PARENT

CLIMATE SURVEY REPORT

2020-2021 & 2021-2022 School Years

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SC EDUCATION
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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings of the Parent School Climate Survey (henceforth, the Parent Survey) administered to parents and guardians statewide in the Spring of 2021 to collect their perceptions of the 2020-21 school year, and in the Spring of 2022 to collect their perceptions of the 2021-22 school year. Data from the 2019 Parent Survey is included for purposes of comparison. A summary of findings and recommendations follow:

- In 2021 and 2022, parents' and guardians' perceptions of school climate remain consistent with Parent Survey results reported in previous years and remain relatively high, with mean responses on all items higher than 2.5 on a 4-point scale, and most item means above 3.0.

- In 2021 and 2022, the Parent Survey moved to an online, mobile-friendly administration to provide easier access to multiple stakeholders at a reduced cost. The 2022 Parent Survey utilized the Qualtrics survey platform which added additional methods for collecting and analyzing stakeholder experiences of school climate.

- The move to online administration permitted parents and guardians of students in all grade levels at all South Carolina schools the opportunity to complete the Parent Survey for the first time in the history of its use in our state.

- Although the number of responses received on the Parent Survey increased in 2021 over the number of responses received in 2019, the estimated response rate fell because all parents and guardians of all students were invited to complete the survey. In 2022, both the number of responses and the estimated response rate fell in 2022. This drop is likely due to new, potentially unfamiliar technologies that were implemented quickly, with communication that may not have been consistent statewide.

- The 2022 Parent Survey provided the first-ever opportunity for parents and guardians to leave free-response comments as part of their feedback to school and district leaders. More than 40,000 free response comments were collected.

- The 2022 Parent Survey also provided the first-ever opportunity for parents and guardians to dynamically choose one of six languages in which to complete the survey (Chinese Simplified, English, French, German, Spanish, or Vietnamese). More than 1,200 surveys were completed, and more than 500 free-responses were written by parents and guardians in a language other than English.

- EOC Staff have begun to investigate how the SC School Climate Surveys, to include the Parent Survey, can be modified to better assess the experiences of SC stakeholders with online and virtual education.

  Recommendation 1. Continue efforts to improve parents' and guardians' experiences of and involvement with school climate in South Carolina by providing school and district leaders with direct access to the Parent Survey results for their school(s) to inform continuous improvement efforts.

  Recommendation 2. Work systematically and early in the coming school year to ensure clear, detailed, and effective communication to all stakeholders on survey implementation and delivery methods, providing technical support as needed to support implementation.

  Recommendation 3. Investigate any barriers to communication or access which may be suppressing response rates on the Parent Survey, particularly among families in poverty and other traditionally underrepresented subgroups.

  Recommendation 4. Continue efforts to make the Parent Survey available to parents and guardians in their preferred language and to use translations of their free response comments to inform school and district continuous improvement efforts.

  Recommendation 5. Continue efforts to improve the ability of the School Climate Surveys to inform continuous improvement of online and virtual learning in South Carolina.

Parent Climate Survey Report

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 SC Parent School Climate Survey (henceforth referred to as the Parent Survey).

A Brief History of Climate Surveys in South Carolina

The annual Parent Survey was prompted by the Education Accountability Act of 1998 which states "school report cards should include information in such areas as evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students." Three versions of the School Climate Survey were developed for administration to students, to teachers, and to parents/guardians of students in South Carolina schools. Since their development and use, selected survey items have been reported on School Report Cards as part of the state's educational accountability system. Beginning with the 2022 School Report Cards, a subset of items from the SC Student School Climate Survey (henceforth referred to as the Student Survey) and the SC Teacher School Climate Survey (henceforth referred to as the Teacher Survey) are used as an accountability indicator on which school ratings are based.

For all administrations through Spring 2019, the Parent Survey was administered in printed form, distributed to parents and guardians through their child at school. There were no survey data collected provided in Spring of 2020 because of the closure of schools following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Spring of 2021 marked the first year that parent surveys were distributed and collected digitally using electronic devices, including smart phones.

In addition to changing the mode of administration for the Parent Survey in 2021, the survey was also made available to parents and guardians of students at all grade levels. Since its inception, the Parent Survey and the Student Survey had only been administered to students and to parents and guardians of students enrolled in the highest grade level offered at a given school. Beginning in the Spring of 2021, the parent surveys were not limited to the highest grade-level groups. This meant that surveys in 2021 were made open to parent and guardians of students at all grade levels.

In Spring 2021, the Parent Survey was delivered through the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) website using an open access, public link approach. Parents and guardians navigated to the survey on the SCDE website and entered an ID number for the school their child attended. In the Spring of 2022, parents and guardians accessed the Qualtrics® powered survey using a personal computer with internet access, or using their smart phone, via unique survey links distributed by districts. In districts where the Parent Portal and eCollect electronic forms modules have been implemented in the PowerSchool student information system, unique links were distributed to parents and guardians electronically via those tools. All districts were also provided PDFs containing a QR Code and URL for each of the unique Qualtrics links that they could send home with students either in addition to or instead of using the PowerSchool system.

Another benefit of moving to electronic presentation is that content changes can now be made more easily to the surveys. For instance, free response items were added in the Parent Survey for the 2021-2022 school year. This report includes some analyses of these free responses and EOC Staff will provide access to school and district leaders to view the responses for their school(s) on an interactive dashboard that will also allow them to read the full text of stakeholders' comments.

In addition, the 2022 Parent Survey capitalized on the increased quality and availability of automated translation services (specifically, Google Translate) to offer the survey in five world languages in addition to English. Respondents could select to take the survey in Chinese (written in simplified characters), French, German, Spanish, or Vietnamese. These languages were offered because 2010 US Census data and related projections indicated that these are the most commonly spoken languages other than English in our state. Future iterations of the Parent Survey will include translations to the most spoken languages in South Carolina based on analyses of the 2020 US Census data, where were not yet publicly available when the 2022 Parent Survey was created. EOC Staff also used Google Translate to translate free response comments that respondents left in their home language to English for analysis and presentation on the dashboard.

About this Report

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 items in the parent survey which continue to directly address Section 59-18-900 of the EAA are:
- I am satisfied with the learning environment in my child's school.
- I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.
- I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.

This report contains the analysis of parent survey data for two school years – the most recent school year (2021-2022) and the prior school year (2020-2021). Previous reports of Parent Survey results to EOC members were typically given in June and reported results for the prior school year. For example, EOC members received a report in June of 2020 that detailed the findings of the Parent Survey administered in May of 2019 (approximately 11 months earlier) collecting parent perceptions of the 2018-2019 school year. By delaying this report until August, EOC Staff can now report Parent Survey results to members only a few months after those results are collected going forward.

This report also includes (as an appendix) the results of the exploratory analysis from the South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEPC) concerning the response rates, demographic profile of respondents, and trends in missing data from the first online administration of the Parent Survey (2020-2021) to previous surveys which were administered in paper-pencil format to parents and guardians of students in select grade-levels.

Responses Received

Response Rates

More survey responses were received for the spring 2021 survey (see Table 1), but the estimated response rate decreased from 37.6% to 12.2%. A similar trend was observed for the response rate of the spring 2021 and spring 2022 surveys which were 12.2% and 7.5%, respectively. The response rate was estimated for the spring 2019 survey based on the percentage of parents who took the survey (63,337) out of the total number of students enrolled in the highest grade-levels of South Carolina schools (168,522). The spring 2021 survey response rate was estimated based on the percentage of parents who took the survey (90,008) out of the total number of enrolled students (738,856). And the spring survey was estimated based on the percentage of parents who took the survey (56,523) out of the total number of enrolled students (751,487). Since parents and guardians are asked to complete one Parent Survey for each school at which they have children, full participation in the survey by all parents and guardians would result in fewer survey responses than the number of students on which these estimates are based. As a result, response rate estimates are expected to be similar to, but lower than, the true response rate.

Table 1

Number of Students for Whom Survey Invitations Were Generated, Responses Received, and Estimated Response Rates for the Parent Survey

Survey Year	Respondents	Total Number of Students	Estimated Response Rate
2019	63,337	168,522 [a]	37.6%
2021	90,008	738,856 [b]	12.2%
2022	56,523	751,487 [c]	7.5%

Note: There was no 2020 Parent Survey data for which to estimate a response rate. Estimated response rates are approximate as parents and guardians are asked to complete one Parent Survey for each school at which they have children. Since many households with children in SC schools have more than one child attending the same school, a perfect response rate would yield fewer responses than the number of students on which the estimate is based. Estimates shown are expected to be similar to but lower than the true response rate.

[a] Based on 180-Day Active Student Headcount for the 2018-2019 school-year in the highest grade level at each school.

[b] Based on 180-Day Active Student Headcount for 2020-2021 school-year across all schools.

[c] Based on number of students enrolled on March 21st, 2022, when the unique Qualtrics® survey invitation links were generated.

There are several factors to consider regarding the decreased survey response rates. In the spring of 2019, all parents with children in selected grade levels (typically the highest grade-level of a school) were asked to complete the parent survey. In the spring of 2021 and spring of 2022, all parents and guardians were permitted to complete the survey, regardless of the grade level in which their children are enrolled. However, it is unclear whether this was communicated the same way to parents and guardians at all schools and districts in the state, which may lead to differences in response rates across schools.

Even though there was an increase in parent survey responses (+26,671) to the 2021 survey when compared to the 2019 survey, there was still a drop in the overall response rates (-25.4%) as shown in Table 1. In 2022, in addition to the lowered response rate, there was also a decrease in total survey

respondents. In Spring of 2022, districts used Power School and unique links created by Qualtrics® survey to link parents to the parent surveys. 56,522 parents completed the survey before the deadline. The use of new and likely unfamiliar systems could have contributed to the reduced response rate seen for the 2022 Parent Survey. A focus on clearer, more detailed, and earlier communications is recommended to increase stakeholders' knowledge of and comfort with the processes and systems used for the Parent Survey, thereby increasing the response rate on this important survey.

Survey Data Quality Measures

Response data quality was also measured and analyzed with the 2022 survey data. Only parents with unique survey invitation links were able to take the survey to prevent unauthorized, automated programs (or bots) from taking the survey. The response quality metric in Qualtrics® also provided an analysis of the overall quality of responses collected. The Qualtrics® ExpertReview Analysis considered the duration of time respondents took to complete the surveys, the number of times the survey was completed, the 24-hour completion rate, patterns of unanswered questions, straight-lining (answering a statistically significant amount of survey questions with the same response), and other respondent behaviors. In 2022, 78% of responses passed the ExpertReview Analysis metric measuring response quality. Next year, the response data quality metric can be compared to this year's data to begin to develop a trendline in the data over time.

The attached report from the June 2022 South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEDC) also outlines an exploratory factor analysis, the shifts and trends concerning demographics, survey response rates, and missing item response data in greater detail for the spring 2019 and spring 2021 surveys.

Demographics of Parent Respondents and Students

In 2021, there were some shifts in respondent demographics in terms of gender, race and ethnicity, educational attainment, and total yearly household income. However, the shifts within the 2021 parent survey data resulted in a demographic make-up which was comparable to the last parent survey demographic data from 2019.

Table 2
Respondent Gender Selection

Gender	2019	2021	2022
Female	85%	83%	**86%**
Male	15%	17%	**14%**

Note: All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a non-response option (presented as "Prefer not to answer"" in 2021 and "I choose not to answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

The gender make-up of respondents remained relatively stable over the course of a three-year period (see Table 2). The racial make-up of respondents also appeared to be relatively stable the three years of the Parent Survey reported (see Table 3). In these years, most respondents tended to be white or African American which mirrors the demographic make-up of the state.

