

2015

Results of the 2014 Parent Survey



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

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Executive Summary

Background: 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. From its inception, the parent survey contains items regarding parent perceptions of the learning environment in the school, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment of the school. Additional questions document characteristics of the parents and the children of the parents responding to the survey. The 2014 parent survey contained many of the same items as the 2013 parent survey. Five items that were added to the 2013 survey to obtain information about parent views of teacher and principal effectiveness, student personalized learning experience, and parental awareness of federal and state report card grades were deleted from the 2014 survey.

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.

Survey Responses: In 2014 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 59,293, a decline of 7,494 surveys (11.2 percent) from the prior year. SCDE staff note two changes in the period of administration of the parent survey that may have affected the response rate. First, the survey occurred later in the year in 2014 (April 11 through May 9) than in 2013 (February 28 through March 25), and second, because of the later administration, the window of administration included Spring break for some school districts. Between 31.0 and 37.4 percent of

all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2014 parent survey. As in the prior year, there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish made available to parents by the South Carolina Department of Education. In 2014 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 5.7 percent, as compared to 5.3 percent in 2013, 5.1 percent in 2012, 4.6 percent in 2011, and 5.0 percent in 2010.

An analysis of the respondents to the 2014 parent survey concluded that the survey responses typically overrepresented 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 obtained higher educational achievements and had 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. Furthermore, when compared to the enrollment of students in public schools, parents of African American students were underrepresented in the responses.

The data documented that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within four percentage points, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their Absolute Rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as students enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2013-14. On the other hand, 58 percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent, compared to 62 percent of children who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2013-14.

2014 Absolute Rating	Percent of Students Enrolled in School 2013-14	Percent of Parents Responding to 2014 Survey
Excellent	43%	39%
Good	19%	19%
Average	30%	33%
Below Average	6%	7%
At Risk	3%	2%

Parent Survey Results: Despite an 11.2 percent decline in the number of parents responding to the annual parent survey, the results of the 2014 parent survey demonstrate that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment 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. Parent satisfaction with home and school relations appears to have declined dramatically from 2013 to 2014; however, the number of missing responses for this item increased from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014. The percentage of parents not satisfied in 2014 was 14.6 percent, a slight increase from 13.3 percent in 2013, which suggests a slight decrease in parental satisfaction with home and school relations. SCDE staff were consulted regarding this data anomaly; no explanation is apparent. EOC staff inquired whether a sample of survey documents could be spot-checked by the contractor to rule out scanning errors. This was not possible.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	2013	2011	2010	Difference between 2014 and 2013
Learning Environment	86.7	87.0	87.2	84.3	(0.3)
Home and School Relations	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	(11.6)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	84.3	84.1	82.4	0.1

When comparing parent satisfaction in 2014 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, the only significant change is in home and school relations, which can be attributed to the data anomaly previously discussed. There were no significant changes in parental satisfaction with respect to the learning environment or social and physical environment of the school.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	Mean % (2010-2013)	Difference between 2014 and Mean of three years
Learning Environment	86.7	86.2	0.5
Home and School Relations	71.7	82.1	(10.4)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	83.6	0.8

There also were minimal differences between item responses from 2014 compared to item responses from 2013 for the learning environment and social and physical environment of the school:

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	Difference
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	(0.7)
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	(0.3)
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	0.2

Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. 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 by the learning environment. This trend is present for all school levels, though some anomalous results for parents of high school students make observing this trend more difficult.

Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends a School with Excellent or At-Risk Ratings, Satisfied with Each School Characteristic:

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
All Schools			
Learning Environment	90.0	81.0	9.0
Home and School Relations	75.1	73.0	2.1
Social and Physical Environment	89.0	71.8	17.1
Elementary Schools			
Learning Environment	92.5	78.6	13.9
Home and School Relations	79.5	66.7	12.8
Social and Physical Environment	93.2	75.5	17.7
Middle Schools			
Learning Environment	88.2	70.0	18.2
Home and School Relations	69.8	56.9	12.9
Social and Physical Environment	85.7	65.7	20.0
High Schools			
Learning Environment	86.1	90.3	(4.2)
Home and School Relations	70.7	88.8	(18.8)
Social and Physical Environment	82.5	73.1	9.4

Across school types, parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average were less satisfied with the learning environment and home and school relations at their child’s school than parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of At Risk. This result, however, is only present for parents of students in high school in the areas of learning environment and home and school relations. For parents of children in elementary and middle schools, the percentage of parents satisfied with each school characteristic is lower for parents of students in schools with At Risk ratings than for parents of students in schools with ratings of Below Average.

Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends a School with Below Average or At-Risk Ratings, Satisfied with Each School Characteristic:

Characteristic	Below Average Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
All Schools			
Learning Environment	79.2	81.0	(0.8)
Home and School Relations	66.9	73.0	(6.1)
Social and Physical Environment	76.3	71.8	4.5
Elementary Schools			
Learning Environment	80.5	78.6	1.9
Home and School Relations	68.3	66.7	1.6
Social and Physical Environment	78.2	75.5	2.7
Middle Schools			
Learning Environment	77.7	70.0	7.7
Home and School Relations	65.7	56.9	8.8
Social and Physical Environment	74.0	65.7	8.3
High Schools			
Learning Environment	82.3	90.3	(8.0)
Home and School Relations	67.0	88.8	(21.8)
Social and Physical Environment	81.8	73.1	8.7

Parents who responded to the 2014 annual survey reported levels of parental involvement compared to previous years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2014

Work Schedule	57.1%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	25.5%
School does not encourage involvement	17.5%
Family and health problems	15.5%
Lack of child or adult care services	14.8%
Transportation	12.2%
Involvement not appreciated	11.9%

Impediments to parental involvement that are at least partially within the control of the schools are the processes by which schools notify parents of volunteer opportunities, the means by which the school encourages or enables parental involvement, and the approach of the school toward parental involvement.

Gallup Student Poll Results: The Gallup Student Poll collects information regarding non-cognitive student attributes that are associated with student success in academic and other endeavors. Results of the Gallup Student Poll indicate that 53 percent of students are Hopeful, 53 percent of students are Engaged, and 64 percent of students are Thriving. Results of the Gallup

Student Poll are consistent from 2013 to 2014 even though there was approximately a 40 percent increase in the number of student responses. Results of this survey are based on student results from participating schools. The Gallup Student Poll is available at no cost to schools; participating schools are provided a view of their students' disposition with respect to Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being.

PART ONE

Administration of the 2014 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 2014 to administer the parent as well as student and teacher surveys.

As in 2014, there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish. A copy of the 2014 survey is in the Appendix B. The 2014 administration of the parent survey occurred over the following time period and involved the following actions.

