



Chalkboard Project Survey Highlights

– SPANISH-SPEAKING PARENTS –

Summary of Methodology

The Chalkboard Project surveyed 31 Spanish-speaking parents of Hispanic K-12 students in the Portland Metro area. Parents responded to eight multiple-choice questions, which asked for reactions to various aspects of the Oregon public school system. The survey was given in Spanish and evaluated in English translation. Readers are cautioned that the percents reported are based on a very small sample size, and represent only the views of those surveyed.

Highlights of Research Findings:

Parents emphasized themes of general and ELL (English Language Learner) instruction, school programs, parent communication, and funding. Though the responses seem reserved, but positive, few parents thought that their children were being served well by the public school system.

- More parents thought that schools were doing a neutral job or worse at serving ELL students than the number of parents who thought that schools were doing a “somewhat good” job.
- The majority of parents thought that schools are “poor” or “very poor” at communicating with parents.
- Parents placed a lot of responsibility on parent involvement and program quality for educational success, but also indicated the importance of quality teachers and after-school programs.
- Parents displayed a decided ambivalence about schools’ capacity to prepare students for high school graduation, college, and for jobs after high school.

Quality of Public Education for ELL Students

Forty-one percent (41%) of the sample thought that Oregon’s public schools are doing a “somewhat good” job of educating ELL students, but an equal percent responded “neutral” (22%) or “very bad” (19%). Also, 52% of the parents did not think that there are appropriate programs in place to successfully educate ELL students. Only 8% thought that there were adequate programs in place.

Most Important Factor for Student Success

Nearly one-third (32%) thought that involved parents are the most important factor for a student’s success in school, followed by those who chose quality programs, quality teachers, and after-school programs.

Parent Involvement

Slightly more respondents thought that parents are “somewhat involved” in their children’s education (35%) than “not too involved” (28%). Though 40% of parents thought that schools are doing a fairly good job of keeping parents informed, the majority thought that schools are “poor” or “very poor” communicators (52% combined).

Student Preparation

The parents surveyed displayed no clear confidence in the school system’s ability to prepare students for the future. Approximately equal numbers of parents thought that schools were or were not preparing students to graduate high school, go to college, or find a job after high school, though the fewest respondents (3) thought that the system was adequately preparing students to enter college.

Efficiency

As with Chalkboard’s statewide public opinion survey results of June, 2004, these parents are also quite concerned about waste and inefficiency. Over two-thirds (69%) believed that local schools do not have a funding problem, but are inefficient with their money.