Table 3
Reported Race of Respondent

Gender	2019	2021	2022
Asian American or Pacific Islander	—	6%	**2%**
Black or African American	28%	24%	**24%**
Hispanic	9%	10%*	**6%**
Native American	—	< 1%	**< 1%**
White or Caucasian	58%	62%	**65%**
More than one racial or ethnic identity	—	3%	**2%**
Other	5%*	5%	**1%**

Note: All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a non-response option (presented as "I choose not to answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

* In 2019, there were fewer racial categories from which respondents could select. In 2021, respondents were able to identify as Hispanic in addition to another racial group.

In 2021, the first year that respondents were able to complete the survey in Spanish, 2042 Parent Surveys (roughly 2% of all surveys received) were completed in Spanish. In 2022, when respondents could select to take the survey in either English or in one of five world languages (Chinese–Simplified, French, German, Spanish, or Vietnamese), 1164 surveys (or 2%) were completed in a language other than English. Of the surveys completed in a language other than English, 1106 (95.0%) were completed in Spanish, 40 (3.4%) were completed in Chinese–Simplified characters, 11 (0.9%) were completed in Vietnamese, 5 (0.4% were completed in French, and 2 (0.2%) were completed in German.
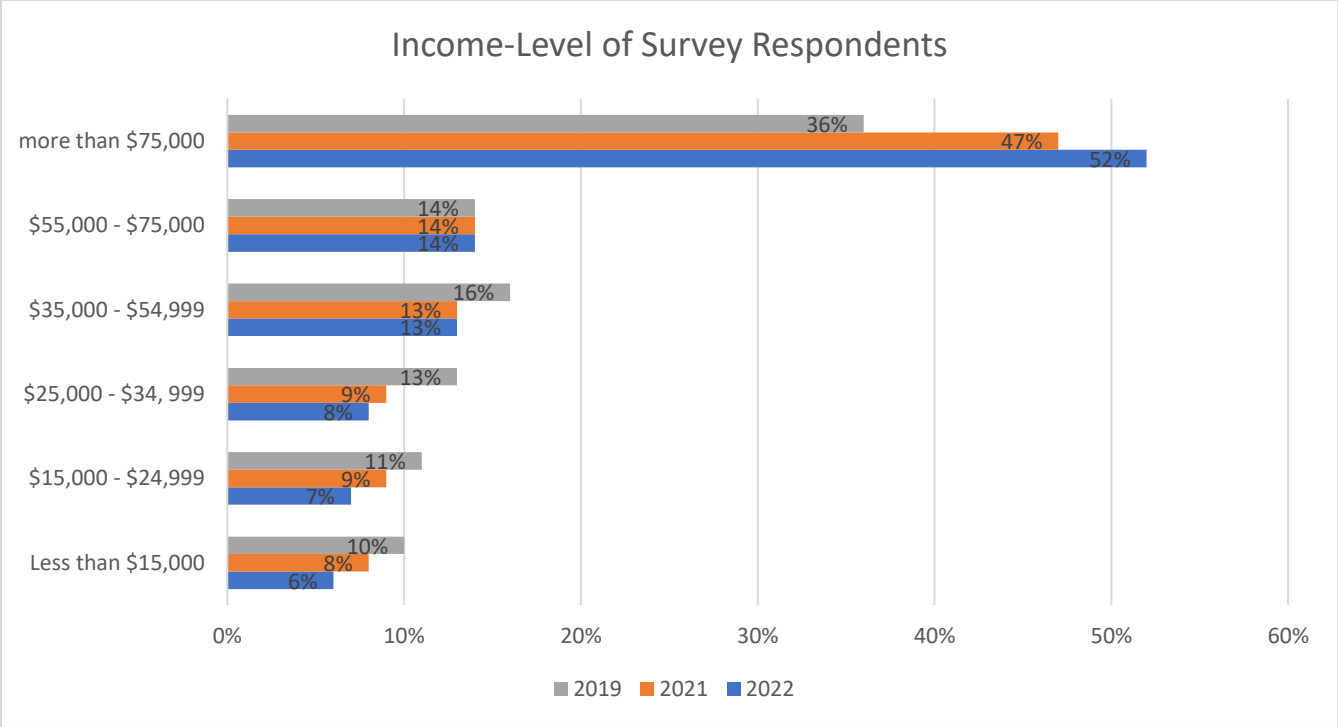
In 2021, there was a higher percentage of parents with earned college degrees (71%) when compared with the 2019 survey respondents (51%) There was a slightly higher percentage of respondents with attained college degrees for 2022 respondents when compared to 2021 respondents (64% vs. 61%).

Table 4
Reported Education Levels of Respondents

Education Level	2019	2021	2022
Attended elementary/high school	10%	6%	**4%**
Earned a high school diploma or GED	21%	16%	**15%**
Attended college or training program	18%	17%	**17%**
Earned a degree from a two-year college or technical school	11%	10%	**14%**
Earned a degree from a four-year college or university	24%	30%	**26%**
Completed postgraduate study or an advanced degree	16%	21%	**24%**

Note: All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a non-response option (presented as "I choose not to answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

Each year, the percentage of respondents with earned college degrees increased. This increase was most notable between the 2019 and 2021 survey respondents. The 2019 survey was given prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and prior to the change of the surveys from the paper-pencil format to a digital format.

Income-Level of Survey Respondents

Income Level	2019	2021	2022
more than $75,000	36%	47%	52%
$55,000 - $75,000	14%	14%	14%
$35,000 - $54,999	16%	13%	13%
$25,000 - $34,999	13%	9%	8%
$15,000 - $24,999	11%	9%	7%
Less than $15,000	10%	8%	6%

■ 2019 ■ 2021 ■ 2022

Throughout the four-year period from 2019-2022, the three-surveys give evidence to suggest a shift in the reported income for the typical survey respondent. The percentage of parents with household incomes of more than $75,000 increased from 36% in 2019, to 47% in 2021, to 52% in 2022. Over time, the percentage of parent respondents with household incomes of $54,999 or less decreased from 50% in 2019 34% percent in 2022.

Traditionally, more parents and guardians of elementary school students complete the Parent Survey, making up 51% of the survey responses received over the past three years of data. In 2021, parents from all grade-levels were able to take the survey. In survey years prior to 2021 which only parents of students from the highest grade level of each school were able to take the survey. Over the past two years the participation of survey participation for parents of high schoolers has increased. Parents of middle schoolers has decreased from 37% in 2019, down to 21% in 2021, and up slightly to 22% in 2022.

Parent Responses By School Level

School Level	2019	2021	2022
Elementary School (K-5th)	47%	54%	53%
Middle School (6th-8th)	37%	21%	23%
High School (9th - 12th)	16%	25%	22%

— Elementary School (K-5th) — Middle School (6th-8th) — High School (9th - 12th)

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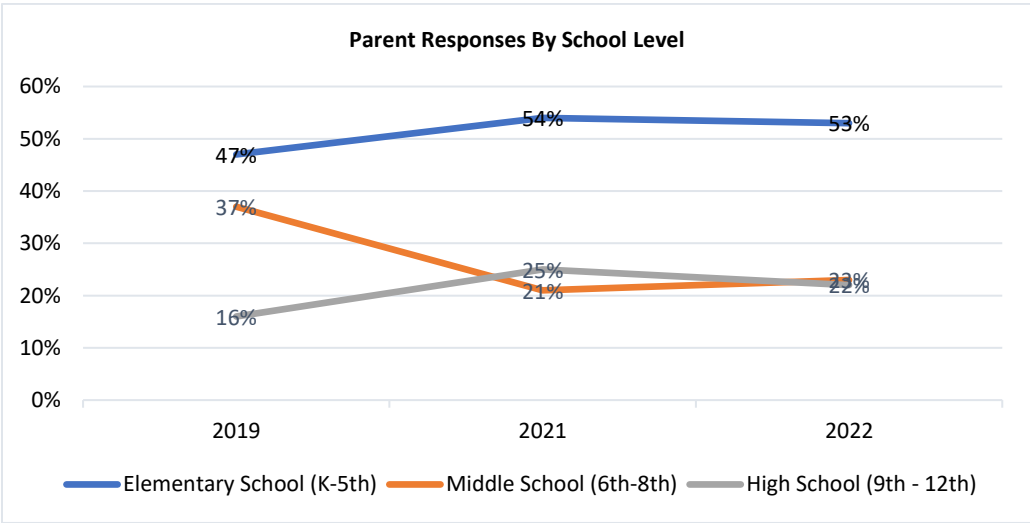
School climate is not a measure that can be objectively identified as "[perceptions of] a school's climate can vary considerably by different members of that community" (Ryberg et al., 2020, p. 2). Therefore, any measurement of school climate must be representative of the diversity in viewpoints "among students, parents, teachers, and staff" (Hamlin, 2021, p. 318). It is important to continue to consider the demographics of parent survey respondents and understand that only parent responses are provided in annual reports on school climate. The attached report from the South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEDC) outlines the shifts in demographics, response rates, and survey response quality between the spring 2019 and spring 2021 surveys in greater detail.

School Climate Survey Factors

The U.S. Department of Education conceptualizes three domains of school climate (engagement, environment, and safety) (USDOE, 2022). The engagement domain of school climate refers to the interactions which occur through relationships among the community members within a school community. According to the literature, the nature of these relationships can be positive or negative based upon several different factors including the shared value system of stake holders, the effectiveness of school leadership, the strengths of teaching and instruction, the physical environment, and the safety and discipline systems within the educational community (Rudasill et al., 2017).

The environment domain of school climate encompasses the "instructional, behavioral, and personal aspects of the classroom experience" (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2017). The environment domain can encompass the level of upkeep and physical environment of the school (ambient noise, lighting, air quality, thermal comfort, building condition, school location).

The third, and final, domain of school climate encompasses elements of safety. The safety domain also aligns with the current literature on school-crime and bullying. The safety domain of school climate is oftentimes correlated with local crime rates of a school community (Sulak, 2016; Whipple et al., 2010).

Table 5
Rates of Agreement and Means for Parent Survey Overall Satisfaction Items

Item	2019		2021		2022	
	% Agree	Mean	% Agree	Mean	% Agree	Mean
I am satisfied with the **learning environment** at my child's school.	87%	3.2	88%	3.2	**84%**	**3.2**
I am satisfied with the **social and physical environment** at my child's school.	93%	3.4	93%	3.4	**91%**	**3.3**
I am satisfied with **home-school relations** at my child's school.	87%	3.2	88%	3.2	**84%**	**3.2**

Note: % Agree = Percent of respondents who answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" out of all respondents for whom this item is not missing. All items are scored on four-point Likert scale in which "Strongly Disagree" = 1, "Disagree" = 2, "Agree" = 3, and "Strongly Agree" = 4. All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a fifth, non-response option (presented as "Don't Know" in 2019 and 2021, and as "Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

Concerning parent satisfaction of the three school climate factors (learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment), the results of the spring 2019, 2021, and 2022 parent surveys indicate moderate to high levels of satisfaction (see Table 5). Satisfaction in this report

refers to 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.

School climates can impact the mental health and academic progress of students and can negatively impact the "capacity of [school community members] to live productive lives while striving to reach their full potential" (US Department of Education, 2022). Hamlin (2021) found school-level increases in perceived school safety correlated with less absenteeism and chronic absences. It is also known that lower scores on school climate are a significant factor for "rates of dropout, absenteeism, and truancy, suspension, drug use, and violent and aggressive behavior" (Bradshaw et al., 2014, p. 593).

