



FORK IN THE ROAD

Where does the District go in K-12 Education?

A survey of 1,001 Registered Voters in the District of Columbia
Conducted by Braun Research, Inc.

July 2009

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INTRODUCTION & KEY FINDINGS

Historically, the District of Columbia has struggled to improve the educational opportunities available to students living in the nation's capital. Over the past decade, District residents have witnessed significant changes in the D.C. education system. New reforms have included the creation of nearly sixty public charter schools on approximately ninety campuses; Mayor Adrian Fenty and Chancellor Michelle Rhee's overhaul of the traditional public school system; and the creation of the federal D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.

As policymakers in District government and on Capitol Hill consider the future of these and other education reform initiatives, attention should be paid to the views of D.C. citizens. In July 2009, the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice commissioned Braun Research, Inc. to conduct a statistically representative survey of 1,001 registered voters in the District of Columbia.

Why conduct a survey on education issues in the District of Columbia? Why now?

This is a critical moment for the District and its residents. With so many proposals being suggested in the public domain – to initiate, expand, scale back, or eliminate programs and policies – it can be dizzying to policy wonks and casual observers alike. We hope that this survey can bring a pause for perspective. Each of the organizations endorsing this survey's fieldwork felt it was important to take a step back and reflect on the wishes of D.C. citizens regarding their city's education system.

The purpose of this project is fourfold: to report on the *levels* of approval for key policy leaders, awareness about certain reforms and policies, and support for various policies and public proposals; to identify *large gaps* between positive and negative feelings toward leaders and policies; while recognizing limitations, to *compare* these levels and gaps across demographic subgroups and topics; and, finally, to present *context and perspective*, extending from the views of the District's voters. Our overarching goal is to provide nonpartisan, representative, data-driven snapshots of public opinion.

This report is presented in four sections. The first section is a description of the survey's methodology and summary of response statistics. We call the second section "Survey Snapshots," this is the main body of the report. To be as user-friendly as possible, we generally present a given question and its results on a page-by-page basis. The third section lays out the topline data and questionnaire, essentially allowing the reader to follow the actual interview to see the results for the total sample of registered voters. The fourth section is similar to an appendix, and presents the technical call dispositions for landline and cell phone interviews. Our survey topics

span the approval/disapproval of Mayor Adrian Fenty, D.C. Council, and Chancellor Michelle Rhee; ratings and impressions of the D.C. Public School system; public spending on education; preferences for specific types of schools; views about D.C. Opportunity Scholarships and proposals to install new incentives for D.C. teachers.

We describe our methodology and call dispositions on pages 6 and 36.

KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

Education is the top priority for D.C. voters.

- Despite the current economy, a plurality of registered voters (29%) say “K-12 education and schools” is currently their top priority.

Survey transmits high approval ratings for city leaders.

- D.C. registered voters give high approval for how city leaders are handling their jobs:
 - 65% D.C. City Council
 - 63% Mayor Adrian Fenty
 - 62% Chancellor Michelle Rhee
- Chancellor Rhee has the highest proportion of respondents (27%) who “strongly approve” of job performance.

There is clear support for D.C. Opportunity Scholarships and charter schools.

- 74% have a favorable view of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program; and 79% of parents of school-age children oppose ending the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.
- 74% have a favorable view of public charter schools.

Private schools are appealing.

- 47% of respondents say they prefer a private school over other school types.

Voters give the public school system low marks, but anecdotal evidence indicates hope for improvement.

- 76% rate the DC public school system as “fair” or “poor;” in a follow-up open-end question, voters most frequently describe their first impression of D.C.’s education system as “poor,” “fair,” “good,” and “improving.” (see page 14 for Wordle illustration)

More than half of respondents say schools need more money... but 9 out 10 underestimate the actual level of per student spending.

- 53% say public school funding is “too low,” but a much larger number of respondents (91%) underestimate how much is currently spent per student in the District.

Voters support reforms for D.C. public schools teachers.

- 70% favor performance pay incentives for teachers.
- 57% favor paying teachers a higher salary in exchange for voluntarily giving up tenure or seniority status.

