



Results and Analyses of the 2009 Parent Survey



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**



PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building | Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Acknowledgements | i |
| Executive Summary | 1 |
| Part One – Summary of Prior Parent Survey Results | 5 |
| Part Two - Administration of the 2009 Parent Survey | 9 |
| Part Three – Response Rate for 2009 Parent Survey | 13 |
| Part Four – Results of the 2009 Parent Survey | 15 |
| Part Five - Analysis of Parent, Teacher, and Student Surveys | 27 |
| Part Six - State Initiative to Use Survey Data to Close the Achievement Gap | 31 |
| Part Seven - Recommendations | 33 |
| Appendix | 35 |
| A. Copy of the 2009 Parent Survey | |
| B. Instructions for Administering Report Card Surveys in 2009 | |

Acknowledgements

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) acknowledges the ongoing assistance of Cynthia Hearn of the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) in providing data files, timely updates, and important information on the annual administration of the parent survey. The EOC also appreciates the parents who took the time to complete and return the annual parent survey, because their perspective is critical in evaluating public schools. And, the EOC is also grateful for principals and administrators who encouraged parental participation in the survey and who oversaw the administration of the survey.

Executive Summary

The parent survey was designed in 2001 to meet the requirements of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) and the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act. Section 59-18-900 of the EAA requires that the annual school report card include "evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students" as performance indicators to evaluate schools. In addition Section 59-28-190 of the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to "survey parents to determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parental involvement." The tool that has been adopted by the EOC and administered by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to meet these statutory requirements is the annual parent survey.

Since 2002 the SCDE has administered the parent survey to a sample of parents whose children attended public schools in South Carolina. The parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle, and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8, and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) are not surveyed. Annually, the EOC has analyzed the results of the parent survey and issued reports. The reports are online at www.eoc.sc.gov.

In 2009 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 67,014 or 2.5 percent fewer than the number who returned surveys in 2008. Between 34 and 44 percent of all eligible parents completed the survey, depending upon the methodology used. Based upon the number of total surveys distributed, approximately 34 percent of all surveys were returned. Based upon the average daily membership of students in grades 5, 8, and 11, approximately 44 percent of parents responded.

The results of the 2009 parent survey demonstrate a significant annual increase in parent satisfaction with the three characteristics measured – the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school. Significant change is defined as an annual increase or decrease of three or more percent. Satisfaction is defined as the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school.

| Percentage of Parents Satisfied With: | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Characteristic | 2009 | 2008 | % Increase |
| Learning Environment | 85.5 | 82.3 | 3.2 |
| Home and School Relations | 81.4 | 77.8 | 3.6 |
| Social and Physical Environment | 82.7 | 78.6 | 4.1 |

Similarly, the 2009 parent survey demonstrated a significant increase in parent satisfaction with the learning, home and school, and social and physical environments of their child's school comparing the 2009 results with the results of the mean satisfaction levels of the three prior years.

| Percentage of Parents Satisfied With: | | | |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Characteristic | 2009 | Mean 2006-2008 | % Difference |
| Learning Environment | 85.5 | 81.9 | 3.6 |
| Home and School Relations | 81.4 | 77.8 | 3.6 |
| Social and Physical Environment | 82.7 | 78.5 | 4.2 |

Unlike previous years, the results of the parent survey could not be analyzed to determine differences between schools based on the absolute rating of the schools because the data were not available. The South Carolina Department of Education will not release the 2009 annual school and district report cards until April 16, 2010.

While discipline remains an issue to parents, the percentage of parents who believed that students at their child's school were well-behaved increased from 56.6 percent to 61.4 percent.

Regarding parental involvement, parents responding to the 2009 annual survey reported having levels of parental involvement that were comparable to levels documented in prior parent surveys. Parents identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

The results of the 2009 teacher, parent, and student surveys documented that teachers were overwhelmingly more satisfied with the learning environment and social and physical environment of schools than were parents or students. Satisfaction with home and school relations was consistent among parents, teachers, and students.

| Percentage Satisfied with: | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Characteristic | Parents | Teachers | Elementary & Middle School Students | High School Students |
| Learning Environment | 85.5 | 90.8 | 80.7 | 75.2 |
| Home and School Relations | 81.4 | 81.6 | 86.1 | 83.7 |
| Social and Physical Environment | 82.7 | 93.4 | 81.3 | 78.0 |

When asked about the learning environment of their school, one-third of the students surveyed did not find classes interesting and fun. The results were similar for students in high school and students in elementary and middle schools. Also, one-third of high school students and over one-fourth of elementary and middle school students did not feel that students at their school believed that they could do good work. In contrast, 84 percent of teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that “students at their school were motivated and interested in learning.” And, students were significantly less satisfied than teachers on issues of cleanliness, student behavior, and teacher-student interactions.

Several questions on the three surveys focus on homework. The responses by teachers, parents, and students revealed a concerted effort to support learning at home through the monitoring of homework. Even a majority of high school students reported that their parents knew their homework assignments.

PART ONE

Summary of Prior Parent Survey Results

Annually, the EOC issues a report documenting the results of the parent survey. The annual report focuses on two specific areas: (1) parent perceptions or satisfaction levels with public schools; and (2) parental involvement activities as self-reported by parents. Copies of prior reports can be downloaded at www.eoc.sc.gov.

The 2007 report represented the first in a triennial evaluation design. While the EOC continues to report annually on the results of the parent survey, the EOC conducts an in-depth analysis of the survey results and provide specific recommendations every three years. For example, in 2008 the EOC tabulated the results for each question on the parent survey and analyzed the results by the school's 2008 absolute rating and level, i.e. elementary, middle, and high. Where appropriate, comparisons between annual parent survey results are highlighted as well as well as any long-term trends in parent perceptions and parental involvement activities.

The 2007 triennial evaluation included the following components. First, the report provides tabulation and analysis of parent survey responses by school type and rating. The report also includes a review of the research literature on parental involvement in public schools, including the benefits of parental involvement on students, parents, and schools and an in-depth analysis comparing the results of the parent and teacher surveys administered in 2007. The parent and teacher surveys determine satisfaction with the same three constructs -- the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of schools. A third component of the 2007 triennial evaluation includes reliability, correlation, and multiple regression analyses to compare the teacher and parent survey responses to determine the degree to which parent and teacher satisfaction variables correlated with the absolute index of the school and the statistical predictions between the parent and teacher satisfaction variables and the school absolute index. The data found that the questions on both the parent and teacher surveys consistently and reliably measured parent and teacher satisfaction with each construct (learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment), but were significantly stronger in the teacher survey. The correlation analysis suggests that parents who have children in schools with higher absolute school indices and teachers employed in schools with higher absolute school indices tend to be more satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment than parents and teachers of schools earning lower indices.

The multiple regression analysis provided contrasting information.

- For parents, all three indicators were significant predictors of an elementary, middle, or high school's absolute index when analyzed separately to control for multicollinearity. However, parent satisfaction of the social and physical environment was the **strongest predictor** of the absolute school index.
- Parent satisfaction with all three indicators explained 49 percent of the variance in the absolute index of elementary schools, 57 percent in middle, and 30 percent in high schools.
- For teachers, the social and physical environment was **not** a predictor of a school's absolute index. Instead, teacher satisfaction with home and school relations was a

predictor of a middle and high school's absolute index while teacher satisfaction with the learning environment and home and school relations was a predictor of an elementary school's absolute index.

- Furthermore, teacher satisfaction with home and school relations was the **strongest indicator** of the absolute school index for all three school levels.

Based on the results of the 2007 parent survey, the EOC recommended that:

- Funding should be provided to the South Carolina Department of Education to implement the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act;
- Technical assistance to underperforming schools should include designing strategies to address weaknesses in the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment as revealed on the teacher and parent surveys;
- SCDE should provide results of the parent survey as well as teacher and student surveys directly to each school district superintendent, school principal, and school improvement council chair; and
- Principals and school improvement councils should identify strengths and weaknesses in their schools, implement policies to improve parental involvement by all parents, and address issues of concern to teachers, parents, and students.

Last year the EOC published the results of the 2008 administration of the parent survey. The findings were consistent with prior year parent survey results with the following exceptions: (1) The percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent and who were satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school declined significantly between 2007 and 2008. A significant decline is defined as an annual reduction of 3 percent or greater. The decline may be explained by the distribution of schools with an Excellent rating in 2008 versus 2007. In 2007 36 percent of all schools rated Excellent were high schools, but in 2008 53 percent of all schools rated Excellent were high schools. As national research and prior results of the parent survey document, parent satisfaction with public schools declines as the child moves from elementary to middle to high schools. Another explanation is that parents who responded to the 2008 parent survey and who had children attending high schools with an Excellent rating were significantly less satisfied than all other parents whose children attended an elementary or middle school rated Excellent with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school. The results show that even in high schools rated Excellent opportunities exist to improve the educational achievement of students through greater collaboration between parents, principals, and teachers. (2) The data also reveal that all parents of high school students in South Carolina who responded to the survey were less satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school, down from 77.3 percent in 2007 to 72.5 percent in 2008. Because the responses underrepresented the general high school population, making generalizations to the entire population of high school parents is not statistically valid. However, as compared to prior year parent survey, parents who completed the survey and had children in high schools were less satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school in 2008 than in 2007.

The results of the 2009 parent survey are documented in this report. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) posted online Excel files with the statewide results from the 2009 administration of the parent, teacher, and student surveys. These data files were used in the following analyses.