Analysis of Results by Domain

Learning Environment

The highest scoring items within the Learning Environment domain are consistently "My child's school has high expectations for student learning," and "My child's teachers encourage my child to learn." This has remained relatively stable over the past three years (see Table 6).

Table 6
Rates of Agreement and Item Means for Parent Survey Items about the Learning Environment

	2019		2021		2022	
Item	**% Agree**	**Mean**	**% Agree**	**Mean**	**% Agree**	**Mean**
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	89%	3.2	88%	3.2	**86%**	**3.2**
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	93%	3.4	93%	3.4	**91%**	**3.3**
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	94%	3.4	93%	3.4	**93%**	**3.4**
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	88%	3.3	88%	3.3	**87%**	**3.3**
*I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school.	—	—	79%	3.0	—	—
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	87%	3.2	88%	3.2	**84%**	**3.2**

Note: % Agree = Percent of respondents who answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" out of all respondents for whom this item is not missing. All items are scored on four-point Likert scale in which "Strongly Disagree" = 1, "Disagree" = 2, "Agree" = 3, and "Strongly Agree" = 4. All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a fifth, non-response option (presented as "Don't Know" in 2019 and 2021, and as "Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

* This item only appeared on the 2021 Parent Survey.

The item that read, "I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school" scored the lowest percentage of satisfaction (79%) observed across all three years reported. However, the item was only included on the 2021 survey. Efforts are currently underway to address the need for climate surveys to adequately address online and virtual schooling.

In the summer of 2022, EOC Staff facilitated three focus groups with teachers and administrators in online and virtual settings. The facilitators used prompts to lead discussions about possible edits to the current climate surveys to be more appropriate for respondents in virtual learning environments. In the future the staff would like to continue to hold focus groups which include various stakeholders in an effort to better address climate and satisfaction surrounding online and virtual educational formats and offerings.

Home-School Relationships

In general, parents reported lower levels of satisfaction with home-school relations than any other factor on the Parent Survey. Parents and guardians consistently mark the items, "My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child," and "My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn," the lowest. A summary of home-school relationship items appears in Table 7.

Table 7

Rates of Agreement and Item Means for Parent Survey Items about Home-School Relationships

Item	2019		2021		2022	
	% Agree	Mean	% Agree	Mean	% Agree	Mean
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	62%	2.8	66%	2.8	**67%**	**2.9**
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	66%	2.8	70%	2.9	**69%**	**2.9**
I feel welcomed at my child's school. [b]	—	—	88%	3.2	**88%**	**3.3**
My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns. [b]	—	—	89%	3.3	**87%**	**3.2**
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	76%	3.0	77%	3.0	**76%**	**3.1**
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	72%	2.9	74%	2.9	**72%**	**2.9**
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	84%	3.1	85%	3.1	**86%**	**3.1**
My child's school treats my child fairly. [a]	81%	3.1	93%	3.3	—	—
The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. [a]	90%	3.3	92%	3.4	—	—
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	84%	3.1	85%	3.1	**84%**	**3.1**

Note: % Agree = Percent of respondents who answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" out of all respondents for whom this item is not missing. All items are scored on four-point Likert scale in which "Strongly Disagree" = 1, "Disagree" = 2, "Agree" = 3, and "Strongly Agree" = 4. All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a fifth, non-response option (presented as "Don't Know" in 2019 and 2021, and as "Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

[a] These items did not appear on the 2022 Parent Survey. [b] These items did not appear on the 2019 Parent Survey.

Social-Physical Environment

Within the school climate literature, research suggests that students achieve and learn better when their social and physical needs are met. Some of students' external needs pertain to physical needs like food,

water, clean air, shelter, sleep, and clothing (Maslow, 1943; Tay & Diener, 2011). Others are more psychological in nature. These psychological needs encompass more abstract concepts such as safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Table 8 summarizes parent and guardian perceptions for items on the Parent Survey related to these needs.

Table 8

Rates of Agreement and Item Means for Parent Survey Items about the Social-Physical Environment

	2019		2021		2022	
Item	**% Agree**	**Mean**	**% Agree**	**Mean**	**% Agree**	**Mean**
My child's school is kept clean.	92%	3.4	97%	3.4	**92%**	**3.4**
My child's teachers care about my child.	91%	2.8	94%	3.4	**93%**	**3.4**
My child feels safe at school.	89%	3.3	94%	3.4	**90%**	**3.3**
My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school.	81%	3.0	86%	3.2	**80%**	**3.1**
My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying.	83%	3.1	91%	3.2	**81%**	**3.1**
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	87%	3.1	90%	3.2	**85%**	**3.2**

Note: % Agree = Percent of respondents who answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" out of all respondents for whom this item is not missing. All items are scored on four-point Likert scale in which "Strongly Disagree" = 1, "Disagree" = 2, "Agree" = 3, and "Strongly Agree" = 4. All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a fifth, non-response option (presented as "Don't Know" in 2019 and 2021, and as "Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

In general, there are two items which continue to be significant factors in the overall percentage of parent school climate satisfaction. The items "My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school" and "My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying" are consistently lower than the other school climate items on the social-physical environment. In addition, the item that asks about an anti-bullying program consistently has the highest rates of non-response on the survey, suggesting that parents and guardians are less aware of programs designed to reduce bullying. In 2019, nearly a quarter (23%) of parents indicated their child was bullied at school. In 2021, only 13% of parents indicated their child was bullied at school. Concerning the most recent school year, on the spring 2022 parent survey, 24% of parents indicated their child had been bullied as shown by the chart below.

Percentage of Respondents Who Responded Yes to Child Being Bullied
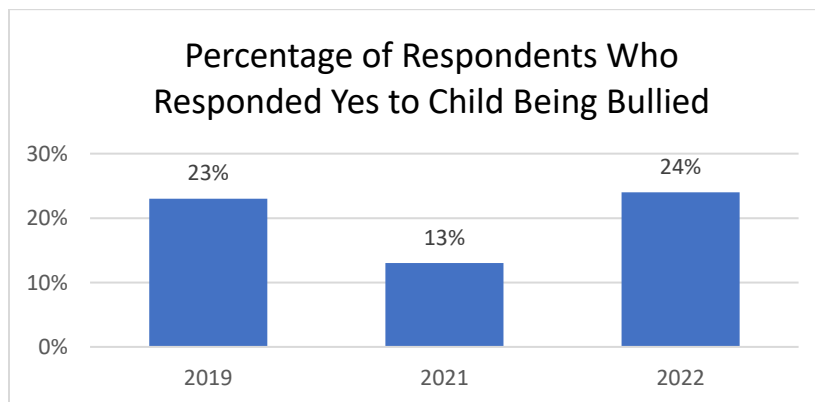
The parents who indicated on the spring 2022 parent survey that their child was bullied, were taken to another item which asked them to provide the specific school setting location(s) their child was bullied. The results of the locations for the bullying are provided in the chart below.

Table 9
Locations of Reported Bullying

Location	2019	2021	2022
Classroom	66%	35%	**39%**
Bus	24%	10%	**12%**
Online/Texting During School	12%	9%	**6%**
After School	13%	8%	**8%**
School Sporting Event	4%	3%	**2%**
Other Location	48%	34%	**33%**

Note: Reported percentages for each year may add up to greater than 100% since respondents could identify more than one location at which their child was bullied. The most recent results are presented in bold.

According to the parent respondents, bullying occurred most in the classroom location. A lower percentage of students across all three years were bullied at a school sporting event. The "Other locations" at which students were bullied may be worth both further investigations to determine additional locations in which patterns of bullying may arise.

Individual Graduation Plan

Per the Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA), schools must help students with an Individual Graduation Plan and provide activities and assessments to help students ultimately select a career path. Questions about the individual graduation plan are typically geared to parents and guardians of students in 8th grade and in high school. Table 10 presents summaries of the IGP items over the past three years.

Table 10
Rates of Agreement and Item Means for Parent Survey Items about the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) Process and Conferences

	2019		2021		2022	
Item	% Agree	Mean	% Agree	Mean	% Agree	Mean
The IGP conference was beneficial to my child as he/she prepares to be promoted to the next grade level.	91%	3.2	89%	3.2	**89%**	**3.2**
During the IGP conference, the counselors discussed my child's academic progress and his/her career goals.	93%	3.3	92%	3.3	**89%**	**3.2**
I recommend that all parents/guardians attend IGP conference with their children.	95%	3.4	95%	3.4	**95%**	**3.4**

Note: % Agree = Percent of respondents (grades 8th – 12th) who answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" out of all respondents for whom this item is not missing. All items are scored on four-point Likert scale in which "Strongly Disagree" = 1, "Disagree" = 2, "Agree" = 3, and "Strongly Agree" = 4. All items that were left blank or for which the respondent selected a fifth, non-response option (presented as "Don't Know" in 2019 and 2021, and as "Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer" in 2022) are considered missing data and are not included in the analyses presented here. The most recent results are presented in bold.

Parent Involvement and Communication

Since 2021, the Parent Survey has included yes/no items related to parent involvement and communications (see Table 11). In general, sentiment was positive for the items about receiving timely communication and updates. Parents and guardians also indicated at high rates that they help with school assignments. Responses indicate that fewer parents and guardians are involved in school committees and organizations or volunteer at the school. It is unclear the degree to which pandemic-related precautions and school security measures may play a role in this pattern of responses.

Table 11

Percent of "Yes" Responses Received on Yes/No Parent Survey Items

Item	2021	2022
I receive timely communication from my child's school (such as telephone calls, newsletters, emails, etc.).	94%	**91%**
I receive regular updates of my child's educational progress.	83%	**81%**
I attend school events such as open houses, parent-teacher conferences, and parent workshops.	80%	**86%**
I participate in school committees or organizations, such as the PTO, or School Improvement Council.	25%	**27%**
I volunteer at my child's school.	27%	**32%**
I help my child with school assignments when needed.	98%	**98%**

Note: Respondents were given the option to select either "Yes" or "No" for the items shown. Percentages displayed indicate the percent of "Yes" responses received out of responses for the indicated item that were not left blank. Results for 2019 are not displayed because the format and phrasing of these items changed substantially from 2019 to 2021. The most recent results are presented in bold.

New Free Response Items

The Spring 2022 survey data included free response data for the first time. The Qualtrics® platform allowed for a more robust analysis of free response survey items. Many responses are specific to schools and are best addressed at the school and district level. School and district leaders will be given access to view the responses for their school or district on an interactive Qualtrics® dashboard so that they can read the responses and use these data to drive continuous improvement efforts.

Table 12

Number of Free Response Comments Received on 2022 Parent Survey

Item	English	Non-English	Total
Based on your experiences with your child/children at [*School Name*], what are some **good things** that you would like to share about this school, its leaders, or its faculty and staff?	21,219	321	**21,540**
Based on your experiences with your child/children at [*School Name*], what are some **areas for improvement** that you would like to share about this school, its leaders, or its faculty and staff?	19,099	269	**19,368**

Note: Counts given include all responses for which the items were not left blank, including some respondents who entered "N/A", "No comment", "I have nothing to share", or similar non-responses.

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Appendix A: 2022 Parent School Climate Survey

Parents and guardians who have children in South Carolina schools are being asked to do this survey. Tell us how you feel about your child's school. This will help your child's school get better. It is important to tell us exactly what you think. Your answers will be kept private. Schools will get a summary of the survey results and will not receive individual responses.