April 11, 2014	All schools received survey forms.
May 9, 2014	Date for parent survey forms returned to school.
May 14, 2014	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. The cost of printing, shipping, processing and scanning the parent surveys was approximately \$90,000.

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 2014 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.²

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 2014 annual school report cards. For each school, SCDE aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the data files to the district office.

The 2014 parent survey contained a total of fifty-seven questions. Forty-seven questions were designed to elicit information on parental perceptions and parental involvement patterns. For the first twenty-three 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.

¹ “Administration of the 2014 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

² “Administration of the 2014 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

These components and individual activities reflect the framework devised by Dr. Joyce Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools.

Parents were asked five questions about their participation in various parental involvement activities both in and outside of the school. Parents were also asked whether each of a list of seven items were 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.

The parent survey administered in 2014 contains items that been a part of the parent survey since 2001. Five items that were included for the first time in the 2013 survey were not included in the 2014. The questions as included in the 2013 survey were:

1. My child's teacher is effective.
2. My child's principal is effective.
3. My child receives a personalized learning experience.
4. I have read BOTH the federal and state report cards for my child's school.
5. I have read BOTH the federal and state report cards by my child's school district.

The 2013 Parent Survey Report published by the EOC documented concerns with the ambiguity of these questions and with the choice of possible answers to the question.³ Consequently, the Department of Education deleted these five questions from the 2014 Parent Survey.

³ "Results of the 2013 Parent Survey," South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, available at: <http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Reports%20%20Publications/Current%20Reports%202008-14/Parent%20Survey/2013ParentSurvey.pdf>

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

Schools containing grades 2 or lower 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 2013-14 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 2013-14 the 135-day average daily membership for grades 5, 8 and 11 rounded to the nearest student totaled 158,479.⁶ 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 2014 was 59,293, which was 7,494 (11.2 percent) fewer than the number returned in the prior year. This is a substantial decrease in the number of parents responding. As a point of reference, from 2012 to 2013 there was a 4.0 percent decrease in the number of parent surveys returned. The number of parent surveys returned has declined each year from the maximum number returned in 2011.

SCDE staff⁷ note two changes in the period of administration of the parent survey that may have affected the response rate. First, the survey occurred later in the year in 2014 (April 11 through May 9) than in 2013 (February 28 through March 25), and second, because of the later administration, the window of administration included Spring break for some school districts.

Table 1
Total Number of Parent Surveys Returned

Year	Surveys
2014	59,293
2013	66,787
2012	69,581
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

⁶ “SC 135-Day Average Daily Membership by Grade, by District, 2013-14, obtained from: <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ie/rda/MembershipandAttendance.cfm>, April 1, 2015.

⁷ Ling Gao, SCDE in e-mail message to EOC, April 13, 2015.

Year	Surveys
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 31.0 and 37.4 percent of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2014 parent survey. In the prior year (2013), using the same two methodologies, the response rate was between 36 and 43 percent. Compared to IAR’s definitions of acceptable response rates for email and online surveys, the response rate to the 2014 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	191,500	59,293	31.0%
Method 2: ADM ⁶ of 5, 8 and 11 th grades	158,480	59,293	37.4%

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
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 2014 parent survey (Table 3).

Table 3
Respondents to the 2014 Parent Survey
(n=59,293)

Gender

Male	14.3%
Female	85.7%

Race

African-American	30.8%
Caucasian/white	59.0%
Hispanic	5.9%
All Other	4.3%

Education

Attended elementary/high school	10.3%
Completed high school/GED	22.3%
Earned Associate Degree	11.0%
Attended college/training program	20.0%
Earned college degree	22.9%
Postgraduate study/and/or degree	13.6%

Household Income

Less than \$15,000	14.0%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	14.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	13.0%
\$35,000 - \$54,999	16.1%
\$55,000 - \$75,000	13.9%
More than \$75,000	28.8%

Their Child Enrolled in:

Grades 3-5	44.7%
Grades 6-8	37.0%
Grades 9-11	18.3%

Their Child's Gender:

Male	44.3%
Female	55.7%

Their Child's Ethnicity:

African-American	31.3%
Caucasian/White	57.1%
Hispanic	5.9%
All Other	5.7%

Their Child's Grades:

All or mostly A's and B's	64.0%
All or mostly B's and C's	26.2%
All or mostly C's and D's	8.2%
All or mostly D's and F's	1.6%

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

As in prior years, the "typical" parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college. Over 57 percent of the respondents who answered the

question about income reported earning over \$35,000. In 2014 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 5.9 percent, as compared to 5.1 percent in 2013, 4.6 percent in 2011 and 5.0 percent in 2010.

To determine if the survey responses were representative of elementary, middle and high school parents, the following analysis was done. First, 57,290 parents who returned the 2014 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, 37 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 school parents declined by 1 percent, middle school parents increased by 2 percent, and the percentage of parents of high school students decreased by 1 percent (from 19 to 18 percent).

The representativeness of the 2014 parent surveys returned of the population of students was investigated by comparing the grade level and ethnicity of students enrolled in the 2013-14 academic year to the grade level and ethnicity of students as reported by parents in the 2014 parent survey. Considering only students in grades 5, 8, and 11, 46 percent of the parent surveys indicate their child was enrolled in grade 5, yet according to the 135-day Average Daily Membership (ADM) enrollment, only 35 percent of students are in grade 5. The percentage of children parents report as enrolled in grade 8 is nearly identical to the percentage of student enrolled in grade 8 according to the ADM. The percentage of students parents report as enrolled in grade 11 (18 percent) is much smaller than the percentage of students enrolled in grade 11 from the ADM (30%). Elementary school students are, then, over-represented in the parent surveys returned and high school students are under-represented in these data.

Table 4
Parental Respondents by Child's Grade

Grade of Child	Surveys Returned	% of Surveys from Grades 5, 8, & 11		2013-14 135-day ADM	% of ADMs for Grades 5, 8 & 11
Grade 5	22,929	46%		54,517	35%
Grade 8	17,885	36%		56,632	35%
Grade 11	9,150	18%		47,330	30%
TOTAL	49,964			158,479	

When asked about their child's race or ethnicity, 57.1 percent of the parents responded that their child's ethnicity was white, 31.3 percent African American and 5.9 percent Hispanic. With respect to the ethnicity of children in the public schools of South Carolina in 2013-14, parents whose children are African American were underrepresented by 2.9 percent, and parents whose children are Hispanic were underrepresented by 1.6 percent in the respondents (Table 5).

**Table 5
Ethnicity of Children**

	2014 Parent Survey	Student Enrollment All Public Schools 2013-14⁸	Difference
White	57.1%	53.2%	3.9%
African American	31.3%	34.2%	(2.9%)
Hispanic	5.9%	7.5%	(1.6%)
Other	5.7%	5.1%	0.6%

Note: "Other" includes American Indian/Alaskan, Asian, Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander and Two or more races.

