

Los Angeles Unified School District *Parent Needs Assessment* Survey Results

Final Report

December 2006

Presented to:



The Board of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District

By the Ad Hoc Parent Engagement Policy Development
Committee of the Parent Collaborative



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On behalf of the Parent Collaborative, I am pleased to present the results of our initial survey of parents in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am particularly grateful to all of the parents and guardians who, as members of the Parent

Engagement Policy Development Committee, worked so long and hard to review and refine survey questions and develop the survey with the assistance of the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI) and to ensure the integrity of the results. I must also recognize the parent volunteers who assisted in processing the thousands of responses. I would also like to thank the entire PCSB staff for their support and specifically acknowledge Rita Caldera, who as Assistant Superintendent of Specially Funded Programs and the Parent Community Services Branch of LAUSD, recognized the importance of this work BY PARENTS and FOR PARENTS and fought to help make it happen.

This survey is what I hope will be the first of a number of tools to enable us to hear from parents and the community at large. We are planning to hold town hall meetings in local districts and in schools throughout LAUSD in the coming year.

Any such initial effort is likely to be fraught with challenges and ours was no different. The Parent Engagement Policy Development Committee did not anticipate the difficulty in reaching consensus as to which questions would be asked in a format such that parents would actually take the time to respond.

Although we asked for the survey to be developed and distributed in a minimum of seven languages, this survey was distributed only in English and Spanish. Future surveys will accommodate other languages.

A few other clarifications are in order as is a thorough evaluation of the findings and the Parent Collaborative will be reviewing the results and will issue it's own analysis and summary report based upon the findings.

I am proud that PARENTS drove this needs assessment. PARENTS have been asking for a district-wide parent survey for over three years and PARENTS decided upon which questions would be included. The results of the survey are intended to help formulate a district-wide parent engagement policy which will serve to improve the level of service to parents and students and help LAUSD to meet it's goal of becoming the best school district in America.

Bill Ring

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Chairperson of the Parent Collaborative

Chairperson, Ad-Hoc Parent Engagement Policy Development Committee

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is committed to developing a stronger relationship with parents in the district whereby parents are partners in their child's school decision-making process. In order to assess parents' interest in school involvement as well as their perceptions of their child's school, the Parent Collaborative of the Los Angeles Unified School District contracted with the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI) to develop a parent needs assessment survey to be distributed to every parent in the district. The purpose of the survey was to find out directly from parents what types of support and services were needed that would encourage parents to become more involved in their children's education.

METHODS

A parent needs assessment survey was developed by ETI, modeled after six levels of parent involvement which included parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community.

After the initial draft, ETI met with the District's Parent Collaborative Committee and several rounds of revisions were made and meetings held until the Committee signed off on the survey. The survey is to be a preliminary step in the development of a new Parent Involvement Policy in the district.

The 26-item survey was mailed out to every parent in the district, approximately 430,000 parents. The survey was available in English and Spanish. Surveys were accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose and importance of the study as well as a self-addressed, stamped envelope to be returned to ETI. Parents with more than one child in Pre K-12 were instructed to base their answers on the school attended by their child in the highest grade level. Parents were given two weeks to return the surveys, but since mail returns were coming in every day, ETI extended the receipt date two more weeks and surveys were received throughout August. A total of 38,275 surveys were returned to ETI; approximately 11,000 surveys were returned to the district as bad addresses/unable to be delivered. This resulted in a response rate of 9 percent. A map depicting the geographical spread of respondents by zip code across the district is presented in the body of the report.

Cross-tabulations and chi-square analyses were conducted wherever appropriate to determine statistical significance of the findings.

FINDINGS

Demographic Information

- Parents surveyed had children ranging in age from pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade. This is consistent with students' enrollment within the District.
- The majority of parents speak English (67 percent) and/or Spanish (54 percent) in the home and identified their ethnicity as Latino (52 percent) with a smaller percentage identifying themselves as White (16 percent).
- The majority of parents reported that their children attended their neighborhood school (84 percent of Spanish speaking parents compared to 70 percent of English speaking parents).
- A significantly higher percentage of English speaking parents work outside the home (76 percent compared to 58 percent of parents from the Spanish language version).

Communication Between Home and School

- Nine-tenths of parents reported feeling welcomed by the teachers (91 percent of English speaking parents and 92 percent of Spanish speaking parents) and approximately four-fifths felt welcomed by school administrators (83 percent of English speaking parents and 78 percent of Spanish speaking parents).
- Approximately nine-tenths of parents reported that there was someone in the school's office who speaks their language (89 percent of English speaking parents and 96 percent of Spanish speaking parents).
- Twenty-five percent of English speaking parents and 12 percent of Spanish speaking parents reported that they or their child had been discriminated against based on their race.
- More than four-fifths of parents (86 percent of English speaking parents and 89 percent of Spanish speaking parents) reported that the school staff was courteous, respectful, and helpful to them.
- Similarly, approximately four-fifths of parents reported that their child's school does a good job of informing them of how their child is doing (see Table 6). However, Spanish speaking parents were significantly more likely to report that the school does a good job of informing them (87 percent compared to 77 percent of English speaking parents).

- Telephone calls to the home (79 percent of English speaking parents and 67 percent of Spanish speaking parents) and letters or notes (67 percent of English speaking parents and 63 percent of Spanish speaking parents) were cited by parents as the best ways to reach them to discuss their child and his/her school activities
- Both English and Spanish speaking parents reported that progress reports (79 and 76 percent), parent-teacher meetings (77 and 91 percent), and report cards (74 and 67 percent) are the procedures for distributing information that best meet their needs.
- Asked to respond to the statement asking if their school has an adequate procedure to handle parent concerns, questions and complaints, Spanish speaking parents were significantly more likely to agree compared to English speaking parents (79 percent compared to 46 percent), while English speaking parents were more likely to be unsure (37 percent compared to 0 percent).
- Over one-third of parents surveyed reported watching LAUSD channel KLCS programs (35 percent of English speaking parents and 39 percent of Spanish speaking parents). The majority of parents indicated that the channel should hold a weekly parent-led news and/or information show to foster better communication, although a significantly higher percentage of Spanish speaking parents indicated interest (95 percent compared to 75 percent).

Parenting Workshops

- Asked if they would be interested if their child's school offered workshops, Spanish speaking parents expressed more interest overall in all proposed workshops. Spanish speaking parents cited the most interest in workshops on *parent and child communication*, *college counseling*, and *drug and alcohol awareness* (each 68 percent). English speaking parents also cited interest in *parent and child communication* (50 percent), but were interested in *computer* (42 percent) and *mathematics* workshops (40 percent) as well.
- Asked if they would like their child's school to offer information classes aimed at helping them to help their child, 86 percent of English speaking parents and 98 percent of Spanish speaking parents, a significant difference, expressed interest. For those who expressed interest in the information classes, Spanish speaking parents expressed more interest in the proposed class topics. Parents expressed the most interest in classes on *how to motivate their child* (83 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 64 percent of English speaking parents), *preparing their child for standardized tests* (82 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 60 percent of English speaking parents), *how to set goals for their child* (75 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 59 percent English speaking parents), and *help their child with homework* (78 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 58 percent of English speaking parents).

Learning at Home

- Asked about their satisfaction with the information they received about their child from their school, more than half of the parents were satisfied, with significantly more Spanish speaking parents reporting satisfaction (75 percent compared to 65 percent of English speaking parents).
- The majority of parents believed that the amount of homework sent home with their child was reasonable, although this percentage was significantly higher among Spanish speaking parents (89 percent compared to 79 percent of English speaking parents).

