

2012

Results of the 2011 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 – Results of Prior Parent Surveys	5
Part Two - Administration of the 2011 Parent Survey	9
Part Three – Respondents of the 2011 Parent Survey	13
Part Four – Results of the 2011 Parent Survey	21
Part Five – Additional Analysis	37
Part Six – Recommendations	39
Appendix.....	
A. Administration of the 2011 Report Card Surveys	
B. Copy of 2011 Parent Survey	
C. <i>Don't Know Why: Investigating Non-Responses on the Parent Survey</i>	

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 2011 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 73,755, a 6.2 percent increase in the number of surveys completed and returned in the prior school year. More parent surveys were returned in 2011 than in any other year since the survey was first administered. Based upon the number of total surveys distributed, approximately 40 percent of all parent surveys that were mailed to schools were completed and returned. This methodology of calculating a response rate underestimates the statewide response rate because schools requested more parent surveys than the total number of parents at each eligible to participate in the survey. Schools requested and received extra copies of the parent survey for parents who enrolled children the second semester or who lost their original form. Based upon the average daily membership of students in grades 5, 8 and 11, approximately 47 percent of parents completed and returned surveys in 2011. This method underestimates the

sample size. The parents of some 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th grade students are also eligible to complete the survey due to the unique grade configurations of the schools. Therefore, using two methods of calculating a response rate, one method that underestimated and one that overestimated the total number of parents eligible to take the survey, the response rate to the 2011 parent survey was between 40 and 47 percent, each of which by industry standards is considered average.

In 2011 there was one significant change in the administration of the parent survey. In 2011 there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish made available to parents as compared to 9,759 that were distributed in 2010. In 2011 the percentage of parents who completed the survey and who identified themselves as Hispanic was 4.6 percent as compared to 5.0 percent in 2010.

An analysis of the respondents to the 2011 parent survey concludes that the survey responses typically over represented the perceptions of parents who had children in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who had children in high school. Furthermore, the respondents typically have obtained higher educational achievements and have greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina.

As in prior years, the “typical” parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college and having a household income of greater than \$35,000. The respondents typically had obtained higher educational achievements and greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina. Typically, parents of elementary school students were overrepresented in the survey responses while parents of high school students were underrepresented. Furthermore, when compared to the enrollment of students in public schools, parents of African American students were underrepresented in the responses.

The results of the 2011 parent survey demonstrate that, despite a significant increase in the number of parents responding, parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment, home and school relations and social and physical environment of their child’s school—were consistent with the prior year’s results. Significant changes are estimated 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	2011	2010	% Increase/Decrease
Learning Environment	84.3	85.9	-1.6
Home and School Relations	80.2	81.9	-1.7
Social and Physical Environment	82.4	83.2	-0.8

Comparing the 2011 parent survey results with the mean satisfaction levels of the three prior year survey results, across all three characteristics, parent satisfaction in 2011 was also consistent with the mean or average of the parent survey results from 2009 through 2010.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:

Characteristic	2011	Mean 2008-2010	% Difference
Learning Environment	84.3	84.6	-0.3
Home and School Relations	80.2	80.4	0.2
Social and Physical Environment	82.4	81.5	0.9

Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, declined as the absolute rating of the school declined. The largest difference in parental satisfaction between the highest and lowest performing schools was in parent perception of the social and physical environment of their child's school, followed closely by the learning environment.

Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends an Excellent or At-Risk School, Satisfied with:

Characteristic	Excellent	At-Risk	Difference
Learning Environment	89.9	74.9	14.9
Home and School Relations	85.1	76.9	8.2
Social and Physical Environment	88.4	71.1	17.3

Regarding parental involvement, parents who responded to the 2011 annual survey reported comparable levels of parental involvement to other years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2011

Work Schedule	54.4%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	24.6%
School does not encourage involvement	16.2%
Lack of child or adult care services	14.5%
Family and health problems	14.3%
Transportation	11.5%
Involvement not appreciated	11.4%

Based upon additional analysis conducted at the state level by the South Carolina Educational Policy Center at the University of South Carolina and national research conducted through the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET), the staff proposes to the EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee the following recommendations:

1. The survey questions on the Parent Survey have not been updated since 2001. The staff recommends that the Parent, Teacher and Student Surveys be reviewed to determine how the survey items could be better aligned among all three surveys. Such a review should also take into account the study provided by the South Carolina Educational Policy Center and the initial results of the MET Project. Since the original items on the Parent Survey were designed by the EOC, the EOC staff would work with the South Carolina Department of Education on this initiative.
2. The EOC staff should work with school districts to determine effective strategies for increasing the number of parents who participate in the survey, especially parents of Hispanic or African-American students who are currently underrepresented in the survey results.

PART ONE

Results of Prior Parent Surveys

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 <http://www.eoc.sc.gov>.

In 2010 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 69,474, a 3.7 percent increase in the number of surveys completed and returned in the prior school year. Between 36 and 47 percent of parents completed and returned the survey. The variation can be explained accordingly. Based upon the number of total surveys actually mailed to the schools, approximately 36 percent of all parent surveys were completed and returned. This methodology of calculating a response rate underestimates the statewide response rate because schools requested more parent surveys than the total number of parents at each eligible to participate in the survey. Schools requested and received extra copies of the parent survey for parents who enrolled children the second semester or who lost their original form. However, based upon the average daily membership of students in grades 5, 8 and 11, approximately 47 percent of parents completed and returned surveys in 2010. This method underestimates the total number of eligible parents surveyed. The parents of some 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th grade students are also eligible to complete the survey due to the unique grade configurations of the schools.

As in prior years, the “typical” parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college and having a household income of greater than \$35,000. The respondents typically had obtained higher educational achievements and greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina. Typically, parents of elementary school students were overrepresented in the survey responses while parents of high school students were underrepresented. Furthermore, when compared to the enrollment of students in public schools, parents of African American students did not complete and return the survey and were therefore underrepresented in the responses.

The results of the 2010 parent survey demonstrate that, despite a significant increase in the number of parents responding, parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment, home and school relations and social and physical environment of their child’s school—were consistent with the prior year’s results. Significant changes are estimated 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	2010	2009	% Increase
Learning Environment	85.9	85.5	0.4
Home and School Relations	81.9	81.4	0.5
Social and Physical Environment	83.2	82.7	0.5

However, comparing the 2010 parent survey results with the mean satisfaction levels of the three prior year survey results, across all three characteristics, parent satisfaction in 2010 exceeded the mean or average of the parent survey results from 2007 through 2009.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:			
Characteristic	2010	Mean 2007-2009	% Difference
Learning Environment	85.9	83.3	2.6
Home and School Relations	81.9	79.0	2.9
Social and Physical Environment	83.2	80.1	3.1

Regarding parental involvement, parents who responded to the 2010 annual survey reported comparable levels of parental involvement to other years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2010	
Work Schedule	55.1%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	25.3%
School does not encourage involvement	17.4%
Lack of child or adult care services	15.1%
Family and health problems	14.3%
Involvement not appreciated	12.0%
Transportation	11.8%

The 2007 parent survey report was a detailed analysis that included the following components: (1) tabulation and analysis of parent survey responses by school type and rating; (2) a review of the research literature on parental involvement in public schools, including the benefits of parental involvement on students, parents and schools; and (3) an in-depth analysis comparing the results of the parent and teacher surveys administered in 2007. The parent and teacher surveys measure 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 included 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 analysis confirmed 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 the questions 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 those involved with 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 (SCDE) 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, 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 and implement policies to improve parental involvement by all parents and address issues of concern to teachers, parents and students.

The results of the 2011 parent survey are documented in this report.

PART TWO

Administration of the 2011 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 school during which the surveys were distributed.

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, which include primary schools, child development schools and schools with configurations like K, K-1, and K-2 are not surveyed. The parent survey is typically administered during the second semester of each school year. Appendix A provides the instructions used by schools in 2010 to administer the parent as well as student and teacher surveys.

Compared to the prior years, in 2011 there was one significant change in the administration of the parent survey. In 2011 there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish. All other administrative and shipping procedures remained the same. A copy of the 2011 survey is in the appendix. The 2011 administration of the parent survey occurred over the following time period and involved the following actions.

February 28, 2011	All schools received survey forms.
March 18, 2011	Date for parent survey forms returned to school.
March 25, 2011	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 the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). According to SCDE, an independent contractor hired by the agency to mail to each school the following:

- ✓ An administrative 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, bar-coded 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.
- ✓ 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. 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.² The annual costs of printing, shipping, processing and scanning the parent surveys are approximately \$54,000.