METHODOLOGY

We obtained a total of 1,001 completed interviews with registered voters in the District of Columbia, providing ample statistical representation for this specific population. The sample's statistical significance and probability are sufficient for assessment.

The margin of sampling error (MSE) at the conventional 95% confidence level is ± 3.1 points for the total sample. It is critical to note that the MSE is higher when considering the number of respondents for a given demographic subgroup. For example, the MSE for a subgroup of 150 respondents is ± 8.0 points.

In addition to sampling error, question wording, ordering, and other practical difficulties when conducting surveys may introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion research.

Braun Research, Inc. (BRI) conducted landline and cell phone interviews using a random sample of D.C. registered voters from its call centers. Random Digit Dial (RDD) samples were produced by Survey Sampling International (SSI) using a sampling frame that includes all active telephone area codes and exchanges in the United States. This process randomly generates phone numbers for calls.

SSI starts with a database of all listed telephone numbers, updated on a four- to six-week rolling basis, 25% of the listings at a time. All active blocks—contiguous groups of 100 phone numbers for which more than one residential number is listed—are added to this database. Blocks and exchanges that include only listed business numbers are excluded.

BRI live callers conducted all phone interviews from July 6 to 13, 2009. A total of 6,029 calls were made in the District of Columbia. Of these calls: 2,179 were disconnected, busy, non-residential, or non-answers; 2,469 were usable phone numbers but eligibility unknown (including refusals); 356 did not currently qualify as registered voters; 24 did not complete the survey. The response rate, combining landline and cell phone interviews, was 29%.

The authors take complete responsibility for question wording and ordering, overall survey design, and any unintentional errors or misrepresentations. Views expressed here are solely our own.

Part 1 | Survey Snapshots

Q1. “I am going to name several issues facing the District of Columbia, and I would like you to select the one that is most important to you.”

	“K-12 EDUCATION & SCHOOLS” (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	29	1,001
PK-12 Parent	39	252
Democrat	30	699
Republican	26	62
Independent	29	159
AGE GROUP		
18 – 25	25	95
26 – 35	29	197
36 – 45	34	244
46 – 55	25	176
56 – 65	31	128
Over 65	28	154
Female	29	535
Male	29	466
African American	27	498
Hispanic	31	42
White	32	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
Under \$25,000	16	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	31	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	31	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	32	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	35	92
Over \$200,000	34	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
HS or Less	22	258
Some College	28	195
College Graduate	25	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	39	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?		
D.C. Government Ties	32	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?		
Union Ties	32	72
WARD (Only)		
Ward 1	25	101
Ward 2	28	89
Ward 3	34	103
Ward 4	30	114
Ward 5	18	115
Ward 6	37	104
Ward 7	35	101
Ward 8	28	74

For years local leaders have been confronting numerous challenges in the D.C. Public School system. The nation’s capital historically has had one of the lowest-performing public school systems in the country, despite spending considerably more, on average, on the typical student than the national average each year. According to the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 8% of D.C. 8th grade students scored “proficient” in math; only 12% were “proficient” in reading.¹ Along with student performance, safety and the physical condition of schools have also been persistent issues.²

Nationally in almost every poll these days the economy is the top issue. Going against this trend, D.C. voters say education is their top concern, even if by a slim margin.

- When voters were asked to select which issue was most important to them out of a range of topics, the largest percentage (29%) chose “K-12 education and schools.” Other issues include the economy and jobs (28%), crime (18%), housing (8%), Congressional voting representation (8%), and taxes (6%).
- Respondents who report having school-age children are more likely to list “K-12 education and schools” (39%) than non-parents (26%).
- As a voter’s level of education increases, there appears to be a corresponding increase for prioritizing K-12 issues.

Q2. “How much do you approve or disapprove of the way Adrian Fenty is handling his job as Mayor?”