Decision-Making

- Parents reported feeling most comfortable expressing their likes and dislikes about their child's school by talking to the school's teachers and principals (68 percent of English speaking parents and 77 percent of Spanish speaking parents).
- Almost three-quarters of parents reported interest in participating in their child's school decision-making process (70 percent of English speaking parents and 71 percent of Spanish speaking parents).

Collaborating with the Community

- English speaking parents were most interested in receiving community program information on *free tutoring* (68 percent) and *youth services* (53 percent), while Spanish speaking parents were more interested in information on *youth services* (61 percent), and *public safety* (58 percent).

Volunteering

- English speaking parents were more likely to respond that they were able to be involved in their child's school through the *PTA* (57 percent) and *in the classroom* and by *going on field trips* (both 53 percent), while Spanish speaking parents responded that their child's school offered parent involvement *in the classroom* (53 percent), *after-school programs* (46 percent), and the *Parent Center* (44 percent).
- The best time reported by English speaking parents (51 percent) to participate in school programs, meetings, activities, or events was in the evenings and for Spanish speaking parents was after school (47 percent).

Health and Safety

- Approximately half of parents believed that their child's school has an adequate safety and emergency plan (44 percent of English speaking parents and 53 percent of Spanish speaking parents).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, parents in the LAUSD are satisfied with their child's school. Parents felt welcomed by teachers and school administrators and reported that school staff was courteous, respectful, and helpful. Also, parents seem to have formed a beneficial relationship with their child's teacher in that they prefer one-on-one contact with their child's teacher to discuss their child's progress and to discuss their opinions of their child's school.

Differences found between the English and Spanish survey versions indicate that in order to better meet the needs of parents, LAUSD needs to take into account language when communicating and designing programs and activities involving parents. This need is evident as approximately half of the parents surveyed are Latino and speak Spanish in the home. Overall, Spanish speaking parents demonstrated more satisfaction with their child's school with respect to information received about their child. English speaking parents on the other hand were more likely to state that they or their child have been discriminated against because of their race and that they do not feel that their concerns are being adequately dealt with by the school. Sensitivity training for school staff and faculty may decrease these complaints in the future.

Interest in school involvement was demonstrated through parents' interest in adult education and child-centered workshops. However, differences between languages emerged with respect to specific classes. This indicates that identical workshops do not have to be offered in both languages, but can be more individualized based on interest by language. We suggest that each school consider distributing the parent needs assessment survey to the parents at the school so the results can be used to tailor workshops specifically to the parents' needs and interests. While parents cited moderate interest in being involved in the decision-making process at their child's school, training might lead to increased participation for parents who do not feel comfortable or competent enough to participate in this process.

When asked what ways the school offers for parents to be involved, parents cited few programs and activities that were available in their child's school for parent involvement. This indicates that either poor communication exists regarding parents' awareness of programs and activities or these programs and activities have yet to be established in many schools. We suggest that a Collaborative be established at each local district comprised of parents, representatives of the District PTAs and representatives of the Division of Adult and Career Education. This group would be responsible for compiling an inventory of programs/workshops/activities available for parents within their local district and publicizing this inventory to parents. In this way, parents would be more aware of offerings at schools other than their child's school that they might wish to attend, thereby increasing parents' involvement in schools District-wide.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is committed to developing a stronger relationship with parents in the district whereby parents are partners in their child's school decision-making process. In order to assess parents' interest in school involvement as well as their perceptions of their child's school, the Parent Collaborative of the Los Angeles Unified School District contracted with the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI) to develop a parent needs assessment survey to be distributed to every parent in the district. The purpose of the survey was to find out directly from parents what types of support and services were needed that would encourage parents to become more involved in their children's education.

A parent needs assessment survey was developed by ETI, modeled after six levels of parent involvement which included parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community¹. The survey was designed to provide information about the level of parent involvement as well as what parents need in order to participate in school programs and activities. In addition, the survey sought to solicit ideas for other kinds of programs parents felt would be beneficial to them.

This needs assessment focused on:

- Communication between home and school;
- Parenting workshops;
- Learning at home;
- Decision-making;
- Collaborating with the community;
- Volunteering;
- Health and safety; and
- Demographic information.

II. METHODOLOGY

After the initial draft, ETI met with the District's Parent Collaborative Committee and several rounds of revisions were made and meetings held until the Committee signed off on the survey. The survey is to be a preliminary step in the development of a new Parent Involvement Policy in the district.

The 26-item survey was mailed out to every parent in the district, approximately 430,000 parents. The survey was available in English and Spanish. Surveys were accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose and importance of the study as well as a self-addressed, stamped envelope to be returned to ETI. Parents with more than one child in Pre K-12 were instructed to base their answers on the school attended by their child in the highest grade level. Parents were given two weeks to return the survey, but since mail returns were coming in every day, ETI extended the receipt date two more weeks and surveys were received throughout August.

¹ See Epstein, et al. (2002). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*, 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

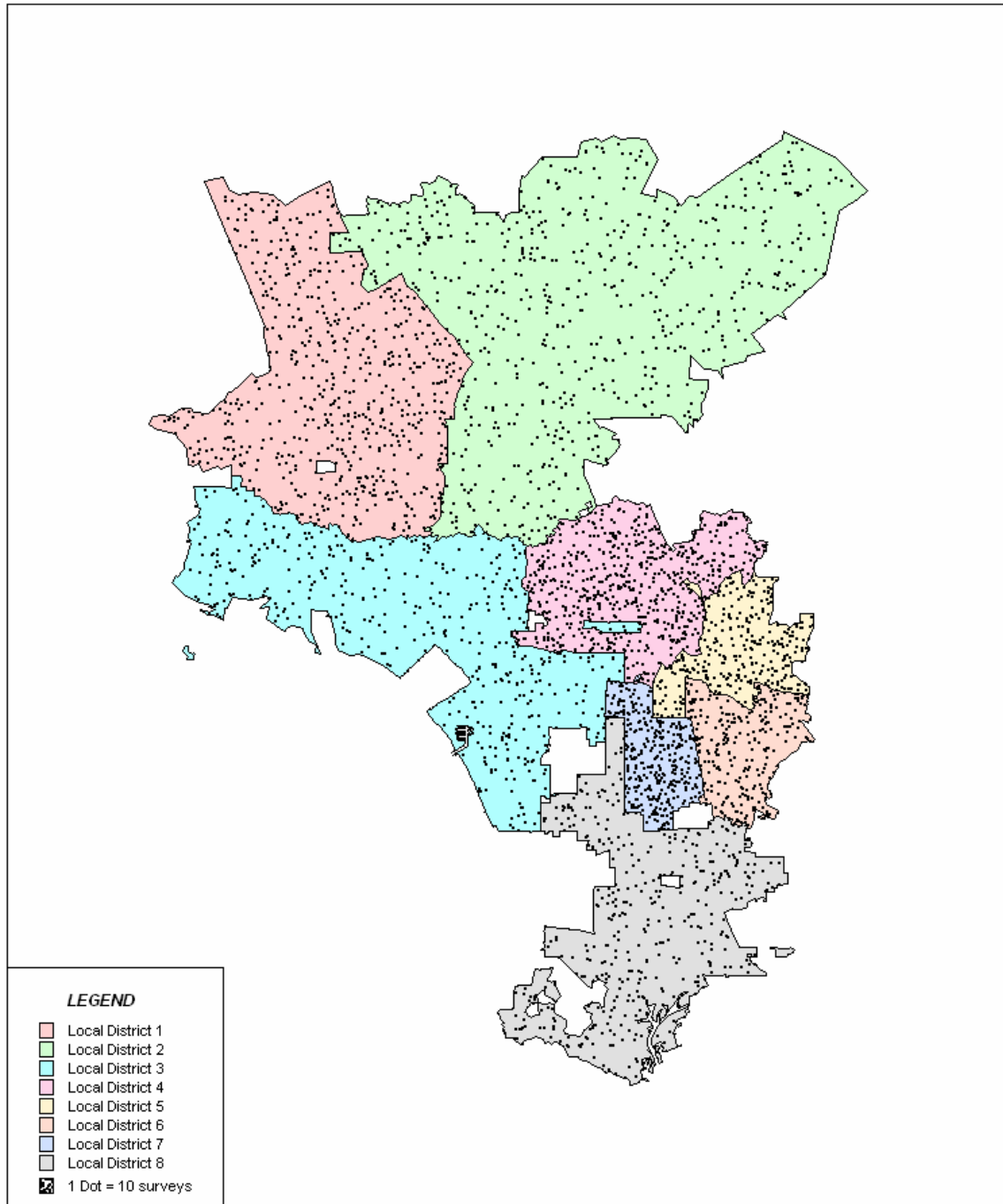
LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