Each school’s designated 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.

As in the prior year, the 2011 instructions contained the following special note that cautions schools against implementing policies that would create disincentives for parents who opt to mail in their survey responses:

SPECIAL NOTE: We appreciate that schools work diligently each year to encourage parents to complete and return the parent surveys. Some schools offer incentives such as ice cream treats or extra recess time to individual students or classes where all students have returned completed parent surveys. Each year parents call the Department to inform us that their child is upset that he/she cannot return the parent survey form to school and receive the special incentive because the parent wants to mail the survey form to the Department. Parents have the option to mail in the survey form, so we would encourage you to not penalize students whose parents’ mail in their completed survey form.³

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 2011 annual school report cards. For each school, SCDE aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the data files to the district office.

¹ “Administration of the 2011 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

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

³ “Administration of the 2011 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

As in prior years, the 2011 parent survey contained a total of fifty-four questions. Forty-six questions were 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.

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

Respondents of the 2011 Parent Survey

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) in 2011 issued the seventh edition of *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. The AAPOR notes that there are mixed mode surveys that “can consist of surveys in which there are separate samples which are conducted with different modes, a unified sample in which multiple modes are used for individual cases (e.g. in address-based samples employing both in-person and postal approaches to obtain responses), or a combination of both. . . . However, for calculating outcome rates many of the detailed, mode-specific disposition codes are irrelevant. They can be collapsed into the major categories used in the outcome formulas used in *Standard Definitions*.”⁴ Therefore, as in prior years, the response rate for the parent survey is calculated accordingly:

Response Rate 4 =

$$\frac{\text{Complete surveys} + \text{Partial Surveys}}{(\text{Completed} + \text{Partial Surveys Returned}) + (\text{Non-Returned Surveys}) + (\text{Estimate of proportion surveys of unknown eligibility that are eligible})}$$

According to Instructional Assessment Resources at the University of Texas, acceptable response rates vary by the method of distribution:

Mail: 50% adequate, 60% good, 70% very good

Phone: 80% good

Email: 40% average, 50% good, 60% very good

Online: 30% average

Classroom paper: > 50% = good

Face-to-face: 80-85% 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 2011 parent survey to determine the percentage of eligible parents who 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 183,764 parent surveys were mailed to 1,145 schools for distribution. The schools included elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, career centers, charter schools, and schools in the South Carolina Public Charter School District as well as the following special schools:

- Felton Laboratory School,
- John de la Howe School,

⁴ The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2011. *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. 7th edition. AAPOR., p. 39.

⁵ Instructional Assessment Resources. University of Texas at Austin, 21 September 2011. <<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/method/survey-Response.php>>.

- Wil Lou Gray School,
- School for the Deaf and the Blind,
- Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics, and
- Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities

Schools containing grades 2 or lower were not included in the survey. This first method inflates the sample size because schools requested and received extra copies of the parent survey for parents who enrolled children in the second semester or who lost their original form.

A second method is to estimate the unknown eligibility of surveys by using the statewide 135-day average daily membership of all students in grades 5, 8 and 11 in school year 2010-11 as the sample size. On the 45th, 90th and 135th days of school, school districts report each student by grade and by a pupil classification system prescribed in the Education Finance Act. In school year 2010-11 the 135-day average daily membership for grades 5, 8 and 11 rounded to the nearest student totaled 156,179.⁶ This method underestimates the number of parents surveyed. The parents of some 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th grade students also complete the survey because some schools have a grade configuration that spans multiple levels or these schools represent the highest grade level in the school.

As reflected in Table 1, the total number of parent surveys returned in 2011 increased by 6.2 percent or 4,281 over the number returned in the prior year. More parent surveys were returned in 2011 than in any other year since the survey was administered.

Table 1
Total Number of Parent Surveys Returned

2011	73,755
2010	69,474
2009	67,014
2008	68,761
2007	64,596
2006	69,495
2005	66,895
2004	66,283
2003	64,732
2002	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 40 and 47 percent of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2011 parent survey. In the prior year, 2010, using the same two methodologies, the response rate was between 36 and

⁶ “SC 135-Day Average Daily Membership by Grade, by District, 2010-2011,” South Carolina Department of Education. <<http://ed.sc.gov/data/other-data/AverageDailyMembershipandAttendance.cfm>>.

47 percent.⁷ Therefore, approximately, four out of every ten eligible parents responded to the parent survey in 2011. Compared to IAR’s definitions of acceptable response rates for email and online surveys, the response rate to the 2011 parent survey should be considered average. 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.”

Table 2
Determining the Response Rate

	Sample Size	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Method 1: Surveys Distributed	183,764	73,755	40.1%
Method 2: ADM of 5, 8 and 11 th grades	156,179	73,755	47.2%

The following research questions were posed:

- What were the characteristics of the respondents of the 2011 parent survey, and how do the respondents compare to parents of all public school children?
- Did the decision by the South Carolina Department of Education not to provide parent surveys written in Spanish reduce the proportion of the Hispanic parents who filled out the surveys?

Parents completing the survey were asked four questions about their child:

1. What grade is your child in? (3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th or 11th)
2. What is your child’s gender?
3. What is your child’s race/ethnicity?
4. What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card?

Parents were asked another set of four questions about themselves and their family:

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your race/ethnic group?
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Attended elementary/high school
 - Completed high school/GED
 - Earned Associate Degree
 - Attended college/training program
 - Earned college degree
 - Postgraduate study/and/or degree

⁷ “Results and Analyses of the 2009 Parent Survey.” Education Oversight Committee. April 19, 2010. <<http://eoc.sc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/005CF7BA-A43F-421B-AB04-72B8B8B6E4A3/34870/2009ParentSurvey2009.pdf>>”

4. What is your family's total yearly household income?

- Less than \$15,000
- \$15,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$34,999
- \$35,000 - \$54,999
- \$55,000 - \$75,000
- More than \$75,000

Responses to these eight questions revealed the following about the parents who completed the 2011 parent survey. As in prior years, the "typical" parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college. A majority of the respondents reported earning over \$35,000.

In 2011 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 4.8 percent as compared to 5.0 percent in 2010.

Table 3
Respondents to the 2011 Parent Survey
(n=73,755)

Gender	
Male	14.2%
Female	84.2%
Race	
African-American	32.1%
Caucasian/white	57.0%
Hispanic	4.6%
All Other	3.9%
Education	
Attended elementary/high school	10.9%
Completed high school/GED	22.8%
Earned Associate Degree	10.1%
Attended college/training program	21.5%
Earned college degree	19.4%
Postgraduate study/and/or degree	11.1%
Household Income	
Less than \$15,000	13.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	13.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	13.2%
\$35,000 - \$54,999	15.8%
\$55,000 - \$75,000	13.5%
More than \$75,000	23.3%
Their Child Enrolled in:	
Grades 3-5	43.9%
Grades 6-8	37.4%
Grades 9-11	16.1%
Their Child's Gender:	
Male	44.5%
Female	53.8%
Their Child's Ethnicity:	
African-American	33.4%
Caucasian/White	56.6%
Hispanic	4.8%
All Other	3.0%
Their Child's Grades:	
All or mostly A's and B's	58.4%
All or mostly B's and C's	27.4%
All or mostly C's and D's	8.9%
All or mostly D's and F's	1.8%

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% because some questions were not answered.

To determine if the survey responses were representative of elementary, middle and high school parents, the following analysis was done. First, 62,779 parents who returned the 2011 survey indicated that their child was in 5th, 8th, or 11th grade. Defining grade 5 as elementary schools, grade 8 as middle school and grade 11, high school, approximately 45 percent of parents who completed the survey were elementary school parents, 36 percent, middle school and 18 percent, high school (Table 4). As compared to the prior year, the percentage of surveys reflecting the perceptions of elementary and middle school parents remained relatively unchanged; however, the percentage of parents of high school students declined from 20 to 18 percent.

As a point of reference, 36 percent of the 135-day average daily membership in 2010-11 was attributed to students in grade 5, 34 percent to students in grade 8 and 30 percent to students in grade 11 (Table 3). The 2011 survey responses over represent the perceptions of parents in elementary schools and under represent the perceptions of parents who have children in high school.

