

AGENDA

EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

Monday, May 18, 2015
10:00 a.m.
Room 433, Blatt Building

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Approval of Minutes of November 16, 2014
- III. Information: FY2015-16 Budget Melanie Barton
- IV. Approval: Annual Report on the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program, 2013-14 Bunnie Ward
- V. Approval: Results of the 2014 Parent Survey Dr. Kevin Andrews
- VI. Update: District Efficiency Study Bunnie Ward
- VII. Adjournment

Subcommittee Members:

Dr. Bob Couch
Margaret Anne Gaffney
Rep. Dwight Loftis
Deb Marks
Rep. Joe Neal
David Whittemore

David Whittemore
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Minutes
EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee
November 17, 2014
2:00 P.M., Room 433 Blatt Building

Subcommittee Members Present: Mr. Alex Martin (Chair); Mr. Phillip Bowers (Vice-Chair), Ms. Deb Marks; Rep. J. Roland Smith; and Mr. David Whittemore

EOC Staff Present: Kevin Andrews; Melanie Barton; Hope Johnson-Jones; and Dana Yow

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Martin opened the meeting by welcoming members of the subcommittee.

Approval of the Minutes of November 10, 2014

There being no changes, the minutes were approved as distributed.

FY2015-16 Budget Recommendations

Rep. Smith asked to take up the issue of the South Carolina State University Minority Teacher Recruitment Program which the Subcommittee had adjourned debate on at its last meeting. Rep. Smith asked unanimous consent to withdraw his motion to amend the proviso regarding the program. There being no opposition, the motion was withdrawn.

Mrs. Barton then updated the Subcommittee on the most recent Board of Economic Advisors EIA revenue estimate for the current fiscal year and for Fiscal Year 2015-16. Due to projected increases in EIA revenue collections this fiscal year, the Subcommittee may recommend non-recurring EIA appropriations of \$4,851,307. In addition, there is a projected \$29,159,233 increase in EIA revenues for FY2015-16.

The Subcommittee then reviewed each EIA request for additional funds and recommended the following budgetary increases along with related provisos:

- Increase of \$2.0 million for modernization of vocational equipment, as recommended by the South Carolina Department of Education;
- Increase of \$4,220,000 for assessments that cover the cost of ACT[®], ACT Aspire[®] and WorkKeys[®] based on information obtained from the Department of Education
- No increase in funding for the Read to Succeed Office or for PowerSchool pending the next administration's agency staffing and reorganization.
- Increase of approximately \$4.0 million for the full-day, 4K program for students at risk of school failure in Anderson 2, Anderson 5, Greenwood 52, and Kershaw, districts that with the release of the 2014 state report cards now have a poverty index of 70% or greater.

- No increase in funding for EIA teacher salary supplement pending South Carolina Supreme Court ruling in Abbeville equity lawsuit and recommendations of the Select Committee on Public School Teachers in South Carolina
- Increase of \$1,254,900 to increase teacher supply allocation to \$300 per eligible teacher
- Increase of \$2.1 million for K-12 Technology Initiative due to increased bandwidth requirements in school districts and county libraries
- Increase of \$60,119 to expand professional development of science teachers at Science PLUS Institute
- No increase for Center for Educational Partnerships
- No Increase for STEM Centers South Carolina
- Appropriation of \$500,000 to the Reach Out and Read program for early literacy to train more medical professionals
- The balance of EIA recurring and non-recurring funds were recommended to fund instructional materials, both print and digital.

The Subcommittee recommended continued funding of the \$29.3 million for technology. The above budget and proviso recommendations were approved. Mr. Bowers abstained, pending an Attorney General's Opinion regarding his membership on the EOC.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee
FROM: Melanie Barton *Melanie Barton*
DATE: May 1, 2015
IN RE: Update on 2015-16 General Appropriation Act, H.3701

On April 23, 2015 the Senate Finance Committee completed its deliberations on H.3701, the 2015-16 General Appropriation Act. The Senate will take up the Committee's report on the bill beginning May 4, 2015. Below are the highlights of the proviso and funding recommendations that pertain to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and public education.

Education Finance Act (EFA) - \$1,548,569,004

The Senate Finance Committee recommended an increase of \$94.2 million for the EFA, a base student cost of \$2,220, the same level as the House-passed version of the budget, or a \$100 increase over the current fiscal year. In addition, the Committee recommended non-recurring funds of \$7.6 million to ensure that no district receives less funds in 2015-16 than in the current fiscal year. These "transition payments" are included because the legislature eliminated the \$29.9 million in lottery appropriations that were allocated this fiscal year.

Instructional Materials

In addition to the base appropriation of \$20.9 million in EIA revenues, the Senate increased funding of instructional materials by \$19.5 million as compared to the House increase of \$15.5 million. The EOC had recommended an additional \$19.8 million for digital and print instructional materials.

Read to Succeed

Like the House, the Senate Finance Committee funded staff for the Read to Succeed Office of \$276,000 and increased funding for Reading Coaches by \$4.9 million, up from \$29.5 million this year and increased funding for Summer Reading Camps by \$1.5 million, up from \$6.0 million this year.

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South Carolina Virtual School Program

Like the House, the Senate Finance Committee increased funding for the program by \$2.9 million.

Education Improvement Act

Attachment A enumerates the line item recommendations for the EIA budget. Of note, per the EOC's recommendations, the Senate Finance Committee:

- Increased funding for modernization of vocational equipment by \$2.1 million, compared to EOC recommendation of \$2.0 million;
- Increased funding for assessment of \$7.3 million, compared to EOC recommendation of \$4.2 million;
- Increased funding for technology for connectivity by \$2.1 million;
- Increased funding of SciencePLUS Institute by \$60,000 to expand professional development opportunities during school year; and
- Funded Reach Out and Read at \$500,000 in non-recurring funds and \$1.0 million in recurring funds with the goal of serving all children in Medicaid.

Full-Day 4K Program

Because four additional school districts now have a poverty index of 70 percent, the program will expand in 2015-16 to children residing in Anderson 2, Anderson 5, Greenwood 50 and Kershaw County school districts. Lapsed funds will be used to pay for the expansion in both public and private centers.

Education Oversight Committee

Funding for the South Carolina Autism Society comes through the EOC's budget. This year the General Assembly increased the EOC's line item appropriation by \$350,000 and redirected these funds to the South Carolina Autism Society. For Fiscal Year 2015-16, both the Senate Finance Committee and House increased the allocation to the Autism Society from \$350,000 to \$500,000. Funding for TransformSC of \$400,000 also comes through the EOC's budget through Provisos 1A.59. and 1A.64.

In addition, the Senate Finance Committee authorized that \$2.0 million in lapsed full-day 4K funds are to be allocated to the EOC for the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program. The focus of the grants for 2015-16 must be on expanding high-quality early childhood education programs. The EOC will continue to identify schools eligible to participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program and to evaluate the full-day 4K program.

Early Readiness Assessments

Provisos adopted by the Senate Finance Committee would direct the following changes in early readiness assessment. First, for all publicly funded 4K programs, the Department of Education would identify three formative assessments that providers would use to measure the early literacy and language development of children. Up to \$15 per child or a total of \$800,000 would be allocated to the providers to pay for the cost of the assessment. In public schools, all children entering five-year-old kindergarten would be assessed using the Diagnostic Reading Assessment with \$2.0 million in EIA funds used for this purpose.

Summary of Assessment Appropriations

Type	Allocation	Authority
4K – Formative Assessment in early literacy and language development	\$800,000	Proviso 1A.77.
5K – Diagnostic Reading Assessment for early literacy and progress monitoring of Read to Succeed	\$2,000,000	Proviso 1A.77.
Grades 3-8 in English language arts (ELA) & Mathematics Grades 4-8 in Science & Social Studies End-of-Course Assessments in English 1, Algebra 1, Biology and US History & Constitution Grade 11 – WorkKeys and College Readiness Assessment Advanced Placement Exams International Baccalaureate Exams PSAT Exams Gifted and Talented Identification Alternative Assessments: SC-Alt in Science & Social Studies NCSC Alternate Assessment in ELA Allocation to Districts for Formative Assessments (\$1.5 Million)	\$27,261,400 \$7,300,000	EIA Appropriation Proviso 1A.59.

Attachment

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate Finance Committee	Explanation
A. STANDARDS, TEACHING, LEARNING, ACCOUNTABILITY						
1. Student Learning						
Personal Service Classified Positions	58,629					
Other Operating Expenses	136,739					
High Achieving Students	0					
Aid to Districts	37,386,600					
School Health & Fitness Act -- Nurses	6,000,000					
Tech Prep	3,021,348					
Modernize Vocational Equipment	6,682,406	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$544,727	\$577,855	SFC: Plus \$1,501,367 in one-time EIA funds House: Plus \$1,296,407 in one-time EIA funds EOC & Governor: Additional funding for specialized equipment for CTE classes
Arts Curricula	1,487,571			\$1,000,000	\$0	House: Requested by Arts Alliance & SCDE SFC: Funded as separate line item under partnerships
Adult Education	13,573,736			\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	SFC & House: Per request by SCDE
Students at Risk of School Failure	79,551,723					
High Schools That Work	2,146,499					
NEW: Summer Reading Camp Expansion				\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	SFC & House: Increase above \$6.0 million appropriation in general fund monies
New: Reading Coaches				\$4,961,278	\$4,961,278	SFC & House: Increase above \$29 million appropriation in general fund monies
EEDA	6,013,832					
Subtotal	156,059,083					
2. Student Testing						
Personal Service Classified Positions	488,518					
Other operating Expenses	332,948					
Assessment / Testing	27,261,400	\$4,200,000	\$4,200,000			SFC & House: Funded with \$7,300,000 in non-recurring EIA revenues EOC & Governor: Increased costs of new assessments for WorkKeys, ACT, ACT Aspire less savings from HSAP and PASS ELA and Math
Subtotal	28,082,866					
3. Curriculum & Standards						
Personal Service Classified Positions	126,232					

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate Finance Committee	Explanation
Read to Succeed Office			\$270,600			SFC: Funded with \$276,000 in General Fund monies House: Funded with General Fund monies of \$205,000 Governor: Read to Succeed Office
Other Personal Service	4,736					
Other Operating Expenses	41,987					
Reading	6,542,052		\$662,013	\$0	\$0	Governor: Reading professional development
Instructional Materials	20,922,839	\$15,444,214	\$7,148,693	\$0	\$0	SFC: \$19.5 million in additional non-recurring (<i>Proviso 118.13</i>) House: \$14.5 million in additional nonrecurring general funds (<i>Proviso 118.13</i>) EOC: \$19.8 million total for digital and print Governor: \$12.0 million in recurring & nonrecurring funds for digital and print
Instructional Materials Non-Recurring	0					
Subtotal	27,637,846					
4. Assistance, Intervention, & Reward						
Personal Service Classified Positions	1,236,436					
Other Operating Expenses	1,174,752					
EAA Technical Assistance	8,800,000					
PowerSchool/Data Collection	7,500,000			\$2,100,000	\$0	House: Increased PowerSchool funding rather than K-12 Technology Initiative for Connectivity (Technical Issue)
Subtotal	18,711,188					
B. Early Childhood						
Personal Service Classified Positions	376,246					
Other Operating Expenses	556,592					
Alloc EIA - 4 YR Early Child	15,513,846					
SCDE-CDEPP	34,324,437	\$4,100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	EOC: Four additional districts eligible to participate in 2015-16 (Anderson 2, Anderson 5, Greenwood 52 and Kershaw) with poverty indices now about 70% Governor: To use existing balance in program for any expansion
Subtotal	50,771,121					
C. TEACHER QUALITY						
1. Certification						