A total of 38,275 surveys were returned to ETI; approximately 11,000 surveys were returned to the district as bad addresses/unable to be delivered. This resulted in a response rate of 9 percent. A map depicting the geographical spread of respondents by zip codes across the district is presented on the following page.

Cross-tabulations and Chi-square analyses were conducted wherever appropriate to determine significant differences in findings. Additional analyses by district and ethnicity were conducted and are included in Appendix A and Appendix B.

A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix C. The following section of this report presents the findings from this survey.

Map 1. Surveys Returned by Local District

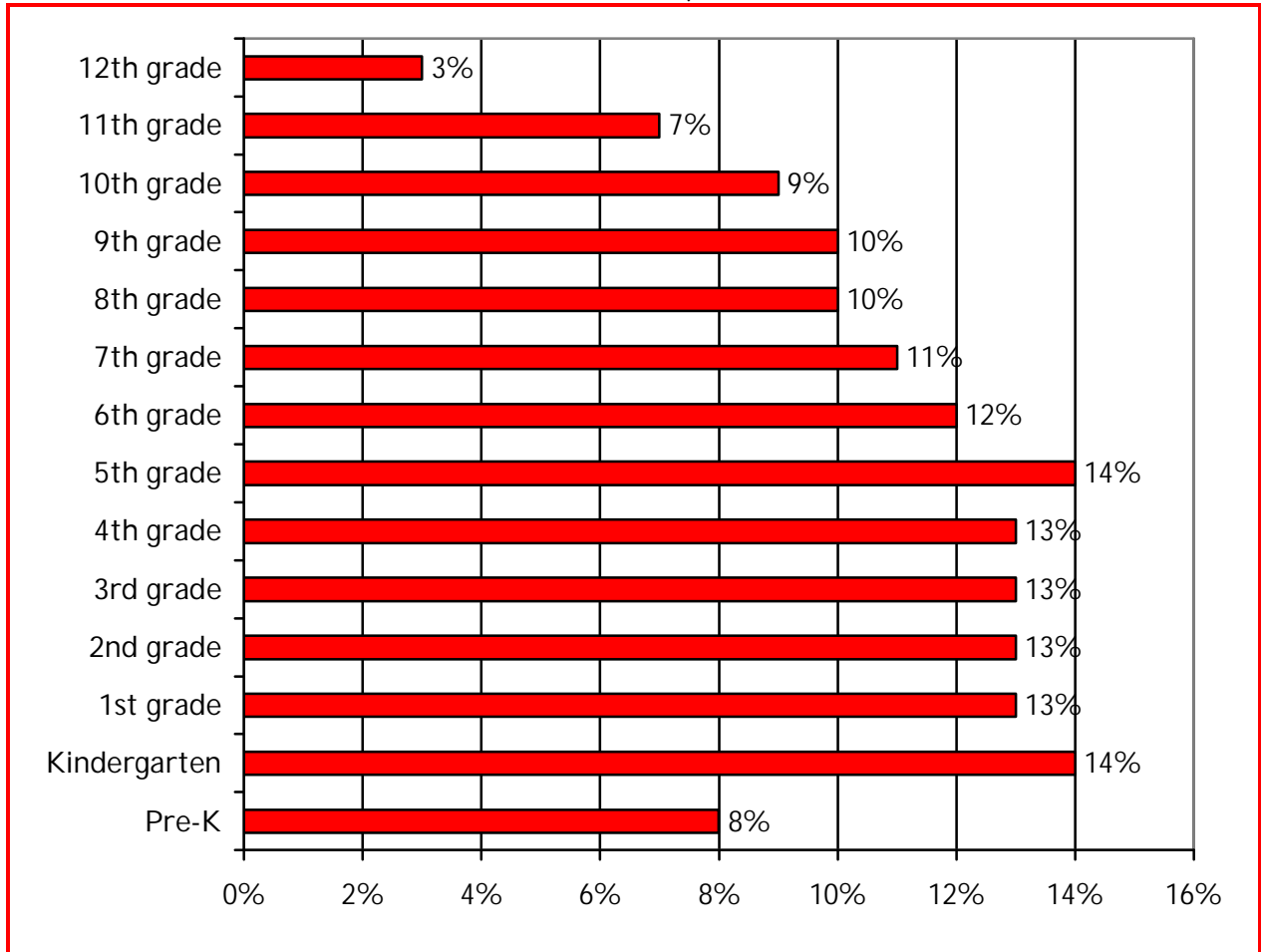


III. FINDINGS

Demographic Information

Parents surveyed had children ranging in age, from pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Child's Grade
(includes multiple responses
n=37,243)



As presented in Figures 2 and 3 on the following page, the majority of responding parents speak English (67 percent) and/or Spanish (54 percent) in the home and identified their ethnicity as Latino (52 percent) with a smaller percentage identifying themselves as White (16 percent).

Figure 2: Language(s) Spoken at Home
(includes multiple responses
n=37,394)