PART TWO

Administration of the 2009 Parent Survey

The design and sampling methodology for the parent survey were established in 2001. The EOC contracted with the Institute of Families in Society at the University of South Carolina to design the survey and to recommend a medium for distributing the survey. To maintain complete anonymity and to maximize the return rate, the Institute recommended that the survey be mailed to a sample of parents along with a postage paid, return envelope. While the sampling methodology proposed by the Institute was implemented, the parent survey has never been mailed to parents due to budgetary restrictions. Instead, schools have been given the responsibility for distributing and collecting the forms. Generally, schools send the surveys home with students. Some schools have held parent meetings or special meetings at the school site where the surveys were distributed.

The parent survey is typically administered during the second semester of each school year. Rather than surveying all parents of public school students, the parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle, and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8, and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) are not surveyed. Appendix A includes the instructions for schools to use in administering the parent as well as student and teacher surveys, including parent participants by each school's grade span.

Compared to the prior year, in 2009 there were no changes in the administration or shipping procedures of the parent survey. A copy of the 2009 survey is also in the appendix. The 2009 administration of the parent survey occurred over the following period of time and involved the following actions.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| February 17, 2009 | All schools received survey forms. |
| March 13, 2009 | Date for parent survey forms returned to school. |
| March 20, 2009 | Last day for schools to mail completed forms to contractor. |

A school survey coordinator, a staff person designated by the school principal, distributed and collected the parent surveys at each school according to instructions provided by SCDE. According to SCDE, an independent contractor hired by SCDE mailed to each school the following:

- ✓ An envelope containing:
 1. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee,
 2. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 3. A page of shipping instructions, and
 4. One-pre-addressed UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor with freight prepaid).

- ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contained a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
- ✓ If applicable, Spanish parent survey envelopes were included. The outside of the envelope was marked with “S.”
- ✓ Student survey forms.¹

The name of each school was printed on the survey forms to assist parents who were completing surveys for multiple schools. Schools were also advised to “distribute the parent surveys as soon as possible” after delivery. SCDE reported to the EOC that the total cost of printing, shipping, processing and scanning the parent survey in 2009 totaled \$53,952.46, the same level as in the prior year.² Beginning in Fiscal Year 2007-08, SCDE entered into a five-year contract with a vendor to print, ship, process, and scan the parent survey with the annual costs the same each year.³

The survey coordinator then distributed envelopes containing the parent survey and letter from the state Superintendent of Education to each classroom teacher within the designated grade being surveyed. Teachers gave each student an envelope and instructions to take the envelope home for their parents to complete and then return the completed survey to school in the sealed envelope. The envelopes were designed to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of all parents. Parents were given the option of mailing the completed survey directly to SCDE with parents incurring the cost of the mailing or of returning the survey to the school. The school survey coordinator was expressly advised that mailing of the envelopes directly to the parents was allowed with all costs to be borne by the school. Information did not exist to document if any schools mailed the parent surveys to parents.

Upon receiving the completed parent surveys, the school survey coordinator then mailed the forms to the independent contractor for scanning and preparation of the data files. Individual school results were tabulated by SCDE. The overall parent satisfaction scores of three questions relating to the school’s overall learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment were printed on the 2009 annual school report cards. For each school, SCDE aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the data files to the district office.

As in prior years, the 2009 parent survey contained forty-six questions designed to elicit information on parental perceptions and parental involvement patterns. For the first twenty-one questions, parents were asked to respond to individual statements using one of the following responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree, or Don’t Know. These twenty-one questions focused on three key components: learning environment, home and school relations, and the physical and social environment of their child’s school. These components and individual activities reflect the framework devised by Dr. Joyce Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools.

¹ “Administration of the 2009 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education. <<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Data-Management-and-Analysis/old/research/documents/surveyinstructions09.doc>>.

² Cynthia Hearn, e-mail to Melanie Barton, February 4, 2010.

³ Cynthia Hearn, e-mail message to Melanie Barton, February 4, 2010.

The remaining questions on the survey addressed parental involvement activities and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Parents were asked about their participation in various parental involvement activities both in and outside of the school. Parents were also asked to determine from a list of responses potential barriers to their involvement in their child's education. Finally, parents were asked to provide specific information about themselves, their child, and their household. Parents were asked four questions about their child: their child's grade in school, gender, race/ethnicity, and grades on his or her last report card. Four questions sought information about the parent: his or her gender, race/ethnicity, highest level of education, and total yearly household income.

PART THREE

Response Rate for 2009 Parent Survey

According to Instructional Assessment Resources (IAR) at the University of Texas, the goal of any survey is to have an acceptable response rate to make generalizations to a larger population or to measure effects. “High survey response rates help to ensure that survey results are representative of the target population. A survey must have a good response rate in order to produce accurate, useful results.”⁴ According to IAR, acceptable response rates vary by the method of distribution:

- Mail: 50% is adequate, 60% is good, 70% is very good
- Phone: 80% is good
- Email 40% is average, 50% is good, 60% is very good
- Online: 30% is average
- Classroom paper: Greater than 50% is good
- Face-to-face: 80-85% is good⁵

Distribution of the South Carolina parent survey does not fall within any of the above media for distribution. Consequently, two methods were developed to analyze the response rate for the 2009 parent survey to determine the percentage of eligible parents that completed and returned a parent survey.

One method is to compare the number of surveys mailed to schools with the number of completed surveys returned. According to SCDE, a total of 196,132 parent surveys were mailed to 1,141 schools for distribution. The total number of surveys distributed included 9,586 surveys printed in Spanish. The schools included elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, career centers, and the following special schools:

- Felton Laboratory School
- John de la Howe School
- Wil Lou Gray School
- School for the Deaf and the Blind
- Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics
- Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities

Schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) were not included in the survey. This first method inflates the sample size because SCDE prints additional survey forms for each school to accommodate additional students enrolling in schools after the 45th day of attendance.

⁴ “Response Rates,” Instructional Assessment Resources, The University of Texas at Austin, <<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/method/survey-Response.php>>(accessed on February 8, 2010).

⁵ Ibid.

A second method is to use the statewide 135-day average daily membership of all students in grades 5, 8, and 11 in school year 2008-09 as the sample size. On the 45th, 90th, and 135th days of school, school districts use the Student Accountability System (SASI) to collect and classify each student in South Carolina's public schools by grade and by a pupil classification system prescribed in the Education Finance Act. In school year 2008-09 the 135-day average daily membership for grades 5, 8, and 11 rounded to the nearest student totaled was 153,730.⁶

As reflected in Table 1, the total number of parent surveys returned in 2009 decreased by 1,747 or 2.5% from the prior year.

Table 1
Total Number of Parent Surveys Returned

| 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 67,014 | 68,761 | 64,596 | 69,495 | 66,895 | 66,283 | 64,732 | 55,864 |

Using the two methods of determining response rates and the total number of parent surveys returned, two response rates were calculated in Table 2. Between 34% and 44% of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2009 parent survey. Over one-third of all eligible parents responded to the parent survey in 2008. Compared to IAR's definitions of acceptable response rates for email and online surveys, the response rate to the 2009 parent survey should be considered average.

Table 2
Determining the Response Rate

| | Sample Size | Surveys Returned | Response Rate |
|---|-------------|------------------|---------------|
| Method 1: Surveys Distributed | 196,132 | 67,014 | 34% |
| Method 2: ADM of 5, 8 and 11 th grades | 153,730 | 67,014 | 44% |

According to IAR, "generally, the better your respondents know you, the better your response rate. Respondents who you know by name or have regular contact with will be more likely to respond to your survey than respondents you do not know."

⁶ "SC Average Daily Membership and Attendance, Fiscal Year 2008-09,." South Carolina Department of Education 6 May 2009. <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Finance-and-Operations/Finance/old/finance/student_data/documents/DMEM09.txt>.

PART FOUR

Results of the 2009 Parent Survey

The parent survey was designed to determine: (1) parent perceptions or satisfaction with their child's public school and (2) parental involvement efforts in public schools. The following is an analysis that documents the actual parent responses to questions focusing on parental satisfaction and parental involvement.

Parent Perceptions of Their Child's School

The information below summarizes the results of the 2009 parent survey. At the school level, responses to these questions can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement initiatives at the individual school site. Statewide, the data provide policymakers information on the overall effectiveness of policies and programs in promoting parental involvement. The following analysis focuses on parent perceptions or satisfaction with the learning environment, home-school relations, and the social and physical environment of their child's school. Totals in the tables may not add to 100 percent because omitted questions and "Don't Know" responses are not included.

A. Learning Environment

Five questions in the parent survey ask parents to reflect upon the learning environment of their child's school. Questions 1 through 4 are designed to elicit parental agreement with specific aspects of the learning environment at their child's school, focusing on homework, expectations, and academic assistance. Question 5 offers parents the opportunity to report on their overall satisfaction with the learning environment at their child's school. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 5 are included on the annual school report card if a sufficient number of parents complete the survey. Table 3 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2009 parent survey.

Table 3
Percentage of Parents in 2009 Responding:

| Learning Environment Questions | Agree or Strongly Agree | Disagree or Strongly Disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. | 89.9 | 7.6 |
| 2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. | 90.9 | 6.8 |
| 3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. | 90.9 | 5.8 |
| 4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. | 79.7 | 12.8 |
| 5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school | 85.5 | 12.6 |

Table 4 compares the percentage of parents who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed to these questions across the past seven years. Parents who completed the survey in 2009 were significantly more positive about the learning environment of their child's school than in the prior year. For purposes of this analysis, "significant" is defined as an annual increase or decrease of 3 percent or greater. In 2009 3.2 percent more parents expressed satisfaction with

the overall learning environment of their child's school than did parents in 2008. And, in 2009, the greatest percentage of parents completing the annual parent survey since 2003 expressed satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school. Question 4, "my child's teachers encourage my child to learn," has consistently elicited the lowest percentage of parents responding that they agreed or strongly agreed.