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate Finance Committee	Explanation
Personal Service Classified Positions	1,068,102					
Other Personal Service	1,579					
Other Operating Expenses	638,999					
Subtotal	1,708,680					
2. Retention & Reward						
Special Items						
Teacher of the Year Award	155,000					
Teacher Quality Commission	372,724					
Teacher Salary Supplement	127,640,691					
Teacher Salary Supplement - Fringe	15,766,752			\$5,000,000	\$2,500,000	House: Per SCDE Request
National Board Certification	55,500,000		(\$2,500,000)		(\$1,500,000)	SFC: Phase-out of National Board redirected to Governor's Rural Teacher Initiative
<i>Rural Teacher Recruiting Initiative (NEW)</i>			\$1,500,000		\$1,500,000	
Teacher Supplies	13,596,000	\$1,254,900	\$0	\$0	\$0	EOC: \$300 per teacher with 49,503 eligible teachers
Subtotal	213,031,167					
3. Professional Development						
Special Items						
Professional Development	5,515,911		\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	SFC, House & Governor: Professional Development technology
ADEPT	873,909					
Subtotal	6,389,820					
E. LEADERSHIP						
1. Schools						
2. State						
Personal Service Classified Positions	82,049					
Other Personal Service	83,121					
Other Operating Expenses	279,032					
Technology	10,171,826	\$2,100,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,100,000	House: See PowerSchool Increase EOC & SFC: Increased bandwidth needs and recommended by BCB as well
Employer Contributions	1,064,221					
Subtotal	11,680,249					
F. PARTNERSHIPS						
1. Business and Community						
2. Other Agencies & Entities						
State Agency Teacher Pay (F30)	73,861					

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate Finance Committee	Explanation
Education Oversight Committee (A85)	1,643,242				\$150,000	SFC: Increased from \$350,000 to \$500,000 allocation to SC Autism Society (<i>Proviso 1A.56.</i>) House: Increase from \$350,000 to \$500,000 funding for SC Autism Society from non-recurring funds (<i>Proviso 1A.56.</i>)
NEW: Reach Out and Read (A85)					\$1,000,000	SFC: Plus \$500,000 in one-time funds; goal to serve all children enrolled in Medicaid
Center for Educational Partnerships (H27)	715,933					
SC Council on Economic Education	300,000					
Science PLUS	503,406	\$60,119	\$0	\$60,000	\$60,000	EOC, House & SFC: Pilot on-going professional development program for PLUS participants during the school year along with additional resources for their classrooms; Provide materials for the American Society of Metals (ASM) camp participants; fund staff to travel to participants schools to conduct program quality checks; and to market program to teachers in I-95 corridor.
Gov. School Arts & Humanities (H63)	959,994					
Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School (H71)	605,294					
School for Deaf & Blind (H75)	7,439,286					
Disabilities & Special Needs (J16)	613,653					
John De La Howe School (L12)	417,734					
Clemson Ag Ed Teachers	889,758					
Centers of Excellence-CHE (H03)	1,137,526					
Teacher Recruitment Program-CHE (H03)	4,243,527					
SC Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers, SC State University (Base: \$339,482)						
Center for Ed, Recruitment, Ret, and Adv	531,680					
Teacher Loan Program-State Treasurer (E16)	5,089,881					
Gov. School Science & Math (H63)	533,130					
Science South	500,000				(\$500,000)	SFC: Deleted funding for program
STEM Centers SC	1,750,000					
Teach For America SC	3,000,000					
ETV - K-12 Public Education	2,829,281					
ETV - Infrastructure	2,000,000					
SC Youth Challenge Academy	1,000,000					
School Readiness Plan (A85) Non-Recurring						
Literacy & Distance Learning	415,000					
Regional Education Centers	1,302,000					
NEW: Arts Curricula (H91)					\$1,000,000	SFC: New Line item whereas House funded on Arts Curriculum line item

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate Finance Committee	Explanation
Subtotal	38,494,186					
G. TRANSPORTATION/BUSES						
Other Operating	12,575,684					
Subtotal	12,575,684					
H. Charter School District	56,253,692		\$11,877,927	\$11,877,927	\$11,877,927	SFC, House & Governor: For projected growth
New: Charter Schools Chartered by Institutions of Higher Education					\$1,440,000	SFC: Added for Felton Lab which is now chartered by SC State University
I. First Steps to School Readiness						
Personal Services	2,182,993					
Other Operating	1,872,789					
County Partnerships	11,262,214			\$1,431,051	\$1,431,051	House: Per OFS Request
CDEPP	9,767,864					
BabyNet Autism Therapy	437,476			\$885,500	\$376,872	House: Per OFS Request
Fringe Benefits	677,349			\$241,500	\$0	House: Allocation for fringe benefits
BabyNet					\$1,127,000	SFC: To address Federal compliance issues
Subtotal	26,200,685					
EIA TOTAL	\$647,596,267	\$29,159,233	\$29,159,233	\$35,101,983	\$35,101,983	
Non-Recurring Appropriations	\$0					
NEW: Reach Out and Read		\$500,000				SFC & House: Recommended \$500,000 in non-recurring General Funds for Reach Out and Read EOC: Expand efforts statewide to include more medical providers and measure outcomes
Instructional Materials		\$4,351,307	\$4,851,307			EOC & Governor: Balance to instructional materials, both digital & print
Assessment				\$7,300,000	\$7,300,000	Proviso 1A.59.
Modernize Vocational Equipment				\$1,296,407	\$1,501,307	Proviso 1A.59.
District Technology, Devices & Content				\$204,900	\$0	Proviso 1A.59.
EOC: Partnerships for Innovation				\$900,000	\$900,000	Proviso 1A.59.
Allendale County School District				\$150,000	\$150,000	Proviso 1A.59.
Digital Instructional Materials					\$625,000	Proviso 1A.59.
TOTAL: Non-Recurring Appropriations		\$4,851,307	\$4,851,307	\$9,851,307	\$10,476,307	

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: **EIA and Improvement Mechanisms**

Date: **May 18, 2015**

ACTION:

Annual Report on the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program, 2013-14

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The Teacher Quality Act of 2000 provides that the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee “shall review the [SC Teacher] loan program annually and report to the General Assembly (Section 59-26-20 (j), SC Code of Laws of 1976, as amended.) This report is the annual report on the SC Teacher Loan Program covering the year 2013-14.

CRITICAL FACTS

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Study began in April 2015 and completed in May 2015 with data collection beginning in March of 2015

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

2013-14

**South Carolina
Teacher Loan
Program**

Annual Report

Annual Report on the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program

The Teacher Quality Act of 2000 directed the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to conduct an annual review of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program and to report its findings and recommendations to South Carolina General Assembly. Pursuant to Section 59-26-20(j) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the annual report documenting the program in Fiscal Year 2013-14 follows. Reports from prior years can be found on the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov.

May 5, 2015

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Acknowledgements

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) staff expresses its appreciation to the following individuals who provided data and data analysis for this report. First, Mim Armour and Camille Brown at the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education were instrumental in merging files from the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, the Professional Certified Staff (PCS) data file from the South Carolina Department of Education and scholarship data files from the Commission. The EOC thanks Ann Harvin Gavin of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and Laura Covington and Cynthia Hearn of the South Carolina Department of Education for the timely provision of data. The EOC is also grateful for data on South Carolina's teaching workforce, hiring trends over time, and the SC Teacher Loan Advisory Committee provided by Jane Turner of the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement at Winthrop University.

I. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Historical data on the Teacher Loan Program can be found on the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov.

New Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1: In 2014-15, there were 2,219 individuals who graduated from a South Carolina teacher education program; however, there were over 4,000 teachers who left their classrooms. The gap between the number of teachers leaving the classroom and the number graduating from a South Carolina teacher education program is growing. This state trend is occurring in nationally as well.

Finding 2: In 2013-14, state teacher education programs provided 32 percent of the new teacher hires. Another 29 percent of the hires came from another state, new graduates from teacher education programs in others, or through alternative certification programs.

Finding 3: In 2013-14 the number of applications to the Teacher Loan Program, 1,426, declined for the second consecutive fiscal year. Consequently, the number of loans approved also declined to 1,109.

Finding 4: For the first time since 1986-87 no funds were used from the Revolving Loan Fund to supplement the EIA appropriation. And, for the first time since 1986-87, the program had a balance, which totaled \$241,926, at the end of the fiscal year. The Revolving Fund includes monies collected by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation from individuals who do not qualify for cancellation. At the end of Fiscal Year 2013-14, the balance in the Revolving Loan Fund was \$13,878,579. The total amount of monies loaned in 2013-14 was \$4,517,984, a decline of \$1.1 million from the prior fiscal year. All eligible loans were funded.

Finding 5: Approximately 68 percent of all schools in 2013-14 met the definition of critical geographic need schools.

Recommendation 1: To encourage students to choose teaching as a career and make college more affordable, a tiered loan forgiveness approach should be considered. Such a system would provide some form of loan forgiveness to all loan participants who teach in any public school in South Carolina, rather than just those students teaching in a critical need subject or geographic schools. And, if a student teaches in a critical need subject and/or in a critical need school the loan would be forgiven in a shorter period of time.

Recommendation 2: The Teacher Loan Advisory Committee and the Center for Educator Recruitment Retention and Advancement (CERRA) should continue their efforts to engage education partners in publicizing the Teacher Loan Program on their websites and in communication materials. In addition they should explore and implement new marketing and communication strategies to increase the applications to the Teacher Loan Program.

Findings from Previous Reports

- ⇒ The Teacher Loan Program continues to fulfill the statutory mission to attract individuals into the teaching profession and into areas of critical need as measured by the annual increase in applications and in the number of Teacher Loan Program recipients teaching in public schools in South Carolina.
- ⇒ Over time, one-third of all Teacher Loan recipients had their loans cancelled by fulfilling the teaching requirement with another 9 percent in the process of teaching and having their loans cancelled. The default rate has been consistently one percent of all loans made.
- ⇒ The Teacher Cadet program continues to be a pipeline for individuals pursuing education degrees with 38 percent of Teacher Loan applicants having participated in the Teacher Cadet program.
- ⇒ The number of critical need subject areas continues to decline over time; however, vacancies in secondary mathematics, science, English and Special Education continue to exist.
- ⇒ The number of critical geographic needs schools continues to increase with two-thirds of all schools meeting the criteria due to the increase in the district poverty index

II. Status of Educator Pipeline

After studying student achievement on various standardized assessments, the Rand Corporation concluded that an effective teacher greatly impacts student achievement:

- ⇒ Teachers matter more to student achievement than any other aspect of schooling,
- ⇒ Nonschool factors influence student achievement, but they are largely outside a school's control,
- ⇒ Effective teachers are best identified by their performance, not by their background or experience, and
- ⇒ Effective teachers tend to stay effective even when they change schools.¹

In addition to test scores, teachers' impact on learning can also be measured by the quality of the teacher-child interaction. During a recent visit to South Carolina, Dr. Robert Pianta of the University of Virginia noted:

- ⇒ Early history of relationships with adults forms the "infrastructure" for school success, including: social competence with peers; self-regulation, emotional self-control, task orientation, persistence, and following directions.
- ⇒ Relationships and interactions with teachers and caregivers define quality and value of early education and are the path to improving school readiness.
- ⇒ Interactions are really important for children from low-income families and those who have difficulty adjusting to classroom environments may particularly benefit from exposure to high-quality early learning environments.²

National Perspective

Given the extreme importance of the quality of teachers and teacher-child interactions, it is crucially important that effective teachers instruct South Carolina's students. However, in order for the state's school districts to recruit, employ and retain effective teachers, the pipeline or supply of teachers must be adequate. There is a national trend that may directly impact South Carolina's teacher pipeline. A newly released report from ACT indicates interest in the teaching profession continues to decrease nationally. As part of the 2014 ACT college entrance exam, graduating high school students were surveyed about their future career interests. The survey made four critical findings:

- ⇒ While interest in becoming school administrative and support staff has increased, students are less interested in becoming teachers than they were in 2010.

¹ Rand Corporation (2014). http://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/CP693z1-2012-09.html#relatedProducts.