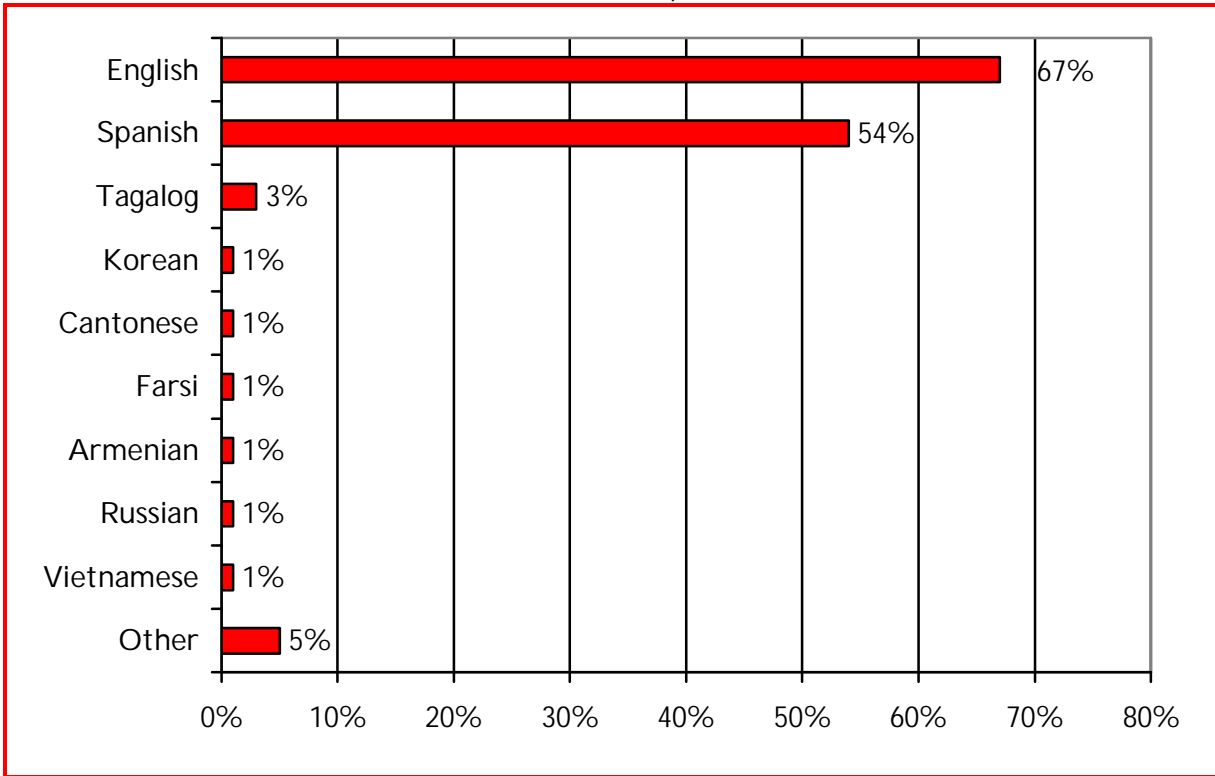
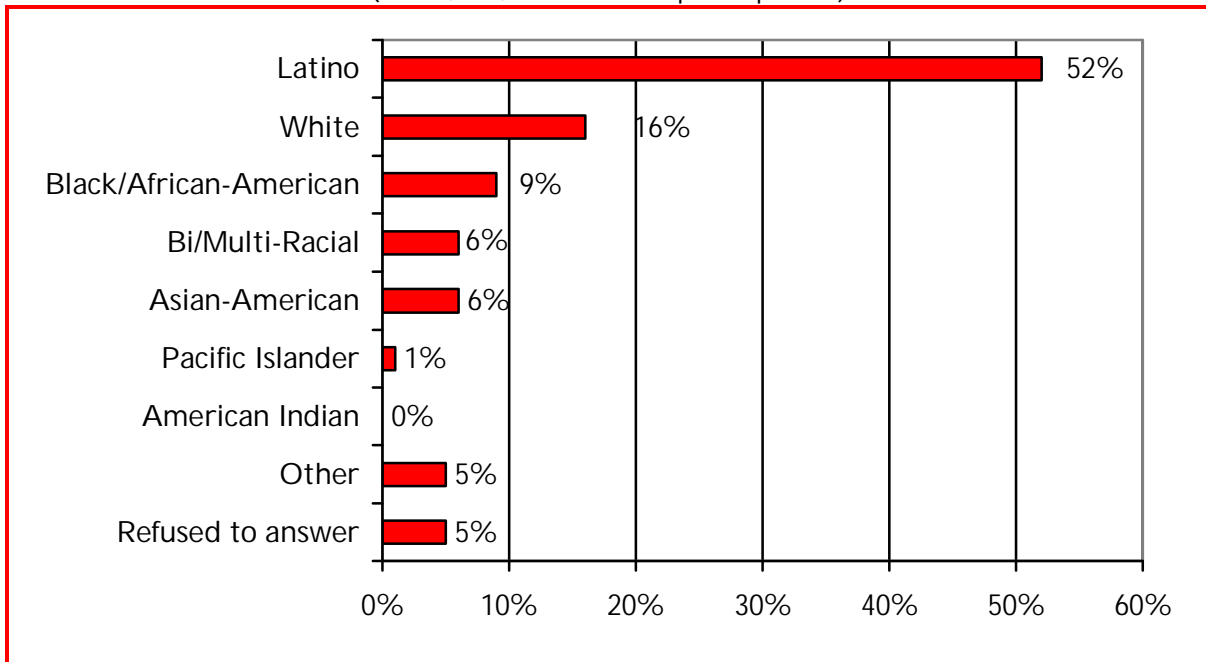


Figure 3: Ethnicity
(n=38,275, includes multiple responses)



LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

While the majority of parents reported that their children attended their neighborhood school, a significantly higher percentage of parents filling out the Spanish language version compared to parents filling out the English language version reported that their child attends their neighborhood school (84 percent compared to 70 percent). (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Attendance at Neighborhood School

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=23,827)	(n=12,225)
Percent yes	70%	84%
Percent no	29	14

A significantly higher percentage of English speaking parents work outside the home (76 percent compared to 58 percent of Spanish speaking parents). (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Works Outside the Home

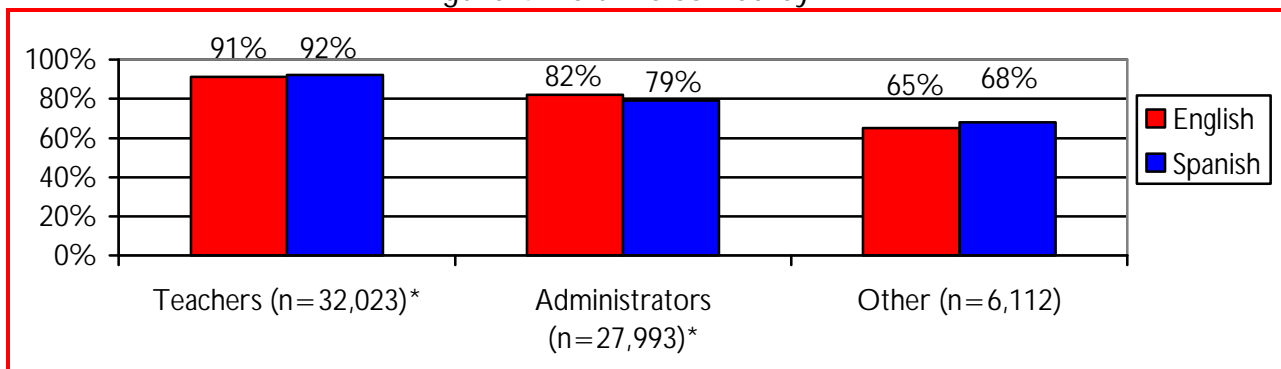
	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,162)	(n=12,312)
Percent yes	76%	58%
Percent no	24	42

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

Communication Between Home and School

Asked if they felt welcomed by the teachers and administrators at their child's school, nine-tenths of parents reported feeling welcomed by the teachers (91 percent of English speaking parents and 92 percent of Spanish speaking parents) and approximately four-fifths felt welcomed by school administrators (83 percent of English speaking parents and 78 percent of Spanish speaking parents). (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4: Felt Welcomed by...



*Indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

Approximately nine-tenths of parents reported that there was someone in the school's office who speaks their language (89 percent of English speaking parents and 96 percent of Spanish speaking parents). (See Table 3.)