Table 4
Parental Respondents by Child's Grade

Child Enrolled in:	Surveys Returned	% of All Surveys		2010-11 135-day Average Daily Membership (ADM)	% of ADM (Grades 5, 8, & 11)
Grade 5	28,467	45%		55,842	35.8%
Grade 8	22,738	36%		52,929	33.9%
Grade 11	11,574	18%		47,408	30.4%
TOTAL	62,779			156,179	

When asked about their child's race or ethnicity, 57 percent of the parents responded that their child's ethnicity was white, 33 percent African American and 5 percent Hispanic. Compared to the ethnicity of children in the public schools of South Carolina in 2009-10, parents whose children are African American were underrepresented by at least 5.0% in the results (Table 5).

Table 5
Ethnicity of Children

	2011 Parent Survey	Student Enrollment All Public Schools 2009-10 ⁸	Difference
White	56.6%	53.7%	2.9%
African American	33.4%	38.4%	-5.0%
Hispanic	4.8%	5.8%	-1.0%
Other	3.0%	2.1%	0.9%

Note: "Other" includes American Indian/Alaskan and Asian/Pacific Islander.

With respect to educational attainment, 30.5 percent of parents who responded to the survey in 2011 had earned a bachelor or postgraduate degree. For comparison purposes, the United States Census Bureau projected that 24.3 percent of persons 25

⁸ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD) < "State Nonfiscal Public Elementary/Secondary Education Survey," 2009-10, v.1b.

years old and over in South Carolina had earned a bachelor's degree or higher in 2009.⁹

Regarding the annual household income of the respondents, in 2011 52.6 percent of the parents who completed the survey reported having an annual household income in excess of \$35,000. For comparison purposes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in South Carolina in 2010 was \$45,669.¹⁰

Conclusions

- The total number of parent surveys completed and returned in 2011 was 73,755, a 6.2 percent or 4,281 over the number returned in the prior year. More parent surveys were returned in 2011 than in any other year since the survey was administered.
- Using two methods of calculating a response rate, one method that underestimated and one that overestimated the total number of parents eligible to take the survey, the response rate to the 2011 parent survey was either 40 or 47 percent, each of which by industry standards is considered average.
- An analysis of the respondents to the 2011 parent survey concludes that the survey responses typically over represented the perceptions of parents in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who have children in high school. Furthermore, the respondents typically have obtained higher educational achievements and have greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012, "Educational Attainment by State: 1990 to 2009," <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0233.pdf>>.

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "Median Household Income by State." <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/statemedian/>>.

PART FOUR

Results of the 2011 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 2011 parent survey. The percentages do not add to 100 percent because invalid or incomplete responses are not reflected. 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 children's schools. With a 6.2 percent increase in the number of parents responding to the survey, any significant change in the positive or negative perception of parents would reveal a shift in public opinion. "Significant change" is defined as a change of three percent or more in satisfaction.

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 6 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2011 parent survey. The data reflect the percentage of parents responding out of the total number of parents surveys completed, 73,755. Overall, 84.3 percent of parents responded that they were satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school. Across the five questions, the percentage of parents who disagreed or strongly disagreed was highest for questions 4 and 5. Approximately, one in five parents either did not believe or did not know if their child received extra help when needed.

Table 6
Percentage of Parents in 2011 Responding:

Learning Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	86.7	7.2	2.3
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	88.9	6.5	2.0
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	88.7	5.4	3.1
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	78.7	11.9	6.7
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	84.3	11.4	1.7

Table 7 compares the percentage of parents who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed to these questions each year from 2008 through 2011. Parents who completed the survey in 2011 were overwhelmingly positive about the overall learning environment of their child's school. The level of parental satisfaction in 2011 was slightly less across all questions; however, no change was greater than three percent or more. Again, consistently over time, parental response to Question 4, "my child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it," has elicited the lowest percentage of parents responding that they agreed or strongly agreed.

Table 7
2004-2011
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2011	2010	2009	2008
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	86.7	89.0	89.9	86.9
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	88.9	90.3	90.9	88.3
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	88.7	90.4	90.9	88.2
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	78.7	79.8	79.7	77.7
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	84.3	85.9	85.5	82.3

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 to compare the 2011 results with the average or mean results of the prior three years. Table 8 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the learning environment of their child's school in 2011 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2008 through 2010. Despite having more parents responding, parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's schools was consistent with the parent satisfaction levels of the three prior years.

Table 8
Comparing 2010 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Learning Environment Questions	2011	Mean % (2008-2010)	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	86.7	88.6	-1.9
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	88.9	89.8	-0.9
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	88.7	89.8	-1.1
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	78.7	79.1	-0.4
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	84.3	84.6	-0.3

Comparing parental responses to Question 5 with the 2011 absolute rating of their child's school, Table 9 documents that a higher percentage parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the overall learning environment at their child's school. Parental satisfaction declines as the absolute rating of the school declines. Comparing parents whose child attended a school with an Excellent rating versus parents whose child attended a school with an At-Risk rating, there was an approximate 15 percent difference in parent satisfaction with the learning environment.

Table 9
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2011 Absolute Rating	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
Excellent	46.3	43.6	89.9
Good	51.5	36.4	87.9
Average	52.4	32.2	84.6
Below Average	51.2	30.1	81.3
At Risk	50.3	24.7	75.0

Then, analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on absolute ratings, the data reveal that parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, even across absolute ratings (Table 10). The only exception is for parents whose children attend schools with an At-Risk rating. Parents whose children attend middle schools with an At-Risk rating were more satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school than were parents whose children attended elementary or high schools with an At-Risk rating.

Table 10
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's Elementary, Middle or High School)

2011 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
Excellent	Elementary	41.1	51.0	92.1
	Middle	49.6	39.0	88.6
	High	53.6	31.9	85.5
Good	Elementary	47.7	42.9	90.6
	Middle	54.5	31.0	85.5
	High	56.3	26.2	82.5
Average	Elementary	48.8	38.6	87.4
	Middle	56.2	25.9	82.1
	High	55.5	24.3	79.8
Below Average	Elementary	48.4	35.6	84.0
	Middle	55.0	25.9	80.9
	High	49.1	23.4	72.5
At Risk	Elementary	46.7	26.8	73.5
	Middle	52.5	23.7	76.2
	High	50.7	23.1	73.8

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 11 are included on the annual school report card.

Table 11 summarizes the total responses to these eleven questions for all parents who completed the 2011 parent survey. Overall, 80.2 percent of parents were satisfied with home and school relations at their child's school. An examination of questions 1 through 10, which ask parents more specific questions about their personal experiences at their child's school, found the following.

- Parents overwhelmingly agreed that the principal at their child's school was available and welcoming.
- 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 forty percent of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child's teachers contacted them to say good things about their child or invited the parents to visit the classroom during the school day.
- One third of the parents disagreed that their child's teachers told them how to help their child learn.
- One-fourth of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child's school included parents in decision-making.
- One-half of all parents responded that they did not believe or did not know if the school considered changes based on parental input.
- Nearly one in three parents did not believe or did not know if students were treated fairly at their child's school.

Table 11
Percentage of Parents in 2011 Responding:

Home and School Relations Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child	54.5	41.4	1.9
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	62.4	33.1	2.2
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	52.0	41.2	4.3
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	77.7	13.7	5.9
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	66.7	24.4	6.1
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	75.6	19.8	2.0
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	49.2	25.0	22.9
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	76.9	16.2	4.0
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	67.3	17.1	13.1
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	80.1	9.6	7.7
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	80.2	13.9	3.4

Approximately 80 percent of all parents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the overall home and school relations at their child's school. As

documented by Table 12, the trend is that parental satisfaction with home and school relations has increased since 2008.

**Table 12
2004-2011**

Home and School Relations

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

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Agree or Strongly Agree	80.2%	81.9%	81.4%	77.8%	77.9%	76.6%	67.8%	66.9%
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	13.9%	14.3%	14.9%	16.0%	17.1%	16.6%	17.7%	18.2%

Analyzing parental satisfaction trends over the recent years, Table 13 documents parental satisfaction with all eleven questions regarding home and school relations since 2008.

**Table 13
2008-2011**

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Home and School Relations Questions	2011	2010	2009	2008
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	54.5	52.2	57.2	53.8
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	62.4	64.1	64.4	62.2
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	52.0	53.7	54.8	53.2
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	77.7	79.5	79.3	75.0
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	66.7	67.8	67.9	65.1
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	75.6	78.3	78.3	75.4
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	49.2	50.1	50.5	47.8
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	76.9	78.9	78.8	75.5
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	67.3	67.5	67.4	63.4
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	80.1	81.4	80.8	77.3
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	80.2	81.9	81.4	77.8

An additional analysis was done comparing the mean or average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed to each statement between 2008 and 2010 with the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed in 2011. Table 14 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding home and school relations at their child's school in 2011 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2008 through 2010. Again, using a three percent change as "significant," there was no significant increase or decrease in parental responses to any of these questions.