² Dr. Robert Pianta, *Elevating the Capacity of Classroom Experiences for Promoting Students' Learning and Development: Observation and Improvement of Teacher-Child Interactions* (February 12, 2015) Presentation hosted by Francis Marion University's Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children and Poverty.

- ⇒ On average, students interested in an education major do not score as well on the ACT. Those students who are interested in becoming education majors are not the highest-achieving.
- ⇒ Male students are not interested in majoring in education. Interest in pursuing early-childhood education is especially low.
- ⇒ There is a lack of diversity among students interested in education. ACT estimates that 71 percent of students interested in education are white.³

States are also experiencing significant drops in enrollment in teacher preparation programs:

Massive changes to the profession, coupled with budget woes, appear to be shaking the image of teaching as a stable, engaging career. Nationwide, enrollments in university teacher-preparation programs have fallen by about 10 percent from 2004 to 2012, according to federal estimates from the U.S. Department of Education’s postsecondary data collection.⁴

A possible reason for the decrease in enrollment preparation programs is the increase in student debt. Nationally, about 69 percent of college seniors who graduated from public and private nonprofit colleges had student loan debt.⁵ For public and nonprofit graduates, state averages for debt at graduation ranged widely in 2013, from \$18,650 to \$32,800.⁶ Table 1 indicates South Carolina had the tenth highest average debt level for the class of 2013. Approximately 59 percent of South Carolina students in the class of 2013 graduated with debt. In 2013, high-debt public colleges had an average debt ranging from \$33,950 to \$48,850.⁷ Nationally, the Citadel and Clemson University were among the top twenty schools in the nation with the highest debt.

Even Teach For America is experiencing unprecedented declines. According to a February 2015 report, “for the second year in a row, applicants for the elite program have dropped, breaking a 15-year growth trend. Applications are down by about 10 percent from a year earlier on college campuses around the country as of the end of last month.”⁸

³ Brenneman, R., “Fewer High School Students Show Interest in Teaching, Study Says,” *Education Week* (April 21, 2015). http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2015/04/fewer-students-report-wanting-to-teach-study.html.

⁴ Sawchuk, S., “Steep Drops Seen in Teacher-Prep Enrollment Numbers,” *Education Week* (October 21, 2014). www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/10/22/09.

⁵ Institute for College Access and Success, *Student Debt and the Class of 2013*, (November 2014), 1.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, 7-8.

⁸ Rich, M. “Fewer Top Graduates Want to Join Teach for America,” *New York Times*. (February 5, 2015), <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/06/education/fewer-top-graduates-want-to-join-teach-for-america.html>.

Table 1⁹
States with the Highest Average Debt per Student

State	Average Debt Per Student
New Hampshire	\$32,795
Delaware	\$32,571
Pennsylvania	\$32,528
Rhode Island	\$31,561
Minnesota	\$30,894
Connecticut	\$30,191
Main	\$29,934
Michigan	\$29,583
Iowa	\$29,370
South Carolina	\$29,092

South Carolina Perspective

Since 2001 the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) at Winthrop University has conducted an annual Teacher/Administrator Supply and Demand Survey. CERRA surveys each school district as well as the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Palmetto Unified School District and the South Carolina Public Charter School District to determine the number of authorized and filled teaching positions. While state teacher education programs provided 32 percent of the new teacher hires in 2013-14, approximately 29 percent of the hires came from another state, new graduates from teacher education programs in other states, or alternative certification programs (Table 2).

Table 2
Sources of New Teacher Hires

	2013-14	2012-13
New Graduates from Teacher Education Programs in SC	32%	36%
Transferred from one district in SC to another district	27%	28%
Hired from another state	15%	14%
New Graduates from Teacher Education Programs in Other States	8%	9%
Alternative Certification Programs	6%	5%
Inactive Teachers who Returned to Teaching	4%	4%
From Outside US	2%	2%
Other Teachers	6%	2%

Source: CERRA, Fall 2014 and Fall 2013, Supply and Demand Survey Reports.

⁹ Ibid at 3.

Table 3 summarizes the results of the most recent supply and demand reports released by CERRA. The number of graduates coming out from our state's colleges and universities is nearly half the number of new teacher hires each year. For 2014-15, there were 2,219 individuals who graduated from a South Carolina teacher education program but there were over 4,000 teachers who left their classrooms. And, the gap is not closing.

Table 3
Key Data from CERRA's Supply and Demand Reports
2012-13 to 2014-15

School Year	Number of Licensed Teaching Positions	Number of Newly Hired Licensed Teachers	Number of Licensed Teachers Who Did Not Return to their Classroom	Number of Graduates who Completed a SC Teacher Education Program	Number of Licensed Teachers Who Did Not Return after Five or Fewer Years in the Classroom	Number of Licensed Teachers Who Did Not Return After One Year or Less in the Classroom	Number of Teaching Positions Still Vacant at the Beginning of the School Year
2012-13	50,395.50	5,739.50	3,503.00	2,050.00	1,608.70	527.90	272.40
2013-14	49,641.50	5,797.70	3,880.50	2,447.00	1,559.50	550.00	270.83
2014-15	51,076.60	6,217.90	4,108.10	2,219.00	1,796.50	667.70	338.60

Source: CERRA

III. Overview of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program

With revenues from the Education Improvement Act Trust Fund, the General Assembly has appropriated monies to support the Teacher Loan Program.

Funding of the Teacher Loan Program

With revenues from the Education Improvement Act Trust Fund, the General Assembly has appropriated monies to support the Teacher Loan Program. Table 4 documents the amounts appropriated and expended over the past five fiscal years. In 2013-14, 6.2 percent of all funds expended for the program were spent on administration with \$4.5 million used to make loans, a decline of \$1.1 million from the prior fiscal year. All eligible loan applications were funded.

For the first time since 1986-87 no funds were used from the Revolving Loan Fund to supplement the EIA appropriation. And, for the first time since 1986-87, the Teacher Loan Program had a balance, which totaled \$241,926, at the end of the fiscal year. The Revolving Fund includes monies collected by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation from individuals who do not qualify for cancellation. At the end of Fiscal Year 2013-14, the balance in the Revolving Loan Fund was \$13,878,579. The total amount of monies loaned in 2013-14 was \$4,517,984, a decline of \$1.1 million from the prior fiscal year. All eligible loans were funded.

Table 4
SC Teacher Loan Program: Revenues and Loans Over Time

Year	EIA Appropriation	Legislatively Mandated Transfers or Reductions	Revolving Funds from Repayments	Total Dollars Available	Administrative Costs	Percent of Total Dollars Spent on Administration	Amount Loaned
2009-10	\$4,000,722	0	\$3,000,000	\$7,000,722	\$360,619	5.2	\$6,640,103
2010-11	\$4,000,722	0	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,722	\$345,757	6.9	\$4,654,965
2011-12	\$4,000,722	0	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,722	\$359,201	7.2	\$4,641,521
2012-13	\$4,000,722	0	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,722	\$351,958	7.0	\$5,648,764
2013-14	\$5,089,881	0	\$0	\$5,089,881	\$329,971	6.2	\$4,517,984

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation

Critical Need Identification

The South Carolina Teacher Loan Program allows borrower to have portions of their loan indebtedness forgiven by teaching in certain critical geographic and subject areas. The statute

assigns the responsibility of defining the critical need areas to the State Board of Education (SBE): “Areas of critical need shall include both rural areas and areas of teacher certification and shall be defined annually for that purpose by the State Board of Education.” Beginning in the fall of 1984, the SBE has defined the certification and geographic areas considered critical and subsequently those teaching assignments eligible for cancellation. Only two subject areas – mathematics and science - were designated critical during the early years of the programs, but teacher shortages in subsequent years expanded the number of certification areas.

To determine the subject areas, the South Carolina Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA) conducts a Supply and Demand Survey of all regular school districts, the South Carolina Public Charter School District, Palmetto Unified, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind. CERRA publishes an annual report documenting the number of: teacher positions, teachers hired; teachers leaving; and vacant teacher positions. The survey results are provided to the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). SCDE then determines the number of teaching positions available in the school year that were vacant or filled with candidates not fully certified in the particular subject area. Table 5 documents the critical need subject areas since 2010-11 as approved by the State Board of Education. The number of critical need subject areas continues to decline over time; however, vacancies in secondary mathematics, science, English and Special Education continue to exist.

Table 5
Critical Need Subject Areas¹⁰

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Business Education	Agriculture	Business Education	Business Education
2	Speech and Drama, Theater	Media Specialist	Family/Consumer Science	Theatre
3	Industrial Technology	Business Education	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)	Industrial Technology Education
4	Media Specialist	Dance	Media Specialist	Foreign Languages
5	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)	Health	Theater	Media Specialist
6	Mathematics	Family/Consumer Science	Agriculture	Middle-Level areas (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)
7	Family/Consumer Science	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)	Secondary Mathematics	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)
8	Foreign Languages	Drama and Theatre	Secondary English	Family/Consumer

¹⁰ Ranked in Order of Greatest Number of Positions Vacant or Filled by not Fully Certified Candidates

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	(French, Spanish, Latin, and German)			Science
9	All Middle-level areas	Middle-Level areas (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)	Art	Agriculture
10	English	English	Foreign Languages (French, Spanish, Latin, and German)	Music
11	Agriculture	Industrial Technology	Health	English as a Second Language
12	Special Education – All Areas	Special Education-All Areas	Special Education – All areas	Secondary English
13	Speech Language Therapist	Mathematics	Middle-Level areas (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)	Secondary Mathematics
14	Art	Foreign Language (Spanish, French, Latin, and German)		Special Education All Areas
15	Physical Education	Speech Language Therapist		Computer Programming
16	Music			

Source: SCDE and CERRA

The criteria used in designating critical geographic schools have evolved over time. The State Board of Education (SBE) has considered multiple factors, including degree of wealth, distance from shopping and entertainment centers, and faculty turnover. For the 2000-01 school year, the SBE adopted the criteria established for the federally funded Perkins Loan Program as the criteria for determining critical need schools. The Perkins Loan Program used student participation rates in the Federal free and reduced price lunch program to determine schools eligible for loan forgiveness and included special schools, alternative schools, and correctional centers. Section 59-26-20(j) was amended in 2006 to redefine geographic critical need schools to be: (1) schools with an absolute rating of Below Average or At-Risk/Unsatisfactory; (2) schools with an average teacher turnover rate for the past three years of 20 percent or higher; and (3) schools with a poverty index of 70 percent or higher. Table 6 documents the number of geographic critical need schools in South Carolina since 2009-10.

Table 6
Critical Geographic Need Schools

Year	Total Schools	Type of School					Qualification		
		Career Centers	Primary Schools	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Absolute Rating	Teacher Turnover	Poverty Index
2009-10	785	3	29	420	209	106	476	286	669
2010-11	751	6	30	429	184	102	255	284	684
2011-12	742	2	34	455	204	103	174	218	706
2012-13	810	7	35	445	203	114	192	187	765
2013-14	850	3	37	463	214	133	147	200	803

Source: South Carolina Department of Education

Note: Some schools may be designated in more than one category (i.e., middle and high).

In 2013-14 there were 850 schools that were classified as critical geographic need schools. For comparison purposes, in school year 2013-14 there was a total of 1,254 schools in the state.¹¹ Therefore, 68 percent of all schools were critical geographic need schools. It should be further noted that the state poverty index in 2012-13 was 70.7 percent. As the poverty index of schools increases, the number of schools classified as critical geographic need schools will increase.

¹¹ Includes all schools that received a state report card in 2014. < <http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2014/index.cfm>

IV. Applications to the Teacher Loan Program

As in the prior fiscal year, applications to the Teacher Loan Program in 2013-14 declined to a total of 1,462. Of the 1,462 applications, 1,109 were approved (Table 7). Of the 280 applications that were denied, the overriding reason for denial was due to the failure of the applicant to meet the academic grade point criteria.