Table 4
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree across Years to:

| Learning Environment Questions | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 |
|---|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. | 89.9 | 86.9 | 88.2 | 87.7 | 88.4 | 89.1 | 88.1 |
| 2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. | 90.9 | 88.3 | 89.1 | 87.4 | 87.7 | 88.2 | 87.5 |
| 3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. | 90.9 | 88.2 | 88.9 | 87.4 | 87.7 | 88.1 | 87.5 |
| 4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. | 79.7 | 77.7 | 77.3 | 76.9 | 76.4 | 75.6 | 75.6 |
| 5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school | 85.5 | 82.3 | 82.2 | 81.3 | 81.2 | 80.9 | 80.1 |

To determine if there are any significant changes in parent perception of the learning environment of their child's school over recent years, an analysis was done comparing the 2009 results with the mean or average responses in the three prior years. Table 5 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the learning environment of their child's school in 2009 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2006 through 2008. While overall parent satisfaction of the learning environment of their child's school was significantly higher in 2009 as compared to the prior three-year average, parents were not significantly more satisfied with individual components of the learning environment: (1) homework that helps their child learn; (2) high expectations for student learning; and (3) academic assistance.

Table 5
Comparing 2009 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

| Learning Environment Questions | 2009 | Mean % (2006 - 2008) | Difference |
|---|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. | 89.9 | 87.6 | 2.3 |
| 2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. | 90.9 | 88.3 | 2.6 |
| 3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. | 90.9 | 88.2 | 2.7 |
| 4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. | 79.7 | 77.3 | 2.4 |
| 5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school | 85.5 | 81.9 | 3.6 |

B. Home and School Relations

The next eleven questions on the parent survey determine parent perception of home and school relations by focusing on the relationship between the parent and their child's teacher and between the parent and the school. Question 11 offers parents the opportunity to report on their overall satisfaction with home and school relations at their child's school. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 5 are included on the annual school report card. Table 6 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2009 parent survey.

Table 6
Percentage of Parents in 2009 Responding:

| Home and School Relations Questions | Agree or Strongly Agree | Disagree or Strongly Disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child | 57.2 | 40.9 |
| 2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. | 64.4 | 33.3 |
| 3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | 54.8 | 40.7 |
| 4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. | 79.3 | 14.0 |
| 5. My child's school includes me in decision-making. | 67.9 | 25.7 |
| 6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school. | 78.3 | 19.5 |
| 7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. | 50.5 | 26.4 |
| 8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. | 78.8 | 17.0 |
| 9. My child's school treats all students fairly. | 67.4 | 18.3 |
| 10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. | 80.8 | 10.5 |
| 11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school | 81.4 | 14.9 |

In analyzing the responses to questions 1 through 10, less than two-thirds of parents agreed or strongly agreed with four specific questions. Three of the four questions deal with the relationship of parents and their child's teachers. In 2009 less than two-thirds of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child's teachers contacted them to say good things about their child, told the parents how to help their child learn, and invited the parent to visit the classroom during the day. These responses are similar to parent responses from surveys conducted in prior years.

Regarding relations between the parent and the school, over three-fourths of the parents agreed that their child's school returned phone calls or e-mails promptly, provided information about what their child should be learning, and scheduled activities at times that parents could attend. Over 80 percent of the parents also agreed that their child's principal was available and welcoming. Regarding parent involvement in decision-making at the school, half of the parents reported that their child's school considered changes based on parental input. And, analyzing the data further, the remaining one-fourth of parents reported that they "did not know" if their child's school considered changes based on parent input.

As documented by Table 7, overall parental satisfaction with home and school relations increased significantly from 2008 to 2009. A significant improvement is defined as an annual increase or decrease of at least three percent. Over 80 percent of all parents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with home and school relations at their child's school.

Table 7
Home and School Relations

Question 11: I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.

| | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Agree or Strongly Agree | 81.4% | 77.8% | 77.9% | 76.6% | 67.8% | 66.9% | 66.8% |
| Disagree or Strongly Disagree | 14.9% | 16.0% | 17.1% | 16.6% | 17.7% | 18.2% | 18.6% |

Given the 3.6 percent increase in the percentage of parents in 2009 who were satisfied with the home and school relations at their child's school as compared to parents in 2008 who were satisfied with the home and school relations at their child's school, an analysis of the ten statements that highlight specific issues of home and school relations was done over time. Table 8 compares the percent of parents who agreed or strongly agreed to each statement since 2006.

Table 8
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree across Years to:

| Home and School Relations Questions | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 |
|---|-------------|------|------|------|
| 1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. | 57.2 | 53.8 | 54.2 | 53.1 |
| 2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. | 64.4 | 62.2 | 63.1 | 62.0 |
| 3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | 54.8 | 53.2 | 53.9 | 54.4 |
| 4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. | 79.3 | 75.0 | 75.1 | 72.9 |
| 5. My child's school includes me in decision-making. | 67.9 | 65.1 | 65.5 | 63.5 |
| 6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school. | 78.3 | 75.4 | 76.2 | 74.8 |
| 7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. | 50.5 | 47.8 | 48.1 | 47.2 |
| 8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. | 78.8 | 75.5 | 76.1 | 74.2 |
| 9. My child's school treats all students fairly. | 67.4 | 63.4 | 63.3 | 61.8 |
| 10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. | 80.8 | 77.3 | 78.0 | 76.2 |
| 11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school | 81.4 | 77.8 | 77.9 | 76.6 |

The data demonstrate that since 2006 the overall percentage of parents who reported satisfaction with home and school relations at their child's school has increased significantly across time from 76.6 percent in 2006 to 81.4 percent in 2009. Moreover, for nine of the eleven questions pertaining to home and school relations, the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed has also increased significantly over time between 2006 and 2009. To reiterate, "significant" is defined as an annual increase or decrease of 3 percent or greater. On the other hand, the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with Questions 2 and 3, which

deal with the relationship between parents and teachers, has not significantly increased since 2006.

An additional analysis was done comparing the mean or average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed to each statement between 2006 and 2008 with the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed in 2009. Table 9 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding home and school relations at their child's school in 2009 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2006 through 2008. Again, using a three percent change as "significant," there were significant improvements in parental satisfaction in 2009 regarding home and school relations. Significant improvement was documented in the areas of: communication; decision-making; scheduling; equitable treatment of students; and the principal's openness. Regarding teacher and parent relations, significantly more parents felt that their child's teachers contacted them to provide positive feedback on their child. Of concern is the fact that there was not significant improvement in the percentage of parents who believed that teachers communicated to parents in ways that helped their child succeed.

Table 9
Comparing 2009 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

| Home and School Relations Questions | 2009 | Mean % (2006 - 2008) | Difference |
|---|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. | 57.2 | 53.7 | 3.5 |
| 2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. | 64.4 | 62.4 | 2.0 |
| 3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | 54.8 | 53.8 | 1.0 |
| 4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. | 79.3 | 74.3 | 5.0 |
| 5. My child's school includes me in decision-making. | 67.9 | 64.7 | 3.2 |
| 6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school. | 78.3 | 75.5 | 2.8 |
| 7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. | 50.5 | 47.7 | 2.8 |
| 8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. | 78.8 | 75.3 | 3.5 |
| 9. My child's school treats all students fairly. | 67.4 | 62.8 | 4.6 |
| 10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. | 80.8 | 77.2 | 3.6 |
| 11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school | 81.4 | 77.4 | 4.0 |

C. Social and Physical Environment

The last five questions on the parent survey focus on the social and physical environment of schools. These questions are designed to elicit parent perceptions of the cleanliness, safety, and climate of their child's school. Question 5 asks parents to report on their overall satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's schools. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 5 are included on the annual school report card. Table 10 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2009 parent survey. As in prior years, one-fourth of parents responding to the survey did not feel that students at their child's school were well behaved.

Table 10
Percentage of Parents in 2009 Responding:

| Social and Physical Environment Questions | Agree or Strongly Agree | Disagree or Strongly Disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. My child's school is kept neat and clean. | 90.7 | 6.5 |
| 2. My child feels safe at school. | 90.1 | 7.7 |
| 3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual. | 82.2 | 9.7 |
| 4. Students at my child's school are well behaved. | 61.1 | 25.0 |
| 5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school. | 82.7 | 13.3 |

Gallup, Inc. conducts telephone opinion polls on various national issues including public education. Since 1999 Gallup has conducted an annual Work and Education survey of adults in the United States that gauges public satisfaction with schools. Gallup reported in 2009 that “three in four American parents (76%) are satisfied with the education their children receive in school, compared to 45% of the general public who are satisfied with the state of schools nationwide.”⁷ These findings are “almost identical to what Gallup found last year, and have not changed materially since 2003.”⁸ In 2009 81 percent of the parents surveyed had a child attending a public school.⁹

Since 1998 Gallup has also asked a representative sample of parents who have a child in grades kindergarten through 12 two questions regarding the social and physical environment of schools. The two questions and the parent responses for the previous five years follow:¹⁰

1. Thinking about your oldest child, when he or she is at school, do you fear for his or her physical safety?

| % Responding | | | |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Year | Yes | No | No Opinion |
| 2009 | 26 | 74 | -- |
| 2008 | 15 | 85 | -- |
| 2007 | 24 | 76 | -- |
| 2006 | 35 | 65 | -- |

⁷ Frank Newport, “Parents Rate Schools Much Higher Than Do Americans Overall,” Gallup, Inc., <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/122432/Parents-Rate-Schools-Higher-Americans-Overall.aspx>> (accessed on March 16, 2010).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Education,” Gallup, Inc., <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/1612/education.aspx>> (accessed on March 16, 2010).