Table 14
Comparing 2010 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Home and School Relations Questions	2011	Mean %	Difference
		(2008-2010)	
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	54.5	54.4	0.1
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	62.4	63.6	-1.2
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	52.0	53.9	-1.9
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	77.7	77.9	-0.2
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	66.7	66.9	-0.2
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	75.6	77.3	-1.7
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	49.2	49.5	-0.3
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	76.9	77.7	-0.8
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	67.3	66.1	1.2
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	80.1	79.8	0.3
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	80.2	80.4	-0.2

Comparing parental responses to Question 11 with the 2011 absolute rating of their child's school, Table 15 documents that a higher percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent strongly agreed that they were satisfied with home and school relations. Again, parental satisfaction declines as the absolute rating of the school declines. However, the difference between the percentage of parents whose children attended an Excellent Schools and the percentage of parents whose children attended an At-Risk school and who agreed or strongly agreed with Question 11 was 8.2 percent as compared to 14.9 percent regarding the learning environment of their child's school.

Table 15
I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2011 Absolute Rating	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
Excellent	53.1	32.0	85.1
Good	56.1	26.5	82.6
Average	55.9	24.4	80.3
Below Average	54.3	25.0	79.3
At Risk	54.8	22.1	76.9

Then, analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on absolute ratings, the data reveal that parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, even across absolute ratings (Table 16).

Table 16
I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's Elementary, Middle or High School)

2011 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
Excellent	Elementary	49.3	39.5	88.8
	Middle	57.4	25.7	83.1
	High	56.8	21.8	78.6
Good	Elementary	53.0	33.7	86.7
	Middle	58.6	19.8	78.4
	High	60.0	17.9	77.9
Average	Elementary	54.8	29.8	84.6
	Middle	57.2	19.0	76.2
	High	56.3	18.4	74.7
Below Average	Elementary	54.3	28.7	83.0
	Middle	55.4	22.5	77.9
	High	51.0	19.8	70.8
At Risk	Elementary	54.5	22.9	77.4
	Middle	54.7	22.5	77.2
	High	54.1	19.8	73.9

C. Social and Physical Environment

The next 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 17 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2011 parent survey. Nine in ten parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child's school was kept neat and clean and that their child felt safe at school. On the other hand, over 47 percent of parents either did not believe or did not know that students at their child's school were well behaved. And, 16.4 percent of parents did not know or did not believe that their child's teachers cared about their child as an individual.

Table 17
Percentage of Parents in 2011 Responding:

Social and Physical Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.0	5.4	2.6
2. My child feels safe at school.	89.7	6.7	1.9
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	81.1	8.8	7.6
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	61.2	23.5	13.0
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	82.4	12.0	3.5

Table 18 compares the 2011 results of the South Carolina parent survey with the results of parent surveys administered since 2004. The data document that parental responses to the five questions regarding the social and physical environment of their child's school are consistent with the prior year's results. Over time, however, parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's schools as reflected in the responses to these five questions has increased.

Table 18
2008- 2011
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2011	2010	2009	2008
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.0	91.0	90.7	87.9
2. My child feels safe at school.	89.7	90.5	90.1	86.3
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	81.1	82.1	82.2	79.0
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	61.2	62.4	61.4	56.6
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school	82.4	83.2	82.7	78.6

A final analysis was conducted to gauge parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2011 with the results of surveys completed during the prior three years. Table 19 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 2011 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2008 through 2010. Again, there were no significant increases or decreases when comparing parental responses in 2011 with the average of the three prior years.

Table 19
Comparing 2011 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2011	Mean % (2008-2010)	Difference
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.0	89.9	0.1
2. My child feels safe at school.	89.7	89.0	0.7
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	81.1	81.1	0.0
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	61.2	60.1	1.1
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	82.4	81.5	0.9

Comparing parental responses to Question 5 with the 2011 absolute rating of their child's school, Table 20 documents that a higher percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an Excellent rating strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment at their child's school. Again, parental satisfaction declines as the absolute rating of the school declines. However, the difference between the percentage of parents whose children attended an Excellent Schools and the percentage of parents whose children attended an At-Risk school and who agreed or strongly agreed with Question 11 was 17.3 percent as compared to 14.9 percent regarding the learning environment of their child's school and 8.2 percent regarding the home and school relations.

Table 20
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2011 Absolute Rating	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
Excellent	54.7	33.7	88.4
Good	58.8	27.1	85.9
Average	58.7	22.8	81.5
Below Average	58.6	19.8	78.4
At Risk	54.0	17.1	71.1

Then, analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on absolute ratings, the data reveal that parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, even across absolute ratings. Table 21 documents the large differences between parent satisfaction between schools with an Excellent or Good absolute rating and schools with an At-Risk rating.

Table 21
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's Elementary, Middle or High School)

2011 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree or Strongly Agree
Excellent	Elementary	49.3	43.0	92.3
	Middle	59.4	26.3	85.7
	High	61.3	20.5	81.8
Good	Elementary	55.8	34.8	90.6
	Middle	62.2	20.4	82.6
	High	59.7	16.8	76.5
Average	Elementary	57.7	29.1	86.8
	Middle	60.1	17.1	77.2
	High	58.3	14.2	72.5
Below Average	Elementary	58.8	24.1	82.9
	Middle	60.4	16.4	76.8
	High	51.2	15.6	66.8
At Risk	Elementary	53.5	17.4	70.9
	Middle	53.8	17.2	71.0
	High	53.3	16.3	69.6

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.

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/nmps_model/school/sixtypes.htm>.

- 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: 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 22 with the fourth column highlighting the percentage of parents who expressed an interest in becoming involved in these school activities. These parents want to be involved but 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 22
Percentage of Parents in 2011 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	(72,032)	79.8	16.3	3.2	0.8
Attend student programs or performances	(72,086)	79.7	16.1	3.0	1.2
Volunteer for the school	(71,202)	37.4	39.0	20.6	3.0
Go on trip with my child’s school	(71,293)	35.1	43.9	15.1	5.9
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	(70,568)	13.1	47.7	33.9	5.3
Participate in Parent-teacher Student Organizations	(71,263)	33.2	37.1	27.1	2.6
Participate in school committees	(71,065)	17.4	39.5	34.8	7.0
Attend parent workshops	(71,483)	26.2	40.5	18.8	14.4

Based on the responses in Table 16 and the six types of involvement, there are significant opportunities for improving parental involvement in South Carolina’s public schools. First, fewer parents report 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 for growth. Moreover, these parents report wanting to be involved in these decision making committees and organizations. Regarding volunteering, three-fourths of the parents attended open houses, parent-teacher conferences or student programs, all activities that support children as students. However, one-fourth reported attending parent workshop. Another 14 percent contend that such workshops are not provided at their child’s school. Approximately 37 percent of the parents responded that they volunteered while 39 percent of parents who did not volunteer wanted to volunteer.

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 23 summarizes parental responses to these five questions.

Table 23
Percentage of Parents in 2011 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	(71,698)	32.8	52.1	15.1
Contact my child’s teachers about my child’s school work.	(72,088)	76.7	19.0	4.3
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet	(72,127)	85.5	8.7	5.9
Make sure my child does his/her homework	(72,596)	95.2	3.5	1.3
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	(72,623)	94.1	4.7	1.2

Clearly, parents overwhelmingly report being involved in activities and decisions to support their child’s learning. At least 94 percent of parents reported helping their child with his or her homework while 86 percent report limiting television and other distractions at home. Approximately 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 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 2011 as well as the results from 2004 are included in

Table 24. 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 24
2004-2011 Percentage of Parents Replying "True" to these questions

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Lack of transportation reduces my involvement	11.5	11.8	11.7	11.6	11.8	12.9	12.3	12.5
Family health problems reduce my involvement.	14.3	14.3	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.	14.5	15.1	15.4	15.2	15.4	16.1	15.9	15.5
My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	54.4	55.1	55.6	56.2	55.4	55.6	55.5	56.2
The school does not encourage my involvement.	16.2	17.4	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.	24.6	25.3	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.	11.4	12.0	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 (Table 25). Approximately one-fourth rated the school's efforts as "okay."