**Table 7
Status of Applicants**

Year	Total Applied*	Approved	Cancelled	Denied	Reason for Denial				
					Academic Reason	Credit Problem	Inadequate Funds	No EEE Praxis	Other**
2009-10	2,228	1,555	92	581	147	13	300	75	46
2010-11	1,717	1,114	97	506	89	4	308	72	33
2011-12	1,471	1,086	81	304	116	1	80	62	45
2012-13	1,472	1,112	85	275	134	1	37	64	39
2013-14	1,462	1,109	73	280	143	0	0	74	54

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation

*This is a duplicated count of individuals because the same individuals may apply for loans in multiple years.

**"Other" reasons include (1) not a SC resident, (2) enrollment less than half time, (3) ineligible critical area, (4) not seeking initial certification, (5) received the maximum annual and/or cumulative loan and (6) application in process.

Description of Applicants

In the 1990s, several states, including members of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), implemented policies to attract and retain minorities into the teaching force. South Carolina specifically implemented minority teacher recruitment programs at Benedict College and South Carolina State University. Currently, only the South Carolina Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers (SC-PRRMT) at South Carolina State University remains in operation. The General Assembly in 2013-14 appropriated by proviso \$339,482 in EIA revenues to the program. SC-PRRMT promotes “teaching as a career choice by publicizing the many career opportunities and benefits in the field of education in the State of South Carolina. The mission of the Program is to increase the pool of teachers in the State by making education accessible to non-traditional students (teacher assistants, career path changers, and technical college transfer students) and by providing an academic support system to help students meet entry, retention, and exit program requirements.”¹² The program “also administers an EIA Forgivable Loan Program and participates in state, regional, and national teacher recruitment initiatives.”¹³

In 2003, the EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee of the Education Oversight Committee requested that staff develop goals and objectives for the Teacher Loan Program. An advisory committee was formed with representatives from CERRA, SCSL, the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership at the State Department of Education, and the Commission on Higher Education. After review of the data, the advisory committee recommended the following three goals and objectives for the Teacher Loan Program (TLP) in 2004.

- ⇒ The percentage of African American applicants and recipients of the TLP should mirror the percentage of African Americans in the South Carolina teaching force.
- ⇒ The percentage of male applicants and recipients of the TLP should mirror the percentage of males in the South Carolina teaching force.
- ⇒ Eighty percent of the individuals receiving loans each year under the TLP should enter the South Carolina teaching force.

Historically, applicants for the program have been overwhelmingly white and/or female (Tables 8 and 9). This trend continued in 2013-14 with almost 81 percent of all applicants female and 79 percent, white. However, the number of African Americans who applied for the loan increased. Historically, about 79 percent of all public school teachers in the state are white and 79 percent are female while historically 12 percent of all teachers are black males.

¹² 2012-13 EIA Program Report as provided to the EOC by the South Carolina Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers, September 28, 2012.

<<http://www.eoc.sc.gov/reportsandpublications/Pages/2012-13EIAProgramReport.aspx>>.

¹³ Ibid.

Table 8
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Gender

Year	# Applications	Male	%	Female	%	Unknown	%
2009-10	2,228	418	18.8%	1,763	79.1%	47	2.1%
2010-11	1,717	316	18.4%	1,324	77.1%	77	4.5%
2011-12	1,471	281	19.1%	1,122	76.3%	68	4.6%
2012-13	1,472	244	16.6%	1,168	79.3%	60	4.1%
2013-14	1,462	248	17.0%	1,177	80.6%	35	2.4%

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

Table 9
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Race/Ethnicity

Year	# Applications	Ethnicity							
		African American		Other		White		Unknown	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2009-10	2,228	317	14	38	2	1,802	81	71	3
2010-11	1,717	228	13	35	2	1,373	80	81	5
2011-12	1,471	215	15	20	1	1,171	80	65	4
2012-13	1,472	242	16	23	2	1,149	78	58	4
2013-14	1,462	248	17	20	1	1,147	79	47	3

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

One approach to increase the supply of highly qualified teachers is school-to-college partnerships that introduce students early on to teaching as a career. In South Carolina the Teacher Cadet Program, which is coordinated by the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) at Winthrop University, has impacted the applicant pool. As reported by CERRA, the mission of the Teacher Cadet Program "is to encourage academically talented or capable students who possess exemplary interpersonal and leadership skills to consider teaching as a career. An important secondary goal of the program is to provide these talented future community leaders with insights about teaching and school so that they will be civic advocates of education." Teacher Cadets must have at least a 3.0 average in a college preparatory curriculum, be recommended in writing by five teachers, and submit an essay on why they want to participate in the class. In 2013-14, 41 percent of all applicants to the Teacher Loan Program were participants in the Teacher Cadet Program (Table 10).

Table 10
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Teacher Cadet Program

Year	Number Applications	Teacher Cadets	%	Not Teacher Cadets	%	Unknown	%
2009-10	2,228	811	36	1,352	61	65	3
2010-11	1,717	662	39	1,024	60	31	2
2011-12	1,471	601	41	830	56	40	3
2012-13	1,472	556	38	871	59	45	3
2013-14	1,462	597	41	843	58	22	2

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

Overwhelmingly, applicants to the Teacher Loan Program are undergraduates. Table 11 showcases the number of applicants by academic level. While historically only 18 percent of program applicants are freshmen, consistently 60-plus percent are continuing undergraduates. In 2013-14 two-thirds of all applicants were continuing undergraduates. Students may be more willing to commit to a professional program after their initial year of post-secondary education. Anecdotal information provided by financial aid counselors about potential graduate student loan applicants identified a hesitancy to participate in the program because they were uncertain about where they might be living after completing their degrees.

Table 11
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Academic Level

Year	Number Applied	Academic Level Status									
		Freshman		Continuing Undergrad		1 st Semester Graduate		Continuing Graduate		Unknown	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2009-10	2,228	404	18	1,370	61	204	9	207	9	43	2
2010-11	1,717	230	13	1,136	66	140	8	195	11	16	1
2011-12	1,471	246	17	961	65	112	8	140	10	12	1
2012-13	1,472	230	16	992	67	98	7	131	9	21	1
2013-14	1,462	263	18	974	67	96	7	113	8	16	1

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

V. Recipients of a South Carolina Teacher Loan

In 2013-14 of the 1,462 applications received, 1,109 or 76 percent received a Teacher Loan. Table 12 documents the distribution of loan recipients over time by academic level. In 2013-14 87 percent of the loan recipients were undergraduate students. Looking at the undergraduate recipients, two-thirds were juniors or seniors, the same levels as in the prior year. Across the past five years, the data show that there is an annual decline in loan recipients between freshman and sophomore years. There are several possible reasons for the decline: (1) individuals may decide that they do not want to become teachers; (2) some students may leave college after freshman year; and (3) some individuals may no longer meet the qualifications to receive the loans. There are two primary reasons sophomores may no longer qualify for the loan: their GPA is below a 2.5 and/or they have not passed the Praxis I test required for entrance into an education program. No data exist on how many of the applicants were rejected for not having passed or how many had simply not taken the exam. Either way, the applicant would not qualify for additional TLP loans until the Praxis I was passed.

Table 12
Distribution of Recipients of the Teacher Loan Program by Academic Level Status

	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	5 th Year Undergrads	1 st year Graduates	2 nd Year Graduates	3+ Year Graduates
2009-10	286	165	362	452	48	157	76	9
2010-11	126	120	254	379	43	107	62	23
2011-12	191	109	292	312	22	122	37	1
2012-13	173	138	270	345	22	118	43	3
2013-14	191	138	279	341	17	111	30	2

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

Table 13 compares the academic status of applicants to actual recipients in 2013-14. The data show that generally the percentage of applicants who are undergraduate reflects the percentage of recipients who were undergraduates.

Table 13
Comparisons by Academic Level of Applicants and Recipients, 2013-14,

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Unknown	Total
Applicants	1,237 (85%)	209 (14%)	16(1%)	1,462
Recipients	966(87%)	143(13%)	--	1,109

Teacher Loan recipients attended forty universities and colleges in 2013-14 of which twenty-seven or two-thirds were South Carolina institutions with a physical campus. For comparison purposes, the Commission on Higher Education reports that there are 59 campuses of higher learning in South Carolina: 13 public senior institutions; 4 public two-year regional campuses in

the USC system; 16 public technical colleges; 24 independent or private senior institutions; and 2 independent two-year- colleges.¹⁴ Table 14 documents the number of Teacher Loan recipients attending South Carolina public and private institutions.

Table 14
Teacher Loan Recipients by Institution of Higher Education, 2013-14

	Institution	Number Recipients
1	American Public University System	1
2	Anderson University	65
3	Charleston Southern University	20
4	Clemson University	93
5	Coastal Carolina University	33
6	Coker College	39
7	College of Charleston	115
8	Columbia College	23
9	Columbia International University	1
10	Converse College	34
11	Covenant College	1
12	Emory and Henry College	1
13	Erskine College	4
14	Fort Hays State University	1
15	Francis Marion University	54
16	Furman University	14
17	Gardner-Webb University	1
18	Grand Canyon University	2
19	Lander University	49
20	Liberty University	3
21	Limestone College	5
22	Mars Hill College	1
23	Newberry College	24
24	North Greenville University	27
25	NOVA Southeastern University	1
26	Presbyterian College	15
27	SC State University	14
28	Southern Wesleyan University	11
29	The Citadel	18
30	University of Southern California	1
31	USC-Aiken	29
32	USC-Beaufort	1
33	USC-Lancaster	1
34	USC-Upstate	52
35	USC-Columbia	212

¹⁴ Commission on Higher Education
<http://www.che.sc.gov/Students,FamiliesMilitary/LearningAboutCollege/SCCollegesUniversities.aspx>

	Institution	Number Recipients
36	University of West Alabama	5
37	Walden University	1
38	Western Governors University	5
39	Winthrop University	130
40	Wofford College	2
TOTAL		1,109

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation

The number of loan recipients at historically African American institutions remains significantly low. According to the Commission on Higher Education and SCSL, in 2013-14 there were a total of 14 teacher loans given to students attending South Carolina State University (Table 15).

Table 15
Teacher Loans to Historically African American Institutions

Institution	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
Benedict College	0	0	0	0	2
Clayton University	0	0	1	0	1
Morris College	0	0	0	0	0
S.C. State University	14	11	11	9	9
TOTAL:	14	11	12	9	12

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and CHE

Recipients of the Teacher Loan Program also receive other state scholarships provided by the General Assembly to assist students in attending institutions of higher learning in South Carolina. The other scholarship programs include the Palmetto Fellows Program, the Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarships, and the Hope Scholarships. The Palmetto Fellows Program, LIFE Scholarships, and Hope award scholarships to students based on academic achievement, but are not directed to teacher recruitment. In 1999 the General Assembly created the Teaching Fellows Program to recruit up to 200 high achieving high school seniors each year into teaching. Students who receive a Teaching Fellows award go through a rigorous selection process, which includes an online application (scholastic profiles, school and community involvement, references, and an interest paragraph), an interview and presentation in front of a team of three educators, and a scored written response. Teaching Fellows are awarded up to \$6,000 per year to attend one of eleven Teaching Fellows Institutions in the state of South Carolina as long as they continue to meet criteria for participation. Teaching Fellows must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75, attend regular Teaching Fellows meetings on their campus, engage in service learning activities, and participate in advanced professional development. Recipients agree to teach in South Carolina at least one year for each year they

receive an award, and they sign a promissory note that requires payment of the scholarship should they decide not to teach. In addition to being an award instead of a loan, the Teaching Fellows Program differs from the Teacher Loan Program in that recipients are not required to commit to teaching in a critical need subject or geographic area to receive the award.