	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” APPROVE (%)	APPROVE- DISAPPROVE GAP (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	62	+29	1,001
PK-12 Parent	58	+21	252
Democrat	64	+32	699
Republican	63	+34	62
Independent	62	+30	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	64	+39	95
26 – 35	67	+37	197
36 – 45	61	+29	244
46 – 55	63	+29	176
56 – 65	55	+15	128
Over 65	63	+31	154
Female	64	+34	535
Male	61	+30	466
African American	53	+10	498
Hispanic	74	+52	42
White	74	+55	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	62	+30	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	58	+20	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	59	+23	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	59	+21	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	72	+44	92
Over \$200,000	77	+61	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	57	+21	258
Some College	56	+18	195
College Graduate	67	+38	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	67	+39	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	47	-4	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	51	+4	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	63	+42	101
Ward 2	69	+43	89
Ward 3	69	+44	103
Ward 4	59	+23	114
Ward 5	62	+26	115
Ward 6	64	+33	104
Ward 7	45	-5	101
Ward 8	45	-6	74

In 2006, Adrian Fenty was elected Mayor of Washington, D.C. In 2007, Mayor Fenty sought and received the authority to “take-over” control of the D.C. Public School system. Under his watch, Chancellor Michelle Rhee has pushed a series of new education reform initiatives.

When asked “how much do you approve or disapprove of the way Mayor Adrian Fenty is handling his job,” 62% of registered voters said that they “somewhat” or “strongly” approve. The approval-disapproval gap is +29 points.

Among parents of school-age children, Mayor Fenty’s job approval rating is lower (58%) than non-parents (64%).

- Fenty’s approval is equally strong across political parties (low/mid 60s) and across most other subgroups.
- D.C. residents with higher levels of education were more likely to support his job performance than those residents with lower levels of education.
- Mayor Fenty’s approval rating is relatively lower among those who reported having ties to D.C. government (47%) or a union (51%).

Q3. “How much do you approve or disapprove of the way the D.C. City Council is handling its job?”

	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” APPROVE (%)	APPROVE- DISAPPROVE GAP (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	65	+38	1,001
PK-12 Parent	65	+36	252
Democrat	68	+44	699
Republican	55	+21	62
Independent	60	+27	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	66	+44	95
26 – 35	68	+43	197
36 – 45	65	+37	244
46 – 55	64	+37	176
56 – 65	63	+32	128
Over 65	61	+33	154
Female	66	+37	535
Male	64	+39	466
African American	62	+32	498
Hispanic	74	+53	42
White	69	+46	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	63	+39	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	67	+41	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	69	+42	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	61	+28	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	66	+37	92
Over \$200,000	63	+39	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	66	+44	258
Some College	64	+40	195
College Graduate	66	+35	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	64	+36	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	58	+23	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	53	+15	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	61	+38	101
Ward 2	65	+43	89
Ward 3	66	+41	103
Ward 4	61	+29	114
Ward 5	71	+43	115
Ward 6	64	+37	104
Ward 7	63	+34	101
Ward 8	54	+15	74

The 13-member District City Council is the legislative branch of the local government in Washington, D.C. The Council oversees important issues affecting the District government, including the annual budget, financial plan, and the operations of government agencies.³ In 2007, the Council approved Mayor Fenty’s school takeover initiative.⁴

- When asked “how much do you approve or disapprove of the way the D.C. City Council is handling its job,” 65% of registered voters said they “somewhat” or “strongly” approve.
- The approval-disapproval gap is +38 points.

Q4. “How much do you approve or disapprove of the way Michelle Rhee is handling her job as D.C. Public School Chancellor?”

	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” APPROVE (%)	APPROVE- DISAPPROVE GAP (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	62	+33	1,001
PK-12 Parent	56	+19	252
Democrat	62	+33	699
Republican	65	+42	62
Independent	61	+30	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	64	+40	95
26 – 35	62	+34	197
36 – 45	61	+31	244
46 – 55	65	+37	176
56 – 65	57	+23	128
Over 65	60	+33	154
Female	62	+35	535
Male	62	+31	466
African American	51	+13	498
Hispanic	69	+45	42
White	75	+58	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	54	+23	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	59	+27	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	56	+19	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	66	+38	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	67	+43	92
Over \$200,000	80	+68	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	57	+28	258
Some College	59	+29	195
College Graduate	62	+31	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	67	+41	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	49	+10	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	54	+15	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	58	+33	101
Ward 2	70	+45	89
Ward 3	75	+60	103
Ward 4	64	+35	114
Ward 5	51	+13	115
Ward 6	74	+54	104
Ward 7	48	+7	101
Ward 8	47	+12	74