Table 3: Personnel in School's Office Speaks Parent Language

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,433)	(n=12,689)
Percent yes	89%	96%
Percent no	11	4

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

Twenty-five percent of English speaking parents and 12 percent of Spanish speaking parents reported that they or their child had been discriminated against based on their race. (See Table 4.) Parents were also provided with an open-ended "Other" category, out of which the most commonly cited reason for discrimination was appearance, such as weight, followed by discrimination based on intelligence or education level and behavioral issues.

Table 4: Discrimination Experienced by Child and/or Parent
(includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=8,381)	(n=6,223)
Race	25%	12%
Language	10	9
Lifestyle	8	7
Disability	8	4
Religion	5	2
Other	63	77

As shown in Table 5, more than four-fifths of parents (86 percent of English speaking parents and 89 percent of Spanish speaking parents) reported that the school staff was courteous, respectful, and helpful to them.

Table 5: School Staff Courteous, Respectful and Helpful

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,065)	(n=12,332)
Percent yes	86%	89%
Percent no	14	11

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

Similarly, approximately four-fifths of parents reported that their child's school does a good job of informing them of how their child is doing (see Table 6). However, Spanish speaking parents were significantly more likely to report that the school does a good job of informing them (87 percent compared to 77 percent of English speaking parents).

Table 6: School Does a Good Job of Informing Parents of Child's Performance

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=23,751)	(n=12,348)
Percent yes	77%	87%
Percent no	23	13

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

Telephone calls to the home (79 percent of English speaking parents and 67 percent of Spanish speaking parents) and letters or notes (67 percent of English speaking parents and 63 percent of Spanish speaking parents) were cited by parents as the best ways to reach them to discuss their child and their school activities (see Table 7).

Table 7: Best Ways to Reach Parent to Talk about Child and his/her School Activities (includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,883)	(n=12,743)
A telephone call home	79%	67%
Letter/note	67	63
School newsletter	34	26
School counselor	17	16
Parent liaison	9	16
Parent Press	7	10
PTA newsletter	10	5
Other	15	4

Parents were asked to indicate what school procedures for distributing information meet their needs. Both English and Spanish speaking parents reported that progress reports (79 and 76 percent), parent-teacher meetings (77 and 91 percent), and report cards (74 and 67 percent) best meet their needs (see Table 8). Home visits, community information, and health and other resources were less likely to be reported as helpful.

Table 8: Information that Addresses Parents Needs
(includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,708)	(n=12,811)
Progress reports	79%	76%
Parent-teacher meetings	77	91
Report cards	74	68
Regular letters/notes	58	63
Activity calendars	49	49
Open House	49	40
Folders of your child's work	49	50
Assignment calendars	44	49
Back to School nights	44	37
School newsletters	40	44
Written policies	38	38
Telephone conferences	38	25
Meeting notices	30	47
Grad-level curriculum packets	27	21
School telephone list	26	20
Parent organization meetings	18	34
Cultural events	17	29
Dances/parties/picnics	14	19
Tip sheets	12	21
Health & other resources	9	21
Community information	9	13
Community outreach	7	16
Home visits	7	14
Other	4	2

Asked to respond to the statement asking if their school has an adequate procedure to handle parent concerns, questions and complaints, Spanish speaking parents were significantly more likely to agree compared to English speaking parents (79 percent compared to 46 percent), while English speaking parents were more likely to be unsure (37 percent compared to 0 percent). (See Table 9 on the following page).

LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

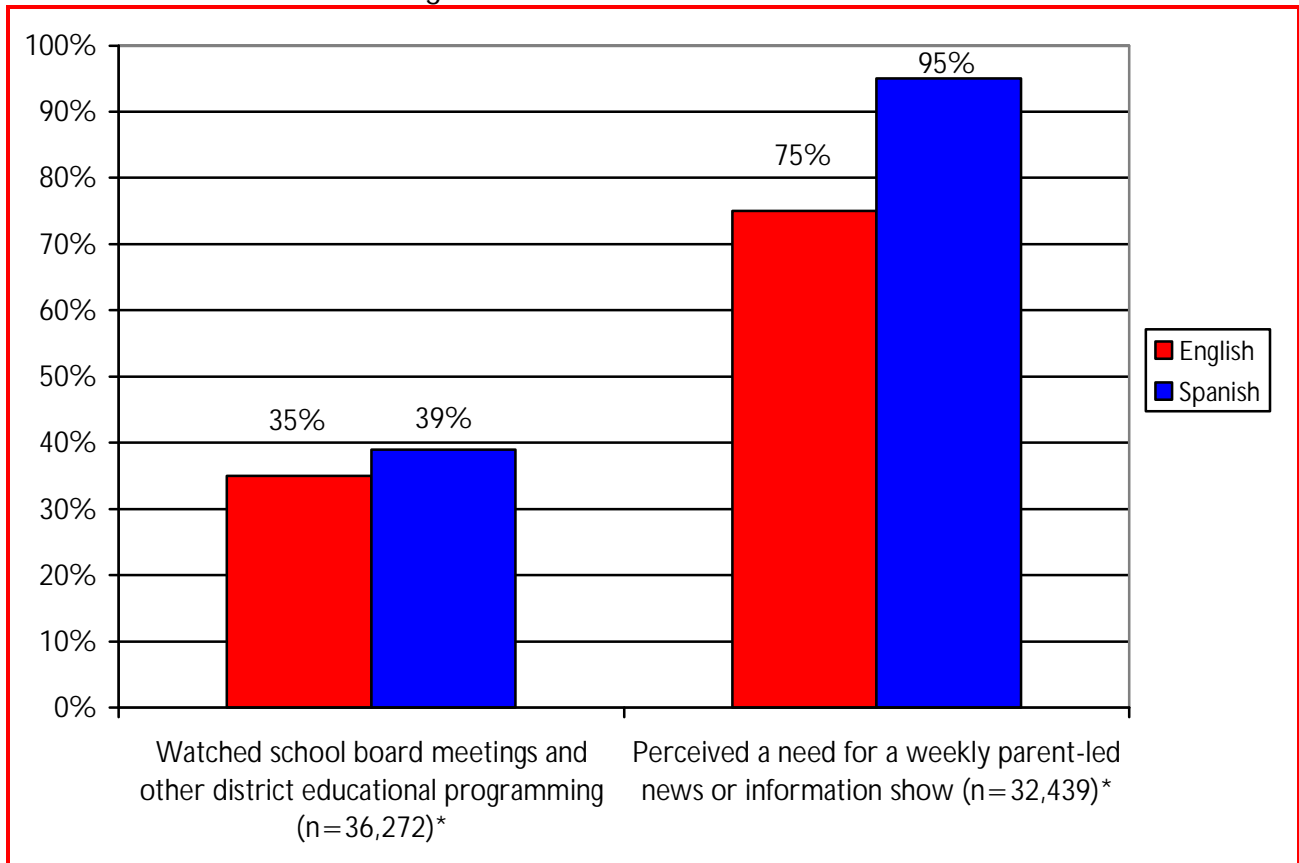
Table 9: School Has Adequate Procedures to Handle Parent Concerns, Questions or Complaints

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,411)	(n=11,978)
Yes	46%	79%
No	16	21
Unsure	37	--

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

The LAUSD television channel KLCS shows school board meetings and other district educational programming for parents and the public in the LAUSD school district. Over one-third of parents surveyed reported watching these KLCS programs (35 percent of English speaking parents and 39 percent of Spanish speaking parents). The majority of parents indicated that they would like the channel to hold a weekly parent-led news and/or information show to foster better communication, with a significantly higher percentage of Spanish speaking parents indicating interest (95 percent compared to 75 percent). (See Figure 5.)