Working with the Commission on Higher Education, the South Carolina Student Loan, and the South Carolina Department of Education, specific data files from the three organizations were merged and cross-referenced to determine how the scholarship programs interact with the Teacher Loan Program. Table 16 shows over the last five years the number of Teacher Loan recipients who also participated in the Hope, LIFE, or Palmetto Fellows programs and who were later employed by public schools. The merged data found a total of 3,154 loan recipients who were also LIFE, Palmetto Fellows or Hope Scholarships recipients and employed in public schools in South Carolina in 2013-14, a 9 percent increase over the prior year. Since Fiscal Year 2009-10 the number has increased by one-third.

Table 16
Loan Recipients serving in South Carolina schools
who received LIFE, Palmetto, Fellows and Hope Scholarships

Fiscal Year	LIFE	Palmetto Fellows	Hope	Total
2009-2010	1,932	116	67	2,115
2010-2011	2,097	145	93	2,335
2011-2012	2,331	171	110	2,612
2012-2013	2,582	188	125	2,895
2013-2014	2,796	211	147	3,154

Source: Commission on Higher Education

*Data Not Available

**Hope Scholarship established in 2002-03.

Policymakers also questioned how the state’s scholarship programs generally impact the number of students pursuing a teaching career in the state. Table 17 shows the total number of scholarship recipients each year. It is a duplicated count across years.

Table 17
Total Number of Scholarship Recipients for the Fall Terms

Year	LIFE	Palmetto Fellows	Hope
2009	31,607	5,894	2,716
2010	32,125	6,122	2,844
2011	32,600	6,410	2,853
2012	33,580	6,666	2,925
2013	34,378	6,818	3,185

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Of these individuals receiving scholarships in the fall of 2013, 9 percent of scholarship recipients had declared education as their intended major (Tables 18 and 19). The data, however, show a downward trend in the percentage of these very talented students initially declaring education as a major since the fall of 2005. With the policy goal on improving the quality of teachers in classrooms, this trend raises concerns.

Table 18
Comparison of Scholarship Recipients and Education Majors, Fall 2013

Scholarship	# of Education Majors	# of Scholarships	Percent
Hope	398	3,185	12.5%
LIFE	3,234	34,378	9.3%
Palmetto Fellows	401	6,818	5.9%
Total	4,033	44,781	9.0%

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Table 19
Percent of Students that Received Scholarships for each Fall Term and had Declared an Education Major

Fall	LIFE	Palmetto Fellows	Hope	Total
2009	11.1	6.5	14.4	10.6
2010	11.0	6.7	12.7	10.5
2011	10.2	6.3	9.9	9.6
2012	9.6	6.0	13.2	9.3
2013	9.3	5.9	12.5	9.0

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Finally, over time, average SAT scores of loan recipients have increased.. These scores reflect the mean for the critical reading and mathematics portions of the SAT (Table 20). And, if a student took the test more than once, the most recent score is used. In 2013-14, the average SAT score of 1,220.4 was well above the South Carolina average of 971 and the national 2013 SAT average of 1,010 in critical reading and mathematics.

Table 20
Mean SAT Scores¹⁵

Year	Teacher Loan Program Recipients	SC
2009	1,091.4	982
2010	1,107.0	979
2011	1,153.8	972
2012	1,181.4	969
2013	1,220.4	971

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and College Board.

Repayment or Cancellation Status

South Carolina Student Loan (SCSL) reports that as of June 30, 2014, 17,423 loans were in a repayment or cancelation status. The following table is a comprehensive list of the status of all borrowers:

Table 21
Borrowers as of June 30, 2014

Number Borrowers	% of Borrowers	Status
2,563	15%	Never eligible for cancellation and are repaying loan
402	2%	Previously taught but not currently teaching
1,325	8%	Teaching and having loans cancelled
7,177	41%	Have loans paid out through monthly payments, loan consolidation or partial cancellation
114	1%	Loan discharged due to death, disability or bankruptcy
85	1%	In Default
5,757	33%	Loans cancelled 100% by fulfilling teaching requirement
17,423	TOTAL	

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, 2014

¹⁵ The composite score is the sum of the Critical Reading score average and the Mathematics score average (2006-2014).

Teacher Loan Program Recipients Employed in Public Schools of South Carolina

What information exists about the current employees of public schools in South Carolina who previously received a Teacher Loan? Data files from South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) were merged. There were 7,450 Teacher Loan recipients employed by public schools in 2013-14, an increase of 290 or 4 percent over the prior year. Like the applicants, the Teacher Loan recipients who were employed in South Carolina's public schools were overwhelmingly white and female (Table 22). These 7,450 individuals served in a variety of positions in 2013-14 (Table 23).

Table 22
Loan Recipients in South Carolina Schools by Gender and Ethnicity, 2013-14

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	956	12.8
Female	6,444	86.5
Unknown	50	0.7
Total	7,450	

Ethnicity	Number	Percent
African American	967	13.0
Caucasian	6,274	84.2
Asian	20	0.3
Hispanic	44	0.6
American Indian	5	0.1
Unknown	140	1.9
Total	7,450	

Table 23
Loan Recipients Employed in SC Public Schools as of 2013-14 by Position

Position Code	Description	Number	Position Code	Description	Number
1	Principal	122	47	Director, Athletics	2
2	Assistant Principal, Coprincipal	204	48	Assistant Superintendent, Noninstruction	1
3	Special Education (Itinerant)	19	49	Assistant Superintendent, Instruction	3
4	Prekindergarten (Child Development)	152	50	District Superintendent	1
5	Kindergarten	341	53	Director, Instruction	2
6	Special Education (Self-Contained)	376	55	Supervisor, Secondary Education	2
7	Special Education (Resource)	456	57	Director, Career and Technology Education	3

positions, working in public schools in typically administrative rather than direct instructional capacities.

Table 24
Loan Recipients Employed in Public Schools By Various Functions, 2013-14

Position Code	Description	# Positions	Percent
04	Prekindergarten	152	2%
05	Kindergarten	341	5%
03, 06, 07	Special Education	851	11%
08	Classroom Teachers	4,804	64%
10	Library Media Specialist	284	4%
11	Guidance Counselor	167	2%
17	Speech Therapist	157	2%
All Others	Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, Coordinators, etc.		9%
	Total	7,450	

Table 25 documents the primary area of certification of all Teacher Loan recipients who were employed in public schools in 2013-14.

Table 25

Loan Recipients Employed in SC Public Schools in 2013-14 by Primary Certification Area

Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified	Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified
1	Elementary	3,181	67	Physical Education	94
2	Generic Special Education	128	70	Superintendent	2
3	Speech - Language Therapist	155	71	Elementary Principal	24
4	English	406	72	Secondary Principal	4
5	French	32	78	School Psychologist III	1
6	Latin	1	80	Reading Teacher	5
7	Spanish	79	84	School Psychologist II	4
8	German	2	85	Early childhood	970
10	Mathematics	476	86	Guidance -Elementary	53
11	General Mathematics	4	89	Guidance – Secondary	11
12	Science	154		Unknown/Not Reported	12
13	General Science	14	1A	Middle School Language Arts	3
14	Biology	50	1B	Middle School Mathematics	3
15	Chemistry	11	1C	Middle School Science	2
16	Physics	2	1D	Middle School Social Studies	3
20	Social Studies	165	1E	Middle Level Lang. Arts	106
21	History	8	1F	Middle Level Mathematics	99
26	Psychology	1	1G	Middle Level Science	30
29	Industrial Technology Education	8	1H	Middle Level Social Studies	97
30	Agriculture	6	2A	Sp.Ed. Ed. Mentally Disabled	89
32	Distributive Education	1	2B	Special Education-Education of the Blind and Visually Impaired	4
35	Family and Consumer Science (Home Economics)	13	2C	Special Education Trainable Mentally Disabled	3
40	Commerce	1	2D	Special Education-Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing	5
47	Business Education	41	2E	Special Education-Emotional Disabilities	102
49	Advanced Fine Arts	1	2G	Special Education – Learning Disabilities	185
50	Art	141	2H	Special Education-Mental Disabilities	34
51	Music Ed. - Choral	55	2I	Special Education-Multicategorical	89
53	Music Ed. - Voice	3	2J	Special Education-Severe Disabilities	3
54	Music Ed. - Instrumental	76	2K	Special Education-Early Childhood Ed	1
57	Speech and Drama	2	4B	Business/Marketing/Computer Tech	27
58	Dance	15	4C	Online Teaching	3
60	Media Specialist	97	AV	Electricity	2

Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified
63	Driver Training	9
5A	English As a Second Language	4
5C	Theatre	8
5G	Literacy Teacher	4
AC	Health Science Technology	1

Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified
BF	Small Engine Repair	1
DB	Protective Services	1
DC	Media Technology	1
7B	Elementary Principal Tier 1	21
7C	Secondary Principal Tier 1	1
TOTAL		7,450

VI. South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee

Proviso 1A.9. of the 2013-14 General Appropriations Act created the South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee (Committee). The Committee is charged with: (1) establishing goals for the Teacher Loan Program; (2) facilitating communication among the cooperating agencies; (3) advocating for program participants; and (4) recommending policies and procedures necessary to promote and maintain the program.¹⁶ For Proviso 1A.9 language, refer to Appendix B.

The Committee was formed in the fall of 2013. Working with the Committee are Marcella Wine-Snyder, CERRA Pre-Collegiate Program Director, and Dr. Jennifer Garrett, CERRA Coordinator of Research and Program Development. Serving on the Committee between the fall of 2013 and May of 2015 are the following individuals and the institution they represent:

- ⇒ Dr. Karen Woodfaulk – Commission on Higher Education,
- ⇒ Dr. David Blackmon – State Board of Education,
- ⇒ Patti Tate – Education Oversight Committee and Educator from York 3,
- ⇒ Jane Turner – CERRA,
- ⇒ Chuck Sanders – SC Student Loan Corporation,
- ⇒ Dr. Ed Miller – University of South Carolina, representing the SC Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators,
- ⇒ Gwendolyn Connor of Lancaster County School District, representing the SC Association of School Personnel Administrators,
- ⇒ Dr. Ed Jadallah of Coastal Carolina University, representing a public higher education institution with an approved teacher education program,
- ⇒ Dr. Valerie Harrison of Claflin University, representing a private higher education institution with an approved teacher education program, and
- ⇒ Dr. Sharon Wall – State Board of Education (served during 2013-14).

At the time of this report, the Committee met five times between January 2014 and April 2015. During this time, the Committee addressed Teacher Loan Program challenges and policy issues:

- ⇒ Communication strategies to enhance awareness of the Teacher Loan Program. CERRA staff integrated Teacher Loan Program information into its current communication activities, including the College Financial Newsletter.
- ⇒ Development of a Teacher Loan Program brochure in 2015. The Committee discussed translating the brochure into Spanish and the possible creation of a web-based application for the brochure.
- ⇒ Pending legislation and budget provisos impacting Teacher Loan Program, such as recruitment and retention of teachers in rural schools with higher turnover rates.

¹⁶ Proviso 1A.9. of the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act.

- ⇒ Loan eligibility for graduate students and conflicting school schedules that impact students' ability to apply for the loan.
- ⇒ A tiered loan forgiveness approach that would provide some form of loan forgiveness to all loan participants who taught in any South Carolina public school, rather than just those students teaching in a critical need subject or geographic school.
- ⇒ The criteria used by South Carolina Department of Education to determine critical need geographic schools. Since nearly two-thirds of all schools make the list each year, Committee members decided to recommend raising the poverty index to 80 percent or more.
- ⇒ The current South Carolina Department of Education formula used to determine critical need subject areas. The Committee was concerned it may not be an appropriate reflection of the areas that should be eligible for loan forgiveness. PACE teacher hires should not be considered 'irregular' and removed from the formula.
- ⇒ New partnerships with other education organizations, such as the South Carolina Alliance of Black School Educators.

Appendix A – Teacher Loan Fund Program

SECTION 59-26-20. Duties of State Board of Education and Commission on Higher Education.