With respect to educational attainment, 31.5 percent of parents who responded to the survey in 2014 had earned a bachelor or postgraduate degree. For comparison purposes, the United States Census Bureau projected that 25.1 percent of persons 25 years old and over in South Carolina had earned a bachelor's degree or higher in 2009.⁸

Regarding the annual household income of the respondents, in 2014 58.8 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 from 2009-2013 was \$44,779.⁹

Finally, staff performed an analysis that compared the number of parents who responded to the survey according to the Absolute Rating of their child's school in 2014 with the percent of students enrolled in schools by their 2014 Absolute Rating (Table 6).¹⁰

**Table 6
Parents Responding and Student Enrolled in School by Absolute Ratings**

2014 Absolute Rating	% of Students Enrolled in School, 2013-14	% of Parents Responding to 2014 Survey
Excellent	43%	39%
Good	19%	19%
Average	30%	33%
Below Average	6%	7%
At Risk	3%	2%

The data document that for each report card rating, the percentages of students enrolled and parents responding are within four percent of one another. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2013-14. Fifty-eight percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent, which is slightly lower than the 62 percent of students

⁸U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County Quick Facts" <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/45000.html>>, accessed April 13, 2015

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ "Student Performance in SC," South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2014. <http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Home/Report%20Card%20Data/2014/2014%20School%20Five%20Year%20List%20-%20for%20Annual%20Release.new11172014.pdf>

who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2013-14.

Conclusions

- A total of 59,293 parent surveys were completed and returned in 2014, which was 7,494 (11.2 percent) fewer than the number returned in the prior year. The survey was administered approximately 2 months later in 2014 than in 2013, and the timeframe for parental response may have included Spring break.
- 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 2014 parent survey was between 31 and 37 percent, which is much lower than the response rate of 36 and 42 percent in 2013, which by industry standards is considered average.
- An analysis of the respondents to the 2014 parent survey found that the survey responses typically overrepresented the perceptions of parents in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who have children in high school.
- Respondents typically have obtained higher educational achievements and have greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina.
- The percentages of respondents by racial/ethnic group are within 5 percent of the make-up of the South Carolina population.
- The data documented that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within four percentage points, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their Absolute Rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2013-14. Also, 58 percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent, while 62 percent of students who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2013-14.

PART THREE

Results for Items of the 2014 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 2014 parent survey. At the school level, responses to these questions can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement initiatives at the individual school site. Statewide, the data provide policymakers information on the overall effectiveness of policies and programs in promoting parental involvement. The following analysis focuses on parent perceptions or satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment of their children’s schools. In analyzing responses, “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 7 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey. Overall, 86.7 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 in parents either did not believe or did not know if their child received extra help when needed.

Table 7
Percentage of Parents in 2014 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.	88.9	8.7	2.4
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	6.4	2.0
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	5.8	3.0
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	12.1	6.0
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	11.6	1.7

Table 8 compares the percentage of parents who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed to these questions each year from 2010 through 2014. The pattern over time is high parental satisfaction with the learning environment, with the highest levels of parental satisfaction in the past three years.

Table 8
Percentage of Parents Who Agree or Strongly Agree: 2010 through 2014

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	89.9	86.7	89.0
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	91.7	91.7	88.9	90.3
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	91.8	88.7	90.4
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	81.9	78.7	79.8
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	87.0	87.2	84.3	85.9

The differences between the percentages of parents who expressed that they are satisfied with the overall learning environment at their child's school in 2014 compared to 2013 are small and can be characterized as normal annual fluctuations (Table 9). The percentage of parents who believe that their child's teacher provides extra help when needed increased by 0.2 from 2013 to 2014. For the remaining questions regarding a school's learning environment there were very small decreases in the percentage of parents who view the learning environment favorably. It is worth noting, however, that the percentages of parents who agree or strongly agree with each statement reached their highest values in 2013, and slightly decreased in 2014. The values obtained in 2014 are the third highest overall. In this light, declines from 2013 to 2014 should not be over-interpreted.

Table 9
Percentage of Parents Who Agree or Strongly Agree: 2013 and 2014

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	(0.7)
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	91.7	(0.1)
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	(0.3)
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	0.2
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	87.0	(0.3)

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 2014 results with the average or mean results of the prior three years. Table 10 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the learning environment of their child's school in 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2011 through 2013. The 2014 respondents were overall more satisfied with the learning environment of their schools

than the average of the respondents over the past three years; however, the difference did not exceed three percent on any one question.

Table 10
Comparing 2014 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Learning Environment Questions	2014	Mean % (2011-2013)	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	88.7	0.2
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	90.8	0.8
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	90.7	0.5
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	80.8	1.1
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	86.2	0.5

Table 11 presents the responses to Question 5 by the Absolute Ratings schools received in 2014. The highest percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree that they were satisfied with the overall learning environment at their child's schools were parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Excellent. Parental satisfaction generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school decreases, except for the case of parents whose child attends a school rated At Risk. The percentage of parents of students who were satisfied with the overall learning environment in schools with Excellent Absolute Ratings was approximately 11 percent higher than the percentage of parents in schools with Below Average ratings. Furthermore, the percentage of parents in schools rated At Risk or Below Average who disagree or strongly disagree with the question is slightly more than twice that of parents in schools with an Excellent Absolute Rating.

Table 11
I am Satisfied With the Learning Environment at My Child's School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2014 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	90.0	8.8
Good	86.9	11.4
Average	84.4	13.6
Below Average	79.2	18.7
At Risk	81.0	16.6

Analyzing the responses by Absolute Rating for elementary, middle and high schools, a clear pattern emerges: among respondents with children in schools with ratings of Excellent, Good, or Average: 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 declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, regardless of the Absolute Rating (Table 12). For parents whose children are enrolled in schools with Below Average or At Risk ratings

different pattern emerges: parents of high school students view the learning environment most favorably, followed by parents of elementary students, and parents of middle school students.

Table 12
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)

2014 Absolute Rating	School Type	Number of Responses	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	12,183	92.5	6.8
	Middle	6,290	88.2	10.3
	High	4,676	86.1	12.0
Good	Elementary	5,871	90.7	8.3
	Middle	3,540	84.1	13.4
	High	1,420	78.5	18.9
Average	Elementary	9,219	87.4	11.1
	Middle	8,233	83.0	14.8
	High	1,649	74.8	21.8
Below Average	Elementary	1,709	80.5	18.0
	Middle	2,054	77.7	19.8
	High	277	82.3	15.2
At Risk	Elementary	434	78.6	18.4
	Middle	362	70.0	24.3
	High	538	90.3	7.6

B. Home and School Relations

The next eleven questions on the parent survey determine parent perception of home and school relations by focusing on the relationship between the parent and their child’s teacher and between the parent and the school. Question 11 offers parents the opportunity to report on their overall satisfaction with home and school relations at their child’s school. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 11 are included on the annual school report card.