¹⁰ Ibid.

2. Have any of your school-aged children expressed any worry or concern about feeling unsafe at their school whey they back to school this fall?

| % Responding | | | |
|--------------|-----|----|------------|
| Year | Yes | No | No Opinion |
| 2009 | 10 | 90 | -- |
| 2008 | 8 | 91 | 1 |
| 2007 | 12 | 87 | 1 |
| 2006 | 12 | 88 | -- |

Based on the Gallup poll, while one in four American parents feared for the physical safety of their child while in school, 90 percent of parents stated that their child did not express concern about feeling unsafe at school. Likewise, 90 percent of parents responding to the 2009 annual parent survey in South Carolina agreed or strongly agreed that their child felt safe at school.

Comparing the 2009 results of the South Carolina parent survey with the results from prior years, Table 11 documents that overall parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school was significantly greater in 2009, up 4.1 percent from 2008. For specific questions, the results show that parents in 2009 were significantly more satisfied with the safety, care, and behavior at their child's school than parents who responded to the survey in 2008.

Table 11
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree:

| Social and Physical Environment Questions | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 |
|--|-------------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|
| 1. My child's school is kept neat and clean. | 90.7 | 87.9 | 88.5 | 86.8 | 87.6 | 87.72 | 86.9 |
| 2. My child feels safe at school. | 90.1 | 86.3 | 87.1 | 85.9 | 86.3 | 85.9 | 85.7 |
| 3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual. | 82.2 | 79.0 | 79.3 | 78.5 | 78.3 | 77.6 | 77.0 |
| 4. Students at my child's school are well behaved. | 61.1 | 56.6 | 56.6 | 55.2 | 55.4 | 53.4 | 54.1 |
| 5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school | 82.7 | 78.6 | 79.0 | 77.8 | 77.7 | 76.9 | 77.3 |

A final analysis was conducted to gauge parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2009 with the results of surveys completed during the prior three-year time period. Table 12 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the social and physical environment at their child's school in 2009 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2006 through 2008. The results demonstrate significant, overall improvement in parental satisfaction with the cleanliness, safety, care, and behavior of students in their child's school in 2009.

Table 12
Comparing 2009 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

| Social and Physical Environment Questions | 2009 | Mean % (2006 - 2008) | Difference |
|--|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. My child's school is kept neat and clean. | 90.7 | 87.7 | 3.0 |
| 2. My child feels safe at school. | 90.1 | 86.4 | 3.7 |
| 3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual. | 82.2 | 78.9 | 3.3 |
| 4. Students at my child's school are well behaved. | 61.1 | 56.1 | 5.0 |
| 5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school | 82.7 | 78.5 | 4.2 |

Parental Involvement

According to the National Network of Partnership Schools, founded and directed by Dr. Joyce Epstein at Johns Hopkins University, there are six types of successful partnerships between the school, family and community:¹¹

- Type 1. Parenting – Assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students. Also, assist schools to better understand families.
- Type 2. Communicating – Conduct effective communications from school-to-home and home-to-school about school programs and student progress.
- Type 3. Volunteering – Organize volunteers and audiences to support the school and students. Provide volunteer opportunities in various locations and at various times.
- Type 4. Learning at Home – Involve families with their children on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
- Type 5. Decision Making – Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives.
- Type 6. Collaborating with the family – Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

In addition to determining parent satisfaction with their child's school, the annual survey of parents in South Carolina includes questions designed to elicit information on the level of parental involvement in schools. The questions focus on the first five types of parental involvement. It should be reiterated that parents self-report their involvement.

First, parents were asked to specifically respond to eight questions relating to their involvement in their child's school. These questions focus on the following types of parental involvement:

¹¹ Epstein, et. al. 2002. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
 <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/nnps_model/school/sixtypes.htm>.

parenting, volunteering, and decision making. Parents were asked specifically to respond to these eight questions in one of four ways:

- I do this
- I don't do this but would like to
- I don't do this and I don't care to
- The school does not offer this activity/event.

The responses are reflected in Table 13. Highlighted in Table 13 is the fourth column which documents the percentage of parents who expressed an interest in becoming involved in these school activities. These parents want to be involved but they either have personal barriers preventing their involvement or face obstacles at the school level. At the school level, parents responding "I don't do this but would like to" are the parents for whom school initiatives to improve parental involvement should be focused.

Table 13
Percentage of Parents Responding:

| | n = | "I do this" | "I don't do but would like to" | "I don't do & I don't care to:" | "The school does not offer this activity/event" |
|---|----------|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences | (66,665) | 79.3 | 16.4 | 3.5 | 0.8 |
| Attend student programs or performances | (66,448) | 78.3 | 17.0 | 3.4 | 1.3 |
| Volunteer for the school | (65,910) | 38.3 | 38.0 | 20.6 | 3.1 |
| Go on trip with my child's school | (65,739) | 36.0 | 43.2 | 15.2 | 5.7 |
| Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings | (65,435) | 13.1 | 48.1 | 33.5 | 5.3 |
| Participate in Parent-teacher Student Organizations | (65,647) | 34.9 | 36.4 | 26.1 | 2.5 |
| Participate in school committees | (65,555) | 17.4 | 41.4 | 34.0 | 7.3 |
| Attend parent workshops | (65,754) | 26.3 | 40.9 | 18.4 | 14.4 |

Based on the responses in Table 13 and the six types of involvement, there are significant opportunities for improving parental involvement in South Carolina's public schools. First, fewer parents reported being involved in the School Improvement Council, Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations, and school committees than in any other activity. Decision making, including parents and families in school decisions, and developing parent leaders and representatives are areas in need of improvement. However, these same parents reported wanting to be involved in these decision making committees and organizations. Regarding volunteering, almost three-fourths of the parents reported attending open houses, parent-teacher conferences, or student programs, all activities that support children as students. However, one-fourth reported attending parent workshops, which typically are focused on assisting families with parenting skills. Another 14 percent contended that such workshops are not provided at their child's

school. Regarding volunteering for the school, approximately 38 percent of the parents responded that they volunteered, a percentage that mirrors the percentage of parents who do not volunteer but would like to.

Then, parents were asked five questions about their involvement with their child's education, both at the school site and at home. These questions are directed at learning at home, parents involved with their children's homework, and other activities and decisions. Parents could respond in one of three ways:

- I do this
- I don't do this but would like to
- I don't do this and I don't care to

Table 14 summarizes parental responses to these five questions.

Table 14
Percentage of Parents Responding

| | n= | "I do this" | "I don't do but would like to" | "I don't do & I don't care to" |
|---|----------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Visit my child's classroom during the school day | (66,353) | 33.4 | 52.0 | 14.6 |
| Contact my child's teachers about my child's school work. | (66,556) | 76.2 | 19.4 | 4.4 |
| Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet | (66,751) | 84.6 | 9.0 | 6.4 |
| Make sure my child does his/her homework | (66,977) | 94.8 | 3.6 | 1.5 |
| Help my child with homework when he/she needs it. | (66,984) | 93.6 | 5.0 | 1.4 |

Clearly, parents overwhelmingly reported being involved in activities and decisions to support their child's learning. Over 90 percent of parents reported helping their child with his or her homework while 84 percent reported limiting television and other distractions at home. However, only one-third of parents responded that they visited their child's classroom during the day while a majority wanted to become involved in this way.

There are obstacles that impede parental involvement in schools. These obstacles may include lack of transportation, family responsibilities, and work schedules. Schools may also not encourage or facilitate parental involvement at the school level. The annual parent survey asks parents to respond "true" or "false" to seven questions on factors that impact their involvement. The results for 2009 as well as the results from prior years are included in Table 15. At the individual school, the responses to these questions may assist principals and teachers in scheduling parental involvement activities or even parent-teacher conferences at times and places convenient for both parents and teachers.

Table 15
Percentage of Parents Replying "True" to these questions

| | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 |
|--|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Lack of transportation reduces my involvement | 11.7 | 11.6 | 11.8 | 12.9 | 12.3 | 12.5 |
| Family health problems reduce my involvement. | 14.7 | 14.9 | 15.0 | 15.5 | 15.4 | 14.9 |
| Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement. | 15.4 | 15.2 | 15.4 | 16.1 | 15.9 | 15.5 |
| My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved. | 55.6 | 56.2 | 55.4 | 55.6 | 55.5 | 56.2 |
| The school does not encourage my involvement. | 17.6 | 18.0 | 19.6 | 19.8 | 20.0 | 20.4 |
| Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all. | 25.7 | 26.8 | 27.3 | 28.2 | 28.3 | 29.1 |
| I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved. | 12.1 | 12.8 | 13.6 | 14.0 | 14.1 | 14.1 |

Finally, parents were also asked several questions about their child's school and its efforts at increasing parental involvement. Across these questions, two-thirds of parents consistently rated the efforts of their child's school at parental involvement efforts as good or very good. Approximately one-fourth rated the school's efforts as "okay."

Table 16
Percentage of Parents who responded:
Very Good or Good Bad or Very Bad Okay

| | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 |
|--|-------------|------|------|-------------|------|------|-------------|------|------|
| School's overall friendliness. | 78.8 | 75.1 | 75.0 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 18.8 | 20.2 | 20.2 |
| School's interest in parents' ideas and opinions. | 61.7 | 57.5 | 58.0 | 7.8 | 8.6 | 8.8 | 30.6 | 31.1 | 30.8 |
| School's effort to get important information from parents. | 66.0 | 61.9 | 61.5 | 7.9 | 9.0 | 9.4 | 26.1 | 26.5 | 27.1 |
| The school's efforts to give important information to parents. | 71.7 | 67.5 | 67.2 | 6.5 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 21.8 | 22.8 | 23.1 |
| How the school is doing overall. | 74.3 | 70.0 | 69.7 | 3.7 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 22.0 | 23.5 | 23.8 |

Conclusion

The results of the 2009 parent survey demonstrate a significant improvement in parent satisfaction with their child's public school. Satisfaction is defined as the percentage of parents who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with the individual questions regarding satisfaction. First, there was a significant annual increase in parent satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environments of their child's school (Table 17).

