



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joel I. Klein
Chancellor

CHANCELLOR KLEIN ANNOUNCES RECORD-HIGH PARTICIPATION IN ANNUAL PUBLIC SCHOOL SURVEY

Almost 850,000 Parents, Teachers, and Students Responded to 2009 NYC School Survey

94 Percent of Parents Satisfied with the Quality of Education Their Children Received

One in Six Surveys Submitted Online, Helping to Save Six Tons of Paper

Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein today announced that participation in the annual NYC School Survey reached a new high this year, with almost 850,000 parents, teachers, and students assessing how well their schools are serving them. This is an increase of more than 40,000 respondents since last year and more than 260,000 since the survey began in 2007. The overall response rate for the survey rose to 59 percent from 55 percent last year. The response rate among teachers this year compared to last year rose 12 percentage points to 73 percent. One in every six surveys was completed online this year—more than six times as many as last year—helping to conserve paper and reduce the survey’s impact on the environment. Survey results show that overall parents, teachers, and students remain satisfied with the quality of the City’s public schools, and that schools improved in all four areas the survey measures—communication, academic expectations, engagement, and safety. The results also highlight areas where schools need to continue to improve. Survey reports customized for every school are now available on the Department of Education’s Web site. Schools can use these reports as they plan for the new school year.

“Schools have come to depend on the valuable feedback they receive from their communities on our annual survey,” said Chancellor Klein. “This year’s results show that the ideas parents, teachers, and students shared last year translated into real improvements. Now, the record number of New Yorkers who took this year’s survey will help our schools build on that progress in the coming school year.”

This year’s survey once again ranked among the largest surveys of any kind ever conducted nationally. A total of 849,664 surveys out of a possible 1,451,750 were submitted, compared to 806,539 out of 1,473,832 last year. The overall response rate rose 4 percentage points, from 55 percent to 59 percent. In 2007, the first year of the survey, a total of 586,707 surveys were returned, and the response rate was 41 percent.

A total of 381,543 out of a possible 857,398 parent surveys were completed, a response rate of 45 percent—5 percentage points higher than last year. A total of 57,822 out of a possible 79,738 teacher surveys were completed, a response rate of 73 percent—12 percentage points higher than last year. A total of 410,299 out of a possible 514,614 student surveys were completed, a response rate of 80 percent—2 percentage points higher than last year.

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Overall, 130,397 surveys were submitted online, compared to 19,212 last year. Almost half of all teachers who returned a survey—26,502—completed it online. A total of 33,214 parents and 70,681 students submitted surveys online. A total of 486 schools opted to forego the paper version of the teacher and student surveys entirely and administer those surveys online instead. Additionally, reports for 26 schools will note that they earned the new “Green School Award” because at least 20 percent of their parents, 61 percent of their teachers, and 78 percent of their students completed the survey online. The increased participation in the online survey, combined with changes the Department made to the printing of the paper version, saved approximately six tons of paper.

Parents’ satisfaction with their schools rose for the second year in a row. A total of 94 percent of parents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their child’s education this year, up from 92 percent last year. A total of 96 percent of parents were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their child’s teachers, up from 94 percent last year. More parents were satisfied or very satisfied with how well their school communicated with them—91 percent this year, compared to 89 percent last year. And 93 percent of parents were satisfied or very satisfied with their opportunities to be involved in their child’s education, compared to 91 percent last year. The results also show that schools need to continue to improve their communication with parents. For example, 28 percent of parents reported that they received information about what their children are studying once every few months or less.

Teachers reported a greater focus on personalized instruction for students. A total of 85 percent of teachers said that their school makes it a priority to help students find the most effective way to achieve their learning goals, up from 81 percent last year. Additionally, 77 percent of teachers said that order and discipline are maintained at their school, compared to 74 percent last year. The surveys also reveal areas for improvement. Twenty-three percent of teachers, for example, reported that their school leaders don’t invite them to play a meaningful role in setting goals and making decisions for their schools, and 23 percent reported that they do not get the help they need to address student behavior and discipline problems.

Students also reported that their schools were doing a better job engaging them in their schoolwork, although the results highlight the need for continued improvement. A total of 65 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that their school offers a wide enough variety of classes to keep them interested in school, up from 62 percent last year. A total of 58 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that students who get good grades at their school are respected by other students, up from 53 percent last year. Students continue to report that their school holds them to high academic standards. A total of 92 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they need to work

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hard to get good grades, the same percentage as last year. More students report that they feel safe in hallways, bathrooms, and locker rooms at their school—76 percent, compared to 72 percent last year.

Parents, teachers, and students completed surveys between late February and late April this year. Today, each school will receive a customized report that includes response rates for parents, teachers, and students, and overall scores for the four major categories on the survey—academic expectations, communication, engagement, and safety and respect. The report also includes complete results for each question on the parent, teacher, and student surveys. These reports are now available on the Department's Web site.

Like last year, the survey results, along with student attendance rates, will determine 15 percent of the letter grade each school earns on its Progress Report. Every survey received will be factored into the Progress Report.

Survey results were collected and compiled by the accounting firm KPMG. All survey results are confidential, and no one at schools or the Department of Education is able to link individuals to their answers.

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