Table 25
2009 – 2011
Percentage of Parents who responded:

Question:	Very Good or Good			Bad or Very Bad			Okay		
	2011	2010	2009	2011	2010	2009	2011	2010	2009
School's overall friendliness.	80.4	79.6	78.8	2.4	2.4	2.4	17.2	17.8	18.8
School's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	63.0	61.4	61.7	7.6	7.9	7.8	29.5	30.5	30.6
School's effort to get important information from parents.	67.8	66.8	66.0	7.5	7.8	7.9	24.7	25.2	26.1
The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	73.3	72.7	71.7	6.2	6.3	6.5	20.5	20.9	21.8
How the school is doing overall.	76.4	75.1	74.3	3.4	3.5	3.7	20.2	21.3	22.0

Conclusions:

- Despite a 6.2 percent increase in the number of parents responding to the annual parent survey, the results of the 2011 parent survey demonstrate that parental satisfaction with their child’s public schools was at comparable levels to the prior year’s survey results

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with:

Characteristic	2011	2010	% Increase/Decrease
Learning Environment	84.3	85.9	-1.6
Home and School Relations	80.2	81.9	-1.7
Social and Physical Environment	82.4	83.2	-0.8

- When comparing parent satisfaction in 2011 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, there were no significant increases or decreases in parent satisfaction levels.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:

Characteristic	2011	Mean 2008-2010	% Difference
Learning Environment	84.3	84.6	-0.3
Home and School Relations	80.2	80.4	0.2
Social and Physical Environment	82.4	81.5	0.9

- Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, declines as the absolute rating of the school declines. The largest difference in parental satisfaction between the highest and lowest performing schools is in parent perception of the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed closely by the learning environment.

Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends an Excellent or At-Risk School, Satisfied with:

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	89.9	74.9	15.0
Home and School Relations	85.1	76.9	8.2
Social and Physical Environment	88.4	71.1	17.3

- Parents who responded to the 2011 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 fall below the ideal. Opportunities for improving communication between parents and teachers also continue to exist.

PART FIVE

Additional Analysis

South Carolina Educational Policy Center

Since 2010 the South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEPC) at the University of South Carolina has produced four-year school climate profiles for the Palmetto Priority schools in collaboration with the EOC and the SCDE. The SCEPC has also created climate profiles for selected Title I Corrective Action Schools in 2012. These profiles are based upon the results of the teacher, parent and student surveys. The profiles are used by the South Carolina Department of Education and the underperforming schools as diagnostic tools to technical assistance interventions. Due to non-responses on the parent survey in 2011, only 53% of all actual responses were used to create the parent factor scores for the school climate profiles. The Center treated “Don’t Know” responses “as if the parent had no knowledge of the issues asked.”

Using best practices in the design and use of Likert scales, the Center analyzed the distribution of “Don’t Know” responses from the 2011 administration of the parent survey. Appendix C is the complete report that concluded with the following recommendations for amending the parent survey:

1. Ensure the statements avoid asking opinions about broad generalities – Keep the focus on personal referent points and personal experiences among the parent, student, and school.
2. Expand the scale to five points with the addition of a neutral midpoint labeled “Neither Disagree Nor Agree” and change “Don’t Know” to “Not Enough Information to Answer” or “Not Enough Information to Have an Opinion.”
3. Re-align items on the Parent Survey to match items on the Teacher Survey and Student Survey.

Student Perceptions and the MET Project

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded a two-year project, Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) “to rigorously develop and test multiple measures of teacher effectiveness.”¹² Part of the analysis is to build upon existing research documenting that students’ perceptions of the teaching they experience are good predictors of student academic achievement. As part of the MET Project, students will be administered the Tripod Project survey, developed by Cambridge Education and Dr. Ronald F. Ferguson of Harvard University. The survey focuses on the following “Seven Cs.”

Caring about students (Encouragement and Support)

Example: “The teacher in this class encourages me to do my best.”

¹² “Student Perceptions and the MET Project,” Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, September 2010. http://metproject.org/downloads/Student_Perceptions_092110.pdf.

Captivating students (Learning seems interesting and relevant)
Example: “This class keeps my attention – I don’t get bored.”

Conferring with students (Students Sense their ideas are respected)
Example: “My teacher gives us time to explain our ideas.”

Controlling behavior (Culture of Cooperation and Peer Support)
Example: “Our class stays busy and doesn’t waste time.”

Clarifying lessons (Success seems feasible)
Example: “When I am confused, my teacher knows how to help me understand.”

Challenging students (Press for Effort, Perseverance and Rigor)
Example: “My teacher wants us to use our thinking skills, not just memorize things.”

Consolidating knowledge (Ideas get connected and integrated)
Example: “My teacher takes the time to summarize what we learn each day.”

The Gates Foundation published the initial findings from the MET project. Regarding student perceptions, researchers have found:

Student perceptions of a given teachers’ strengths and weakness are consistent across the different groups of students they teach. Moreover, students seem to know effective teaching when they perceive it: student perceptions in one class are related to the achievement gains in other classes taught by the same teacher. Most important are students’ perception of a teacher’s ability to control a classroom and to challenge students with rigorous work.¹³

¹³ *Learning about Teaching -- Initial Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project*, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, http://metproject.org/downloads/Preliminary_Findings-Research_Paper.pdf

PART SIX

Recommendations

1. The survey questions on the Parent Survey have not been updated since 2001. The staff recommends that the Parent, Teacher and Student Surveys be reviewed to determine how the survey items could be better aligned among all three surveys. Such a review should also take into account the study provided by the South Carolina Educational Policy Center and the initial results of the MET Project. Since the original items on the Parent Survey were designed by the EOC, the EOC staff would work with the South Carolina Department of Education on this initiative.

2. The EOC staff should work with school districts to determine effective strategies for increasing the number of parents who participate in the survey, especially parents of Hispanic or African-American students who are currently underrepresented in the survey results.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

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 16, 2011 – Teacher Survey portal opens.
- March 18, 2011 – Teacher Survey portal closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

- February 28, 2011 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.
- March 25, 2011 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

- February 28, 2011 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.
- March 18, 2011 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.

This is the due date in the letter to parents.
- March 25, 2011 – 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 2011 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

CHANGES THIS YEAR

STUDENT & PARENT SURVEYS – the Parent Survey printed in Spanish is not available this year.

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 2011
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 administrative envelope containing;
 5. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 6. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 7. A page of shipping instructions, and
 8. One pre-addressed, bar-coded 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.
 - ✓ Student survey forms.
- The number of survey forms allocated to your school is based on numbers provided by your district office. The shipping list located on the report card portal website (<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Data-Management-and-Analysis/ReportCardPortal.html>) provides the number of survey forms ordered for your school. If your shipment is correct, please do not request additional surveys. The contractor does not print extras. Contact Mike Pulaski if you received fewer surveys than ordered.
- 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.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011
REPORT CARD SURVEYS**

- 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 2011 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

SPECIAL NOTE: We appreciate that schools work diligently each year to encourage parents to complete and return the parent surveys. Some schools offer incentives such as ice cream treats or extra recess time to individual students or classes where all students have returned completed parent surveys. Each year parents call the Department to inform us that their child is upset that he/she cannot return the parent survey form to school and receive the special incentive because the parent wants to mail the survey form to the Department. Parents have the option to mail in the survey form, so we would encourage you to not penalize students whose parents' mail in their completed survey form.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011 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 18 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(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.
- As the due date for returning the parent survey approaches, you may want to send home a note or use your automated phone system to remind parents of the due date.

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.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

- 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 which will allow you to see how many surveys have been completed for your school.
- Problems with your school's internet access should be directed to your district technology coordinator.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011
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 can also drop off the package at any UPS store or drop box as well as select Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011
REPORT CARD SURVEYS**

- The pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label was included in the administrative envelope along with these instructions. 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 25, 2011**.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011
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.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2011
REPORT CARD SURVEYS**

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

APPENDIX B

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 ore-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. |

APPENDIX B

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"/>				
2. The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. The school's efforts to get important information from parents.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. How the school is doing overall.	<input type="radio"/>				

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

1. What grade is your child in? 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th 11th
2. What is your child's gender? Male 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 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.

1. What is your gender? Male 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!

<p>DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">3205044</p>

APPENDIX C



**South Carolina Educational Policy Center
College of Education, University of South Carolina**

**Don't Know Why:
Investigating Non-Responses on the Parent Survey^{*}**

Dîana Mindrilă Mihaela Ene
Elizabeth Leighton Sally
Huguley Tomonori Ishikawa
Christine DiStefano, Ph.D. Diane M.
Monrad, Ph.D.

February 2012

^{*} For inquiries, please contact: Diane Monrad, Director, South Carolina Educational Policy Center, 803-777-8244, dmonrad@mailbox.sc.edu.