Table 17
Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:

| Characteristic | 2009 | 2008 | % Increase |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Learning Environment | 85.5 | 82.3 | 3.2 |
| Home and School Relations | 81.4 | 77.8 | 3.6 |
| Social and Physical Environment | 82.7 | 78.6 | 4.1 |

Second, there was a significant increase in parent satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school over time. Comparing the 2009 results with the mean results of the prior three years, significantly more parents were satisfied with the three characteristics of their child's school (Table 18).

Table 18
Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:

| Characteristic | 2009 | Mean 2006-2008 | % Difference |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Learning Environment | 85.5 | 81.9 | 3.6 |
| Home and School Relations | 81.4 | 77.8 | 3.6 |
| Social and Physical Environment | 82.7 | 78.5 | 4.2 |

Along with these improvements, the data show that, comparing the 2009 parent survey responses with the mean or average responses from the three prior years, there are still issues of concern to parents including: high expectations for student learning, academic assistance, communication, and student behavior.

Regarding parental involvement, parents who responded to the 2009 annual survey reported comparable levels of parental involvement as in other years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement. As in prior years, the inclusion of parents in school decisions and the development of parent leaders and representatives are still issues to be addressed in the public schools of South Carolina.

PART FIVE

Analysis of Parent, Teacher, and Student Surveys

In addition to parents, teachers and a sample of students in South Carolina's public schools also complete annual surveys. All teachers are encouraged to complete an online survey. Students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools also complete a student survey. For high schools and career centers, the student surveys are administered to all 11th graders."¹² Like the parent survey, students in primary schools, schools with a grade span of K-1, K-2, or 1-2, are not surveyed.

While the three surveys contain different questions, the focus of each is to obtain information on three constructs: the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of public schools. Consistent on all three surveys are the following three questions:

- I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school/at my child's school.
- I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school/at my child's school.
- I am satisfied with home and school relations/at my child's school.

If sufficient responses are provided, the responses to these three questions are included on the annual school report cards.

The following is a comparison of the results of the parent, teacher, and student surveys in 2009 for the above three questions as well as other survey questions that are included in all three surveys. For purposes of the analysis, the responses of students were disaggregated between students in elementary and middle school and students in high school. The number responding to each question (or "n" value) is included and represents the total number of responses for the individual question.

Learning Environment

Table 19 tabulates the percentage of parents, teachers, and students who were generally satisfied with the learning environment at their school or their child's school. Teachers were overwhelmingly positive in their satisfaction. On the other hand, students were significantly less positive than teachers and parents. One-fourth of all high school students responding were not satisfied with the learning environment of their school. Even students at the elementary and middle school level were less satisfied with the learning environment of their school than their parents or teachers.

¹² "Administration of the 2009 Report Card Surveys." South Carolina Department of Education.

Table 19
“I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school or in my child’s school.”

| Responses from: | Total Number Responding (n=) | Percentage Agree, Mostly Agree, or Strongly Agree |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Parents | 66,553 | 85.5 |
| Teachers | 44,727 | 90.8 |
| Students: | | |
| Elementary & Middle | 97,542 | 80.7 |
| High School | 41,237 | 75.2 |

In analyzing the responses to the student surveys regarding the learning environment, only two-thirds of all students agreed or strongly agreed to two specific questions regarding the learning environment (Table 20). Approximately, two-thirds of the students surveyed found classes interesting and fun. The results were similar for students in high school as well as for students in elementary and middle schools. Also, 67 percent of high school students and 73 percent of elementary and middle school students felt that students at their school believed that they could do good work. In contrast, 84 percent of teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that “students at their school were motivated and interested in learning.”

Table 20
Percentage of Students who Agreed or Mostly Agreed

| Question: | High School Students | Elementary & Middle School Students |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| My classes are interesting and fun. | 60.1 | 67.5 |
| Students at my school believe they can do good work. | 67.3 | 73.3 |

Social and Physical Environment

Table 21 compares the satisfaction of parents, teachers and students to the social and physical environment of their school or their child's school. Again, teachers were significantly more satisfied with the social and physical environment of their school than parents or students.

Table 21
“I am satisfied with the social and physical environment in my school or in my child’s school.”

| Responses from: | Total Number Responding (n=) | % Agree, Mostly Agree, or Strongly Agree |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Parents | 66,668 | 82.7 |
| Teachers | 44,755 | 93.4 |
| Students: | | |
| Elementary & Middle | 97,137 | 81.3 |
| High School | 41,039 | 78.9 |

Analyzing the specific reasons students gave for their satisfaction, Table 22 documents that between 48 and 73 percent of all students agreed or mostly agreed to the following questions regarding the social and physical environment of their school. The data show very consistent results across grades on the issues of bathroom cleanliness, student behavior, and teacher-

student interactions. At the elementary and middle school levels, approximately one-half of students believed that students were well behaved whether in class or outside of class. The data also highlight the difference in perception between students and teachers on these issues.

Table 22
Percentage of who Agreed or Mostly Agreed

| Question: | High School Students | Elementary & Middle School Students | ALL Teachers |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| The bathrooms at my school are kept clean. | 52.3 | 52.4 | 89.8 |
| Students at my school behave well in class. | 56.9 | 50.2 | 86.1 |
| Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom, and on the playground. | 52.9 | 48.7 | 82.5 |
| Students from different backgrounds get along well at my school. | 73.5 | 70.2 | 94.4 |
| Teachers and students get along well with each other at my school. | 73.5 | 72.8 | 97.3 |

Home and School Relations

And, regarding home and school relations, Table 23 documents that parents, teachers, and students reported consistent satisfaction levels with home and school relations.

Table 23
“I am satisfied with the home and social relations in my school or in my child’s school.”

| Responses from: | Total Number Responding (n=) | % Agree, Mostly Agree, or Strongly Agree |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Parents | 66,409 | 81.4 |
| Teachers | 44,518 | 81.6 |
| Students: | | |
| Elementary & Middle | 97,043 | 86.1 |
| High School | 40,848 | 83.7 |

On the issue of homework, again, the perception is the same among teachers, students, and parents (Table 24). The responses by teachers, parents, and students revealed a concerted effort to support learning at home through the monitoring of homework. Even a majority of high school students reported that their parents still knew their homework assignments.

Table 24
Questions to Teachers, Students, and Parents Regarding Homework

| | |
|---|--|
| Question to Teachers: | % Responding Agree or Mostly Agree |
| Parents at my school are interested in their children's schoolwork. | 82.5 |
| Question to Students: | % Responding Agree or Mostly Agree |
| Parents at my school know their children's homework assignments. | 51.9 (High School) 75.0 (Elementary & Middle) |
| Questions to Parents: | % Responding "I do this" |
| Make sure my child does his/her homework. | 94.8 |
| Help my child with homework when he/she needs its. | 93.6 |

Conclusion

The results of the 2009 teacher, parent, and student surveys documented overall satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of public schools. Teachers were significantly more satisfied with the learning environment and social and physical environment of schools than were parents or students. Satisfaction with home and school relations was consistent between parents, teachers, and students (Table 25).

Table 25
Parents, Teachers and Students Satisfaction Levels, 2009

| | Parents | Teachers | Elementary & Middle School Students | High School Students |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Learning Environment | 85.5 | 90.8 | 80.7 | 75.2 |
| Home and School Relations | 81.4 | 81.6 | 86.1 | 83.7 |
| Social and Physical Environment | 82.7 | 93.4 | 81.3 | 78.0 |

Regarding the learning environment, one-third of the students surveyed did not find classes interesting and fun. The results were similar for students in high school as well as for students in elementary and middle schools. Also, one-third of high school students and over one-fourth of elementary and middle school students did not feel that students at their school believed that they could do good work. In contrast, 84 percent of teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that "students at their school were motivated and interested in learning." And, students were significantly less satisfied than teachers on issues of cleanliness, student behavior, and teacher-student interactions.

Several questions on the three surveys focus on homework. The responses by teachers, parents, and students revealed a concerted effort to support learning at home through the monitoring of homework. Even a majority of high school students reported that their parents still knew their homework assignments.

PART SIX

State Initiative to Use Survey Data to Close the Achievement Gap

On February 4, 2010 Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction in California, announced a new resource to assist schools in closing the achievement gap. According to the Superintendent, writing in the *Workbook for Improving School Climate & Closing the Achievement Gap*, the resource was "developed with the recognition that teachers and administrators have a 'full plate,' and are implementing strategies to address the important needs of their students; therefore, we wanted to provide an easy to use resource that not only offers additional strategies, but also affirms the hard work and effort that many schools and districts have already invested toward improving the success of students."¹³ Developed by WestEd, a nonprofit research agency that works at the local, state, and federal levels, the workbook assists classroom teachers, principals, and other administrators in understanding and using survey data from the California Healthy Kids Survey and the California School Climate Survey. The California Healthy Kids Survey is completed by students while the California School Climate Survey is completed by school staff. The workbook assists officials in using survey data to "focus on, improve, maintain and strengthen" efforts to improve school climate. The objective is to close the achievement gap between students of different races, between special education students and others, and between students in migrant education programs and others by improving school climate. School climate is defined as:

conditions or quality of the teaching and learning environment – as created by the community of people involved their values, beliefs and interpersonal relationships, and the physic setting itself – that affect the subjective school experiences, attitudes, behaviors and performance of both students and staff. A positive school climate is on that is supportive, safe, caring, challenging, and participatory for all.¹⁴

Step-by-step, the workbook takes officials through a process of comparing the results of the surveys for students and staff. Schools are given charts and told to fill in the results for their school with the answers to specific survey questions as noted. Results to both surveys are disaggregated according to responses by specific ethnic groups. Schools are asked to reflect upon the results of the surveys for their schools and to use a check list of strategies to target areas needing improvement. Administrators and teachers are asked to check which strategies are currently being done or need to be done. Then the workbook provides links to resources to assist schools. Schools are then asked to develop two planning and implementation charts that establish dates by which the school will undertake:

1. Things we want to do (focus on and improve); and
2. Things we are doing (maintain and strengthen).

The workbook can be downloaded at <http://www.wested.org>.