Figure 5: LAUSD Channel KLCS



*Indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

[Parenting Workshops](#)

As shown in Table 10, asked if they would be interested if their child’s school offered workshops, Spanish speaking parents expressed more interest overall in all proposed workshops. Spanish speaking parents cited the most interest in workshops on *parent and child communication*, *college counseling*, and *drug and alcohol awareness* (each 68 percent). English speaking parents also cited interest in *parent and child communication* (50 percent), but were interested in *computer* (42 percent) and *mathematics* workshops (40 percent) as well.

Table 10: Interested if the Following Workshops were Offered at Child’s School (includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=21,095)	(n=12,577)
Parent/Child communication	50%	68%
Computer classes	42	51
Mathematics	40	53
College counseling	38	68
Stress/Anger management	37	49
Discipline	36	54
Parenting	35	43
Drug/Awareness	32	68
How LAUSD system works	32	36
Conflict resolution	29	34
Health	24	45
Abuse prevention	20	53
Vocational counseling	20	35
Literacy	17	26
English as a Second Language	15	61
General Equivalency Diploma	14	23
Other	8	5

Asked if they would like their child’s school to offer information classes aimed at helping them support their child in school, an overwhelming majority of parents – 86 percent of English speaking parents and 98 percent of Spanish speaking parents – expressed interest (see Table 11 on the following page). For those who expressed interest in the information classes, Spanish speaking parents expressed more interest in the proposed class topics (see Table 12 on the following page). Parents expressed the most interest in classes on *how to motivate their child* (83 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 64 percent of English speaking parents), *preparing their child for standardized tests* (82 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 60 percent of English speaking parents), *how to set goals for their child* (75 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 59 percent English speaking parents), and *help their child with homework* (78 percent of Spanish speaking parents and 58 percent of English speaking parents).

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Table 11: Interested in Child’s School Offering Information Classes on How to Help Their Child

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=19,245)	(n=11,663)
Percent yes	86%	98%
Percent no	14	2

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

Table 12: Interest in Information Class Topics
(includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=21,818)	(n=12,391)
How to motivate your child	63%	83%
Prepare your child for standardized tests	59	81
How to set goals for your child	59	75
Help your child with homework	58	78
Manage time	44	40
How to promote family reading	32	59
I do not want/need any of these	13	4

[Learning at Home](#)

Asked about their satisfaction with the information they received about their child from the school, more than half of the parents were satisfied, with significantly more Spanish speaking parents reporting satisfaction (75 percent compared to 65 percent of English speaking parents). (See Table 13.)

Table 13: Satisfied with Information Received about Child from School

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=23,338)	(n=10,989)
Percent yes	65%	75%
Percent no	35	25

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

The majority of parents believed that the amount of homework sent home with their child was reasonable, although this percentage was significantly higher among Spanish speaking parents (89 percent compared to 79 percent of English speaking parents). Of those parents who felt the workload was not reasonable, most reported that the amount was not enough, especially among Spanish speaking parents (80 percent compared to 62 percent of English speaking parents). (See Tables 14 and 15 on the following page.)

Table 14: Homework Amount Reasonable

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=20,192)	(n=9,920)
Percent yes	79%	89%
Percent no	21	11

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

Table 15: Reason Given for Homework Amount Rated as Unreasonable

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=7,877)	(n=3,178)
Too little	62%	80%
Too much	38	20

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.

Decision-Making

As demonstrated in Table 16, parents reported feeling most comfortable expressing their likes and dislikes about their child’s school by talking to the school’s teachers and principals (68 percent of English speaking parents and 77 percent of Spanish speaking parents). Parents were also comfortable expressing themselves in written surveys (50 percent English speaking parents and 42 percent Spanish speaking parents).

Table 16: Comfortableness Expressing Likes and Dislikes about Child’s School (includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=23,443)	(n=12,374)
Talking to teachers/principal	68	77
Written surveys	50	42
Using a suggestion box	33	18
Parent Centers	18	28
Serving on committees	13	20
Other	5	23

Almost three-quarters of parents reported interest in participating in their child’s school decision-making process (70 percent of English speaking parents and 71 percent of Spanish speaking parents). Parents who cited that they would not like to participate in this process were asked if they would reconsider if training were provided. Significantly more Spanish speaking parents (77 percent) said that they would reconsider compared to English speaking parents (59 percent). (See Tables 17 and 18 on the following page.)

LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

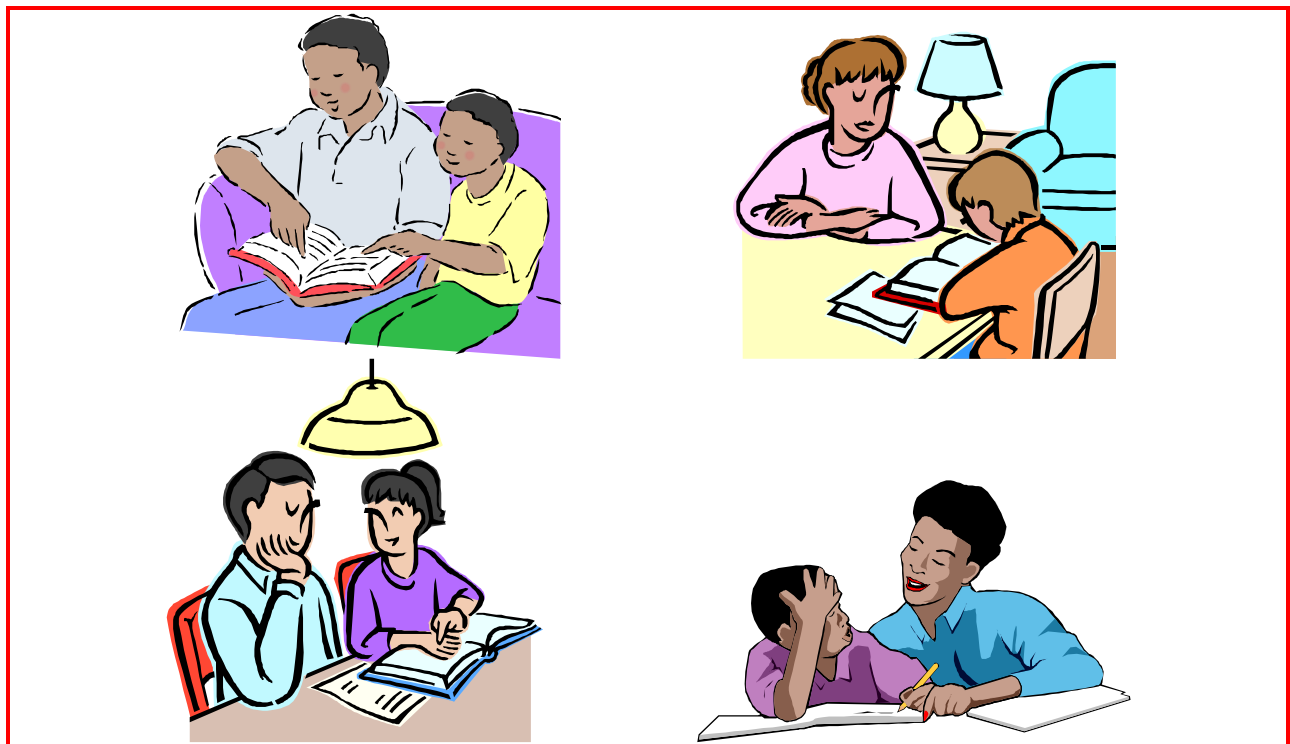
Table 17: Interest in Participating in Child’s School Decision-Making Process

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=21,530)	(n=10,678)
Percent yes	70%	71%
Percent no	30	29

Table 18: Uninterested Parents who would Reconsider if Training were Provided

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=7,490)	(n=4,130)
Percent yes	59%	77%
Percent no	41	23

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.