Table 13 summarizes the total responses to these eleven questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey.

Table 13
Percentage of Parents in 2014 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	57.1	40.7	2.2
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	34.0	2.5
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	44.1	4.8
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	14.0	5.2
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	24.5	5.7
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	21.7	4.6
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	24.3	21.3
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	16.4	4.2
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	16.9	12.2
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	10.0	7.8
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	14.6	13.7

Overall, 71.7 percent of parents were satisfied with home and school relations at their child's school, which is 11.6 percent less than the percentage in 2013. The percentage of parents who indicated that indicated dissatisfaction with home and school relations increased only slightly from 13.3 in 2013 to 14.6 in 2014. The decline in the percentage of parents indicating satisfaction can best be explained by a marked increase in the percentage of parents not providing a response, from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014 (a 10.3 percent increase). An examination of questions 1 through 10, which ask parents more specific questions about their personal experiences at their child's school, reveals the following.

- Parents overwhelmingly agreed that the principal at their child's school was available and welcoming.
- Approximately 80 percent of the parents agreed that their child's school returned phone calls or e-mails promptly and scheduled activities at times that parents could attend.
- Approximately four out of ten parents 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 or 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.

As documented by Table 14, the trend is that parental satisfaction with home and school Relations increased from 2006 through 2013, but declined dramatically to 2014. The dramatic decline in satisfaction from 2013 to 2014 is not accompanied by a corresponding increase in the percentage of parents expressing dissatisfaction with home and school relations. Instead, there was a substantial increase from 2013 to 2014 in the percentage of parents who indicated they did not have an opinion of the home and school relations.

Table 14
2006-2014
Home and School Relations
Question 11: I am Satisfied with Home and School relations at My Child’s School.

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Agree or Strongly Agree	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	81.9	81.4	77.8	77.9	76.6
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	14.6	13.3	13.7	13.9	14.3	14.9	16.0	17.1	16.6

Analyzing parental satisfaction trends over the recent years, Table 15 documents parental satisfaction for all eleven questions regarding home and school relations since 2010. For seven of the eleven questions, the percentages of parents who view the home and school relations favorably were highest in 2012. Among the remaining four questions, the highest ratings for three were obtained in 2014. The highest rating for the overall satisfaction with home and school relations came in 2013.

Table 15
2010-2014
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree

Home and School Relations Questions	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	57.1	56.9	57.3	54.5	52.2
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	64.5	65.4	62.4	64.1
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	51.5	54.0	52.0	53.7
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	80.9	81.0	77.7	79.5
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	69.2	69.8	66.7	67.8
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	78.1	78.3	75.6	78.3
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	52.0	52.6	49.2	50.1
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	79.6	79.7	76.9	78.9
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	70.3	70.0	67.3	67.5
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	82.2	82.4	80.1	81.4
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	81.9

An additional analysis was done comparing the mean or average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed to each statement over the past three years with the responses from 2014. Table 16 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding home and school relations at their child's school in 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2010 through 2013. Again, using a three percent change as "significant," the only question that demonstrated a significant difference was the overall satisfaction with home and school relations. The unusually low value obtained in 2014 has previously been discussed.

Table 16
Comparing 2014 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Home and School Relations Questions	2014	Mean % (2011-2013)	Difference
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	57.1	56.2	0.9
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	64.1	(0.6)
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	52.5	(1.4)
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	79.9	0.9
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	68.6	0.3
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	77.3	(3.6)
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	51.3	3.2
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	78.7	(0.7)
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	69.2	1.8
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	81.6	0.6
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	82.1	(10.4)

Table 17 presents the responses to Question 11 by the Absolute Ratings schools received in 2014. Table 17 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. The percentage of parents of students who were satisfied with the home and school relations in schools with Excellent Absolute Ratings was approximately 8 percent higher than the percentage of parents in schools with Below Average ratings. Recall that this difference was approximately 11 percent for parental perceptions of the learning environment in their child's school. The percentage of parents in schools with Below Average ratings who disagree or strongly disagree with the question is approximately 7 percent higher than the percentage of parents with students in schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent.

The pattern of satisfaction with home and school relations obtained from the 2014 parent survey is very similar to the pattern obtained from the 2013 survey. The same decline from schools with ratings of Excellent to schools with ratings of Below Average is observed, and the differences between the percentages for parents in schools with ratings of Excellent and the parents of students in schools with ratings of Below Average are nearly the same as in 2013. It appears that the increase in non-response to this item from 2013 to 2014 did not occur within schools with any particular report card rating.

Table 17
I am Satisfied with Home and School Relations at My Child's School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2014 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	75.1	12.3
Good	70.5	14.7
Average	69.7	16.1
Below Average	66.9	19.4
At Risk	73.0	17.0

Analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on Absolute Ratings, the data reveal that among schools with Excellent, Good, or Average ratings, 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 (Table 18). Parents of children in schools with Below Average ratings have historically had the lowest levels of parental satisfaction with home and school relations.

Table 18
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)

2014 Absolute Rating	School Type	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	79.5	9.0
	Middle	69.8	15.5
	High	70.7	16.5
Good	Elementary	75.2	11.1
	Middle	65.6	18.0
	High	63.7	21.6
Average	Elementary	74.3	12.6
	Middle	65.7	18.8
	High	63.9	22.3
Below Average	Elementary	68.3	18.6
	Middle	65.7	20.0
	High	67.0	20.2
At Risk	Elementary	66.7	20.4
	Middle	56.9	26.3
	High	88.8	8.0

This is true for the 2014 survey with one exception, where the satisfaction among parents of high school students is the higher than any other combination of Absolute Rating and school type. This anomaly cannot be explained by either a small number of high schools with Absolute Ratings of At Risk or an unusually low number of parents from these schools responding to the survey. Respondents from schools with Absolute Ratings of At Risk come from 12 high schools

(6.3 percent of parents and 5.6 percent of schools), 13 middle schools (1.2 percent of parents and 4.34 percent of schools), and 17 elementary schools (1.5 percent of parents and 2.6 percent of schools). Although the number of high schools is small, it does not differ dramatically from the number of middle or elementary schools, and the number of parents from high schools responding is large enough that it cannot be attributed to a small sample size, but instead to differences in parent perception.

C. Social and Physical Environment

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 student behavior at 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 19 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey.