The State Board of Education, through the State Department of Education, and the Commission on Higher Education shall:

(a) develop and implement a plan for the continuous evaluation and upgrading of standards for program approval of undergraduate and graduate education training programs of colleges and universities in this State;

(b) adopt policies and procedures which result in visiting teams with a balanced composition of teachers, administrators, and higher education faculties;

(c) establish program approval procedures which shall assure that all members of visiting teams which review and approve undergraduate and graduate education programs have attended training programs in program approval procedures within two years prior to service on such teams;

(d) render advice and aid to departments and colleges of education concerning their curricula, program approval standards, and results on the examinations provided for in this chapter;

(e) adopt program approval standards so that all colleges and universities in this State that offer undergraduate degrees in education shall require that students successfully complete the basic skills examination that is developed in compliance with this chapter before final admittance into the undergraduate teacher education program. These program approval standards shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) A student initially may take the basic skills examination during his first or second year in college.

(2) Students may be allowed to take the examination no more than four times.

(3) If a student has not passed the examination, he may not be conditionally admitted to a teacher education program after December 1, 1996. After December 1, 1996, any person who has failed to achieve a passing score on all sections of the examination after two attempts may retake for a third time any test section not passed in the manner allowed by this section. The person shall first complete a remedial or developmental course from a post-secondary institution in the subject area of any test section not passed and provide satisfactory evidence of completion of this required remedial or developmental course to the State Superintendent of Education. A third administration of the examination then may be given to this person. If the person fails to pass the examination after the third attempt, after a period of three years, he may take the examination or any sections not passed for a fourth time under the same terms and conditions provided by this section of persons desiring to take the examination for a third time.

Provided, that in addition to the above approval standards, beginning in 1984-85, additional and upgraded approval standards must be developed, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, and promulgated by the State Board of Education for these teacher education programs.

(f) administer the basic skills examination provided for in this section three times a year;

(g) report the results of the examination to the colleges, universities, and student in such form that he will be provided specific information about his strengths and weaknesses and given consultation to assist in improving his performance;

(h) adopt program approval standards so that all colleges and universities in this State that offer undergraduate degrees in education shall require that students pursuing courses leading to teacher certification successfully complete one semester of student teaching and other field experiences and teacher development techniques directly related to practical classroom situations;

(i) adopt program approval standards whereby each student teacher must be evaluated and assisted by a representative or representatives of the college or university in which the student teacher is enrolled. Evaluation and assistance processes shall be locally developed or selected by colleges or universities in accordance with State Board of Education regulations. Processes shall evaluate and assist student teachers based on the criteria for teaching effectiveness developed in accordance with this chapter. All college and university representatives who are involved in the evaluation and assistance process shall receive appropriate training as defined by State Board of Education regulations. The college or university in which the student teacher is enrolled shall make available assistance, training, and counseling to the student teacher to overcome any identified deficiencies;

(j) the Commission on Higher Education, in consultation with the State Department of Education and the staff of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, shall develop a loan program in which talented and qualified state residents may be provided loans to attend public or private colleges and universities for the sole purpose and intent of becoming certified teachers employed in the State in areas of critical need. Areas of critical need shall include both geographic areas and areas of teacher certification and must be defined annually for that purpose by the State Board of Education. The definitions used in the federal Perkins Loan Program shall serve as the basis for defining "critical geographical areas", which shall include special schools, alternative schools, and correctional centers as identified by the State Board of Education. The recipient of a loan is entitled to have up to one hundred percent of the amount of the loan plus the interest canceled if he becomes certified and teaches in an area of critical need. Should the area of critical need in which the loan recipient is teaching be reclassified during the time of cancellation, the cancellation shall continue as though the critical need area had not changed. Additionally, beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, a teacher with a teacher loan through the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation shall qualify, if the teacher is teaching in an area newly designated as a critical needs area (geographic or subject, or both). Previous loan payments will not be reimbursed. The Department of Education and the local school district are responsible for annual distribution of the critical needs list. It is the responsibility of the teacher to request loan cancellation through service in a critical needs area to the Student Loan Corporation by November first.

Beginning July 1, 2000, the loan must be canceled at the rate of twenty percent or three thousand dollars, whichever is greater, of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in either an academic critical need area or in a geographic need area. The loan must be canceled at the rate of thirty-three and one-third percent, or five thousand dollars, whichever is greater, of the total

principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in both an academic critical need area and a geographic need area. Beginning July 1, 2000, all loan recipients teaching in the public schools of South Carolina but not in an academic or geographic critical need area are to be charged an interest rate below that charged to loan recipients who do not teach in South Carolina.

Additional loans to assist with college and living expenses must be made available for talented and qualified state residents attending public or private colleges and universities in this State for the sole purpose and intent of changing careers in order to become certified teachers employed in the State in areas of critical need. These loan funds also may be used for the cost of participation in the critical needs certification program pursuant to Section 59-26-30(A)(8). Such loans must be cancelled under the same conditions and at the same rates as other critical need loans.

In case of failure to make a scheduled repayment of an installment, failure to apply for cancellation or deferment of the loan on time, or noncompliance by a borrower with the intent of the loan, the entire unpaid indebtedness including accrued interest, at the option of the commission, shall become immediately due and payable. The recipient shall execute the necessary legal documents to reflect his obligation and the terms and conditions of the loan. The loan program, if implemented, pursuant to the South Carolina Education Improvement Act, is to be administered by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation. Funds generated from repayments to the loan program must be retained in a separate account and utilized as a revolving account for the purpose that the funds were originally appropriated. Appropriations for loans and administrative costs incurred by the corporation are to be provided in annual amounts, recommended by the Commission on Higher Education, to the State Treasurer for use by the corporation. The Education Oversight Committee shall review the loan program annually and report to the General Assembly.

Notwithstanding another provision of this item:

(1) For a student seeking loan forgiveness pursuant to the Teacher Loan Program after July 1, 2004, "critical geographic area" is defined as a school that:

(a) has an absolute rating of below average or unsatisfactory;

(b) has an average teacher turnover rate for the past three years that is twenty percent or higher; or

(c) meets the poverty index criteria at the seventy percent level or higher.

(2) After July 1, 2004, a student shall have his loan forgiven based on those schools or districts designated as critical geographic areas at the time of employment.

(3) The definition of critical geographic area must not change for a student who has a loan, or who is in the process of having a loan forgiven before July 1, 2004.

(k) for special education in the area of vision, adopt program approval standards for initial certification and amend the approved program of specific course requirements for adding certification so that students receive appropriate training and can demonstrate competence in reading and writing braille;

(l) adopt program approval standards so that students who are pursuing a program in a college or university in this State which leads to certification as instructional or administrative personnel shall complete successfully training and teacher development experiences in teaching higher order thinking skills;

(m) adopt program approval standards so that programs in a college or university in this State which lead to certification as administrative personnel must include training in methods of making school improvement councils an active and effective force in improving schools;

(n) the Commission on Higher Education in consultation with the State Department of Education and the staff of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, shall develop a Governor's Teaching Scholarship Loan Program to provide talented and qualified state residents loans not to exceed five thousand dollars a year to attend public or private colleges and universities for the purpose of becoming certified teachers employed in the public schools of this State. The recipient of a loan is entitled to have up to one hundred percent of the amount of the loan plus the interest on the loan canceled if he becomes certified and teaches in the public schools of this State for at least five years. The loan is canceled at the rate of twenty percent of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in a public school. However, beginning July 1, 1990, the loan is canceled at the rate of thirty-three and one-third percent of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in both an academic critical need area and a geographic need area as defined annually by the State Board of Education. In case of failure to make a scheduled repayment of any installment, failure to apply for cancellation or deferment of the loan on time, or noncompliance by a borrower with the purpose of the loan, the entire unpaid indebtedness plus interest is, at the option of the commission, immediately due and payable. The recipient shall execute the necessary legal documents to reflect his obligation and the terms and conditions of the loan. The loan program must be administered by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation. Funds generated from repayments to the loan program must be retained in a separate account and utilized as a revolving account for the purpose of making additional loans. Appropriations for loans and administrative costs must come from the Education Improvement Act of 1984 Fund, on the recommendation of the Commission on Higher Education to the State Treasurer, for use by the corporation. The Education Oversight Committee shall review this scholarship loan program annually and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. For purposes of this item, a 'talented and qualified state resident' includes freshmen students who graduate in the top ten percentile of their high school class, or who receive a combined verbal plus mathematics Scholastic Aptitude Test score of at least eleven hundred and enrolled students who have completed one year (two semesters or the equivalent) of collegiate work and who have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. To remain eligible for the loan while in college, the student must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

Appendix B – SC Teacher Loan Advisory Committee

1A.9. (SDE-EIA: XII.F.2-CHE/Teacher Recruitment) Of the funds appropriated in Part IA, Section 1, XII.F.2. for the Teacher Recruitment Program, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall distribute a total of ninety-two percent to the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA-South Carolina) for a state teacher recruitment program, of which at least seventy-eight percent must be used for the Teaching Fellows Program specifically to provide scholarships for future teachers, and of which twenty-two percent must be used for other aspects of the state teacher recruitment program, including the Teacher Cadet Program and \$166,302 which must be used for specific programs to recruit minority teachers: and shall distribute eight percent to South Carolina State University to be used only for the operation of a minority teacher recruitment program and therefore shall not be used for the operation of their established general education programs. Working with districts with an absolute rating of At-Risk or Below Average, CERRA will provide shared initiatives to recruit and retain teachers to schools in these districts. CERRA will report annually by October first to the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education on the success of the recruitment and retention efforts in these schools. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that all funds are used to promote teacher recruitment on a statewide basis, shall ensure the continued coordination of efforts among the three teacher recruitment projects, shall review the use of funds and shall have prior program and budget approval. The South Carolina State University program, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, shall extend beyond the geographic area it currently serves. Annually, the Commission on Higher Education shall evaluate the effectiveness of each of the teacher recruitment projects and shall report its findings and its program and budget recommendations to the House and Senate Education Committees, the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee by October 1 annually, in a format agreed upon by the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education.

With the funds appropriated CERRA shall also establish, appoint, and maintain the South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee. The Committee shall be composed of one member representing each of the following: (1) Commission on Higher Education; (2) State Board of Education; (3) Education Oversight Committee; (4) Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement; (5) South Carolina Student Loan Corporation; (6) South Carolina Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators; (7) a local school district human resources officer; (8) a public higher education institution with an approved teacher education program; and (9) a private higher education institution with an approved teacher education program. The members of the committee representing the public and private higher education institutions shall rotate among those institutions and shall serve a two-year term on the committee. Initial appointments must be made by July 1, 2013, at which time the member representing CERRA shall call the first meeting. At the initial meeting, a chairperson and vice-chairperson must be elected by a majority vote of the committee. The committee must be staffed by CERRA, and shall meet at least twice annually. The committee's responsibilities are limited to: (1) establishing goals for the Teacher Loan

Program; (2) facilitating communication among the cooperating agencies; (3) advocating for program participants; and (4) recommending policies and procedures necessary to promote and maintain the program.

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

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Date: May 18, 2015

INFORMATION

Results of the 2014 Parent Survey

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

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." In addition Section 59-18-900 of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) requires that the annual school report cards include "evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students" as performance indicators to evaluate schools. The tool that has been adopted by the EOC and administered by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to meet these statutory requirements is the annual parent survey.

CRITICAL FACTS

The parent survey was commissioned by the EOC and designed by the Institute for Families in Society at the University of South Carolina in 2001. The survey is designed to determine parent perceptions of their child's school and to evaluate the effectiveness of state and local parental involvement programs. Since 2002 the South Carolina Department of Education has annually administered the survey, and the EOC has provided an annual review of the survey results. The attached report reflects the results of the 2014 administration of the parent survey.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Study began in April 2015 and completed in May 2015

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

2014

DRAFT

**Results of the 2014
Parent Survey**

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Acknowledgements

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

Executive Summary

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

Since 2002 the SCDE has administered the parent survey to a sample of parents whose children attended public schools in South Carolina. From its inception, the parent survey contains items regarding parent perceptions of the learning environment in the school, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment of the school. Additional questions document characteristics of the parents and the children of the parents responding to the survey. The 2014 parent survey contained many of the same items as the 2013 parent survey. Five items that were added to the 2013 survey to obtain information about parent views of teacher and principal effectiveness, student personalized learning experience, and parental awareness of federal and state report card grades were deleted from the 2014 survey.