¹³ *Workbook for Improving School Climate & Closing the Achievement Gap*. WestEd for the State of California. February 2010. <http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/WB_1221_allv5.pdf>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

PART SEVEN

Recommendations

Based on the results of the 2009 parent survey, the following recommendations are made:

1. The South Carolina Department of Education is commended for posting online the statewide results of the 2009 parent, teacher, and student surveys. Public access to the data reiterates the importance of accountability and access. The information also can assist policymakers in evaluating, designing, and implementing parental involvement programs. Moreover, individual school officials can compare the results of the school's parent, student, and teacher survey results to the statewide results.
2. South Carolina public schools would benefit from having a tool like the *California Workbook for Improving School Climate & Closing the Achievement Gap*. Schools would be given assistance in how to use survey data, how to focus on key questions and issues contained in all three surveys, and how to focus, improve, maintain, and strengthen school reform efforts. The South Carolina Department of Education and the Education Oversight Committee should pursue private funds to supplement public resources and publish a similar tool for school use in the 2011-12 academic year.
3. During the 2011 administration of the parent survey, the South Carolina Department of Education conduct a pilot project to determine if emailing the parent survey would improve the response rate of all parents and reduce costs of distributing the surveys. The pilot project also should study procedures for allowing parents to complete the survey on a school computer.

APPENDIX A

South Carolina Parent Survey

Parents in South Carolina who have children in selected grades are being asked to complete this survey. This survey asks you how you feel about your child's school. Since this survey will be used to help make your child's school a better place, it is very important to tell us exactly what you think. Your answers will be kept private. The school will get a summary of the survey results.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Make solid marks that fill the circle completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.

- Make no stray marks on this form.

- Correct Mark: ● Incorrect Marks: ○ × ○ ○

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Learning Environment at your child's school.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Home and School Relations.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. My child's school includes me in decision-making. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. My child's school treats all students fairly. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Social and Physical Environment at your child's school.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My child's school is kept neat and clean. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. My child feels safe at school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Students at my child's school are well-behaved. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please tell us if you do the following.

| | I do this | I don't do this, but I would like to | I don't do this, and I don't care to | The school does not offer this activity/event |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Attend student programs or performances | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Volunteer for the school (bake cookies, help in office, help with school fund raising, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Go on trips with my child's school (out of town band contest, field trip to the museum, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Participate in School Improvement Council meetings. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations (PTA, PTO, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Participate in school committees (textbook committee, spring carnival committee, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Attend parent workshops (how to help my child with school work, how to talk to my child about drugs, effective discipline, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please tell us if you do the following.

| | I do this | I don't do this, but I would like to | I don't do this, and I don't care to |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Contact my child's teachers about my child's school work. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet, etc. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Make sure my child does his/her homework. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Help my child with homework when he/she needs it. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Go on to next page.



| Please mark if each of the following is TRUE or FALSE. | | TRUE | FALSE |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| 1. Lack of transportation reduces my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
| 2. Family health problems reduce my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
| 3. Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
| 4. My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
| 5. The school does not encourage my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
| 6. Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
| 7. I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |

| Please rate your school on... | | Very good | Good | Okay | Bad | Very bad |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The school's overall friendliness. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The school's efforts to get important information from parents. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The school's efforts to give important information to parents. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. How the school is doing overall. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| Please answer the following questions about <u>your child</u> who attends the school identified at the bottom of this page. | |
|---|--|
| 1. What grade is your child in? | <input type="radio"/> 3rd <input type="radio"/> 4th <input type="radio"/> 5th <input type="radio"/> 6th <input type="radio"/> 7th <input type="radio"/> 8th <input type="radio"/> 9th <input type="radio"/> 10th <input type="radio"/> 11th |
| 2. What is your child's gender? | <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female |
| 3. What is your child's race/ethnicity? | <input type="radio"/> African - American/Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white <input type="radio"/> Native American <input type="radio"/> Other |
| 4. What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card? | <input type="radio"/> All or mostly A's and B's <input type="radio"/> All or mostly C's and D's <input type="radio"/> All or mostly B's and C's <input type="radio"/> All or mostly D's and F's |

| Please answer the following questions about <u>yourself</u> . We are asking these questions because we want to be sure that schools are involving all parents. For each question, please mark only one answer. Your answers will be kept private. | |
|---|---|
| 1. What is your gender? | <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female |
| 2. What is your race/ethnic group? | <input type="radio"/> African - American/Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific islander <input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white <input type="radio"/> Native American <input type="radio"/> Other |
| 3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? | <input type="radio"/> Attended elementary/high school <input type="radio"/> Earned Associate Degree <input type="radio"/> Earned college degree <input type="radio"/> Completed high school/GED <input type="radio"/> Attended college/training program <input type="radio"/> Postgraduate study and/or degree |
| 4. What is your family's total yearly household income? | <input type="radio"/> Less than \$15,000 <input type="radio"/> \$25,000 - \$34,999 <input type="radio"/> \$55,000 - \$75,000 <input type="radio"/> \$15,000 - \$24,999 <input type="radio"/> \$35,000 - \$54,999 <input type="radio"/> More than \$75,000 |

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

| | | |
|---|---------|---------------------|
| DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA | | |
|  | 3205044 | Leaphart Elementary |



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

APPENDIX B

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 specifies that “school report cards should include information in such areas as...evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students.” To obtain these evaluations, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) has constructed student, teacher, and parent surveys that are designed to measure perceptions of three factors: home and school relations, the school’s learning environment, and the school’s social and physical environment. The purpose of these teacher, parent, and student surveys is to obtain information related to the perceptions of these groups about your school. Results will provide valuable information to principals, teachers, parents, School Improvement Councils, and community groups in their efforts to identify areas for improvement. Results will also appear on the annual school report cards.

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on www.ed.sc.gov website

February 2, 2009 – Website opens.

February 27, 2009 – Website closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

February 17, 2009 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.

March 20, 2009 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

February 17, 2009 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.

March 13, 2009 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.

This is the date appearing in the letter to parents.

March 20, 2009 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Cynthia Hearn at chearn@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-8269.

INDEX

This booklet is divided into sections by the different tasks required for the administration of surveys.

| SECTION | PAGE | SECTION | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------|------|---|------|
| Changes This Year | 2 | Preparing Surveys for Shipment | 6 |
| General Guidelines | 2 | Shipping the Completed Surveys | 6 |
| Receipt and Distribution of Materials | 3 | Appendix A – Student and Parent | |
| Survey Guidelines | 3 | Survey Participants | 7 |
| Administration of Surveys | 5 | Teacher Instructions for Student Survey | 8 |

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

CHANGES THIS YEAR

STUDENT & PARENT SURVEYS – No changes in administration or shipping procedures.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the parent survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school's survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.
- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment can not scan photocopies.
- ✓ Retain the container in which you received the survey forms. That same container can be used to return the survey forms to the contractor.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

- Check the materials received in your shipment to ensure that you have received the following items:
 - ✓ An envelope containing;
 1. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 2. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 3. A page of shipping instructions, and
 4. One pre-addressed UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
 - ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
 - ✓ If applicable, Spanish parent survey envelopes. The outside of the envelope is marked with "S."
 - ✓ Student survey forms.
- The number of survey forms allocated to your school is based on numbers provided by your district office in December. The shipping list located on the Office of Data Management and Analysis website (<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Data-Management-and-Analysis/>) provides the number of survey forms ordered for your school.
- Check a few student and parent survey forms to make sure that your school name is on the form. If you have received survey forms for another school, please contact Mike Pulaski.
- Keep the box in which the survey forms were delivered to use for the return shipment.
- Give the letter from the EOC to your principal.
- Determine the number of student and parent survey forms you will need for each class at the designated grade level(s). Count the surveys into classroom stacks and distribute.