In 2007, Michelle Rhee was named D.C. Chancellor. A *Teach for America* alumna, Rhee founded and led the non-profit New Teacher Project, which aims to improve teacher recruitment and performance. Over the last two years, Chancellor Rhee has implemented significant changes in the D.C. Public School system, including rounds of school consolidations and the dismissal of many school principals and administrators. Chancellor Rhee has also proposed major changes for teacher incentives and compensation. Under her proposal to change the teachers’ collective bargaining agreement, teachers would be eligible for significant salary increases if they agree to waive tenure and seniority rights.⁵

- When asked “how much do you approve or disapprove of the way Michelle Rhee is handling her job,” a solid majority (62%) of voters answered that they either “some-what” or “strongly” approve of Rhee’s performance.
- More respondents “strongly approved” of Rhee’s performance (27%) than Mayor Fenty’s (15%) or the City Council’s (11%).
- Rhee’s approval rates were relatively lower among respondents with ties to D.C. government or a union, 49% and 54%, respectively.

Q5. “How would you rate the D.C. Public School system?”

	“GOOD” OR “EXCELLENT” (%)	GOOD/ EXCELLENT- FAIR/POOR GAP %	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	20	-56	1,001
PK-12 Parent	20	-58	252
Democrat	21	-54	699
Republican	19	-60	62
Independent	17	-62	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	18	-61	95
26 – 35	18	-61	197
36 – 45	19	-57	244
46 – 55	22	-51	176
56 – 65	18	-60	128
Over 65	25	-45	154
Female	19	-57	535
Male	22	-54	466
African American	24	-48	498
Hispanic	43	-12	42
White	14	-68	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	28	-41	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	23	-51	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	20	-56	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	16	-64	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	10	-74	92
Over \$200,000	9	-79	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	33	-31	258
Some College	24	-45	195
College Graduate	15	-65	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	10	-78	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	27	-44	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	25	-47	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	21	-52	101
Ward 2	23	-51	89
Ward 3	11	-62	103
Ward 4	18	-59	114
Ward 5	30	-36	115
Ward 6	22	-56	104
Ward 7	23	-47	101
Ward 8	16	-62	74

The local and national media consistently report that the D.C. Public School system is one of the lowest-performing school systems in the country. A 2009 *Education Week* report found that the high school graduation rate of D.C. public school students was only 58%.⁶

On the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress, D.C. students scored well below the national average on fourth grade and eighth grade tests. When compared with 10 other urban school districts, D.C. ranked 10th in fourth grade reading (significantly lower than 7 districts) and 10th in fourth grade math (significantly lower than 9 districts). The story is the same in eighth grade. D.C. ranked 10th in eighth grade reading (significantly lower than 9 districts) and 11th in eighth grade reading (significantly lower than all other districts).⁷

On July 13, 2009, D.C. Public Schools released the new Comprehensive Assessment System scores. They show steady gains in both reading and math. Despite notable improvement, still less than half of students are scoring proficient in reading or math.⁸

- In this context, it is understandable to see the reactions of respondents when asked “how would you rate the D.C. Public School system,”—only 1 in 5 said “good” or excellent; 76% chose either “fair” or “poor.”
- Based on trends in Table Q5, as education levels and household income levels increase, it appears there may be increased expectations for the public school system. Ratings trend downward, and gaps shoot up, as we observe the less educated to more educated. The same trend is observed viewing group responses of less income to more income.

D.C. REGISTERED VOTERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

Q6. “What ONE WORD best describes your impression of the D.C. Public School system? Just the one word that best describes D.C.’s education system.”



TOP 20 IMPRESSIONS (by frequency)

POOR.....96	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT....27	INADEQUATE.....18	DISORGANIZED*12
FAIR.....70	BAD.....20	OKAY.....18	MEDIocre.....11
GOOD.....57	FADING*.....20	STRUGGLING.....16	TERRIBLE.....11
IMPROVING*55	HORRIBLE*19	CHAOTIC*14	DYSFUNCTION*10
LACKING*29	TROUBLED.....19	UNDER-FUNDED.....13	INEFFECTIVE*10

FIGURE SHOWS NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WHO OFFERED EACH IMPRESSION; THESE NUMBERS ARE NOT PERCENTAGES.

