2.4	2.2	2.4	3.0
Much less than taking courses at a two year college	<b>1.2</b>	0.9	3.0	1.2	---	1.0	---
Not sure	<b>7.1</b>	6.5	4.0	8.9	6.5	6.6	3.0

# Opinions Toward Two-Year Colleges



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

# Opinions Toward Two-Year Colleges



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

# Getting...



# Ease of Accessing Information and Making Decisions



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

# Ease of Accessing Information and Making Decisions



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

## School Helpfulness in Assisting



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

## School Helpfulness in Assisting



<i><b>Response</b></i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
Has been helpful	<b>59.1</b>	54.8	72.5	62.1	53.1	53.9	50.0
Has not been helpful	<b>25.8</b>	27.7	16.7	25.0	29.2	28.0	37.1
Not applicable	<b>8.4</b>	8.1	7.8	9.8	7.3	7.8	7.1
Not sure	<b>6.7</b>	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>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Above MHI</b>	<b>Below MHI</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Non-White</b>
They couldn't afford to go	<b>31.6</b>	26.9	46.1	29.5	43.4
They couldn't get in (poor grades / low entrance exam scores)	<b>5.7</b>	5.8	4.8	5.6	6.2
They didn't want to go (their choice)	<b>28.7</b>	31.2	25.7	28.9	27.9
That they didn't finish H.S. (dropped out)	<b>0.4</b>	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.8
Some other reason (vol.)	<b>8.2</b>	7.4	10.2	8.7	6.2
Nothing would keep them from going (vol.)	<b>19.8</b>	21.1	10.8	21.0	12.4
Don't know (vol.)	<b>5.2</b>	6.8	1.8	5.8	3.1
Refused (vol.)	<b>0.4</b>	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><b>Response</b></i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Upstate</b>	<b>Low Country</b>	<b>Midlands</b>	<b>Pee Dee</b>	<b>I-85</b>	<b>I-95</b>
They couldn't afford to go	<b>31.6</b>	33.5	26.5	26.7	41.7	33.9	38.6
They couldn't get in (poor grades / low entrance exam scores)	<b>5.7</b>	5.5	6.9	5.5	6.3	5.5	5.7
They didn't want to go (their choice)	<b>28.7</b>	28.6	34.3	30.6	19.8	27.7	22.9
That they didn't finish H.S. (dropped out)	<b>0.4</b>	0.3	---	---	2.1	0.3	2.9
Some other reason (vol.)	<b>8.2</b>	9.0	8.8	7.1	8.3	8.6	5.7
Nothing would keep them from going (vol.)	<b>19.8</b>	18.8	20.6	21.6	17.7	19.9	21.4
Don't know (vol.)	<b>5.2</b>	4.3	2.9	7.8	3.1	4.1	1.4
Refused (vol.)	<b>0.4</b>	---	---	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.