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Student surveys should be administered in classroom settings.
- Each survey item has four response choices. Respondents must decide whether they agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each statement. Students will mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey form. If they do not have knowledge relative to the statement, students should be instructed to skip the item and go on to the next one.
- Teachers should not read the survey items to the students, but they may answer student questions about the survey items. Teachers may read items to special education students with an oral administration testing accommodation. On the last page of these instructions is the script for teachers to use to explain the survey to students.
- It is important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way. Please have the students use pencils. A number 2 pencil is not required.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

- Parent surveys are available in both English and Spanish. Spanish-language parent surveys are for recent immigrants or parents who do not yet possess adequate English reading skills. The Spanish version of the parent survey is enclosed in an envelope with an “S” on the outside.
- Schools will distribute envelopes containing parent surveys to students in the appropriate grade(s). Students should take the envelope home for their parents to complete the survey inside and then return the envelope to the school. Envelopes are used to maintain confidentiality.
- The parent survey should be administered to the parents of the same children participating in the student survey.
- Parents with children in the highest grade at two different schools will receive two survey forms to complete. The name of the school appears on the survey form to help avoid confusion for the parents.
- Parent surveys will not be administered to parents of children in grades two and below. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- The parent survey forms are identical for all grade levels. If you are surveying parents for more than one grade level, the correct number of survey forms for all grade levels will be in your shipment.
- Each survey contains fifty-four questions and should take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. The letter enclosed with the survey form tells parents that they are being asked for their opinions about their child’s school. Parents are asked to think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened only once or twice. They are asked to provide honest responses that can help to improve the school.
- Parents should mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey. Although the scanning equipment can read pen marks, it is still a good idea to use a pencil should the parent need to change an answer. It is also important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way.
- No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the survey form. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- Parents have the option of mailing their completed survey form to the Department of Education. The mailing address is provided in the letter to parents from the State Superintendent of Education.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Choose a day within the time period to administer the survey to the students. The survey should be administered to students at the same time (homeroom or advisory period for example).
- Copy the teacher instructions from the last page of these administration procedures and provide a copy of the instructions with the survey forms. Make sure the classroom teachers administering the student surveys are familiar with the administration instructions for your school.
- On the day the survey is to be administered, distribute materials to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s).
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the March 13 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). The envelopes containing the Spanish version of the survey and letter will be marked with an "S." Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible.
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Teacher Survey

- The teacher survey is conducted online over the internet. The survey can be accessed from the State Department of Education website at www.ed.sc.gov.
- Teachers, librarians, guidance counselors, and speech therapists at the school should complete the teacher survey. Part-time teachers may complete a survey form if they are on campus at least half of each school day or week.
- The survey may be completed using any computer with internet access. Teachers may use their home computers.
- There is no way to determine which teachers have completed the survey, but the internet site keeps track of how many survey forms have been completed for each school. A teacher survey reporting tool may be accessed from the first page of the teacher survey.
- Problems with your school's internet access should be directed to your district technology coordinator.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

PREPARING SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Place all surveys flat, face up, and turned the same way. **Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged.** No changes or edits may be made to student responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review student responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with masking tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

Parent Survey

- All parent surveys should be returned in their individual envelopes. Envelopes should be returned flat, face up, and all turned the same way.
- All parent surveys returned without the envelope should be placed on top of the envelopes. Place the survey forms flat, face up, and turned the same way. **Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged.** No changes or edits may be made to parent responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review parent responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed survey forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with masking tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Attach the pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label to your package. (NOTE: If you are re-using the original delivery box be sure to remove or cover up the old label.) Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school. You also can drop off the package at any UPS store as well as selected Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Friday, March 20, 2009**.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student and Parent Survey Participants

| School's Grade Span | Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed | | School's Grade Span | Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed |
|---------------------|--|--|---------------------|--|
| K-1, K-2, 1-2 | none | | 4-9 | 5 & 9 |
| K-3 | 3 | | 5-9 | 9 |
| 1-3 | 3 | | 6-9 | 9 |
| 2-3 | 3 | | 7-9 | 9 |
| K-4 | 4 | | 8-9 | 9 |
| 1-4 | 4 | | K-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 2-4 | 4 | | 1-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 3-4 | 4 | | 2-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| K-5 | 5 | | 3-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 1-5 | 5 | | 4-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 2-5 | 5 | | 5-10 | 8 & 10 |
| 3-5 | 5 | | 6-10 | 8 & 10 |
| 4-5 | 5 | | 7-10 | 8 & 10 |
| K-6 | 6 | | 8-10 | 10 |
| 1-6 | 6 | | 9-10 | 10 |
| 2-6 | 6 | | K-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 3-6 | 6 | | 1-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 4-6 | 6 | | 2-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 5-6 | 6 | | 3-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| K-7 | 5 & 7 | | 4-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 1-7 | 5 & 7 | | 5-11 | 8 & 11 |
| 2-7 | 5 & 7 | | 6-11 | 8 & 11 |
| 3-7 | 5 & 7 | | 7-11 | 8 & 11 |
| 4-7 | 5 & 7 | | 8-11 | 11 |
| 5-7 | 7 | | 9-11 | 11 |
| 6-7 | 7 | | 10-11 | 11 |
| K-8 | 5 & 8 | | K-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 1-8 | 5 & 8 | | 1-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 2-8 | 5 & 8 | | 2-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 3-8 | 5 & 8 | | 3-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 4-8 | 5 & 8 | | 4-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 5-8 | 8 | | 5-12 | 8 & 11 |
| 6-8 | 8 | | 6-12 | 8 & 11 |
| 7-8 | 8 | | 7-12 | 8 & 11 |
| K-9 | 5 & 9 | | 8-12 | 11 |
| 1-9 | 5 & 9 | | 9-12 | 11 |
| 2-9 | 5 & 9 | | 10-12 | 11 |
| 3-9 | 5 & 9 | | 11-12 | 11 |

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT SURVEY

Surveys should be administered in a classroom setting. One student should be designated in each classroom to collect the student surveys and to bring them to the school survey coordinator. To ensure confidentiality, classroom/homeroom teachers should not collect completed surveys. Classroom teachers and school administrators are not to review completed student surveys.

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

Today you are being asked your opinions about our school. There are no right or wrong answers. When you read each item, think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened once or twice. Please provide honest and true answers so that we can change and improve our school. Do not talk to other students, but you can ask me a question if you do not understand a statement. Do NOT write your name on the survey. Do not fold or bend the sheet.

First, read the instructions at the top of the form and mark your grade. Make sure you have a pencil. Do not use a pen. You will read each statement, and mark your response on your survey sheet. Darken the ovals completely with your pencil. Erase any stray marks or changes. Remember to continue on the back of the sheet.

There are four choices for each sentence. Decide whether you agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each sentence. Do your best to decide. If you do not know anything about the subject, you can skip the sentence and go on to the next one.

When you have completed the survey, check to see that you have marked only one response to each sentence and that you have marked your correct grade. Then, place your survey on your desk. (The designated student) will collect the forms.

Have the student designated to collect surveys do so. Then, have the student take the completed surveys to the school survey coordinator.

Thank You

South Carolina Parent Survey

Parents in South Carolina who have children in selected grades are being asked to complete this survey. This survey asks you how you feel about your child's school. Since this survey will be used to help make your child's school a better place, it is very important to tell us exactly what you think. Your answers will be kept private. The school will get a summary of the survey results.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Make solid marks that fill the circle completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.

- Make no stray marks on this form.

• Correct Mark: ● Incorrect Marks: ○ × ○ ○

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Learning Environment at your child's school.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Home and School Relations.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. My child's school includes me in decision-making. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. My child's school treats all students fairly. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Social and Physical Environment at your child's school.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Don't Know |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My child's school is kept neat and clean. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. My child feels safe at school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Students at my child's school are well-behaved. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please tell us if you do the following.

| | I do this | I don't do this, but I would like to | I don't do this, and I don't care to | The school does not offer this activity/event |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Attend student programs or performances | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Volunteer for the school (bake cookies, help in office, help with school fund raising, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Go on trips with my child's school (out of town band contest, field trip to the museum, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Participate in School Improvement Council meetings. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations (PTA, PTO, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Participate in school committees (textbook committee, spring carnival committee, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Attend parent workshops (how to help my child with school work, how to talk to my child about drugs, effective discipline, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please tell us if you do the following.

| | I do this | I don't do this, but I would like to | I don't do this, and I don't care to |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Visit my child's classrooms during the school day. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Contact my child's teachers about my child's school work. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet, etc. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Make sure my child does his/her homework. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Help my child with homework when he/she needs it. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Go on to next page.



Please mark if each of the following is TRUE or FALSE.

- | | TRUE | FALSE |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Lack of transportation reduces my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Family health problems reduce my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The school does not encourage my involvement. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please rate your school on...

- | | Very good | Good | Okay | Bad | Very bad |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The school's overall friendliness. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The school's efforts to get important information from parents. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The school's efforts to give important information to parents. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. How the school is doing overall. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please answer the following questions about your child who attends the school identified at the bottom of this page.

- What grade is your child in? ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ 5th ☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ 9th ☐ 10th ☐ 11th
- What is your child's gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female
- What is your child's race/ethnicity?

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> African - American/Black | <input type="radio"/> Hispanic | <input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific Islander |
| <input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white | <input type="radio"/> Native American | <input type="radio"/> Other |
- What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card?

| | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> All or mostly A's and B's | <input type="radio"/> All or mostly C's and D's |
| <input type="radio"/> All or mostly B's and C's | <input type="radio"/> All or mostly D's and F's |

Please answer the following questions about yourself. We are asking these questions because we want to be sure that schools are involving all parents. For each question, please mark only one answer. Your answers will be kept private.

- What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female
- What is your race/ethnic group?

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> African - American/Black | <input type="radio"/> Hispanic | <input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific islander |
| <input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white | <input type="radio"/> Native American | <input type="radio"/> Other |
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Attended elementary/high school | <input type="radio"/> Earned Associate Degree | <input type="radio"/> Earned college degree |
| <input type="radio"/> Completed high school/GED | <input type="radio"/> Attended college/training program | <input type="radio"/> Postgraduate study and/or degree |
- What is your family's total yearly household income?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than \$15,000 | <input type="radio"/> \$25,000 - \$34,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$55,000 - \$75,000 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$15,000 - \$24,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$35,000 - \$54,999 | <input type="radio"/> More than \$75,000 |

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA



3205044

Leaphart Elementary



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 specifies that “school report cards should include information in such areas as...evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students.” To obtain these evaluations, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) has constructed student, teacher, and parent surveys that are designed to measure perceptions of three factors: home and school relations, the school’s learning environment, and the school’s social and physical environment. The purpose of these teacher, parent, and student surveys is to obtain information related to the perceptions of these groups about your school. Results will provide valuable information to principals, teachers, parents, School Improvement Councils, and community groups in their efforts to identify areas for improvement. Results will also appear on the annual school report cards.