Table 19
Percentage of Parents in 2014 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.	90.6	6.4	3.1
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	6.9	1.9
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	9.1	7.1
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	22.5	12.6
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child’s school.	84.4	11.9	3.7

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 one out of three parents either did not believe or did not know whether students at their child’s school were well behaved, and 16.2 percent of parents did not know or did not believe that their child’s teachers cared about their child as an individual.

Table 20 compares the 2014 results of the South Carolina parent survey with the results of parent surveys administered since 2010. 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, 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 20
2010-2014
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.6	91.5	91.3	90.0	91.0
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	91.0	90.9	89.7	90.5
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	83.7	84.1	81.1	82.1
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	64.0	63.7	61.2	62.4
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school	84.4	84.3	84.1	82.4	83.2

A final analysis was conducted to gauge parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2014 with the results of surveys completed during the prior three years. Table 21 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 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2011 through 2013. Again, there were no significant increases or decreases when comparing parental responses in 2014 with the average of the three prior years.

Table 21
Comparing 2014 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2014	Mean % (2011-2013)	Difference
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.6	90.9	(0.3)
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	90.5	0.7
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	83.0	0.8
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	63.0	1.8
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	84.4	83.6	0.8

Comparing parental responses to Question 5 with the 2014 Absolute Rating of their child's school, Table 22 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 generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. The difference between the percentage of parents whose children attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Excellent and those whose children attended a school with an Absolute Rating of At Risk and who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child's school was 17.2 percent as compared to 9.0 percent for learning environment and 2.1 for home and school relations.

Table 22
I am Satisfied with the Social and Physical Environment at My Child’s School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s School)

2013 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	89.0	8.5
Good	84.4	12.1
Average	80.8	14.3
Below Average	76.3	18.5
At Risk	71.8	17.1

Analyzing the responses by school type (elementary, middle and high), for elementary and middle schools, the percentage of parents satisfied with the social and physical environment at their child’s school decreases as Absolute Rating decreases. For high schools this same pattern is present with one exception, which is that parents of students in schools with ratings of Below Average are more satisfied than are parents with students in schools with ratings of Good or Average.

The data also reveal that for schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent, Good, or Average, parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child’s school is greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools. Among schools with Absolute Ratings of Below Average, parents of students in high school are most satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed by parents of elementary school students, and parents of middle schools students. Among schools with Absolute Ratings of At Risk, parents of elementary school students are most satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed by parents of high school students, and parents of middle school students.

Table 23 documents the large differences between parent satisfaction between schools with an Absolute Rating of Excellent compared to schools with an Absolute Rating of At-Risk by school type. For parents with children in elementary school the difference is 17.7 percent, for parents with children in middle school the difference is 20.0 percent, and for parents with children in high school the difference is 9.4 percent.

Table 23
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)

2013 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	93.2	5.4
	Middle	85.7	11.0
	High	82.5	13.1
Good	Elementary	90.1	7.7
	Middle	80.1	15.1
	High	71.3	22.9
Average	Elementary	85.5	10.6
	Middle	77.8	16.5
	High	68.9	24.4
Below Average	Elementary	78.2	17.3
	Middle	74.0	20.0
	High	81.8	15.0
At Risk	Elementary	75.5	20.7
	Middle	65.7	28.0
	High	73.1	6.3

D. Parental Involvement

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

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

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

- 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 24 with the middle 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 24
Percent of Parents Providing Each Response to
Parental Involvement Questions Regarding Activities at the School

<u>Parental Involvement Question</u>	I do this	I don’t but would like to	I don’t and don’t care to	Activity/event not offered
Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences	79.9	14.8	4.2	1.1
Attend student programs or performances	80.7	14.3	3.6	1.4
Volunteer for the school	36.4	36.9	23.1	3.6
Go on trip with my child’s school	35.8	42.4	16.0	5.8
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	12.0	44.6	37.2	6.3
Participate in Parent-teacher Student Organizations	32.9	33.7	30.3	3.1
Participate in school committees	16.5	37.8	38.2	7.5
Attend parent workshops	24.8	37.8	22.6	14.8

Based on the responses in Table 24 and the six types of involvement, there are significant opportunities for improving parental involvement in South Carolina’s public schools.

- Decision-Making – Substantially fewer parents report being involved in the School Improvement Council and school committees than in any other activity.

Slightly less than one-third of parents report participating in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations. Decision making, including parents and families in school decisions, and developing parent leaders and representatives are areas for growth where parents want to be involved in these decision-making organizations.

- Volunteering – Approximately 36 percent of the parents responded that they volunteered while 37 percent wanted to volunteer.
- Parenting - Over three-fourths of the parents attended open houses, parent-teacher conferences or student programs, all activities that support their children. Approximately one-fourth reported attending parent workshops while 15 percent contend that such workshops were not provided at their child’s school.

Parents were asked five questions about their involvement with their child’s learning, both at the school site and at home. 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 25 summarizes parental responses to these five questions.

Table 25
Percent of Parents Providing Each Response to
Parental Involvement Questions Regarding Their Child’s Learning

	I do this	I don’t but would like to	I don’t and don’t care to
Visit my child’s classroom during the school day	31.2	50.0	18.9
Contact my child’s teachers about my child’s school work.	76.3	17.9	5.8
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet	83.5	8.8	7.7
Make sure my child does his/her homework	94.3	3.9	1.9
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	93.1	5.2	1.8

Clearly, parents overwhelmingly report being involved in activities and decisions to support their child’s learning. Over 93 percent of parents reported helping their child with his or her homework while 83.5 percent report limiting television and other distractions at home. Almost 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. These responses are similar to parent responses in prior years.

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

from 2008 through 2014 are included in Table 26. Consistently across years, work schedule is the most common obstacle to parent involvement. 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 26
Percentage of Parents Experiencing Each Impediment to Involvement in Schools

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Lack of transportation reduces my involvement	12.2	11.6	11.6	11.5	11.8	11.7	11.6
Family health problems reduce my involvement.	15.5	14.6	14.4	14.3	14.3	14.7	14.9
Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement.	14.8	14.1	14.7	14.5	15.1	15.4	15.2
My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	57.1	54.6	53.8	54.4	55.1	55.6	56.2
The school does not encourage my involvement.	17.5	16.1	15.7	16.2	17.4	17.6	18.0
Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all.	25.5	23.7	23.5	24.6	25.3	25.7	26.8
I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved.	11.9	11.3	10.6	11.4	12.0	12.1	12.8

Finally, parents were also asked several questions about their child's school and its efforts at increasing parental involvement. Across these questions and across time, two-thirds or more of parents consistently rated the efforts of their child's school at parental involvement efforts as good or very good (Table 27). Approximately twenty percent rated their child's school overall as "okay". Fewer than 10 percent of parents have provided unfavorable responses regarding their child's school for any of these questions over the past three years.