A survey link is being sent to the parents or guardians of every student. If you have multiple children, you might get several links. We are only asking you to complete one survey for each school. If you have had very different experiences with different children, you can complete more than one survey if you like.

This survey link was sent to you for a child enrolled in **grade <GradeLevel>** at **<NameOfSchool>.** Which of the following do you want to do?

- ○ **I want to do this survey about <NameOfSchool>.** Either this is my first survey about this school or I would like to complete another one.

- ○ **I do not want to do this survey about <NameOfSchool>.** Either I have already completed a survey about this school or I do not want to do so.

→

Read each statement. Decide if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement or if the statement does not apply. Then select the appropriate response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	○	○	○	○	○
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

→

Read each statement. Decide if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement or if the statement does not apply. Then select the appropriate response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	○	○	○	○	○
I feel welcomed at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	○	○	○	○	○
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school	○	○	○	○	○

Read each statement. Decide if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement or if the statement does not apply. Then select the appropriate response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer
My child's school is kept clean.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's teachers care about my child.	○	○	○	○	○
My child feels safe at school.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school.	○	○	○	○	○
My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying.	○	○	○	○	○
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

←   →

In accordance with the Education and Economic Development Act of 2005, school counseling personnel are required to invite parents or guardians of students in grades eight through twelve to participate in annual conferences with their children to develop and/or review their individual graduation plans (IGPs). During IGP conferences, counselors should discuss a series of topics, including grades and academic progress, career assessments and goals, and upcoming courses.

Remember that this survey link was sent to you for a child enrolled in grade at . If this child is in eighth grade or later, or if you have a child who is in eighth grade or later at this school and you only want to complete one survey response for this school, then please respond to the statements below. Otherwise, you may skip these items.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer
The IGP conference was beneficial to my child as they prepare to be promoted to the next grade level.	○	○	○	○	○
During the IGP conference, the counselors discussed my child's academic progress and career goals.	○	○	○	○	○
I recommend that all parents/guardians attend IGP conferences with their children.	○	○	○	○	○

Please mark YES or NO to the following statements about your experience at <School>.

	Yes	No	Does Not Apply or Choose Not to Answer
I receive timely communication from my child's school (such as telephone calls, newsletters, emails, etc.).	◯	◯	◯
I receive regular updates of my child's educational progress.	◯	◯	◯
I attend school events such as open houses, parent-teacher conferences, and parent workshops.	◯	◯	◯
I participate in school committees or organizations such as the PTO or School Improvement Council.	◯	◯	◯
I volunteer at my child's school.	◯	◯	◯
I help my child with school assignments when needed.	◯	◯	◯

←   →

The items in this section deal with bullying. For this survey, bullying is defined as gestures, electronic communications, or written, verbal, or sexual acts that are reasonably perceived to have the effect of harming a student physically or emotionally, damaging a student's property, placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage, or insulting or demeaning the student.

Has your child or children been bullied at this year?

🔵 **Yes**

◯ No

◯ Don't know

◯ Choose not to answer

Note: The two items below are only displayed to respondents who select "Yes" on the first item shown on this page.

Where was your child or children bullied?
(Select all that apply.)

☐ In the classroom

☐ Some other location at school

☐ At a school sporting event

☐ Online or texting during school

☐ On the bus

☐ After school

How was your child or children bullied?
(Select all that apply.)

◯ Physically

◯ Verbally

◯ Both

Please answer the following questions **about your child or children who attend <NameOfSchool>**. If you are doing one survey response for multiple children at this school, please mark all the choices for each item that applies to any of those children. If you are doing this survey response for only one child, then please only mark the choices that apply to that child.

What grade level is your child or children in?
(Select all that apply.)

K   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

What is the gender of your child or children?
(Select all that apply.)

☐ I have at least one female child at this school.

☐ I have at least one male child at this school.

☐ I have at least one child for whom I choose not to answer.

What is your child's or children's racial or ethnic identity?
(Select all that apply.)

☐ Asian American or Pacific Islander

☐ Black or African American

☐ Hispanic

☐ Native American

☐ White or Caucasian

☐ A racial or ethnic identity not listed here

☐ I choose not to answer

Please answer the following questions **about yourself**. We ask these questions to better understand your experiences as a parent or guardian and to ensure that all parents and guardians are represented in the responses to this survey.

What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

○ I choose not to answer

What is your racial or ethnic identity?

○ Asian American or Pacific Islander

○ Black or African American

○ Hispanic

○ Native American

○ White or Caucasian

○ More than one racial or ethnic identity

○ A racial or ethnic identity not listed here

○ I choose not to answer

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

○ Attended elementary/high school

○ Earned a high school diploma or GED

○ Attended college or training program

○ Earned a degree from a two-year college or technical school

○ Earned a degree from a four-year college or university

○ Completed postgraduate study or an advanced degree

○ I choose not to answer

What is your household's total annual income?

○ Less than $15,000

○ $15,000 to $24,999

○ $25,000 to $34,999

○ $35,000 to $54,999

○ $55,000 to $75,000

○ More than $75,000

○ I choose not to answer

←   →

This page gives you an opportunity to provide additional thoughts about <NameOfSchool>. **Please DO NOT include your name or the name of any children in your response.** What you write in this section may be shared with leaders at and/or its district.

Based on your experiences with your child/children at <NameOfSchool>, what are some **good things** that you would like to share about this school, its leaders, or its faculty and staff?

NOTE: Because of the high number of surveys that we expect to receive, your answer might not be read quickly. If you have a concern that needs an immediate response, please contact the school principal or district office directly.

Based on your experiences with your child/children at <NameOfSchool>, what are some **areas for improvement** that you would like to share about this school, its leaders, or its faculty and staff?

NOTE: Because of the high number of surveys that we expect to receive, your answer might not be read quickly. If you have a concern that needs an immediate response, please contact the school principal or district office directly.

Appendix B: South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEPC) Report

South Carolina Educational Policy Center

2019-2021 Parent Survey Comparison

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The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee

June 2022

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Executive Summary

The parent survey has been administered in South Carolina (SC) public schools for the last two decades to provide a measure of school climate from the parent/home perspective. Parent perceptions regarding their child's school have been included on the annual school report cards to meet requirements of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998 and the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act. For all survey administrations through Spring 2019, the parent survey has been administered to parents of students at selected grade levels in all public schools across the state, through paper-and-pencil forms distributed by schools.

Several changes occurred for the Spring 2021 administration. First, survey distribution changed as the parent survey was administered online in Spring 2021. Second, the pool of recipients was expanded to request feedback from parents of students in all grades (K-12th) attending SC public schools. Besides survey administration changes, the parent survey was revised, resulting in several changes to survey items and item response options. Examples of changes include deleting items, combining survey sections, adding new items, rewording items used in previous years, and adding or changing some item response options.

This report aimed to compare aspects of the parent survey that have changed. Specifically, the purpose of this report was to compare parent responses obtained in both 2019 and 2021 to examine 1) parent demographic characteristics for the expanded participant pool, 2) the total number of parent surveys received and school-level response rates, and 3) the distribution of "Don't Know" as a response option across survey items. As items from the parent survey are used in factor analyses, it was also of interest to examine potential changes to the factor structure of the parent survey resulting from participant and administration changes.

The South Carolina Educational Policy Center (SCEPC) conducted a comparison of the 2019 and 2021 parent survey results to determine potential differences occurring in the population of parents responding to the survey and their responses. The results provide an initial investigation of parent perceptions of school climate post COVID school closures. Key findings included:
- Parents responding to the survey were fairly similar with regards to their demographic characteristics in 2019 and 2021. The majority of parents responding in both years were Caucasian/White females, who attended college or completed a higher level of education, with a total annual household income of at least $35,000. More parents reported having a

higher educational attainment level (i.e., college degree or postgraduate studies) in 2021 as compared to 2019.

- A total of 26,671 more parent surveys were collected in 2021 compared to responses in 2019. Although substantially more parent surveys were collected in 2021, this did not result in an improved statewide response rate.

- Schools with lower poverty, on average, collected more parent surveys in 2021 compared to 2019. Schools with lower poverty had higher response rates in 2021 as compared to schools with higher poverty. This pattern was consistent across elementary, middle, and high schools.

- Schools with the highest poverty, on average, had the largest reduction in response rates from 2019 to 2021.

- In general, the 2021 parent survey response rates were low across all schools, regardless of school poverty status and organizational level.

- The percentage of parent "Don't Know" (DK) responses increased in 2021. Items with substantial increases in their percentage of DK responses in 2021 include both items with consistently high percentage of DKs and items with fairly low percentage of DKs in previous years.

- The overall factor structure of the parent survey remained fairly stable in 2021. Consistent with previous years, four parent factors were identified in 2021: Learning Environment, Social-Physical Environment, Teacher Care and Support, and Home-School Relationship. However, several items showed stronger relationships with different factors compared to the structure identified in 2019 (and previous years).

In summary, the comparison of the 2019 and 2021 parent survey results demonstrated changes in the population of parents responding to the survey as well as in survey responses in 2021. Considering the various factors occurring in 2021 (e.g., changes in survey administration, survey revisions, impact of COVID-19 on the educational setting and process), these changes in results cannot be attributed to any specific factors. A similar comparison with the 2022 parent survey results may be needed to determine how the shift to online administration may impact the population of parents responding to the survey and the school-level response rates.

Introduction/Overview of Changes in 2021

History and Description of the Parent Survey

The South Carolina opinion surveys include surveys of parents, students, and teachers. Results of each survey are used to assess various aspects of a school's climate. The current surveys have been administered in SC public schools since 2002 to meet the requirements of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998. Section 59-18-900 of the EAA required the inclusion of "evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students" on the annual school report card. In response to this requirement, South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) developed and administered the parent, student, and teacher surveys in all public schools across the state. Each survey is a multi-item survey that asks the opinion and perceptions across multiple aspects of a school's climate from the rater's point of view, including evaluation of the learning environment, social and physical environment, and the home-school relationship.

In addition to the EAA, 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 EOC has adopted the parent survey to meet this requirement. Through the Spring 2019 survey administration, the parent survey has consisted of approximately 60 total items. A set of 23, Likert-scaled items were organized into the areas of Learning Environment, Social and Physical Environment, and Home-School Relations. Additional items asked parents to reflect on their participation in school-based activities, obstacles to involvement in activities, the overall effectiveness of the school, and items regarding their child's Individualized Graduation Plan (IGP) Conference. In addition, several items asked parents questions regarding their child's demographics (e.g., grade-level, gender, race) as well as their school experience including whether their child had been bullied in school. Finally, several items collected demographic information about the parents (e.g., gender, race, educational level, income).

For all survey administrations through Spring 2019, the parent survey was given to parents of students in selected grade levels in all elementary, middle, and high schools across the state. Typically, parents of students in grades 5, 8, and 11 completed the annual survey. This grade selection mirrored the sample of students who are typically asked to complete the student opinion survey, where the "highest" grade level of students at a school was asked to complete the survey (note: an exception is high school, where 11th grade students and their parents are asked to

provide feedback). In schools with a grade configuration including multiple levels (e.g., both elementary and middle), parents of students in multiple grades (e.g., grades 5 and 8) were surveyed every year. All parents completed the surveys via paper-and-pencil forms, distributed through their child's school. The specifics of the parent survey distribution varied at the district and/or school-level. For example, at some schools, parent surveys were distributed in homeroom classrooms and taken home by the student, while other schools attempted to capture parents as they visited the school (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, school open-houses).