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on www.ed.sc.gov website

February 2, 2009 – Website opens.

February 27, 2009 – Website closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

February 17, 2009 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.

March 20, 2009 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

February 17, 2009 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.

March 13, 2009 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.

This is the date appearing in the letter to parents.

March 20, 2009 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Cynthia Hearn at chearn@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-8269.

INDEX

This booklet is divided into sections by the different tasks required for the administration of surveys.

| SECTION | PAGE | SECTION | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------|------|---|------|
| Changes This Year | 2 | Preparing Surveys for Shipment | 6 |
| General Guidelines | 2 | Shipping the Completed Surveys | 6 |
| Receipt and Distribution of Materials | 3 | Appendix A – Student and Parent | |
| Survey Guidelines | 3 | Survey Participants | 7 |
| Administration of Surveys | 5 | Teacher Instructions for Student Survey | 8 |

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS**

CHANGES THIS YEAR

STUDENT & PARENT SURVEYS – No changes in administration or shipping procedures.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the parent survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school's survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.
- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment can not scan photocopies.
- ✓ Retain the container in which you received the survey forms. That same container can be used to return the survey forms to the contractor.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

- Check the materials received in your shipment to ensure that you have received the following items:
 - ✓ An envelope containing;
 1. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 2. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 3. A page of shipping instructions, and
 4. One pre-addressed UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
 - ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
 - ✓ If applicable, Spanish parent survey envelopes. The outside of the envelope is marked with “S.”
 - ✓ Student survey forms.
- The number of survey forms allocated to your school is based on numbers provided by your district office in December. The shipping list located on the Office of Data Management and Analysis website (<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Data-Management-and-Analysis/>) provides the number of survey forms ordered for your school.
- Check a few student and parent survey forms to make sure that your school name is on the form. If you have received survey forms for another school, please contact Mike Pulaski.
- Keep the box in which the survey forms were delivered to use for the return shipment.
- Give the letter from the EOC to your principal.
- Determine the number of student and parent survey forms you will need for each class at the designated grade level(s). Count the surveys into classroom stacks and distribute.

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Student surveys should be administered in classroom settings.
- Each survey item has four response choices. Respondents must decide whether they agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each statement. Students will mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey form. If they do not have knowledge relative to the statement, students should be instructed to skip the item and go on to the next one.
- Teachers should not read the survey items to the students, but they may answer student questions about the survey items. Teachers may read items to special education students with an oral administration testing accommodation. On the last page of these instructions is the script for teachers to use to explain the survey to students.
- It is important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way. Please have the students use pencils. A number 2 pencil is not required.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

- Parent surveys are available in both English and Spanish. Spanish-language parent surveys are for recent immigrants or parents who do not yet possess adequate English reading skills. The Spanish version of the parent survey is enclosed in an envelope with an “S” on the outside.
- Schools will distribute envelopes containing parent surveys to students in the appropriate grade(s). Students should take the envelope home for their parents to complete the survey inside and then return the envelope to the school. Envelopes are used to maintain confidentiality.
- The parent survey should be administered to the parents of the same children participating in the student survey.
- Parents with children in the highest grade at two different schools will receive two survey forms to complete. The name of the school appears on the survey form to help avoid confusion for the parents.
- Parent surveys will not be administered to parents of children in grades two and below. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- The parent survey forms are identical for all grade levels. If you are surveying parents for more than one grade level, the correct number of survey forms for all grade levels will be in your shipment.
- Each survey contains fifty-four questions and should take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. The letter enclosed with the survey form tells parents that they are being asked for their opinions about their child’s school. Parents are asked to think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened only once or twice. They are asked to provide honest responses that can help to improve the school.
- Parents should mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey. Although the scanning equipment can read pen marks, it is still a good idea to use a pencil should the parent need to change an answer. It is also important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way.
- No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the survey form. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- Parents have the option of mailing their completed survey form to the Department of Education. The mailing address is provided in the letter to parents from the State Superintendent of Education.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Choose a day within the time period to administer the survey to the students. The survey should be administered to students at the same time (homeroom or advisory period for example).
- Copy the teacher instructions from the last page of these administration procedures and provide a copy of the instructions with the survey forms. Make sure the classroom teachers administering the student surveys are familiar with the administration instructions for your school.
- On the day the survey is to be administered, distribute materials to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s).
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the March 13 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). The envelopes containing the Spanish version of the survey and letter will be marked with an "S." Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible.
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Teacher Survey

- The teacher survey is conducted online over the internet. The survey can be accessed from the State Department of Education website at www.ed.sc.gov.
- Teachers, librarians, guidance counselors, and speech therapists at the school should complete the teacher survey. Part-time teachers may complete a survey form if they are on campus at least half of each school day or week.
- The survey may be completed using any computer with internet access. Teachers may use their home computers.
- There is no way to determine which teachers have completed the survey, but the internet site keeps track of how many survey forms have been completed for each school. A teacher survey reporting tool may be accessed from the first page of the teacher survey.
- Problems with your school's internet access should be directed to your district technology coordinator.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

PREPARING SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Place all surveys flat, face up, and turned the same way. **Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged.** No changes or edits may be made to student responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review student responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with masking tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

Parent Survey

- All parent surveys should be returned in their individual envelopes. Envelopes should be returned flat, face up, and all turned the same way.
- All parent surveys returned without the envelope should be placed on top of the envelopes. Place the survey forms flat, face up, and turned the same way. **Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged.** No changes or edits may be made to parent responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review parent responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed survey forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with masking tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Attach the pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label to your package. (NOTE: If you are re-using the original delivery box be sure to remove or cover up the old label.) Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school. You also can drop off the package at any UPS store as well as selected Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Friday, March 20, 2009**.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2009
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student and Parent Survey Participants

| School's Grade Span | Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed | | School's Grade Span | Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed |
|---------------------|--|--|---------------------|--|
| K-1, K-2, 1-2 | none | | 4-9 | 5 & 9 |
| K-3 | 3 | | 5-9 | 9 |
| 1-3 | 3 | | 6-9 | 9 |
| 2-3 | 3 | | 7-9 | 9 |
| K-4 | 4 | | 8-9 | 9 |
| 1-4 | 4 | | K-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 2-4 | 4 | | 1-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 3-4 | 4 | | 2-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| K-5 | 5 | | 3-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 1-5 | 5 | | 4-10 | 5, 8, & 10 |
| 2-5 | 5 | | 5-10 | 8 & 10 |
| 3-5 | 5 | | 6-10 | 8 & 10 |
| 4-5 | 5 | | 7-10 | 8 & 10 |
| K-6 | 6 | | 8-10 | 10 |
| 1-6 | 6 | | 9-10 | 10 |
| 2-6 | 6 | | K-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 3-6 | 6 | | 1-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 4-6 | 6 | | 2-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 5-6 | 6 | | 3-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| K-7 | 5 & 7 | | 4-11 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 1-7 | 5 & 7 | | 5-11 | 8 & 11 |
| 2-7 | 5 & 7 | | 6-11 | 8 & 11 |
| 3-7 | 5 & 7 | | 7-11 | 8 & 11 |
| 4-7 | 5 & 7 | | 8-11 | 11 |
| 5-7 | 7 | | 9-11 | 11 |
| 6-7 | 7 | | 10-11 | 11 |
| K-8 | 5 & 8 | | K-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 1-8 | 5 & 8 | | 1-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 2-8 | 5 & 8 | | 2-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 3-8 | 5 & 8 | | 3-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 4-8 | 5 & 8 | | 4-12 | 5, 8, & 11 |
| 5-8 | 8 | | 5-12 | 8 & 11 |
| 6-8 | 8 | | 6-12 | 8 & 11 |
| 7-8 | 8 | | 7-12 | 8 & 11 |
| K-9 | 5 & 9 | | 8-12 | 11 |
| 1-9 | 5 & 9 | | 9-12 | 11 |
| 2-9 | 5 & 9 | | 10-12 | 11 |
| 3-9 | 5 & 9 | | 11-12 | 11 |

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT SURVEY

Surveys should be administered in a classroom setting. One student should be designated in each classroom to collect the student surveys and to bring them to the school survey coordinator. To ensure confidentiality, classroom/homeroom teachers should not collect completed surveys. Classroom teachers and school administrators are not to review completed student surveys.

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

Today you are being asked your opinions about our school. There are no right or wrong answers. When you read each item, think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened once or twice. Please provide honest and true answers so that we can change and improve our school. Do not talk to other students, but you can ask me a question if you do not understand a statement. Do NOT write your name on the survey. Do not fold or bend the sheet.

First, read the instructions at the top of the form and mark your grade. Make sure you have a pencil. Do not use a pen. You will read each statement, and mark your response on your survey sheet. Darken the ovals completely with your pencil. Erase any stray marks or changes. Remember to continue on the back of the sheet.

There are four choices for each sentence. Decide whether you agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each sentence. Do your best to decide. If you do not know anything about the subject, you can skip the sentence and go on to the next one.

When you have completed the survey, check to see that you have marked only one response to each sentence and that you have marked your correct grade. Then, place your survey on your desk. (The designated student) will collect the forms.

Have the student designated to collect surveys do so. Then, have the student take the completed surveys to the school survey coordinator.

Thank You

The Education Oversight Committee does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap in its practices relating to employment or establishment and administration of its programs and initiatives. Inquiries regarding employment, programs and initiatives of the Committee should be directed to the Executive Director 803.734.6148.