In 2011, a total sample of 71,909 parents responded to the Parent Survey. However, due to non-responses, we could only use 38,170 (53%) of the responses to create the parent factor scores for the four-year school climate profiles. There are two types of parent non-responses. A parent could:

1. Leave an item blank, or
2. Mark "Don't Know" (DK), one of the provided response options.

In our factor analysis, we included parents who left fewer than 25% of the items blank in a section of the survey, but we treated DK responses as if the parent had no knowledge of the issue asked. So, we did not include the responses of parents who provided even one DK response. We examined the incidence of DK responses and ascertained the removal of parents with DK responses did not change the demographic characteristics of the parent group included in the factor analytic studies.

Given an opportunity to revise the Parent Survey, we offer recommendations for redesigning the Parent Survey in keeping with best practices from current research in survey design and useful statistical analyses, such as factor analyses and structural equation modeling.

Treating Don't Knows and Blanks Differently

We used Likert scale items in the factor analyses. The Parent Survey includes 21 Likert items, where parents are asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with a positively-worded statement about the climate at their child's school by choosing a position on a four-point scale: "Strongly Disagree" (SD), "Disagree" (D), "Agree" (A), or "Strongly Agree" (SA). In addition, these items contain a "Don't Know" (DK) option. The percentage of parents agreeing with three summary statements appears on their school's report card every year.

Many of the surveys were incomplete, limiting their usefulness in further detailed statistical analyses of the results. A parent can provide an uninformative response to a Likert scale item on the Parent Survey in one of two ways. A parent could simply skip the item without any physical mark, leaving it blank. We classified this non-response as "missing" data. Or, a parent could mark the column "Don't Know" for the item. We classified this non-response in a distinct category of its own, calling it a DK response.

We treated DK responses differently from blanks in our analysis. We treat DKs as non-responses indicating a deliberate unwillingness to respond due to a lack of knowledge about the issue raised in the statement. In contrast, we did not construe blanks with knowing the intent of the respondent. Thus, for a limited number of blank responses (up to 25% of the items in a section of the survey), we imputed responses with the section mean. That is, for any individual parent, we filled in small amounts of missing data with the average of his/her answers for items appearing in the same section of the survey.

We chose not to impute DK responses because of the parent's active decision to select the option that indicated he/she did not have enough knowledge of the situation to answer the question. In keeping with standard best practice in factor analyses, we "listwise deleted" such observations. That is, if a parent answered DK to even one question, we did not use any of that parent's responses in the factor analysis. However, we included every informative response in the item-level analyses, such as item scale responses (tables of the percentage of responses for each response option on the Likert scale by school) and item agreement percentage boxplots (charts comparing the percentage of those parents agreeing with each item by school).

Other school climate surveys—the Teacher Survey and the Student Survey—do not include a DK response option. Therefore, respondents to those surveys could only have missing data by leaving an item blank. For these cases, we imputed missing item level data, thus helping to retain larger sample sizes to use in analyses. We used the same rules to impute missing data in all three surveys. We only imputed small amounts of missing data (if missing values comprised less than 25% of data per survey section) and used the same algorithm (imputing missing data with the mean of the individual's other responses in the same survey section).

Devising a Methodology to Investigate Don't Knows

Figure 1 illustrates the steps we took and the decisions we made to investigate the issue of “Don't Know” responses. We devised a logic model to examine the distribution of DK responses and determine their impact on our factor analysis and assess the sufficiency of samples for analysis and reporting. We also looked for evidence of any changes in the demographic characteristics of the parents in the total sample versus the analyzed sample. Finally, we considered alternative procedures in keeping with best practices in data management and analysis.

Table 1 provides the 2007-2011 distribution of DK responses for all the Likert scale items on the Parent Survey which we used in factor analysis. The items with the highest percentages of DK responses across years were:

- PHSR7** “My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.”
- PHSR9** “My child's school treats all students fairly.”
- PSPE4** “Students at my child's school are well behaved.”

The DK response percentages were remarkably consistent across years and indicated that:

1. Parents are simply not aware of the extent to which teachers and administrators take their input into account in the decision making process.
2. Parents do not have enough information on how children other than their own behave and/or are treated in the school setting to provide a response to these survey items.

Table 2 provides the number of observations removed at each stage of the data cleaning process and the final number of observations at each step for the 2011 data. As shown, we removed approximately 44% of the parent surveys due to DK responses.

Table 2. Observations Removed at Every Step of the Data Cleaning Process for the 2011 Parent Survey

Data Cleaning Steps	1	2		3		4	
	Original SCDE Data Set (“Total Sample”)	Remove “Don't Know” (DK) Responses		Remove Duplicates		Impute Missing Data for Factor Analysis (“Analyzed Sample”)	
		Removed	Kept	Removed	Kept	Removed	Kept
Number	71909	-31574	40335	0	40335	-2165	38170
Percentage	100%	-44%	56%	0%	56%	-3%	53%

Appendix A contains information on the number of observations at each stage of the data cleaning process across the years 2007-2011. The percentage of parent surveys removed due to DK responses showed little variation across years.

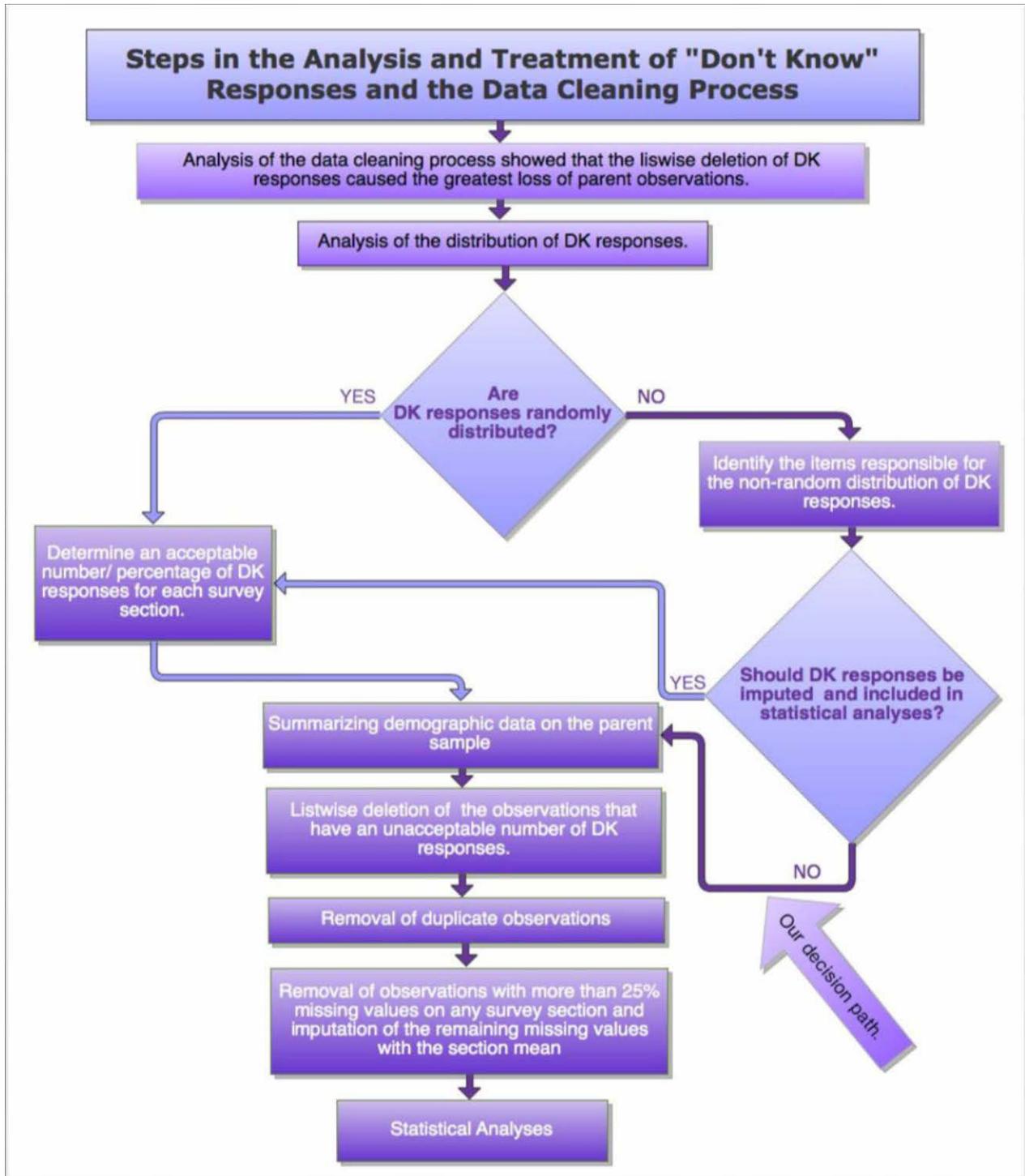


Figure 1. Logic Model for Steps Taken in the Analysis and Treatment of "Don't Know" Responses and the Data Cleaning Process