Since 2002, the parent survey has consistently included 21 items; two additional items related to bullying were added in 2014. Parents provided responses to each item using a 4-point, Likert scale, with anchors of Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4). Items were organized into three sections, named Learning Environment, Social and Physical Environment, and Home-School Relations. One item from each of these survey sections has been included on each school's report card to reflect parents' "overall" satisfaction in an area. However, to better utilize all information provided in the parent survey, the SCEPC has used all Likert scaled items to identify factors underlying the set of items. The use of factor analysis, and estimated factor scores (i.e., composite scores) to place schools on an identified factor, offers a more reliable and valid method to examine the status of a parent's view of the school's climate compared to examining the response to a single item. Specifically, the SCEPC has identified the following four factors associated with the parent survey:

1. Learning Environment (5 items) – parent satisfaction with their child's teacher(s) and the expectations for student learning at the school;
2. Social-Physical Environment (5 items) – parent satisfaction with a school's cleanliness, student behavior in the school, and the teacher-student relationship;
3. Teacher Care and Support (3 items) – parent perceptions regarding teacher support for their child and parent involvement in the classroom; and
4. Home-School Relationship (8 items) – parent perceptions regarding parent involvement with the school and student learning.

The underlying parent factors (along with the student and teacher factors obtained through similar procedures) have been found to be consistent over time (2006-2019). Through the use of factor analysis and estimated factor scores for each school, the SCEPC has used information from multiple raters (i.e., parents, students, and teachers) to (1) examine schools' climate trends over

time, (2) identify clusters of schools with similar climate, and (3) investigate relationships with various indicators of school performance. Key findings from these studies have been presented to various audiences (including school and district personnel, SCDE, School Improvement Councils, and policymakers) and have been used for school improvement initiatives.

Parent Survey Changes in 2021

Several changes were made to the parent survey in 2021, including changes to survey administration as well as survey items. Specifically, the survey was administered online for the first time in Spring 2021. Parents were able to access and complete the surveys through electronic devices, including smart phones. In addition, the online survey was expanded to parents of students at all grade levels in South Carolina public schools instead of administered to parents of students in selected grades (i.e., grades 5, 8, and 11). Parents were asked to complete one survey for each child enrolled in a public school. Parents with children enrolled in a district's virtual school option for the 2020-2021 school year were asked to complete the survey for the child's home school. The link to the online survey, along with details about survey administration, directions, and the importance of completing the survey were provided to parents by school personnel; however, it is unclear if the procedures followed by each school were uniform across the state.

Lastly, there were several changes made to survey items and item response options. These changes came about through a series of collaborative discussions between SC Department of Education, EOC, and SCEPC personnel. In reaching decisions regarding the revision or elimination of survey items, the following criteria was considered: (1) "best practices" in survey construction (e.g., eliminating compound items), (2) prior survey results to examine items with high percentages of "Don't Know" responses, and (3) the elimination of items that were unclear/confusing to parents or were not accurately capturing parent perceptions of the school environment (e.g., "*I limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, etc.*"). The discussions regarding revisions to the parent survey began in 2019 in preparation for the Spring 2020 survey administration. However, due to school closures related to COVID-19, the revised parent survey was not implemented until Spring 2021.

The 2021 parent survey included 45 items in total. Items associated within the Learning Environment, Home-School Relations, and Social-Physical Environment sections are of particular interest as these items are used for factor analysis by the SCEPC. Table 1 presents a summary of item changes specific to these sections. All items included in these sections were measured

on the same scale as in previous years (i.e., a four-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree", along with a "Don't Know" option). Changes to these sections included:

- A new item was added to the Learning Environment section (i.e., *"I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school."*).
- Three items in the Home-School Relations section were reworded:
  - *"I feel welcomed at my child's school."*
  - *"My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns."*
  - *"My child's school treats my child fairly."*
- Two items in the Social and Physical Environment section were reworded:
  - *"My child's school is kept clean."*
  - *"My child's teachers care about my child."*
- One item from the Home-School Relations section (i.e., *"My child's school includes me in decision-making."*) and one item from the Social and Physical Environment section (i.e., *"Students at my child's school are well-behaved."*) was deleted.

Table 1. Item Changes for the Parent Survey Sections Used for Factor Analysis

Survey Section	2019		2021	
	Item Nb	Item	Item Nb	Item
Learning Environment	a1	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	a1	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.
	a2	My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	a2	My child's school has high expectations for student learning.
	a3	My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	a3	My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.
	a4	My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	a4	My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.
			a5	**I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school.[a]**
	a5	I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	a6	I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
Home-School Relations	b1	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	b1	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.
	b2	My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	b2	My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.
	b3	My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	**b3**	**I feel welcomed at my child's school.[b]**
	b4	My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	**b4**	**My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.[b]**
	b5	**My child's school includes me in decision-making.[c]**		
	b6	My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	b5	My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.
	b7	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	b6	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.
	b8	My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	b7	My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.
	b9	My child's school treats all students fairly.	**b8**	**My child's school treats my child fairly.[b]**
	b10	The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	b9	The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.
	b11	I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	b10	I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.
Social and Physical Environment	c1	My child's school is kept neat and clean.	**c1**	**My child's school is kept clean.[b]**
	c2	My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	**c2**	**My child's teachers care about my child.[b]**
	c3	**Students at my child's school are well-behaved.[c]**		
	c4	My child feels safe at school.	c3	My child feels safe at school.
	c5	My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school.	c4	My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school.
	c6	My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying.	c5	My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying.
	c7	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	c6	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.

Note. All items included in these sections were measured on the following scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree, 5=Don't Know.

[a] = Item added in 2021; [b] = Item reworded in 2021; [c] = Item deleted in 2021

Changes to the other sections of the parent survey included:

- Items related to a student's IGP conference were restructured into a new section titled Career Awareness. The following items were also added to this section:
  - *"My child's school provides adequate opportunities for him or her to actively explore a variety of careers."* (for middle students)
  - *"My child's school provides adequate resources (to include activities and services) designed to increase his or her awareness of a variety of career choices."* (for elementary students)
- Items related to bullying were restructured into a new section titled Student Safety. The items associated with this section and response options were unchanged.
- Items related to parent involvement in school activities were restructured into a new section titled Parent Communication. This new section combined two previous sections related to parent involvement in school activities (a total of 13 items) into a shorter section (6 reworded items) and changed the item response options to "Yes/No."
- Two survey sections containing items related to obstacles to parent involvement in activities (7 items) and parent perceptions of overall school effectiveness (4 items) were deleted.
- The item asking parents about their child's grades was deleted from the child demographics section.
- A separate question about ethnicity for both the child (*"Is your child Hispanic?"*; "Yes/No") and parent demographic (*"Are you Hispanic?"*; "Yes/No") sections was added.
- One or more response options to most demographic items, including child's grade level, child's and parent's gender and race, as well as family's total yearly household income was added.

With the expansion of the parent survey to all parents of students of all grades within a school, it was expected that more surveys would be collected in 2021 compared to 2019. However, the shift from paper-and-pencil forms to online administration could potentially impact parent access to the survey, resulting in a disproportionate increase in the type of parents responding to the survey in 2021. This could, in turn, impact the type of schools experiencing significant increases in the total number of parent surveys received and the school-level response rate in 2021. Therefore, the purpose of this report was to compare parent responses obtained in both 2019 and 2021 to examine 1) parent demographic characteristics, 2) the total number of parent surveys received and school-level response rates, 3) the distribution of "Don't Know" responses across survey items, and 4) the factor structure of the parent survey.

Descriptive Statistics/Parent Responses

Comparison of Parent Demographic Characteristics

As the parent survey was expanded to parents of students at all grade levels instead of selected grade levels, the distribution of parent responses by child's grade level changed in 2021. As shown in Table 2, whereas the majority of parents responding in 2019 were of students in grades 5th (40.6%), 8th (31.3%), or 11th (17.7%), the number of parents responding in 2021 were distributed across K-12 grade levels. The percentage of parents responding to the 2021 survey ranged from approximately 4.9% (12th grade) to 8.9% (5th grade), with the percentage of parents of students at all other grade levels being above 7%.

Table 2. Distribution of Child's Grade Level (2019 and 2021)

Grade Level[a]	2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%
K	N/A	N/A	7765	8.7
1st	N/A	N/A	6999	7.8
2nd	N/A	N/A	7064	7.9
3rd	717	1.2	7284	8.2
4th	2074	3.4	7115	8.0
5th	25110	**40.6**	7917	8.9
6th	2595	4.2	6788	7.6
7th	227	0.4	6685	7.5
8th	19362	**31.3**	7270	8.2
9th	509	0.8	6755	7.6
10th	325	0.5	6600	7.4
11th	10984	**17.7**	6583	7.4
12th	N/A	N/A	4406	4.9
Total	61903	100.0	89231	100.0

[a]Grades K, 1st, 2nd, and 12th were response options added in 2021.

Tables 3-6 present a summary of the demographic information for the overall sample of parents responding to the parent survey in 2019 and 2021. Overall, the parents responding to the survey were fairly similar with regards to gender, race/ethnicity, level of education, and income. Similar to 2019, the majority of parents responding to the survey in 2021 were Caucasian/White females,

who attended college or completed a higher level of education and reported a total annual household income of at least $35,000.

Specifically, 82.9% of the parents responding in 2021 indicated being female (Table 3), and 68.5% indicated being Caucasian/White (Table 4). This is comparable to 2019, when 85.2% and 58.3% of the parents indicated being female and Caucasian/White, respectively. It is to be noted that both questions had some changes in their response options in 2021. Parents were able to choose the option of not answering the question about their gender as well as indicate more than one race in 2021. Over 2% of the parents responding to these questions in 2021 chose these response options (2.0% and 2.9%, respectively). In addition, parent ethnicity was addressed in a separate question in 2021, with 6.9% of the parents responding to that question indicating being Hispanic.

Table 3. Distribution of Parent Gender (2019 and 2021)

Gender	2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%
Male	9173	14.8	13442	15.1
Female	52863	**85.2**	73564	**82.9**
Prefer not to answer[a]	N/A	N/A	1780	2.0
Total	**62036**	**100.0**	**88786**	**100.0**

[a]Response option added in 2021.

Table 4. Distribution of Parent Race/Ethnicity (2019 and 2021)

Race/Ethnicity[a]	2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%
African-American/Black	16956	27.9	17982	20.6
Caucasian/White	35411	**58.3**	59780	**68.5**
Hispanic	5318	8.8	N/A	N/A
Native American	304	0.5	463	0.5
Asian American/Pacific Islander	1263	2.1	1577	1.8
Other	1513	2.5	4903	5.6
More than one race[b]	N/A	N/A	2559	2.9
Total	**60765**	**100.0**	**87264**	**100.0**

[a]Ethnicity was addressed in a separate question in 2021 (6.9% of parents responding indicated that they are Hispanic).
[b]Response option added in 2021.

Parent level of education (Table 5) and annual household income (Table 6) also showed similarities between parents responding in 2019 and 2021. For both years, the most common responses indicated earning a college degree (approximately 24% in 2019 and 32.2% in 2021) and having a total annual income of more than $75,000 (35.6% in 2019 and 39.7% in 2021). However, the percentage of parents who earned a college degree or completed postgraduate studies increased compared to 2019 (from 39.9% to 54.4%). Also, 22.8% of the parents responding to the question about total annual income in 2021 did not answer this question; this was a new response option, added to this question in 2021.