Table 27
2012 – 2014
Percent of Parents Providing Each Response to Parental Involvement Questions Regarding School Effort

Question:	Very Good or Good			Bad or Very Bad			Okay		
	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012
School's overall friendliness.	80.6	79.3	81.5	1.6	2.2	2.2	16.9	18.4	16.3
School's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	62.5	63.4	63.9	8.1	7.6	7.2	29.4	30.1	28.9
School's effort to get important information from parents.	68.6	67.4	68.8	7.5	7.6	7.2	24.0	25.1	24.0
The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	73.9	73.1	74.3	6.3	6.1	6.0	19.8	20.8	19.7
How the school is doing overall.	76.9	75.8	77.5	3.6	3.2	3.2	19.5	21.0	19.3

E. Conclusions

- Parental satisfaction with the Learning Environment (86.7 percent) and the Social and Physical Environment (84.4 percent) of their child's school is similar to the levels from 2013.
- Parental satisfaction with the Home and School Relations for their child's school decrease substantially from 2013 from 83.3 percent to 71.7 percent; however, this decline was accompanied by a corresponding increase in the number of parents not providing responses to this question. The percent of parents expressing dissatisfaction remained nearly constant (13.3 in 2013, 14.6 in 2014).
- Parental satisfaction in all areas decreases as the Absolute Rating of the school their child attends declines. This holds true for all three areas (Learning Environment, Home and School Relations, and Social and Physical Environment), and for schools of all levels (Elementary, Middle, and High).
- Parental work schedule continues to be the largest impediment to parental involvement in school activities.

PART FOUR

Results of the Gallup Student Poll – 2013 and 2014

The Gallup Student Poll collects information annually from students in grades 5-12. The survey is available free-of-charge to all schools in the United States, and is administered in the Fall of each year via a secure web-site. The survey was first administered in 2009. The survey provides information in three areas: Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being. The complete survey is included in Appendix C.

A. Gallup Student Poll Methodology

The following description of the Gallup Student Poll is provided with the U.S. Overall Student Poll Results:

The annual Gallup Student Poll is offered at no cost to public schools and districts in the United States. The online poll is completed by a convenience sample of schools and districts each fall. Schools participating in the annual Gallup Student Poll are not randomly selected and are neither charged nor given any incentives beyond receipt of school-specific data. Participation rates vary by school. The poll is conducted during a designated survey period and available during school hours Tuesday through Friday only. The Gallup Student Poll is administered to students in grades 5 through 12. The primary application of the Gallup Student Poll is as a measure of non-cognitive metrics that predicts student success in academic and other youth development settings.

The overall data from the annual administration of the Gallup student Poll may not reflect responses from a nationally representative sample of students, and the overall data are not statistically weighted to reflect the U.S. student population; thereby, overall data and scorecards should be used cautiously by local schools and districts as a data comparison. School and district data and scorecards provide meaningful data for local comparisons and may inform strategic initiatives and programming, though the results are not generalizable beyond the universe of the participating school or district¹².

B. National Results for 2013 and 2014

For each area, student responses are summarized so that each student is associated with one of three categories. The categories are unique to each area. The percentage of students associated with these categories for 2013 and 2014 are presented in Table 28. The Gallup organization, in their materials to educate users of the student survey¹³, indicate that the process of identifying students in each of the three categories for each area is a proprietary process, and that it is not simply a mean of the responses to the items in each area.

¹² “Gallup Student Poll Technical Report, Fall 2014”, Gallup Inc., 2010. Retrieved from: <http://www.gallup.com/services/177095/gallup-student-poll-technical-report.aspx>, April 15, 2015.

¹³ “Fall 2014 U.S. Overall Gallup Student Poll Results”, Gallup Inc., 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.gallup.com/services/180029/gallup-student-poll-2014-overall-report.aspx>, April 15, 2015.

problem solving. All remaining items have from 80-89 percent of students providing favorable responses.

Table 29
Summary of 2014 Hope Items

Item	N	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Item Mean
I know I will graduate from high school.	856,952	84	n/a	4.72
There is an adult in my life who cares about my future.	861,288	95	n/a	4.78
I can think of many ways to get good grades.	861,847	85	4	4.33
I energetically pursue my goals.	857,869	80	5	4.16
I can find lots of ways around any problem.	859,586	68	9	3.88
I know I will find a good job after I graduate.	850,108	85	4	4.38

n/a – Numeric values of any response category less than 5% are not available. When enough categories have missing information percentages cannot be determined.

Table 30 presents the average of the numeric score for all Hope items for the entire sample and by grade level for 2013 and 2014; this average is referred to as the Grandmean. Grandmean scores for 2014 range from 4.36 to 4.42 while grandmean scores for 2013 range from 4.35 to 4.42. There are only minor differences between Hope grandmean scores by grade level. Most noticeable is the dramatic increase in the number of students who responded to the survey from 2013 (589,997) to 2014 (827,246).

Table 30
Hope Grandmean by Year

Grade Level	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	All	N
2013	4.40	4.42	4.42	4.40	4.37	4.36	4.38	4.41	4.40	589,997
2014	4.39	4.42	4.41	4.38	4.36	4.35	4.36	4.40	4.39	827,246

D. Engagement

The section of the student survey identified as Engagement includes seven questions. The first two questions ask students about their comfort level at school as manifest by the presence of a best friend at school and their perception of their safety in the school setting. Two questions address the students' teachers; one asks whether the students' teachers communicate the importance of schoolwork to the student, and the other asks whether students have at least one teacher that instills excitement about the future to the student. The remaining questions address ways in which the school fosters student engagement: by providing students the opportunity to excel daily, recognizing excellent schoolwork, and building the strengths of each student.

Students respond to these items on the same 5-point scale as the items assessing Hope, again with the only verbal descriptions to values of the scale being associated with the lowest score of 1 (Strongly Disagree) and the highest score of 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 31 presents the percentage of students giving favorable responses to each item and the mean item score for each Engagement item for the entire sample in 2014. The percentage of students providing positive responses for the Engagement items range from 57 to 85. The item with the most favorable response (85 percent) and highest item mean (4.43) indicates that students have a best friend at school. The item with the least favorable response (57 percent) and lowest item mean (3.49) addresses whether students have received recent recognition for the academic achievement. The two remaining items that address the school fostering student engagement have similar percentages of students with positive responses, 69 and 70 percent of students, respectively, agree that their school is committed to building their individual strengths and providing student the opportunity to do their best daily. Nearly the same percentages of students believe teachers make them feel schoolwork is important (78 percent) and perceive that at least one teacher makes them excited about the future (79 percent).