Table 1. Distribution of "Don't Know" Responses for Likert Scale Items on the Parent Survey

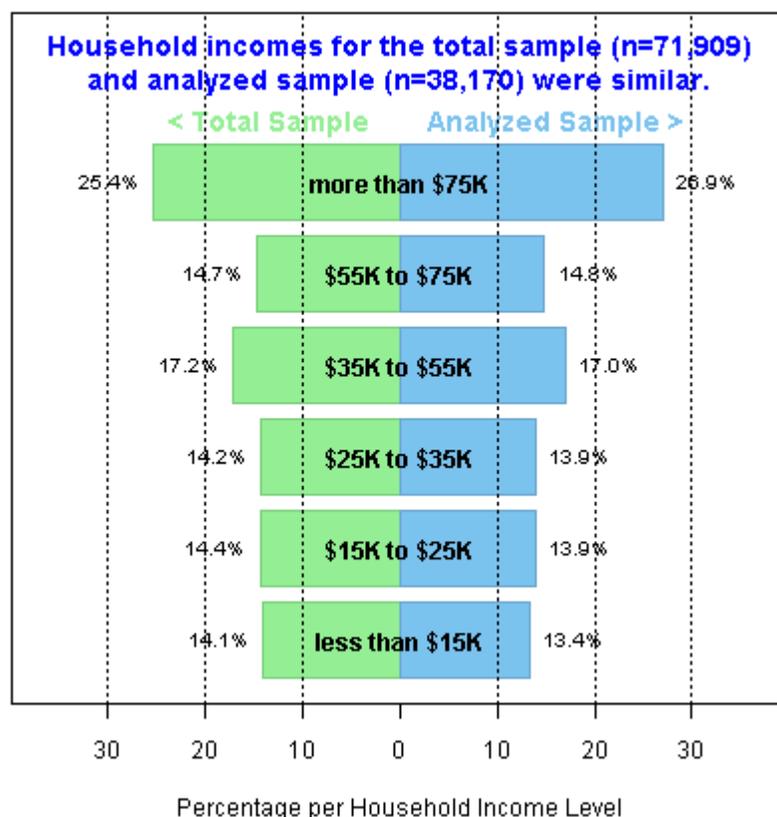
Parent Survey Section Item Text		Percentage Don't Know by Year				
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Learning Environment						
PLE1	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	2.7%	2.6%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%
PLE2	My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	2.7%	2.4%	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%
PLE3	My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	3.7%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%
PLE4	My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	7.4%	7.0%	7.3%	7.2%	6.8%
PLE5	I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	2.2%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%
Home-School Relationship						
PHSR1	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%
PHSR2	My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	2.3%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%
PHSR3	My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classroom during the school day.	4.1%	3.9%	4.3%	4.3%	4.4%
PHSR4	My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	7.7%	7.0%	6.5%	6.3%	5.9%
PHSR5	My child's school includes me in decision-making.	6.4%	6.0%	6.2%	6.2%	6.1%
PHSR6	My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	2.2%	2.0%	2.2%	2.0%	2.1%
PHSR7	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	22.1%	22.0%	22.5%	23.1%	23.1%
PHSR8	My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	4.7%	4.4%	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%
PHSR9	My child's school treats all students fairly.	14.3%	14.2%	14.0%	14.0%	13.1%
PHSR10	The principal at my school is available and welcoming.	8.9%	8.8%	8.5%	8.1%	7.8%
PHSR11	I am satisfied with the home-school relations at my child's school.	4.1%	3.7%	3.6%	3.5%	3.4%
Physical Environment						
PSPE1	My child's school is kept neat and clean.					
PSPE2	My child feels safe at school.					
PSPE3	My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.					
PSPE4	Students at my child's school are well behaved.					
PSPE5	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.					

Comparing the Demographic Characteristics of the Total Sample and the Analyzed Sample

We were compelled to listwise delete DK responses to keep with best practices for factor analysis. To ensure this process did not change the sample structure, we assessed its impact by examining the demographic characteristics (household income, educational attainment, race, and gender) of the parents in the total sample compared to those remaining in the analyzed sample.

Figure 2 illustrates the 2011 distribution of parent income in the total sample and the analyzed sample. The income range categories on the back-to-back bar chart represent the survey response choices offered to parents to self-report their household income. The pattern is a mirror image showing that the analyzed sample has a distribution of household income which is very similar to the total sample. Thus, we concluded that the removal of observations with DK responses did not significantly bias the sample of parents analyzed in terms of household income.

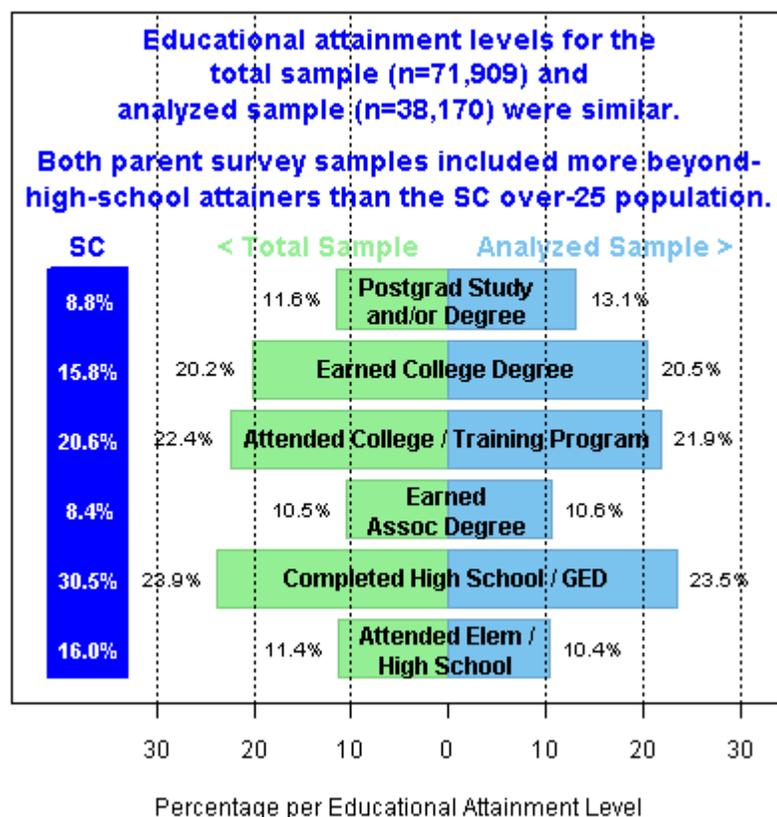
Figure 2: 2011 Parent Survey, Distribution of Household Income, Total Sample versus Analyzed Sample



Appendix B contains a table listing the distributions of household income in the total sample versus the analyzed sample across the years 2007-2011. The similarities for 2011 are consistent across all prior years 2007-2010.

Figure 3 provides the 2011 distribution of parent educational attainment in the total sample and the analyzed sample. The categories for highest educational level attained on the back-to-back bar chart represent the survey response choices offered to parents to self-report their educational attainment. The percentage of parents at each educational attainment level is very similar between the total sample and the factor analyzed sample. Thus, we concluded that the removal of DK responses did not introduce any biases favoring any particular group in terms of educational attainment. Analyses of the 2007-2011 samples in Appendix C show that this total-sample versus analyzed-sample similarity is consistent across years.

**Figure 3: 2011 Parent Survey, Educational Attainment
Total Sample versus Analyzed Sample**



Appendix D contains a complete set of the remaining self-reported 2011 Parent Survey demographic characteristics for the total sample and analyzed sample. The characteristics include information related to parents' gender and ethnicity, as well as students' gender, ethnicity, grade level, and grades. We did not find any major discrepancies between the samples, indicating the loss of parent surveys due to listwise deletion of DK responses did not alter the type of respondents included in the analysis.