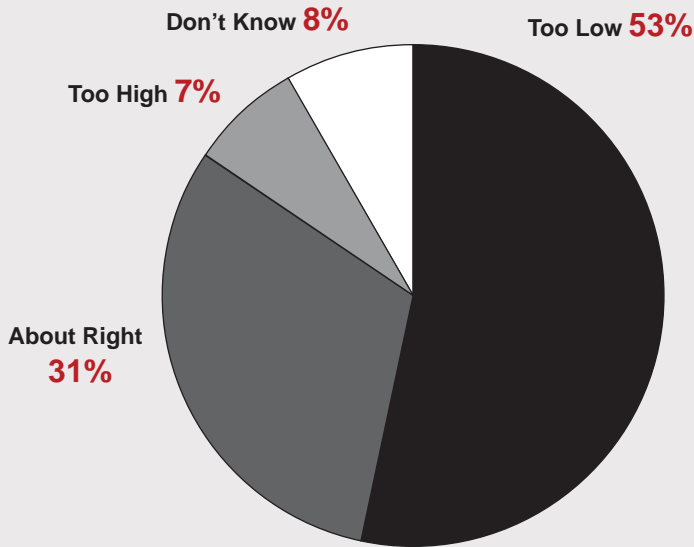
For Question #6, Braun Research supplied verbatim interview responses. Each respondent was asked to provide one descriptive word about the D.C. Public School system. Short phrases were accepted. The sample produced 207 distinct “impressions.”

We illustrate registered voters’ impressions by entering responses into Wordle, which is a Web tool that generates “word clouds” from text provided by the user. The clouds give greater visibility to responses that appear more frequently in the supplied source text.

Derivative words were matched and grouped together under a single impression. These coded impressions are marked with an asterisk (*). For example, we received responses including “improving,” “improvement,” and “improved.” All responses were grouped under the single impression “improving” because this specific response had the highest frequency.

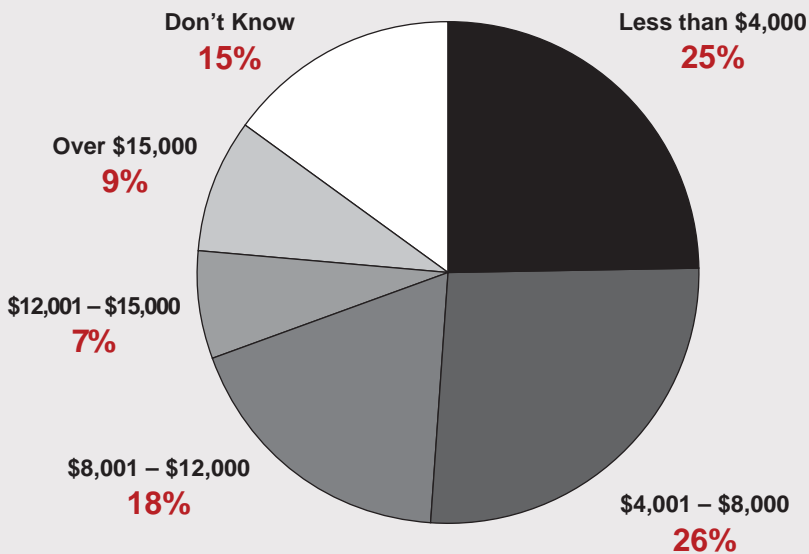
For this Wordle, the impression cut-off is frequency=3, displaying 55 impressions. Incoherent responses (frequency=5) and “Don’t Know” responses (frequency=88) are not included in the illustration in order to emphasize clear impressions.

Q7. “Do you believe that public school funding in D.C. is at a level that is:”



Q8. “Approximately how much do you think is currently spent on each student in the D.C. Public School system? Your estimate will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.”

ACTUAL 2007 SCHOOL YEAR FIGURE: \$15,511*



*SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, “Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2006-07,” Table 6, published March 2009.

Are the persistent challenges in the D.C. Public School system caused by a lack of funding?

