



At a Glance

Results of the 2009 Parent Survey

April 2010

Background of Survey and Report

- Since 2002, the South Carolina Department of Education has collected information on parental involvement and reported parent perceptions of their child's school on the annual school report cards.
- The parents of students in grades 5, 8, and 11, or the highest grade in elementary and middle schools are surveyed.
- Using the results of the Parent Survey, the EOC issues annual reports to document parent satisfaction with public schools and to "determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parent involvement." (*Section 59-28-190, Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act*)

Results of the 2009 Survey

- The total number of parent surveys returned in 2009 declined by three percent from 2008. Even with the decline, an estimated 34 percent to 44 percent of the parents who were surveyed responded in 2009.
- Results of the 2009 survey demonstrate an annual increase in parent satisfaction with the three characteristics measured – the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school.

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

- Ninety percent of parents agreed that their child feels safe at school, the highest percentage since 2003.
- Ninety-one percent of parents stated that their child's school has high expectations for learning.
- Significant opportunities for improving parental involvement in schools exist. Fewer parents reported being involved in the School Improvement Council, Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations, and school committees than in any other activity.

Obstacles to Parent Involvement

The work schedule of parents was consistently reported as the greatest obstacle to their involvement in schools. Fifty-six percent of respondents stated that their work schedule made it hard to be involved. Other obstacles to parental involvement included:

- Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all (26 percent)
- Family health problems (15 percent)
- Lack of available care for children or other family members (15 percent)
- Lack of transportation (12 percent)

EOC Recommendations

- To give schools assistance on how to use survey data, the EOC recommends a workbook/toolkit be developed. Modeled after a California tool, the kit would help schools focus on key questions and issues contained in the surveys along with student achievement data, and how to focus, improve, maintain, and strengthen school reform efforts.
- The EOC recommends a pilot project to e-mail the parent survey in order to reduce costs and increase participation.

Additional Information.

For additional information, contact the EOC at (803) 734-6148. A complete copy of "Results and Analyses of the 2009 Parent Survey" can currently be found online at www.eoc.sc.gov. Previous years' reports are online as well. Click on *Reports and Publications*.