Table 31
Engagement Item Summary

Item	N	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Item Mean
I have a best friend at school.	856,802	85	8	4.43
I feel safe in this school.	860,273	73	12	4.00
My teachers make me feel my schoolwork is important.	861,749	78	8	4.14
At this school I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	858,675	70	13	3.91
In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good schoolwork.	847,050	57	25	3.49
My school is committed to building the strengths of each student.	849,121	69	12	3.92
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future.	856,544	79	11	4.19

Table 32 presents the average of the numeric score for all Engagement items for the entire sample and by grade level for 2013 and 2014; this average is referred to as the Grandmean. Grandmean scores for 2014 range from 3.71 to 4.38 while grandmean scores for 2013 range from 3.81 to 4.38. The grandmeans decrease from grade 5 (4.37) through grade 11 (3.71), then remain steady for grade 12. One way to conceptualize the decrease in the grandmeans of 0.66 is that the typical student in grade 11 would respond to an item by “more than 1/2 of a category” lower than a grade 5 student. The dramatic increase in the number of students who responded to the survey from 2013 (589,031) to 2014 (826,853) is also evident in the area of Engagement.

Table 32
Engagement Grandmean by Year

Grade Level	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	All	N
2013	4.38	4.28	4.13	3.97	3.92	3.81	3.79	3.79	4.04	589,031
2014	4.37	4.28	4.10	3.93	3.87	3.74	3.71	3.73	4.00	826,853

E. Well-Being

The section of the student survey identified as Well-Being includes seven questions. The first question asks students to rate their well-being on a scale of 0 to 10, where each point is envisioned as a step on a ladder, with the bottom of the ladder representing the worst possible life, and the top of the ladder the best possible life. Students are asked to identify which rung on the ladder they currently stand on, and which rung of the ladder they will stand about five years from now. For well-being, the grandmean is the mean across students of where they expect to stand on the ladder with respect to their best/worst possible life. The goal of the Gallup organization was to assess students' future vision of their well-being².

Six additional items are presented that address distinct elements of well-being: personal integrity, laughter, learning, health, social network. Students are asked to respond, yes or no, whether they have experienced each of these indicators of well-being. For the item asking if students have health problems, the percent without health problems can be obtained by subtracting the obtained percent from 100. Table 33 presents the percentage of students responding Yes to each Well-Being item for the entire sample in 2014.

Table 33
Well-Being Item Summary

Item	N	Percent Yes
Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?	797,724	68
Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?	838,612	83
Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday/	837,173	75
Did you have enough energy to get things done yesterday?	835,308	73
Do you have health problems that keep you from doing any of the things other people your age normally can do?	817,849	16
If you are in trouble, do you have family or friends you can count on to help whenever you need them?	826,177	92

The item students respond to most favorably is that they have family or friends that they can count on (92 percent). Eight-four (84) percent responded that they did not have health problems and 83 percent stated that they smiled or laughed yesterday. Two-thirds of students responded that they were treated with respect all day yesterday (68 percent), a measure of the behavior of others that impact the students.

Table 34 presents the grandmean score for Well-Being for the entire sample and by grade level for 2013 and 2014. Recall that the grandmean for Well-Being comes from one item only, which is student perceptions of where they will be in five years on a ladder with steps from 0 to 10. Grandmean scores for 2014 range from 8.37 to 8.56. There is no particular pattern of grandmeans by grade level, in fact the lowest and highest values occur in grades 5 and 6, respectively. As with the other areas assessed, differences between 2013 and 2014 are small, which is interesting given the substantial increase in the number of students responding to the survey.

Table 34
Well-Being Grandmean by Year

Grade Level	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	All	N
2013	8.43	8.59	8.60	8.56	8.52	8.46	8.46	8.49	8.52	616,203
2014	8.37	8.56	8.56	8.53	8.51	8.45	8.44	8.48	8.49	867,546

F. Conclusions

The Gallup Student Poll is a measure of students' Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being.

- The initial survey was administered in 2009, and the number of responses increased by approximately 140,000 students from 2013 to 2014. (As measured by the number of responses to the first Well-Being question, which presents the largest item response rate).
- Fifty-three (53) percent of students are identified as Hopeful, 53 percent are identified as Engaged, and 64 percent are identified as Thriving.
- In the area of Hope, the overall student response is a score of 4.4 on a 5-point scale, with results consistent from 2013 to 2014. Minor differences exist by grade level, with no apparent trend by grade level.
- In the area of Engagement, the overall student response is a mean score of approximately 4.0 on a 5-point scale. Mean responses by grade level decline from grade 5 (4.37) to grade 11 (3.71), with the mean response for grade 12 (3.73) similar to grade 11.
- In the area of Well-Being, the overall student response is a mean score of 8.5 on a 10-point scale. There are no differences by grade level.
- There was approximately a 40 percent increase in the number of students responding to the poll from 2013 to 2014 (based on responses to questions on Well-Being).
- Monitoring student behavior in these three dimensions over time can provide important information to school/district personnel with respect to three important dimensions of student disposition that are minimally related to student achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2014 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 59,293, a decline of 7,494 surveys (11.2 percent) from the prior year. SCDE staff note two changes in the period of administration of the parent survey that may have affected the response rate. First, the survey occurred later in the year in 2014 (April 11 through May 9) than in 2013 (February 28 through March 25), and second, because of the later administration, the window of administration included Spring break for some school districts. Despite this decline, the results of the 2014 parent survey demonstrate that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment and social and physical environment of their child's school—were generally 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. Parent satisfaction with home and school relations appears to have declined dramatically from 2013 to 2014; however, the number of missing responses for this item increased from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014. The percentage of parents not satisfied in 2014 was 14.6 percent, a slight increase from 13.3 percent in 2013, which suggests a slight decrease in parental satisfaction with home and school relations. SCDE staff were consulted regarding this data anomaly; no explanation is apparent. EOC staff inquired of the SCDE whether a sample of survey documents could be spot-checked by the contractor to rule out scanning errors. SCDE staff¹⁴ indicated that this was not possible.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	2013	2011	2010	Difference between 2014 and 2013
Learning Environment	86.7	87.0	87.2	84.3	(0.3)
Home and School Relations	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	(11.6)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	84.3	84.1	82.4	0.1

When comparing parent satisfaction in 2014 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, the only significant change is in home and school relations, which can be attributed to the data anomaly previously discussed. There were no significant changes in parental satisfaction with respect to the learning environment or social and physical environment of the school.