Table 5. Distribution of Parent Educational Attainment Level (2019 and 2021)

Educational Level	2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%
Attended elementary/high school	5963	9.9	3795	4.3
Completed high school/GED[a]	12450	20.7	13763	15.6
Earned associate degree	6742	11.2	8177	9.3
Attended college/training program	11034	18.3	14658	16.6
Earned college degree	14424	**24.0**	28415	**32.2**
Postgraduate study and/or degree[b]	9568	15.9	19587	22.2
Total	**60181**	**100.0**	**88395**	**100.0**

[a]Formulated as *Earned high school diploma or GED* in 2021.
[b]Formulated as *Postgraduate study and degree* in 2021.

Table 6. Distribution of Family Total Yearly Household Income (2019 and 2021)

Yearly Household Income	2019		2021	
	N	%	N	%
Less than $15,000	5962	10.3	4272	4.9
$15,000 - $24,999	6687	11.5	5012	5.8
$25,000 - $34,999	7384	12.7	5612	6.5
$35,000 - $54,999	9110	15.7	8467	9.7
$55,000 - $75,000	8242	14.2	9284	10.7
More than $75,000	20694	**35.6**	34549	**39.7**
I prefer not to answer[a]	N/A	N/A	19862	22.8
Total	**58079**	**100.0**	**87058**	**100.0**

[a]Response option added in 2021.

Review of Total Responses/Response Rates

Table 7 presents the overall statewide estimated response rates for both 2019 and 2021. In 2019, all parents with children in selected grade levels were asked to complete the survey. This typically represented parents of students in grades 5 (elementary schools), 8 (middle schools), and 11 (high schools). Therefore, the total number of students used to calculate the 2019 response rate is based on the total number of students enrolled in only these grades. For 2021, the total number of students is based on the total number of students enrolled in grades K-12, as all parents of students of all grade levels were asked to complete the parent survey in 2021. As shown in Table 7, although 26,671 more surveys were obtained in 2021, the overall response rate is low (12.2%), and is lower than the response rate obtained in 2019.

Table 7. Statewide Total Parent Surveys and Overall Response Rate (2019 and 2021)

Survey Year	Total Parent Surveys	Number of Students	Response Rate
Spring 2019	63,337	168,522[a]	37.6%
Spring 2021	90,008	738,856[b]	12.2%

[a]Total number of students enrolled in grades 5, 8, and 11 in the 2018-2019 180-day Active Student Headcount
[b]Total number of students enrolled in grades K-12 in the 2020-2021 180-day Active Student Headcount

To examine direct changes at the school level between the parent surveys obtained in 2019 and 2021, schools that either closed or were new in 2021 were removed from analysis. A total of 1,187 schools in the 2019 and 2021 file were used for analysis. Table 8 highlights the total number of schools with parent survey data, as well as schools with missing parent survey data in both 2019 and 2021. The number of schools with missing parent survey data in 2021 is comparable to that of 2019. In 2021, a total of 49 schools did not report any parent survey data compared to 54 in 2019.

Table 8. Total Schools with Parent Survey Data (2019 and 2021)

Survey Year	Total Schools with Parent Responses	Total Schools with Missing Parent Data
Spring 2019	1133	54
Spring 2021	1138	49

Table 9 highlights the average response rates, total surveys received, and the average change in total parent surveys received in 2019 and 2021 across schools. As previously described, response rates for 2019 were estimated based on (a) the number of students in grades 5, 8,

and/or 11 in each school, and (b) the grade composition/organizational level of each school. Specifically, the following criteria were used to calculate parent survey response rates in 2019:

- If a school was listed as an elementary, middle, or high school only in the poverty index file, the response rate is based on the number of students in grades 5, 8, or 11 for the school.
- If a school was listed as both an elementary and middle school, the response rate is based on the number of students in grades 5 and 8 in the school.
- If a school was listed as a middle and high school, the response rate is based on the number of students in grades 8 and 11 in the school.
- If a school was listed as an elementary, middle, and high school, the response rate is based on the number of students in grades 5, 8, and 11 in the school.

Table 9. Average School-Level Response Rate and Total Parent Surveys Received (2019 and 2021)

	Spring 2019		Spring 2021	
	Mean[a]	Range	Mean[a]	Range
School Response Rate	35.0%	0.49% - 178.4%	12.4%	0.10% - 70.4%
Total Surveys Received by School	54.4	1 - 285	77.2	1 - 734
Average Change in Total Surveys Received by School	**+23.7 (*Range: -198 – 610*)**			

[a]Mean response rate based on a weighted average

Response rates across schools in 2019 varied widely, from a low of 0.5% to (erroneously) over 100%. Response rates over 100% indicate that it is possible some schools did not limit the parents who were asked to complete the survey to only those parents of students in the school's highest grade level, or grades 5, 8, and 11 in most cases. In 2021, on average, schools received almost 24 more parent survey responses compared to 2019, with response rates across schools ranging from less than 1% to as high as 70.4% across schools. While, on average, more surveys were collected, it was not substantial enough to result in an improved average response rate across schools. The average response rate in 2021 was 12.4% compared to 35.0% in 2019.

School Poverty Status, Organizational Level, and Parent Survey Responses/Response Rates

To examine the relationship between school poverty status and the total number of parent surveys received/response rates in 2019 and 2021, schools were separated into quartiles using the 2021 school poverty index. The first quartile, or Q1, represents schools with the highest poverty, while the fourth quartile, or Q4, represents schools with the lowest poverty. Table 10 summarizes the poverty status quartiles of the schools contained in the analyzed sample.

Table 10. School Poverty Status

Poverty Quartile	N	Average Poverty Index
Q1 (Highest Poverty)	290	90.28
Q2	295	76.89
Q3	292	63.42
Q4 (Lowest Poverty)	292	39.01

As reported in Table 8, a total of 54 and 49 schools reported no parent survey data in 2019 and 2021, respectively. Table 11 examines these schools further by showing the relationship between school poverty status and schools with missing parent survey data in both 2019 and 2021.

Table 11. Number of Schools with Missing Data by Poverty Status (2019 and 2021)

Poverty Quartile	Spring 2019		Spring 2021	
	N	%	N	%
Q1 (Highest Poverty)	29	53.7	17	34.7
Q2	15	27.8	15	30.6
Q3	4	7.4	11	22.4
Q4 (Lowest Poverty)	6	11.1	6	12.2

Compared to 2019, the number of schools with missing parent survey data is slightly more evenly distributed among schools in different poverty quartiles. In 2021, 34.7% of schools with missing parent survey data were schools with the highest poverty, whereas 12.2% of schools with missing data were schools with the lowest poverty.

Table 12 highlights the average response rates, total surveys received, and the average change in total parent surveys received in 2019 and 2021 across schools by school poverty status.

Table 12. Average Response Rates and Total Parent Responses by School Poverty Status (2019 and 2021)

School Poverty Status Quartile	Spring 2019		Spring 2021	
	Mean[a]	Range	Mean[a]	Range
Q1 Poverty (Highest Poverty)				
School Response Rate	41.3%	4.5% - 150.0%	9.0%	0.2% - 70.4%
Total Surveys Received by School	37.4	2 – 136	34.9	1 – 225
Average Change in Total Surveys Received by School	**-4.5 (*Range*: -95 – 152)**			
Q2 Poverty				
School Response Rate	36.1%	1.6% - 119.6%	9.4%	0.1% - 44.4%
Total Surveys Received by School	46.6	1 – 211	49.0	1 – 244
Average Change in Total Surveys Received by School	**+2.7 (*Range*: -103 – 148)**			
Q3 Poverty				
School Response Rate	32.8%	0.5% - 178.4%	11.8%	0.5% - 69.6%
Total Surveys Received by School	59.3	1 – 256	85.2	6 – 547
Average Change in Total Surveys Received by School	**+26.9 (*Range*: -125 – 457)**			
Q4 Poverty (Lowest Poverty)				
School Response Rate	33.8%	2.1% - 109.8%	16.1%	0.2% - 67.7%
Total Surveys Received by School	72.4	1 – 285	138.7	2 – 734
Average Change in Total Surveys Received by School	**+67.0 (*Range*: -198 – 610)**			

[a]Mean response rate based on a weighted average

As seen in Table 12, two patterns are evident. First, the average change in the total number of parent survey responses received in 2021 increased as a school's poverty level decreased. In other words, schools with lower poverty, on average, received substantially more surveys in 2021 than in 2019. Furthermore, schools with the highest poverty (Q1), on average, received *fewer* surveys in 2021 as compared to 2019. Specifically, schools with the highest poverty level received, on average, 4.5 *fewer* parent survey responses in 2021 than in 2019.

Second, response rates in 2021 tended to improve as a school's poverty level decreased. Schools with the highest poverty (i.e., Q1) had an average parent survey response rate in 2021 of 9.0% compared to 16.1% for schools with the lowest poverty (i.e., Q4). However, across all poverty levels, the average response rate across schools remained low. Compared to 2019, the average response rate across all poverty levels decreased in 2021. Notably, in 2019, schools with the highest poverty (i.e., Q1), on average, experienced the highest response rate at 41.3%, but in 2021, highest poverty schools had the lowest response rate at 9.0%.

In addition to examining the changes in total parent surveys received and response rates in 2019 and 2021 overall by school poverty status, this relationship was also examined within school organizational level. Each school's classification was based on their organizational level (i.e., elementary, middle, or high) noted in the 2021 Poverty Index file. Some schools are classified in multiple categories depending on the grade levels contained within the school. In such cases, the school was counted multiple times for each organizational level for which it is classified. For example, a school containing grades K-8 was counted as both an elementary and a middle school and included in both samples. Separate datasets were created for elementary, middle, and high schools. Within each dataset, poverty quartiles were reassigned within the organizational level, again with the first quartile (i.e., Q1) representing schools with the highest poverty and the fourth quartile (i.e., Q4) representing schools with the lowest poverty.

Figure 1 examines the relationship between school poverty status, organizational level, and the average change in the number of parent survey responses received in 2021. As seen in Figure 1, the pattern of schools with lower poverty receiving substantially more surveys, on average, is consistent within organizational level. Somewhat problematic is what occurred within middle schools in 2021. The data showed that middle schools in the lowest quartile (i.e., highest poverty schools), on average, received approximately 18 *fewer* surveys in 2021 compared to 2019.