- 53% of registered voters responded that per-student funding levels in the District are “too low.” However, this reaction may be based on low amounts of information and knowledge. The survey indicates that voters are generally unaware of education spending.
- When asked to approximate how much is spent each year on every public school student, 70% estimated that per-student expenditures were below \$12,000. According to the U.S. Department of Education, total per-student spending in D.C. public schools was \$15,511 as of 2006-07—well above the national average of \$9,683.⁹ Only 9% of registered voters in D.C. correctly estimated that the District spends more than \$15,000 per student.

Q9. “What do you see as the biggest challenge confronting the D.C. Public School system?”

	ACCOUNTABILITY (%)	FUNDING (%)	DISCIPLINE SELF-CONTROL (%)	BUREAUCRACY (%)	N=
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	17	18	22	17	1,001
PK-12 Parent	17	19	17	18	252
Democrat	17	19	25	16	699
Republican	13	21	15	18	62
Independent	18	16	18	21	159
AGE GROUP					
18 – 25	8	21	35	11	95
26 – 35	18	25	16	15	197
36 – 45	23	16	18	16	244
46 – 55	19	21	24	14	176
56 – 65	16	17	21	20	128
Over 65	10	8	29	24	154
Female	17	19	19	16	535
Male	17	17	26	17	466
African American	13	19	29	13	498
Hispanic	7	17	29	14	42
White	23	17	16	21	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$25,000	8	23	33	7	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	15	20	29	13	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	16	21	18	18	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	21	15	21	19	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	30	7	15	19	92
Over \$200,000	34	11	9	28	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION					
HS or Less	8	22	28	9	258
Some College	14	24	25	12	195
College Graduate	21	19	19	18	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	24	11	19	24	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?					
D.C. Government Ties	14	21	27	9	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?					
Union Ties	17	18	24	18	72
WARD (Landline Only)					
Ward 1	13	17	27	20	101
Ward 2	21	12	33	18	89
Ward 3	28	13	14	19	103
Ward 4	9	23	30	18	114
Ward 5	23	10	24	20	115
Ward 6	13	14	22	18	104
Ward 7	13	23	24	8	101
Ward 8	15	19	20	16	74

- The discipline and self-control of students is a top concern for 22% of voters. Accountability, bureaucracy, and funding are each viewed as considerable challenges within the D.C. Public School system.
- Those with household incomes below \$50,000 are about 1.5 times more likely to view student discipline as the biggest systemic challenge, when compared to households earning \$50,000 or more.
- African Americans are almost twice as likely as whites to say student discipline and self-control is the biggest challenge facing the system (29% vs. 16%).
- The more educated respondents tend to highlight accountability and bureaucracy as key systemic challenges.
- Nearly 1 out of 4 respondents in the 36-to-45 age group (24%) say accountability is their biggest systemic concern.

Q10. “If it was your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?”

Parents of school-age children prefer a range of schooling options.

There is a disconnect between parental schooling preferences (expressed in this survey) and actual school enrollments:¹⁰

- 42% of District parents say they would like to send their child to a private school. In reality, however, approximately 20% of the District’s PK-12 students attend private schools.
- 29% of District parents say they would like to send their child to a public charter school, which matches the proportion of students enrolled in 2009. According to the D.C. Department of Education, 93 public charter schools serve 25,614 students in the District.
- 22% of District parents say they would choose a regular public school for their child. Approximately 51% of the District’s PK-12 students attend regular public schools.
- Public charter schools are most popular with those who reported household incomes less than \$50,000.
- Private schools are consistently the top preference across all major demographic subgroups.