[Collaborating with the Community](#)

Parents were asked about community programs and/or resources that they would like to have more information about (see Table 19). English speaking parents were most interested in *free tutoring* (68 percent) and *youth services* (53 percent), while Spanish speaking parents were more interested in information on *youth services* (61 percent), and *public safety* (58 percent).

Table 19: Community Programs and/or Resources Parents Would Like More Information
(includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=20,725)	(n=12,277)
Free tutoring	68%	47%
Youth services	53	61
Emergency preparedness	35	57
Public safety	34	58
Job listings	29	43
Health services	26	50
Affordable housing	26	48
Environmental programs	22	28
Resource directory	22	23
Legal aid	18	39
Crisis counseling	18	27
Cultural celebrations	16	25
Mental health	15	25
Food assistance	14	32
Emergency shelters	14	21
Other	4	3

[Volunteering](#)

Parents were asked what activities or programs for parent involvement were offered at their child’s school (see Table 20 on the following page). English speaking parents were more likely to respond that they were able to be involved in their child’s school through the *PTA* (57 percent) and *in the classroom* and by *going on field trips* (both 53 percent), while Spanish speaking parents responded that their child’s school offered parent involvement *in the classroom* (53 percent), *after-school programs* (46 percent), and the *Parent Center* (44 percent).

LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

Table 20: Activities and Programs Offered at Child’s School for Parent Involvement
(includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=19,881)	(n=10,830)
The PTA	57%	18%
In the classroom	53	53
Go on field trips	53	43
Fundraising	50	18
Library volunteer	31	34
Special events/assemblies	31	21
After school programs	29	46
School beautification	28	27
Parent Center	26	44
Monitoring events	26	26
Committee/Council member	22	26
Help in the office	19	24
Tutoring	17	21
School newspaper	15	16
School store	11	20
Budget planning	11	11
Computer aide	10	17
Violence prevention	9	27
Friend/mentor	9	9
Coaching clubs	8	19
Other	8	6

The best time reported by English speaking parents (51 percent) to participate in school programs, meetings, activities, or events was in the evenings and for Spanish speaking parents was after school (47 percent). Overall, before school is not a convenient time for parents to participate (see Table 21).

Table 21: Best Times for Parents to Participate in School Programs, Meetings, Activities, or Events
(includes multiple responses)

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=22,563)	(n=11,947)
Before school	11%	11%
During school	30	29
After school	32	47
Evenings	51	34
Weekends	40	43

LAUSD Parent Needs Assessment

[Health and Safety](#)

Approximately half of parents believed that their child's school has an adequate safety and emergency plan (44 percent of English speaking parents and 53 percent of Spanish speaking parents). (See Table 22.)

Table 22: Adequate Safety and Emergency Plan at Child's School

	English	Spanish
Respondents	(n=24,107)	(n=12,184)
Percent yes	44%	53%
Percent no	4	4
Don't know	52	42

Shading indicates a statistically significant difference between language groups.



IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, parents in the LAUSD are satisfied with their child's school. Parents felt welcomed by teachers and school administrators and reported that school staff was courteous, respectful, and helpful. Also, parents seem to have formed a beneficial relationship with their child's teacher in that they prefer one-on-one contact with their child's teacher to discuss their child's progress and to discuss their opinions of their child's school.

Differences found between the English and Spanish survey versions indicate that in order to better meet the needs of parents, LAUSD needs to take into account language when communicating and designing programs and activities involving parents. This need is evident as approximately half of parents surveyed are Latino and speak Spanish in the home. Overall, Spanish speaking parents demonstrated more satisfaction with their child's school with respect to information received about their child. English speaking parents on the other hand were more likely to state that they or their child have been discriminated against because of their race and that they do not feel that their concerns are being adequately dealt with by the school. Sensitivity training for school staff and faculty may decrease these complaints in the future.

Interest in school involvement was demonstrated through interest in adult education and child-centered workshops. However, differences between languages emerged with respect to specific classes. This indicates that identical workshops do not have to be offered in both languages, but can be more individualized based on interest by language. It is recommended that each school use the parent needs assessment survey to survey their parents and then tailor workshops specifically to meet the parents' needs and interests. While parents cited moderate interest in being involved in the decision-making process at their child's school, training might lead to increased participation for those parents who do not feel comfortable or competent enough to participate in this process.

Parents cited few programs and activities that were available in their child's school for parent involvement. This indicates that either poor communication exists about existing parent involvement programs and activities or these programs and activities have yet to be established in many schools. We suggest that a Collaborative be established at the local districts comprised of parents, representatives from the District PTAs, and representatives of the Division of Adult and Career Education. This Collaborative would be charged with compiling an inventory of workshops/program and activities that are available for parents within the local district and distributing this information to the parents in the local district. In this way, parents would be more aware of offerings at schools other than their child's school that might be of interest to them. Given parents general satisfaction as a strong foundation, the schools can work with the parents to design programs that meet their parents' needs and thereby add to their involvement in their child's education.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Statistical Analyses by District

Appendix B: Statistical Analyses by Ethnicity

Appendix C: Parent Needs Assessment Survey

PARENT SURVEY for the 2005-2006 SCHOOL YEAR

This survey is being sent to each family. If you have more than one child in K-12, please answer questions based on the school attended by your child who is in the highest grade level.

Thank you for your time.

Communicating Between Home and School

1. Do you feel welcomed by the following people at your child's school?

(n=29,239)

p₁ Yes (88%) **p**₂ No (12%)

(If yes, please check all that apply)

p₁ Teachers (92%) **p**₂ Administrators (81%) **p**₃ Other _____ (66%)

2. Is the school staff courteous, respectful and helpful to parents?

(n=36,397)

p₁ Yes (87%) **p**₂ No (13%)

3. Does your child's school do a good job of letting you know how your child is doing?

(n=36,099)

p₁ Yes (80%) **p**₂ No (20%)

4. The best ways to reach me to talk about my child and her/his school activities are?

(Please check all that apply)

(n=37,626)

p₁ A telephone call home (75%) **p**₂ School newsletter (31%) **p**₃ Letter/note (65%) **p**₄ PTA newsletter (8%)
p₅ Parent liaison (11%) **p**₆ School counselor (16%) **p**₇ Parent Press (8%) **p**₈ Other _____ (11%)