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

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

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

An analysis of the respondents to the 2014 parent survey concluded that the survey responses typically overrepresented the perceptions of parents who had children in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who had children in high school. Furthermore, the respondents typically obtained higher educational achievements and had greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina. As in prior years, the “typical” parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college and having a household income of greater than \$35,000. Furthermore, when compared to the enrollment of students in public schools, parents of African American students were underrepresented in the responses.

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

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

Parent Survey Results: Despite an 11.2 percent decline in the number of parents responding to the annual parent survey, the results of the 2014 parent survey demonstrate that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment and social and physical environment of their child’s school—were consistent with the prior year’s results. Significant changes are estimated as an annual increase or decrease of three or more percent.

Satisfaction is defined as the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school. Parent satisfaction with home and school relations appears to have declined dramatically from 2013 to 2014; however, the number of missing responses for this item increased from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014. The percentage of parents not satisfied in 2014 was 14.6 percent, a slight increase from 13.3 percent in 2013, which suggests a slight decrease in parental satisfaction with home and school relations. SCDE staff were consulted regarding this data anomaly; no explanation is apparent. EOC staff inquired whether a sample of survey documents could be spot-checked by the contractor to rule out scanning errors. This was not possible.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

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

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

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

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

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

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

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

Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. The largest difference in parental satisfaction between the highest and lowest performing schools was in parent perception of the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed by the learning environment. This trend is present for all school levels, though some anomalous results for parents of high school students make observing this trend more difficult.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2014

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

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

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

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

PART ONE

Administration of the 2014 Parent Survey

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

Rather than surveying all parents of public school students, the parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8 and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower, which include primary schools, child development schools and schools with configurations like K, K-1, and K-2 are not surveyed. The parent survey is typically administered during the second semester of each school year. Appendix A provides the instructions used by schools in 2014 to administer the parent as well as student and teacher surveys.

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

April 11, 2014	All schools received survey forms.
May 9, 2014	Date for parent survey forms returned to school.
May 14, 2014	Last day for schools to mail completed forms to contractor.

A school survey coordinator, a staff person designated by the school principal, distributed and collected the parent surveys at each school according to instructions provided by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). According to SCDE, an independent contractor hired by the agency to mail to each school the following:

- ✓ An administrative envelope containing;
 1. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 2. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 3. A page of shipping instructions, and
 4. One pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
- ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.

- ✓ Student survey forms.¹

The name of each school was printed on the survey forms to assist parents who were completing surveys for multiple schools. Schools were also advised to “distribute the parent surveys as soon as possible” after delivery. The cost of printing, shipping, processing and scanning the parent surveys was approximately \$90,000.

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

As in the prior year, the 2014 instructions contained the following special note that cautions schools against implementing policies that would create disincentives for parents who opt to mail in their survey responses:

SPECIAL NOTE: We appreciate that schools work diligently each year to encourage parents to complete and return the parent surveys. Some schools offer incentives such as ice cream treats or extra recess time to individual students or classes where all students have returned completed parent surveys. Each year parents call the Department to inform us that their child is upset that he/she cannot return the parent survey form to school and receive the special incentive because the parent wants to mail the survey form to the Department. Parents have the option to mail in the survey form, so we would encourage you to not penalize students whose parents’ mail in their completed survey form.²

Upon receiving the completed parent surveys, the school survey coordinator then mailed the forms to the independent contractor for scanning and preparation of the data files. Individual school results were tabulated by SCDE. The overall parent satisfaction scores of three questions relating to the school’s overall learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment were printed on the 2014 annual school report cards. For each school, SCDE aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the data files to the district office.

The 2014 parent survey contained a total of fifty-seven questions. Forty-seven questions were designed to elicit information on parental perceptions and parental involvement patterns. For the first twenty-three questions, parents were asked to respond to individual statements using one of the following responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree or Don’t Know. These twenty-one questions focused on three key components: learning environment, home and school relations, and the physical and social environment of their child’s school.

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

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

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

Parents were asked five questions about their participation in various parental involvement activities both in and outside of the school. Parents were also asked whether each of a list of seven items were potential barriers to their involvement in their child's education. Finally, parents were asked to provide specific information about themselves, their child, and their household. Parents were asked four questions about their child: their child's grade in school, gender, race/ethnicity, and grades on his or her last report card. Four questions sought information about the parent: his or her gender, race/ethnicity, highest level of education and total yearly household income.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A second method is to estimate the unknown eligibility of surveys by using the statewide 135-day average daily membership of all students in grades 5, 8 and 11 in school year 2013-14 as the sample size. On the 45th, 90th and 135th days of school, school districts report each student by grade and by a pupil classification system prescribed in the Education Finance Act. In school year 2013-14 the 135-day average daily membership for grades 5, 8 and 11 rounded to the nearest student totaled 158,479.⁶ This method underestimates the number of parents surveyed. The parents of some 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th grade students also complete the survey because some schools have a grade configuration that spans multiple levels or these schools represent the highest grade level in the school.

As reflected in Table 1, the total number of parent surveys returned in 2014 was 59,293, which was 7,494 (11.2 percent) fewer than the number returned in the prior year. This is a substantial decrease in the number of parents responding. As a point of reference, from 2012 to 2013 there was a 4.0 percent decrease in the number of parent surveys returned. The number of parent surveys returned has declined each year from the maximum number returned in 2011.

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

Table 1
Total Number of Parent Surveys Returned

Year	Surveys
2014	59,293
2013	66,787
2012	69,581
2011	73,755
2010	69,474
2009	67,014
2008	68,761
2007	64,596
2006	69,495
2005	66,895
2004	66,283
2003	64,732

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

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

Year	Surveys
2002	55,864

Using the two methods of determining response rates and the total number of parent surveys returned, two response rates were calculated in Table 2. Between 31.0 and 37.4 percent of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2014 parent survey. In the prior year (2013), using the same two methodologies, the response rate was between 36 and 43 percent. Compared to IAR’s definitions of acceptable response rates for email and online surveys, the response rate to the 2014 parent survey should be considered average. According to IAR, “generally, the better your respondents know you, the better your response rate. Respondents who you know by name or have regular contact with will be more likely to respond to your survey than respondents you do not know.”

**Table 2
Determining the Response Rate**

	Sample Size	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Method 1: Surveys Distributed	191,500	59,293	31.0%
Method 2: ADM ⁶ of 5, 8 and 11 th grades	158,480	59,293	37.4%

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

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

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

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your race/ethnic group?
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Attended elementary/high school
 - Completed high school/GED
 - Earned associate degree
 - Attended college/training program
 - Earned college degree
 - Postgraduate study/and/or degree
4. What is your family’s total yearly household income?
 - Less than \$15,000
 - \$15,000 - \$24,999
 - \$25,000 - \$34,999
 - \$35,000 - \$54,999
 - \$55,000 - \$75,000
 - More than \$75,000

Responses to these eight questions revealed the following about the parents who completed the 2014 parent survey (Table 3).

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

Gender	
Male	14.3%
Female	85.7%
Race	
African-American	30.8%
Caucasian/white	59.0%
Hispanic	5.9%
All Other	4.3%
Education	
Attended elementary/high school	10.3%
Completed high school/GED	22.3%
Earned Associate Degree	11.0%
Attended college/training program	20.0%
Earned college degree	22.9%
Postgraduate study/and/or degree	13.6%
Household Income	
Less than \$15,000	14.0%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	14.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	13.0%
\$35,000 - \$54,999	16.1%
\$55,000 - \$75,000	13.9%
More than \$75,000	28.8%
Their Child Enrolled in:	
Grades 3-5	44.7%
Grades 6-8	37.0%
Grades 9-11	18.3%
Their Child's Gender:	
Male	44.3%
Female	55.7%
Their Child's Ethnicity:	
African-American	31.3%
Caucasian/White	57.1%
Hispanic	5.9%
All Other	5.7%
Their Child's Grades:	
All or mostly A's and B's	64.0%
All or mostly B's and C's	26.2%
All or mostly C's and D's	8.2%
All or mostly D's and F's	1.6%

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

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

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

To determine if the survey responses were representative of elementary, middle and high school parents, the following analysis was done. First, 57,290 parents who returned the 2014 survey indicated that their child was in 5th, 8th, or 11th grade. Defining grade 5 as elementary schools, grade 8 as middle school and grade 11, high school, approximately 45 percent of parents who completed the survey were elementary school parents, 37 percent middle school, and 18 percent high school (Table 4). As compared to the prior year, the percentage of surveys reflecting the perceptions of elementary school parents declined by 1 percent, middle school parents increased by 2 percent, and the percentage of parents of high school students decreased by 1 percent (from 19 to 18 percent).

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

**Table 4
Parental Respondents by Child's Grade**

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

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

**Table 5
Ethnicity of Children**

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

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

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

Regarding the annual household income of the respondents, in 2014 58.8 percent of the parents who completed the survey reported having an annual household income in excess of \$35,000. For comparison purposes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in South Carolina from 2009-2013 was \$44,779.⁹

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

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

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

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

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

⁹ Ibid.

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

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

Conclusions

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

PART THREE

Results for Items of the 2014 Parent Survey

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

Parent Perceptions of Their Child's School

The information below summarizes the results of the 2014 parent survey. At the school level, responses to these questions can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement initiatives at the individual school site. Statewide, the data provide policymakers information on the overall effectiveness of policies and programs in promoting parental involvement. The following analysis focuses on parent perceptions or satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment of their children's schools. In analyzing responses, "significant change" is defined as a change of three percent or more in satisfaction.

A. Learning Environment

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

Table 7 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey. Overall, 86.7 percent of parents responded that they were satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school. Across the five questions, the percentage of parents who disagreed or strongly disagreed was highest for questions 4 and 5. Approximately, one in five in parents either did not believe or did not know if their child received extra help when needed.

Table 7
Percentage of Parents in 2014 Responding

Learning Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	8.7	2.4
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	6.4	2.0
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	5.8	3.0
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	12.1	6.0
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	11.6	1.7

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

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

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

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

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

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

To determine if there are any significant changes in parent perception of the learning environment of their child's school over recent years, an analysis was done to compare the 2014 results with the average or mean results of the prior three years. Table 10 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the learning environment of their child's school in 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2011 through 2013. The 2014 respondents were overall more satisfied with the learning environment of their schools

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

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

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

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

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

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

Analyzing the responses by Absolute Rating for elementary, middle and high schools, a clear pattern emerges: among respondents with children in schools with ratings of Excellent, Good, or Average: parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, regardless of the Absolute Rating (Table 12). For parents whose children are enrolled in schools with Below Average or At Risk ratings

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

Table 12
I am Satisfied With the Learning Environment at My Child’s School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)

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

B. Home and School Relations

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

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

Table 13
Percentage of Parents in 2014 Responding:

Home and School Relations Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child	57.1	40.7	2.2
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	34.0	2.5
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	44.1	4.8
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	14.0	5.2
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	24.5	5.7
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	21.7	4.6
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	24.3	21.3
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	16.4	4.2
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	16.9	12.2
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	10.0	7.8
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	14.6	13.7

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

- Parents overwhelmingly agreed that the principal at their child's school was available and welcoming.
- Approximately 80 percent of the parents agreed that their child's school returned phone calls or e-mails promptly and scheduled activities at times that parents could attend.
- Approximately four out of ten parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child's teachers contacted them to say good things about their child or invited the parents to visit the classroom during the school day.
- One third of the parents disagreed that their child's teachers told them how to help their child learn.