Best Practices for Survey Redesign

If an opportunity is forthcoming to revise the Parent Survey, we suggest making the following changes in order to keep pace with current research on the best way to construct Likert scale items for detailed statistical analyses including techniques such as factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

1. **Ensure the statements avoid asking opinions about broad generalities.** Keep the focus on personal referent points and personal experiences among the parent, student, and school. For example, we would recommend changing the wording on the items with the most frequent occurrence of DK responses.
 - o PHSR7 could be changed from "The school considers changes based on what parents say" to "Teachers/administrators would ask for suggestions on how to improve the school."
 - o PHSR9 could be changed from "My child's school treats all students fairly" to "The school treats my child fairly."
 - o PSPE4 could be changed from "Students at my child's school are well behaved" to "The school takes measures to ensure my child is well-behaved."
2. **Expand the scale to five points with the addition of a neutral midpoint labeled "Neither Disagree Nor Agree" and change "Don't Know" to "Not Enough Information to Answer" or "Not Enough Information to Have an Opinion."** Keep its position at the end to the right of "Strongly Agree."

Keeping the DK response option in this context would ensure it is not used as a neutral midpoint, and that it exposes areas of ineffective communication between the school and parents. This could be particularly useful information for school improvement purposes.

3. **Re-align items on the Parent Survey to match items on the Teacher Survey and Student Survey.** This change would facilitate the investigation of the same issue from the viewpoint of all three stakeholders.

Conclusions

The number of parents responding to the climate survey was much higher than the sample of parents we could use in our analyses. The parent sample we used in our analysis was greatly reduced because parents were given the option to select "Don't Know" (DK) as a response. We did not impute data to replace a DK response because this would project a response where parents said they did not have knowledge of the situation. Investigating the items with a high percentage of DK responses suggests these items use vague or complex wording or relate to school-based issues where parents may not have adequate personal knowledge.

If an opportunity to revise the Parent Survey presents itself, we suggest a review of items for clarity and rewording items where needed. For technical reasons, we also suggest adding a neutral midpoint response and rewording the DK response to make clear that the parent does not have sufficient information to respond. Alternatively, because the information collected with the school climate survey deals with parent perceptions, we suggest reviewing the Likert response scale to see if a DK option is even necessary.

Appendix A
Observations Removed at Every Step of the Data Cleaning Process (2007-2011)

Data Cleaning Step	Obs	Year				
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1 Original SCDE Data Set ("Total Sample")		64896	68764	67925	69474	71909
1a Remove Duplicates (Used for Item-Level Analysis)	Removed	NA	NA	15	0	0
	Kept	NA	NA	67910	69474	71909
2 Remove "Don't Know" Responses	Removed	30132	31116	30438	31185	31574
	Kept	34764	37648	37472	38289	40335
3 Remove Duplicates	Removed	0	88	15	0	0
	Kept	34764	37560	37457	38289	40335
4 Impute Missing Data for Factor Analysis ("Analyzed Sample")	Removed	504	1676	1601	1402	2165
	Kept	34260	35884	35856	36887	38170
	Kept	52.8%	52.2%	52.8%	53.1%	53.1%

Appendix B
2007-2011 Distribution of Household Income

Table B1. Distribution of Parent Income in the Total Sample

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Less Than \$15K	13.2%	12.9%	13.5%	14.2%	14.1%
\$15K-\$25K	14.1%	13.7%	14.1%	14.6%	14.4%
\$25K-\$35K	14.3%	14.3%	14.1%	13.9%	14.2%
\$35K-\$55K	18.3%	17.8%	17.4%	17.3%	17.2%
\$55K-\$75K	15.7%	15.6%	15.4%	14.8%	14.7%
More Than \$75K	24.4%	25.7%	25.4%	25.3%	25.4%

Table B2. Distribution of Parent Income in the Analyzed Sample

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Less Than \$15K	12.2%	11.9%	12.9%	13.2%	13.4%
\$15K-\$25K	13.5%	13.0%	13.4%	13.9%	13.9%
\$25K-\$35K	14.1%	13.9%	13.6%	13.5%	13.9%
\$35K-\$55K	18.3%	18.1%	17.7%	17.1%	17.0%
\$55K-\$75K	16.2%	16.0%	15.6%	15.3%	14.9%
More Than \$75K	25.7%	27.0%	26.9%	27.1%	27.0%

Appendix C
2007-2011 Distribution of Parent Educational Level

Table C1. Distribution of Parent Educational Level in the Total Sample

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Attended Elementary/High School	13.0%	12.7%	12.1%	11.6%	11.4%
Completed High School/ GED	25.8%	25.7%	25.5%	24.9%	23.9%
Earned Associate Degree	9.5%	9.6%	9.8%	10.4%	10.5%
Attended College/Training Program	23.2%	22.7%	22.8%	22.4%	22.5%
Earned College Degree	18.3%	19.0%	19.3%	19.4%	20.2%
Postgraduate Study and/or Degree	10.3%	10.4%	10.6%	11.3%	11.6%

Table C2. Distribution of Parent Educational Level in the Analyzed Sample

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Attended Elementary/High School	11.9%	11.7%	11.4%	10.6%	10.4%
Completed High School/ GED	24.9%	24.6%	24.4%	24.1%	23.5%
Earned Associate Degree	9.6%	9.8%	9.8%	10.4%	10.6%
Attended College/Training Program	23.0%	22.4%	22.7%	21.9%	21.9%
Earned College Degree	18.9%	19.9%	19.9%	20.1%	20.5%
Postgraduate Study and/or Degree	11.7%	11.8%	11.9%	13.0%	13.1%

Appendix D
Other Demographic Indicators (2011)

Table D1. 2011 Distribution of Parent Gender by Ethnicity for Total Dataset

	African- American	White	Hispanic	Native American	Asian- American / Pacific Islander	Other	Total
Male	3.5%	8.8%	1.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.4%	14.5%
Female	28.7%	50.2%	3.6%	0.4%	1.2%	1.4%	85.5%
Total	32.2%	59.0%	4.8%	0.5%	1.7%	1.9%	100.0%

Table D2. 2011 Distribution of Parent Gender by Ethnicity for Analyzed Dataset

	African- American	White	Hispanic	Native American	Asian- American / Pacific Islander	Other	Total
Male	3.3%	8.9%	1.0%	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	14.1%
Female	26.9%	53.3%	3.1%	0.4%	1.1%	1.2%	85.9%
Total	30.2%	62.2%	4.1%	0.5%	1.5%	1.6%	100.0%

Table D3. 2011 Distribution of Child's Gender by Ethnicity for Total Dataset

	African- American	White	Hispanic	Native American	Asian- American / Pacific Islander	Other	Total
Male	14.1%	26.8%	2.1%	0.2%	0.8%	1.3%	45.3%
Female	18.6%	30.4%	2.7%	0.3%	1.0%	1.7%	54.7%
Total	32.7%	57.2%	4.9%	0.5%	1.8%	3.0%	100.0%

Table D4. 2011 Distribution of Child's Gender by Ethnicity for Analyzed Dataset

	African- American	White	Hispanic	Native American	Asian- American / Pacific Islander	Other	Total
Male	13.3%	28.5%	1.8%	0.2%	0.7%	1.2%	45.7%
Female	17.5%	31.9%	2.3%	0.3%	0.8%	1.6%	54.3%
Total	30.8%	60.3%	4.1%	0.5%	1.5%	2.7%	100.0%

**Table D5. 2011 Distribution of Child's Grades by Grade Level
for Total Dataset**

	As and Bs	Bs and Cs	Cs and Ds	Ds and Fs	Total
3rd Grade	1.6%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	2.4%
4th Grade	2.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.0%	3.2%
5th Grade	25.2%	10.1%	3.2%	0.7%	39.2%
6th Grade	3.5%	1.7%	0.5%	0.1%	5.9%
7th Grade	0.5%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.8%
8th Grade	17.3%	9.2%	3.3%	0.7%	30.5%
9th Grade	0.8%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	1.4%
10th Grade	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%
11th Grade	9.3%	5.3%	1.4%	0.2%	16.3%
Total	60.7%	28.3%	9.1%	1.9%	100.0%

**Table D6. Distribution of Child's Grades by Grade Level
for Analyzed Dataset**

	As and Bs	Bs and Cs	Cs and Ds	Ds and Fs	Total
3rd Grade	1.7%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	2.4%
4th Grade	2.4%	0.7%	0.2%	0.1%	3.4%
5th Grade	27.2%	10.5%	3.2%	0.7%	41.5%
6th Grade	3.6%	1.7%	0.5%	0.1%	5.9%
7th Grade	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.7%
8th Grade	16.3%	8.7%	2.9%	0.6%	28.4%
9th Grade	0.7%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	1.3%
10th Grade	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%
11th Grade	9.0%	5.2%	1.4%	0.2%	15.8%
Total	61.5%	28.1%	8.7%	1.7%	100.0%

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 Interim Executive Director 803.734.6148.