Figure 1. Average Change in Total Parent Responses by Organizational Level and School Poverty Status
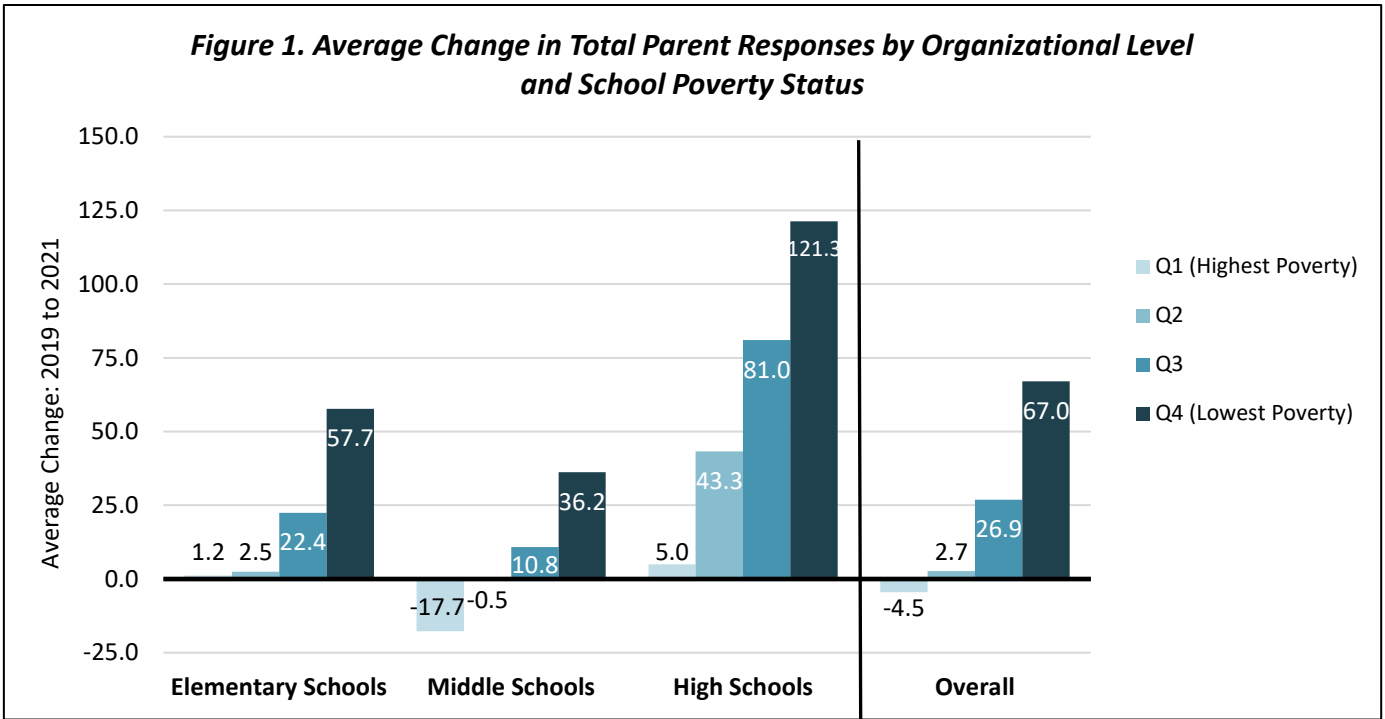
Figure 2 examines the relationship between school poverty status, organizational level, and the 2021 parent survey response rate. The pattern of schools with lower poverty, on average, experiencing slightly better parent survey response rates in 2021 is consistent within organizational level. However, across all poverty levels, the average school-level parent survey response rate is low. This pattern is also consistent across organizational level.

Figure 2. Average 2021 Parent Survey Response Rates by Organizational Level and School Poverty Status
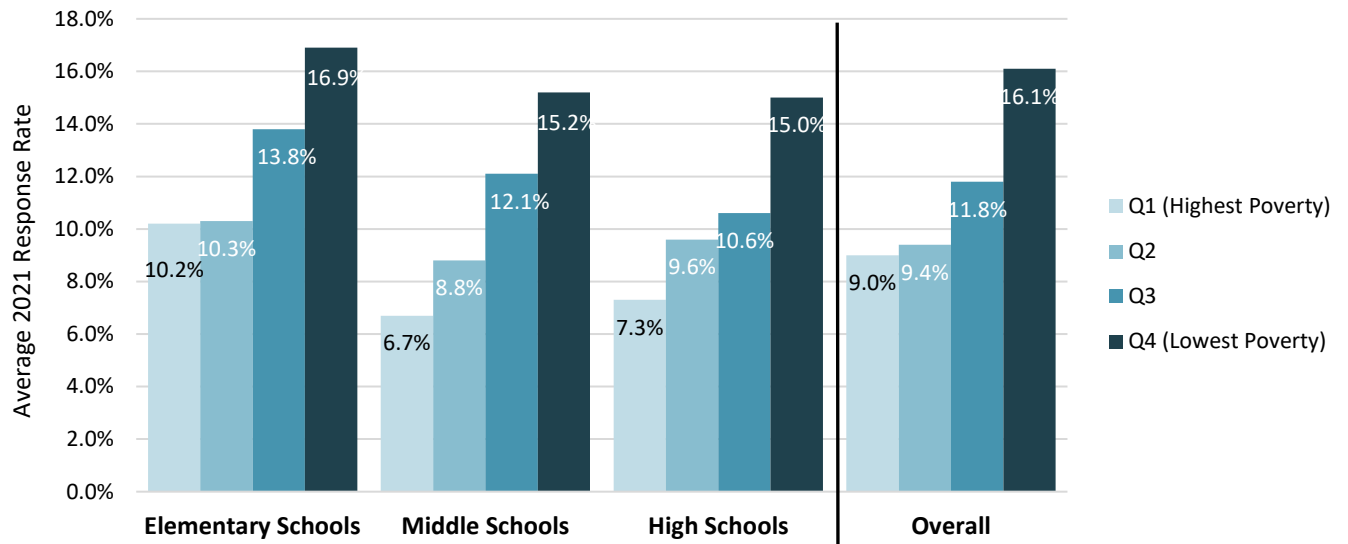
Review of Parent "Don't Know" Responses for Items Used in Factor Analysis

In 2021, parents continued to have the option of selecting "Don't Know" (DK) as a response to Likert scale items. The SCEPC uses Likert items from the first three survey sections (i.e., Learning Environment, Home-School Relations, Social and Physical Environment) in factor analysis. These items ask parents to rate their agreement or disagreement with a statement about the climate at their child's school using a four-point scale (i.e., "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree", "Agree", "Strongly Agree"), giving parents the option to also choose "Don't Know" as their response.

Whereas all parent responses are used in item-level analysis (e.g., item percentage by response category), the responses of parents who responded DK to any of the items used in factor analysis are removed before conducting this analysis. The DKs are treated as indicating parents' lack of knowledge regarding the issue asked and their active decision to select the DK option is considered an indication of not having enough knowledge of the situation to answer the question. Deleting all observations with DK responses leads to a substantial reduction in the sample of parents used for factor analysis (i.e., approximately 46% of the parent responses were removed in 2019 and 60% were removed in 2021).

The issue of DK responses was previously investigated by the SCEPC[1], showing a consistent pattern across years. This report indicated that the following three items consistently had the highest percentages of DK responses across multiple years, ranging from approximately 14% to greater than 20% of parents selecting DK:
- "*My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.*"
- "*My child's school treats all students fairly.*" (reworded in 2021)
- "*Students at my child's school are well behaved.*" (deleted in 2021)

Table 13 presents the 2019 and 2021 distribution of DK responses for the parent survey items used by the SCEPC for factor analysis. The comparison of the 2019 and 2021 percentage of DKs showed that although overall the DK responses follow a similar pattern, most items showed an increase in their percentage of DKs in 2021.

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[1] Diana Mindrila, Mihaela Ene, Elizabeth Leighton, Sally Huguley, Tomonori Ishikawa, and Christine DiStefano, and Diane M. Monrad, "Don't Know Why: Investigating Non-Responses on the Parent Survey", February 2012

Table 13. Distribution of "Don't Know" Responses for the 2021 Parent Survey Items Used for Factor Analysis (2019 and 2021)

Survey Section	Item (2021)	% Don't Know	
		2019 (N=63,337)	2021 (N=90,008)
Learning Environment	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	2.7	4.1
	My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	1.9	2.5
	My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	2.8	3.0
	My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	5.9	7.0
	I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school.[a]	N/A	8.5
	I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	1.7	5.2
Home-School Relations	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	2.3	2.9
	My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	2.8	3.9
	I feel welcomed at my child's school.[b]	5.6	6.5
	My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.[b]	4.8	4.0
	My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	5.9	2.8
	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	**20.6**	**32.6**
	My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	4.3	**16.7**
	My child's school treats my child fairly.[b]	**11.8**	4.4
	The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	8.0	**14.0**
	I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	**12.3**	**14.5**
Social and Physical Environment	**My child's school is kept clean.[b]**	3.6	**20.4**
	My child's teachers care about my child.[b]	6.6	7.5
	My child feels safe at school.	2.5	6.3
	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	3.6	**10.1**

Note. Item %DK > 10 are in boldface. Items with substantial changes (increase/decrease) in their %DK are in boldface.
[a] = Item added in 2021; [b] = Item reworded in 2021

As shown in Table 13, several items had a fairly high increase in their percentage of DK responses on the 2021 measure as compared to 2019. These items include a Home-School Relations item that has consistently had a high percentage of DKs across years ("*My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.";* see Footnote 1). This item yielded a 12 percentage point increase in the percentage of DK responses, from 20.6% in 2019 to 32.6% in 2021. In addition, there were several items with a low percentage of DK responses in previous years that had a

substantial increase in their percentage of DKs in 2021. These items (also shown in Table 13) include:

- *"My child's school is kept clean."* (reworded in 2021; item with the largest increase in the percentage of DKs (16.8 percentage points), from 3.6% in 2019 to 20.4% in 2021)

- *"My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend."* (increasing from 4.3% in 2019 to 16.7% in 2021)

- *"I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school."* (increasing from 3.6% in 2019 to 10.1% in 2021)

- *"The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming"* (increasing from 8% in 2019 to 14% in 2021)

Although most items showed an increase in their percentage of DK responses in 2021, there were three items that had a lower percentage of DKs compared to 2019. These items (also shown in Table 13) include:

- *"My child's school treats my child fairly."* (reworded in 2021; item with the largest decrease in the percentage of DKs (7.4 percentage points), from 11.8% in 2019 to 4.4% in 2021)

- *"My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school."* (decreasing from 5.9% in 2019 to 2.8% in 2021)

- *"My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns."* (reworded in 2021; decreasing from 4.8% in 2019 to 4.0% in 2021)

Parent Survey Factor Structure

The parent survey factor structure has been investigated by the SCEPC since 2006 using both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). These factor analytic procedures involve grouping similar items into dimensions underlying the survey data collected from parents across the state. EFA was employed as the first step to identify the factor structure of the survey, followed by CFA, used to confirm the identified factor structure.

Since 2006, these analyses were performed using a total of 21 items from the first three sections of the parent survey (i.e., Learning Environment, Home-School Relations, Social and Physical Environment Likert scaled items). Before conducting factor analyses, parent surveys with DK responses to any of the 21 items used in these analyses were removed. In addition, parent surveys with blank responses for 25% or more items within a survey section used for factor analysis were removed. For a parent survey with less than 25% blank responses for a survey section, parent's missing responses were replaced with the average of his/her responses to the remaining items in the survey section (i.e., mean imputation using an individual's average response).

The following four parent factors were identified in 2006:
- Learning Environment (5 items)
- Social-Physical Environment (5 items)
- Teacher Care and Support (3 items)
- Home-School Relationship (8 items)

This factor structure (Table 14) was replicated in 2007 and confirmed in the following years (2008-2019), remaining consistent over time.

Table 14. Parent Survey Factors and Their Corresponding Items (2006-2019, 21 items)

Parent Survey Factors	Items
Learning Environment	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
Social-Physical Environment	My child's school is kept neat and clean. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual. Students at my child's school are well-behaved. My child feels safe at school. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.
Teacher Care and Support	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.
Home-School Relationship	My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. My child's school includes me in decision-making. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. My child's school treats all students fairly. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.

Changes in the 2021 Factor Structure

Considering the changes to the 2021 parent survey, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine any changes to the underlying parent factor structure.

The EFA was conducted using a total of 20 items from the first three parent survey sections. These included 14 items that were the same as used in previous years, 5 items that were similar to items used in previous years (reworded in 2021), and an item that was added in 2021. The EFA results indicated that a 4-factor solution (Table A1, Appendix) continues to represent the optimal factor structure for the parent survey data.