5. Which of the following best address your needs? (Please check all that apply)

(n=37,519)

p ₁ Parent-teacher meeting (82%)	p ₉ Progress reports (78%)	p ₁₇ Telephone conferences (33%)
p ₂ School newsletters (41%)	p ₁₀ Report cards (72%)	p ₁₈ Home visits (9%)
p ₃ Back to School nights (41%)	p ₁₁ Open House (46%)	p ₁₉ Information (Community) (11%)
p ₄ Parent organization meetings (23%)	p ₁₂ Cultural events (21%)	p ₂₀ Health & other resources (13%)
p ₅ Activity calendars (49%)	p ₁₃ Dances/parties/picnics (15%)	p ₂₁ Community outreach (10%)
p ₆ Regular letters/notes (60%)	p ₁₄ Grade-level curriculum packets (25%)	p ₂₂ Tip sheets (15%)
p ₇ Folders of your child's work (49%)	p ₁₅ Written policies (e.g. homework) (38%)	p ₂₃ School telephone list (24%)
p ₈ Assignment calendars (46%)	p ₁₆ Meeting notices	p ₂₄ Other _____ (4%)

6. Does someone in the school office speak your language?

(n=37,122)

p₁ Yes (92%) **p**₂ No (8%)

7. Have you or your child(ren) experienced discrimination in his/her school based upon the following:

(Please check all that apply)

(n=14,604)

p₁ Race (20%) **p**₂ Disability (6%) **p**₃ Religion (3%) **p**₄ Lifestyle (7%) **p**₅ Language (10%) **p**₆ Other (69%)

8. Does your school have an adequate procedure when parents have concerns, questions or complaints?

(n=36,389)

p₁ Yes (57%) **p**₂ No (18%) **p**₃ Unsure (25%)

9. Do you watch school board meetings and other district educational programming for parents and the public on the LAUSD channel KLCS?

(n=36,272)

p₁ Yes (36%) **p**₂ No (64%)

10. Should Channel KLCS hold a weekly parent-led television and/or news and information show to foster better communication?

(n=32,439)

p₁ Yes (82%) **p**₂ No (18%)

Parenting Workshops

11. Would you like your child's school to offer you? (Please check all that apply)

(n=33,672)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. p Parenting workshops (38%) | 9. p Stress/ Anger Management (41%) |
| 2. p Computer classes (46%) | 10. p Abuse prevention (32%) |
| 3. p English as a Second Language (32%) | 11. p Mathematics |
| 4. p General Equivalency Diploma (17%) | 12. p Discipline (43%) |
| 5. p Health (32%) | 13. p Conflict Resolution (31%) |
| 6. p Literacy (21%) | 14. p How LAUSD system works (33%) |
| 7. p Parent/Child Communication (57%) | 15. p Vocational counseling (21%) |
| 8. p Drug/Alcohol Awareness (46%) | 16. p College counseling (49%) |
| | 17. p Other _____ (7%) |

12. Would you like your child's school to offer information/classes on how to help you to help your child?

(n=30,908)

p₁ Yes (91%) **p**₂ No (9%) (If yes, Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| p ₁ Help your child with homework (65%) | p ₅ How to motivate your child (70%) |
| p ₂ Prepare your child for standardized tests (67%) | p ₆ How to promote family reading (42%) |
| p ₃ Manage time (42%) | p ₇ I do not want/need any of these (10%) |
| p ₄ How to set goals for your child (65%) | |

Learning at home

13. Are you satisfied with the information you get from your school to help your child?

(n=34,327)

p₁ Yes (68%) **p**₂ No (32%)

14. Is the amount of homework being sent home with your child reasonable?

(n=30,112)

p₁ Yes (67%)
p₂ No (33%) It is: **p**₁ Too little (67%) **p**₂ Too much (33%)

Decision-making

It is your right to participate in the decision-making process at your child's school

15. How do you feel most comfortable expressing what you like or do not like about your child's school?

(Please check all that apply):

(n=35,817)

p₁ Written surveys (47%) **p**₃ Using the suggestion box (28%) **p**₅ Parent Centers (22%)
p₂ Serving on Committees (15%) **p**₄ Talking to teachers/principal (71%) **p**₆ Other _____ (4%)

16. Would you like to participate in the decision-making process at your child's school?

(n=32,208)

p₁ Yes (71%) **p**₂ No (29%)

If no, would you reconsider if training were provided? **p**₁ Yes (65%) **p**₂ No (35%)

Collaborating with the Community

17. On which of the following community programs and/or resources would you like information?

(Please check all that apply)

(n=33,002)

p₁ Public Safety (43%) **p**₆ Crisis counseling (21%) **p**₁₁ Youth services (56%)
p₂ Free Tutoring (60%) **p**₇ Cultural celebrations (20%) **p**₁₂ Legal aid (26%)
p₃ Health services (35%) **p**₈ Affordable Housing (35%) **p**₁₃ Job listings (34%)
p₄ Mental health (18%) **p**₉ Emergency Shelters (17%) **p**₁₄ Food assistance (21%)
p₅ Emergency preparedness (43%) **p**₁₀ Environmental Programs (24%) **p**₁₅ Resource Directory (22%)
p₁₆ Other _____ (3%)

Volunteering

18. My child's school offers the following ways parents can work with their school:

(Please check all that apply)

(n=30,711)

p₁ In the classroom (53%) **p**₈ Coaching clubs (12%) **p**₁₅ Fundraising (38%)
p₂ Library volunteer (32%) **p**₉ Budget planning (11%) **p**₁₆ Computer aide (13%)
p₃ Monitoring events (26%) **p**₁₀ Go on field trips (49%) **p**₁₇ Special events/assemblies (28%)
p₄ Violence prevention (15%) **p**₁₁ School newspaper (15%) **p**₁₈ Friend/mentor (9%)
p₅ School beautification (27%) **p**₁₂ Tutoring (18%) **p**₁₉ School store (14%)
p₆ The PTA or site council (43%) **p**₁₃ After school programs (35%) **p**₂₀ Committee member (24%)
p₇ Help in the office (21%) **p**₁₄ Parent Center (32%) **p**₂₁ Other _____ (7%)

19. What times are best for you to participate in school programs, meetings, activities, or events?

(n=34,510)

p₁ Before School (11%) **p**₂ During School (30%) **p**₃ After School (37%)
p₄ Evenings (45%) **p**₅ Weekends (41%)

Health and Safety

20. Does your child's school have an adequate safety and emergency plan?

(n=36,291)

p₁ Yes (47%) **p**₂ No (4%) **p**₃ I don't Know (49%)

Personal Information

21. What grade(s) is/are your child(ren) in? (Circle all that apply).

(n=37,243)

Pre-K (8%) K (14%) 1 (13%) 2 (13%) 3 (13%) 4 (13%) 5 (14%)
6 (12%) 7 (11%) 8 (10%) 9 (10%) 10 (9%) 11 (7%) 12 (3%)

22. Does your child attend his/her neighborhood school?

(36,052)

p₁ Yes (75%) p₂ No (24%)

23. Do you work outside the home?

(n=36,474)

p₁ Yes (70%) p₂ No (30%)

24. What language do you speak at home?

(n=37,394)

p₁ English (67%) p₂ Spanish (54%) p₃ Armenian (1%) p₄ Korean (1%) p₅ Tagalog (3%)
p₆ Cantonese (1%) p₇ Farsi (1%) p₈ Russian (1%) p₉ Vietnamese (1%) p₁₀ Other (5%)

25. Ethnicity:

(n=38,275)

p₁ American Indian -- p₄ Latino (52%) p₇ Bi/Multi-Racial (6%)
p₂ Asian-American (6%) p₅ Pacific Islander (1%) p₈ Other _____ (5%)
p₃ Black/African-American (9%) p₆ White (16%)

26. What is your zip code? _____

THANK YOU!