¹⁴ Ling Gao, SCDE e-mail message to EOC, April 8, 2015.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	Mean % (2010-2013)	Difference between 2014 and Mean of three years
Learning Environment	86.7	86.2	0.5
Home and School Relations	71.7	82.1	(10.4)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	83.6	0.8

There also were minimal differences between item responses from 2014 compared to item responses from 2013 for the learning environment and social and physical environment of the school:

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	Difference
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	(0.7)
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	(0.3)
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	0.2

Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. 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 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	90.0	81.0	9.0
Home and School Relations	75.1	73.0	2.1
Social and Physical Environment	89.0	71.8	17.1

Parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average were less satisfied with the learning environment and home and school relations at their child's school than parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of At Risk.

**Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends a School Rated Below Average or At-Risk,
Satisfied with:**

Characteristic	Below Average Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	79.2	81.0	(0.8)
Home and School Relations	66.9	73.0	(6.1)
Social and Physical Environment	76.3	71.8	4.5

Parents who responded to the 2014 annual survey reported levels of parental involvement compared to previous years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2014

Work Schedule	57.1%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	25.5%
School does not encourage involvement	17.5%
Family and health problems	15.5%
Lack of child or adult care services	14.8%
Transportation	12.2%
Involvement not appreciated	11.9%

Items parents perceive as impediments to parental involvement that are at least partially within the control of the schools are the processes by which schools notify parents of volunteer opportunities, the means by which the school encourages or enables interaction between parents and the school, and the approach of the school toward parental involvement.

The Gallup Student Poll collects information regarding non-cognitive student attributes that are associated with student success in academic and other endeavors. From the Gallup Student Poll, 53 percent of students are identified as being Hopeful, 53 percent of students are identified as being Engaged, and 64 percent of students are identified as Thriving. Results of the Gallup Student Poll are consistent from 2013 to 2014 even though there was approximately a 40 percent increase in the number of student responses.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

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 <https://ed.sc.gov/apps/teachersurvey/>

- March 17, 2014 – Teacher Survey portal opens.
- April 25, 2014 – Teacher Survey portal closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

- April 11, 2014 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date, except schools in 10 districts that are on spring break on April 11 to receive the forms on April 14.
- May 14, 2014 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

- April 11, 2014 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date, except schools in 10 districts that are on spring break on April 11 to receive the forms on April 14.
- May 9, 2014 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
This is the due date in the letter to parents.
- May 14, 2013 – 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 Amanda Thomas with Scantron Corporation. Her email address is amanda.thomas@scantron.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Dr. Ling Gao at lgao@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-4321.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

INDEX

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

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Receipt and Distribution of Materials	3	Appendix A – Student and Parent	
Survey Guidelines	3	Survey Participants	7
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CHANGES THIS YEAR

Five questions have been deleted from the Parent Survey.

The look of the surveys and accompanying information may be different this year since the Department has contracted with a different vendor. But the questions and administration procedures have not been changed.

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.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

- ✓ 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 **cannot** 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 2014 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 printed for your school is based on numbers provided by your district office. 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 director of the Education Oversight Committee to your principal.
- Determine the number of student and parent survey forms you will need for each class at the designated grade level(s). Count the surveys into classroom stacks and distribute.

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 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 should take approximately twenty 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 directly 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 2014 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.
- 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 25 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. **Remind teachers that they should not write any student names on the envelopes.**
- 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.
- 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 2014
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 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 shipped to the contractor 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 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, 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.**
- 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** Amanda Thomas with Scantron Corporation. Her email address is amanda.thomas@scantron.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Wednesday, May 14, 2013.**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014
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, teachers should not collect completed surveys. Classroom teachers and school administrators are not to review completed student surveys.

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

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

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

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

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

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

Thank You

The 2014 Parent Survey

4860026906

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"/>

Please mark if each of the following are 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"/>				

Please answer the following questions about your child:

- What grade is your child in? 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th 11th
- What is your child's gender? Male Female
- What is your child's race/ethnicity? African American/Black Hispanic Asian American/ Pacific Islander Caucasian/White Native American Other
- What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card? All or mostly A's and B's All or mostly C's and D's All or mostly B's and C's All or mostly D's and F's
- Has your child been bullied at school this year? Yes No Don't know
- If yes, was your child bullied: (Check all that apply) In classroom Other location at school At sporting events On-line/texting during school On the bus After school
- If yes, was your child bullied: (Check all that apply) Physically Verbally Both

Bullying is when 1 or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again physically. It is not bullying when 2 students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way.

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

- What is your gender? Male Female
- What is your race/ethnicity? African American/Black Hispanic Asian American/ Pacific Islander Caucasian/White Native American Other
- What is the highest level of education you have completed? Attended elementary/high school Earned Associate Degree Earned college degree Completed high school/GED Attended college/training program Postgraduate study and/or degree
- What is your family's total yearly household income? Less than \$15,000 \$25,000 - \$34,999 \$55,000 - \$75,000 \$15,000 - \$24,999 \$35,000 - \$54,999 More than \$75,000

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

The 2014 Gallup Student Poll Questions



MEASURING STUDENT HOPE, ENGAGEMENT, AND WELL-BEING

GALLUP STUDENT POLL QUESTIONS

The Gallup Student Poll is administered to students in grades five through 12 via a secure website. The survey includes demographic items: age, grade, race/ethnicity, and gender. The standard scorecard includes results for the core 20 items only. Gallup can provide demographic data and additional item results for a fee. For more information, visit www.gallupstudentpoll.com or contact us at Education@gallup.com.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Well-Being;
<i>presented with
ladder graphic</i> | 1. Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time? On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now? |
| Hope | 2. I know I will graduate from high school. |
| Hope | 3. There is an adult in my life who cares about my future. |
| Hope | 4. I can think of many ways to get good grades. |
| Hope | 5. I energetically pursue my goals. |
| Hope | 6. I can find lots of ways around any problem. |
| Hope | 7. I know I will find a good job after I graduate. |
| Engagement | 8. I have a best friend at school. |
| Engagement | 9. I feel safe in this school. |
| Engagement | 10. My teachers make me feel my schoolwork is important. |
| Engagement | 11. At this school, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day. |
| Engagement | 12. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good schoolwork. |
| Engagement | 13. My school is committed to building the strengths of each student. |
| Engagement | 14. I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future. |
| Well-Being | 15. Were you treated with respect all day yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 16. Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 17. Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 18. Did you have enough energy to get things done yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 19. Do you have health problems that keep you from doing any of the things other people your age normally can do? |
| Well-Being | 20. If you are in trouble, do you have family or friends you can count on to help whenever you need them? |

DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

The Gallup Student Poll always includes these items, so all students answer them. However, Gallup charges a fee to report these items.

- I am one of the best students in my class.
- I am very involved in activities, such as clubs, music, sports, or something else.
- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- Do you consider yourself to be: (student chooses racial/ethnic origin)
- What is the grade you are in at school?

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