The 2021 parent factors appeared to be essentially consistent with the factors identified in previous years: Learning Environment (5 items), Social-Physical Environment (8 items), Teacher Care and Support (3 items), and Home-School Relationship (4 items). These factors provide measures of parent perceptions about a school's learning context (Learning Environment), building cleanliness and safe/welcoming school environment (Social-Physical Environment), teacher support for student learning (Teacher Care and Support), and the relationship between school and parents (Home-School Relationship).

Although the overall factor structure remained fairly consistent in 2021, the EFA results showed several changes regarding certain item's associations with the identified parent factors (Table 15). Specifically, five items (including three items that were reworded in 2021) showed stronger relationships with a different factor compared to previous years. These items included:

- three items associating with Social-Physical Environment instead of Home-School Relationship
    - *"My child's school treats my child fairly."* (reworded in 2021)
    - *"My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns."* (reworded in 2021)
    - *"The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming."*
- one item associating with Social-Physical Environment instead of Teacher Care and Support
    - *"I feel welcomed at my child's school."* (reworded in 2021)
- one item associating with Teacher Care and Support instead of Home-School Relationship
    - *"My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school."*

The new item added in 2021 (*"I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school."*) showed the strongest relationship with the Home-School Relationship factor.

Table 15. Parent Survey Factors and Their Corresponding Items (2021, 20 Items)

Parent Survey Factors	Items
Learning Environment	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
Social-Physical Environment	My child's school is kept clean.[a] My child's teachers care about my child.[a] My child feels safe at school. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school. **My child's school treats my child fairly.[ac]** **I feel welcomed at my child's school.[ac]** **My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.[ac]** **The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.[c]**
Teacher Care and Support	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. **My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.[c]**
Home-School Relationship	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school. **I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school.[b]**

Note. Factor analyses included the same/similar items as in previous years and the new item added in 2021.
[a] = Item reworded in 2021; [b] = Item added in 2021 (in boldface); [c] = Item loading on a different factor in 2021 (in boldface)

The EFA was also conducted without including the new item added in 2021. Results obtained when only using the same or similar items as in previous years were similar to the 2006-2019 results (Tables A2-A3, Appendix). The 2021 EFA results for both models were further confirmed through CFA. Overall, the 2021 CFA results (Tables A4-A5, Appendix) were similar to 2019 (Table A6, Appendix). Specifically, the strength of item relationships with their corresponding factor (i.e., factor loadings) followed the same pattern. Although the 2021 factor loadings appeared to be slightly lower, they had a similar range (0.69 – 0.90) as in 2019 (0.72 - 0.92). In addition, the 2021 model fit information for both models showed acceptable model fit of the parent factor structure to the survey data, similar to 2019 (Table A7, Appendix).

Key Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Given the substantial changes to both the survey administration process and several items contained within the 2021 parent survey, the purpose of this report was to compare parent responses to the 2019 and 2021 parent survey to examine 1) parent demographic characteristics, 2) the total number of parent surveys received and school-level response rates, 3) the distribution of parent "Don't Know" responses across survey items, and 4) the factor structure of the parent survey.

Key findings:

- Parents responding to the survey were fairly similar with regards to their demographic characteristics in 2019 and 2021. The majority of parents responding in both years were Caucasian/White females, who attended college or completed a higher level of education, with a total annual household income of at least $35,000. More parents reported having a higher educational attainment level (i.e., college degree or postgraduate studies) in 2021 as compared to 2019.

- A total of 26,671 more parent surveys were collected in 2021 compared to responses in 2019. Although substantially more parent surveys were collected in 2021, this did not result in an improved statewide response rate.

- Schools with lower poverty, on average, collected more parent surveys in 2021 compared to 2019. Schools with lower poverty had higher response rates in 2021 as compared to schools with higher poverty. This pattern was consistent across elementary, middle, and high schools.

- Schools with the highest poverty, on average, had the largest reduction in response rates from 2019 to 2021.

- In general, the 2021 parent survey response rates were low across all schools, regardless of school poverty status and organizational level.

- The percentage of parent "Don't Know" (DK) responses increased in 2021. Items with substantial increases in their percentage of DK responses in 2021 include both items with consistently high percentage of DKs and items with fairly low percentage of DKs in previous years.

- The overall factor structure of the parent survey remained fairly stable in 2021. Consistent with previous years, four parent factors were identified in 2021: Learning Environment, Social-Physical Environment, Teacher Care and Support, and Home-School Relationship.

However, several items showed stronger relationships with different factors compared to the structure identified in 2019 (and previous years).

Conclusions and recommendations:

- The comparison of the 2019 and 2021 parent survey results demonstrated changes in the population of parents responding to the survey as well as in survey responses in 2021.
- Considering the various factors occurring with the 2021 administration of the parent survey (e.g., changes in survey administration, survey revisions, impact of COVID-19 on the educational setting and process), these changes in results cannot be attributed to any specific factors.
- A similar comparison with the 2022 parent survey results may be needed to determine a pattern of changes that may occur and how the shift to online administration may impact the population of parents responding to the survey and the school-level response rates.

Appendix

Table A1. Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis of the 2021 Parent Survey (20 Items[a])

Items	Factor 1 (Social-Physical Environment)	Factor 2 (Home-School Relationship)	Factor 3 (Learning Environment)	Factor 4 (Teacher Care and Support)
My child feels safe at school.	**80**	-5	8	5
My child's school is kept clean.	**65**	8	6	-4
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	**63**	21	6	3
My child's school treats my child fairly.	**56**	19	14	7
The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	**52**	38	-4	-4
My child's teachers care about my child.	**51**	-12	28	29
I feel welcomed at my child's school.	**44**	**37**	0	10
My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.	**39**	**34**	6	16
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	15	**55**	0	24
I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school.	-11	**51**	**40**	0
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	21	**48**	5	8
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	23	**48**	17	10
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	18	-6	**68**	15
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	22	20	**54**	-10
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	-2	24	**53**	11
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	9	9	**51**	26
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	**32**	27	**39**	-2
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	-2	10	7	**82**
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	1	6	3	**81**
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	12	**33**	12	**41**

Note. EFA was performed with Promax rotation. Factor loadings > .30 are in boldface.

[a]= Items included the same/similar items as used in previous years and the new item added in 2021

Table A2. Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis of the 2021 Parent Survey (19 Items[a])

Items	Factor 1 (Home-School Relationship)	Factor 2 (Social-Physical Environment)	Factor 3 (Learning Environment)	Factor 4 (Teacher Care and Support)
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	**64**	-2	3	24
The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	**57**	29	2	-7
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	**56**	7	6	9
I feel welcomed at my child's school.	**54**	23	5	8
My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.	**50**	19	12	13
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	**50**	14	16	14
My child feels safe at school.	4	**80**	2	6
My child's school is kept clean.	20	**54**	6	-5
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	32	**54**	2	5
My child's teachers care about my child.	-5	**48**	28	27
My child's school treats my child fairly.	32	**42**	17	5
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	-8	12	**76**	12
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	24	9	**62**	-11
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	7	5	**55**	26
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	19	-5	**54**	13
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	29	24	**39**	1
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	8	1	6	**82**
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	5	5	1	**81**
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	38	2	15	**40**

Note. EFA was performed with Promax rotation. Factor loadings > .30 are in boldface.

[a]= same/similar items as in previous years

Table A3. Parent Survey Factors and Their Corresponding Items (2021, 19 Items)

Parent Survey Factors	Items
Learning Environment	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn. My child's school has high expectations for student learning. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
Social-Physical Environment	My child's school is kept clean.[a] My child's teachers care about my child.[a] My child feels safe at school. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school. **My child's school treats my child fairly.[ab]**
Teacher Care and Support	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn. **My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.[b]**
Home-School Relationship	**I feel welcomed at my child's school.[ab]** My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.[a] My child's school considers changes based on what parents say. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming. I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.

Note. Factor analyses were performed with the same/similar items as in previous years.
[a] = Item reworded in 2021; [b] = Item loading on a different factor in 2021 (in boldface)

Table A4. Factor Loadings for Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the 2021 Parent Survey (20 Items[a])

Parent Survey Factors	2021 Loading
Learning Environment	
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	0.84
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	0.83
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	0.82
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	0.77
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	0.73
Social-Physical Environment	
My child's school treats my child fairly.	0.85
My child's teachers care about my child.	0.83
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	0.83
My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.	0.82
My child feels safe at school.	0.81
I feel welcomed at my child's school.	0.79
The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	0.74
My child's school is kept clean.	0.69
Teacher Care and Support	
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	0.90
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	0.85
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	0.84
Home-School Relationship	
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	0.85
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	0.81
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	0.71
I am satisfied with the remote/online learning options available through my child's school.	0.70

[a]= Items included the same/similar items as used in previous years and the new item added in 2021

Table A5. Factor Loadings for Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the 2021 Parent Survey (19 Items[a])

Parent Survey Factors	2021 Loading
Learning Environment	
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	0.84
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	0.83
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	0.82
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	0.77
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	0.73
Social-Physical Environment	
My child's school treats my child fairly.	0.85
My child's teachers care about my child.	0.84
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	0.83
My child feels safe at school.	0.83
My child's school is kept clean.	0.69
Teacher Care and Support	
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	0.90
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	0.85
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	0.84
Home-School Relationship	
My child's school responds promptly when I have concerns.	0.84
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	0.83
I feel welcomed at my child's school.	0.81
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	0.79
The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	0.75
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	0.70

[a]= same/similar items as in previous years

Table A6. Factor Loadings for Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the 2019 Parent Survey (21 Items)

Parent Survey Factors	2019 Loading
Learning Environment	
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	0.88
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	0.87
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	0.83
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	0.83
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	0.76
Social-Physical Environment	
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	0.88
My child feels safe at school.	0.85
My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	0.81
Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	0.78
My child's school is kept neat and clean.	0.72
Teacher Care and Support	
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	0.92
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	0.87
My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	0.79
Home-School Relationship	
I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	0.87
My child's school treats all students fairly.	0.83
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	0.83
My child's school includes me in decision-making.	0.82
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	0.81
My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	0.79
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	0.75
The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	0.74

Table A7. Model Fit Indices for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Parent Survey (2019 and 2021)

Year (N)	Model	RMSEA (90% CI)	SRMR	CFI	GFI
2019 **(N=32,678)**	**4 Factors & 21 Items** Learning Environment (5 items) Social-Physical Environment (5 items) Teacher Care and Support (3 items) Home-School Relationship (8 items)	0.0685 (0.0679-0.0692)	0.033	0.953	0.911
2021 **(N=35,180)**	**4 Factors & 20 Items**[a] Learning Environment (5 items) Social-Physical Environment (8 items) Teacher Care and Support (3 items) Home-School Relationship (4 items)	0.0792 (0.0785-0.0799)	0.037	0.937	0.892
	4 Factors & 19 Items[b] Learning Environment (5 items) Social-Physical Environment (5 items) Teacher Care and Support (3 items) Home-School Relationship (6 items)	0.0754 (0.0747-0.0761)	0.035	0.947	0.905

Note. Factor analyses were performed using the data set obtained after removing duplicate observations, observations with "Don't Know" responses, and imputing missing data. RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; CFI = comparative fit index; GFI = goodness of fit index; CI = confidence interval.
[a]= same/similar items as in previous years and the new item added in 2021; [b]= same/similar items as in previous years