- One-fourth of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child’s school included parents in decision-making or considered changes based on parental input.
- Nearly one in three parents did not believe or did not know if students were treated fairly at their child’s school.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on Absolute Ratings, the data reveal that among schools with Excellent, Good, or Average ratings, parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools (Table 18). Parents of children in schools with Below Average ratings have historically had the lowest levels of parental satisfaction with home and school relations.

Table 18
I am Satisfied with Home and School Relations at My Child's School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's Elementary, Middle or High School)

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

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

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

C. Social and Physical Environment

Five questions on the parent survey focus on the social and physical environment of schools. These questions are designed to elicit parent perceptions of the cleanliness, safety, and student behavior at their child’s school. Question 5 asks parents to report on their overall satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child’s schools. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 5 are included on the annual school report card.

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

Table 19
Percentage of Parents in 2014 Responding

Social and Physical Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.6	6.4	3.1
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	6.9	1.9
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	9.1	7.1
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	22.5	12.6
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child’s school.	84.4	11.9	3.7

Nine in ten parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child’s school was kept neat and clean and that their child felt safe at school. On the other hand, over one out of three parents either did not believe or did not know whether students at their child’s school were well behaved, and 16.2 percent of parents did not know or did not believe that their child’s teachers cared about their child as an individual.

Table 20 compares the 2014 results of the South Carolina parent survey with the results of parent surveys administered since 2010. The data document that parental responses to the five questions regarding the social and physical environment of their child’s school are consistent with the prior year’s results. Over time, parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child’s schools as reflected in the responses to these five questions has increased.

Table 20
2010-2014
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Table 23
I am Satisfied with the Social and Physical Environment at My Child’s School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)

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

D. Parental Involvement

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

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

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

- Type 6. Collaborating with the family – Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

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

First, parents were asked to specifically respond to eight questions relating to their involvement in their child's school. These questions focus on the following types of parental involvement: parenting, volunteering and decision making. Parents were asked specifically to respond to these eight questions in one of four ways:

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

The responses are reflected in Table 24 with the middle column highlighting the percentage of parents who expressed an interest in becoming involved in these school activities. These parents want to be involved but either have personal barriers preventing their involvement or face obstacles at the school level. At the school level, parents responding "I don't do this but would like to" are the parents for whom school initiatives to improve parental involvement should be focused.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Parents were asked five questions about their involvement with their child’s learning, both at the school site and at home. Parents could respond in one of three ways:

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

Table 25 summarizes parental responses to these five questions.

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

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

Clearly, parents overwhelmingly report being involved in activities and decisions to support their child’s learning. Over 93 percent of parents reported helping their child with his or her homework while 83.5 percent report limiting television and other distractions at home. Almost one-third of parents responded that they visited their child’s classroom during the day while a majority wanted to become involved in this way. These responses are similar to parent responses in prior years.

There are obstacles that impede parental involvement in schools. These obstacles may include lack of transportation, family responsibilities, and work schedules. Schools may not encourage or facilitate parental involvement at the school level. The annual parent survey asks parents to respond “true” or “false” to seven questions on factors that impact their involvement. The results

from 2008 through 2014 are included in Table 26. Consistently across years, work schedule is the most common obstacle to parent involvement. At the individual school, the responses to these questions may assist principals and teachers in scheduling parental involvement activities or even parent-teacher conferences at times and places convenient for both parents and teachers.

Table 26
Percentage of Parents Experiencing Each Impediment to Involvement in Schools

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

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

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

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

E. Conclusions

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

PART FOUR

Results of the Gallup Student Poll – 2013 and 2014

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

A. Gallup Student Poll Methodology

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

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

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

B. National Results for 2013 and 2014

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

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

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

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

Table 29
Summary of 2014 Hope Items

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

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

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

Table 30
Hope Grandmean by Year

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

D. Engagement

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

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

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

Table 31
Engagement Item Summary

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

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

Table 32
Engagement Grandmean by Year

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

E. Well-Being

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

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

Table 33
Well-Being Item Summary

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

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

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

Table 34
Well-Being Grandmean by Year

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

F. Conclusions

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

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

CONCLUSIONS

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

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

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

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

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

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

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

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

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

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

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

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

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	90.0	81.0	9.0
Home and School Relations	75.1	73.0	2.1
Social and Physical Environment	89.0	71.8	17.1

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

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

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

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

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2014

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

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

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



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

APPENDIX A

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

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on <https://ed.sc.gov/apps/teachersurvey/>

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

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

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

Parent Surveys – paper forms

- April 11, 2014 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date, except schools in 10 districts that are on spring break on April 11 to receive the forms on April 14.
- May 9, 2014 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
This is the due date in the letter to parents.
- May 14, 2013 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Amanda Thomas with Scantron Corporation. Her email address is amanda.thomas@scantron.com.

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



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

INDEX

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

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

Five questions have been deleted from the Parent Survey.

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

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the parent survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school’s survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment **cannot** scan photocopies.
- ✓ Retain the container in which you received the survey forms. That same container can be used to return the survey forms to the contractor.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

- Check the materials received in your shipment to ensure that you have received the following items:
 - ✓ An administrative envelope containing;
 5. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 6. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 7. A page of shipping instructions, and
 8. One pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
 - ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
 - ✓ Student survey forms.
- The number of survey forms printed for your school is based on numbers provided by your district office. Contact Mike Pulaski if you received fewer surveys than ordered.
- Check a few student and parent survey forms to make sure that your school name is on the form. If you have received survey forms for another school, please contact Mike Pulaski.
- Keep the box in which the survey forms were delivered to use for the return shipment.
- Give the letter from the director of the Education Oversight Committee to your principal.
- Determine the number of student and parent survey forms you will need for each class at the designated grade level(s). Count the surveys into classroom stacks and distribute.

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

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

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the March 25 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible. **Remind teachers that they should not write any student names on the envelopes.**
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.
- As the due date for returning the parent survey approaches, you may want to send home a note or use your automated phone system to remind parents of the due date.

Teacher Survey

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

PREPARING SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

Parent Survey

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

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Attach the pre-addressed, **bar-coded UPS return shipping label to your package.** (NOTE: If you are re-using the original delivery box, remove or cover up the old label.) **Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school.** You can also drop off the package **at any UPS store or drop box as well** as select Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- The **pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label** was included in the administrative envelope along with these instructions. **If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact** Amanda Thomas with Scantron Corporation. Her email address is amanda.thomas@scantron.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Wednesday, May 14, 2013.**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student and Parent Survey Participants

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

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT SURVEY

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

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

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

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

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

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

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

Thank You

APPENDIX B

The 2014 Parent Survey

4803036903

**South Carolina
Parent Survey**

DIRECTIONS

- Correct Mark: ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○
- Incorrect Mark: ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- Erase completely to change.
- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- Fill in bubble completely.
- Do not fold or staple.

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

Directions: Read each statement. Decide if you agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or disagree with the statement. Then darken the bubble beside each statement. Do not write your name or address on this survey.

Learning Environment

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

Home-School Relations

1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	○	○	○	○	○
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	○	○	○	○	○
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	○	○	○	○	○
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	○	○	○	○	○
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	○	○	○	○	○
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	○	○	○	○	○
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	○	○	○	○	○
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	○	○	○	○	○
10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	○	○	○	○	○
11. I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

Social and Physical Environment

1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	○	○	○	○	○
3. Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	○	○	○	○	○
4. My child feels safe at school.	○	○	○	○	○
5. My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school.	○	○	○	○	○
6. My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying.	○	○	○	○	○
7. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

Please tell us if you do the following:

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

Go on to next page.

The 2014 Parent Survey

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Please tell us if you do the following:

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

Please mark if each of the following are True or False:

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

Please rate your school on:

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

Please answer the following questions about your child:

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

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

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

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

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

The 2014 Gallup Student Poll Questions



MEASURING STUDENT HOPE, ENGAGEMENT, AND WELL-BEING

GALLUP STUDENT POLL QUESTIONS

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

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

DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

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

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

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

School District Efficiency Review Pilot Program

Authority: Proviso 1.95. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act

Funding: \$300,000 in one-time funds

Summary: The proviso allows the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to contract with an independent entity to review certain school districts' central operations with a focus on non-instructional expenditures so as to identify opportunities to improve operational efficiencies and reduce costs for the district. "The review shall include, but not be limited to, examinations of: (1) overhead; (2) human resources; (3) procurement, (4) facilities use and management, (5) financial management; (6) transportation; (7) technology planning; and (8) energy management. The review shall not address the effectiveness of the educational services being delivered by the district. The review shall be completed no later than June 30, 2015 with reports going to "the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee; the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the Chairman of the House Education and Public Works Committee; and the Governor detailing the findings of the review, including the estimated savings that could be achieved, the manner in which the savings could be achieved, and the districts' plan for implementation of the recommendations.

Timeline: The district efficiency review pilot was a yearlong process that began in the summer of 2014 with the EOC survey of districts to gauge interest in participation. The final report will be submitted to the EOC June 1, 2015.

- **July 2014:** EOC surveys districts to determine which will participate
- **August 1 2014:** Ten (10) districts volunteered to participate
- **October 8, 2014:** MMO issued Request for Proposals; five proposals were submitted. All offerors had to select from these ten districts at least three districts to participate in the survey with at least one district from each of the following tiers. The tiers are based upon the number of students enrolled in the district. Tier 1 denotes districts with an enrollment of less than 3,000 students. Tier 2 denotes districts with an enrollment of more than 3,000 but less than 10,000 students. And, Tier 3 constitutes districts with an enrollment of more than 10,000.

Table 1

Tier	District	Total Expenditures (2011-12)	Enrollment (2012-13)
1	Barnwell 19	\$9,635,228	780
	Clarendon 1	\$14,782,567	774
	Hampton 1	\$17,412,817	2,383
	Saluda	\$20,202,256	2,118
2	Lexington 4	\$34,134,023	3,150
	Orangeburg 5	\$81,607,074	6,421
	Spartanburg 2	\$90,652,743	9,721
3	Charleston	\$562,304,356	43,012
	Dorchester 2	\$204,707,096	23,258
	Oconee	\$130,345,337	10,298

- **December 3, 2014:** Evaluation panel meets and selects Tidwell & Associates (Tidwell) who agrees to conduct efficiency studies of: Barnwell 19, Clarendon 1, Lexington 4 and Dorchester 2.
- **January 2015:** Tidwell visits with each District during separate orientation sessions.
- **February 17 – March 20, 2015:** Tidwell conducts site visits to each district.
- **March – May, 2015:** Tidwell drafts district reports and receives feedback from EOC staff and District leadership.
- **June 1, 2015:** Final report due to the EOC.

Overview of Pilot:

With EOC staff, Tidwell visited and met with District leadership during separate orientation sessions to discuss the purpose, timeline, data requests and process for the review. The scope of the reviews was limited to non-instructional district operations and responsibilities. During the orientation sessions, Tidwell and the districts also scheduled dates for the in-depth onsite work. The districts also selected peer districts that were similar so Tidwell could request and collect data for comparison purposes.

During the time when Tidwell worked onsite, the consulting team reviewed documents, visited schools and district facilities, held a community feedback session and met with students, parents, school staff, and district leadership and staff. The Tidwell consulting team was comprised of both national and state-level experts and professionals. The team reviewed district operations in:

- financial management
- overhead/district leadership, organization and management
- human resources
- procurement/purchasing and warehousing
- facilities use and management
- transportation
- technology planning and management
- energy management
- food services.

In addition to this onsite work, Tidwell conducted a survey to engage central office administrators, school leadership and teachers in the reviews. The survey allowed staff to provide anonymous input regardless if they were selected for an in-person interview with the consulting team.

Even though the final report has not been submitted, initial feedback from participating districts has been positive. A few districts have already begun to initiate changes to address facilities, technology and infrastructure needs.