	REGULAR PUBLIC SCHOOL (%)	PRIVATE SCHOOL (%)	PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	23	47	23	1,001
PK-12 Parent	22	42	29	252
Democrat	24	45	24	699
Republican	18	63	16	62
Independent	23	49	25	159
AGE GROUP				
18 – 25	24	46	25	95
26 – 35	20	51	22	197
36 – 45	17	53	24	244
46 – 55	23	48	23	176
56 – 65	29	37	27	128
Over 65	31	40	20	154
Female	22	47	24	535
Male	24	47	22	466
African American	25	41	26	498
Hispanic	36	36	29	42
White	18	57	20	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
Under \$25,000	23	40	30	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	21	41	32	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	24	48	23	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	22	51	17	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	30	47	17	92
Over \$200,000	16	64	17	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION				
HS or Less	22	40	32	258
Some College	26	42	25	195
College Graduate	23	54	17	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	22	51	18	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?				
D.C. Government Ties	23	44	27	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?				
Union Ties	38	39	14	72
WARD (Landline Only)				
Ward 1	30	37	23	101
Ward 2	26	43	28	89
Ward 3	17	57	20	103
Ward 4	25	49	18	114
Ward 5	25	44	23	115
Ward 6	17	50	30	104
Ward 7	24	45	25	101
Ward 8	16	38	35	74

Q11. “How much do you know about public charter schools?”

Q13. “Low-income families who live in the District of Columbia are eligible to use federally funded scholarships to pay tuition for sending their child to a private school. This policy is called the ‘D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.’ How much do you know about the program?”

	CHARTER SCHOOLS LOW AWARENESS* (%)	OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS LOW AWARENESS* (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	34	52	1,001
PK-12 Parent	24	48	252
Democrat	34	53	699
Republican	44	52	62
Independent	29	48	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	38	60	95
26 – 35	34	53	197
36 – 45	28	46	244
46 – 55	28	52	176
56 – 65	27	51	128
Over 65	51	58	154
Female	36	54	535
Male	31	50	466
African American	38	59	498
Hispanic	38	57	42
White	26	43	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	50	62	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	32	58	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	27	38	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	22	47	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	20	45	92
Over \$200,000	27	50	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	49	69	258
Some College	35	50	195
College Graduate	34	43	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	18	47	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	35	66	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	24	43	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	41	64	101
Ward 2	25	49	89
Ward 3	27	50	103
Ward 4	38	52	114
Ward 5	33	52	115
Ward 6	26	56	104
Ward 7	42	58	101
Ward 8	39	57	74

* LOW AWARENESS IS A COLLAPSED CATEGORY, REPRESENTING RESPONDENTS SAYING "VERY LITTLE," "NOTHING AT ALL," AND "DON'T KNOW."

The District has allowed charter schools since 1996. Charter schools are public schools that are not run by the local school district. Charter schools, however, are held accountable for their performance to the D.C. Public Charter School Board.

For the 2008-2009 school year, more than 25,000 students were enrolled in the District’s public charter schools—about 36% of the total public school enrollment in D.C.¹¹

- 34% of respondents indicate they have relatively low awareness of charter schools, saying they know “very little,” “nothing at all,” or “don’t know.”

D.C. Opportunity Scholarships have been available since 2004. Low-income families who live in the District of Columbia are eligible to use federally funded scholarships, worth up to \$7,500, to cover the costs of tuition, school fees, and transportation for sending their child to a private school.

Approximately 1,700 students received Opportunity Scholarships in 2009, accounting for nearly 10% of the total private school enrollment in D.C.¹²

- 52% of respondents indicate they have relatively low awareness of D.C. Opportunity Scholarships, saying they know “very little,” “nothing at all,” or “don’t know.” Low awareness is pervasive among those who say their household incomes are below \$50,000 – the program is designed specifically to serve this demographic group.

Q12. “Charter schools are independent public schools that are free to be more innovative. They are accountable for student achievement and school operations. In general, how much do you favor or oppose public charter schools?”

	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” FAVOR (%)	FAVOR-OPPOSE GAP (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	74	+53	1,001
PK-12 Parent	80	+64	252
Democrat	74	+54	699
Republican	77	+62	62
Independent	70	+44	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	80	+65	95
26 – 35	81	+67	197
36 – 45	74	+54	244
46 – 55	76	+57	176
56 – 65	64	+34	128
Over 65	64	+38	154
Female	74	+54	535
Male	73	+53	466
African American	69	+45	498
Hispanic	88	+81	42
White	79	+63	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	68	+45	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	77	+59	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	76	+56	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	70	+45	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	71	+49	92
Over \$200,000	86	+75	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	68	+44	258
Some College	77	+62	195
College Graduate	78	+61	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	73	+73	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	69	+43	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	67	+38	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	77	+60	101
Ward 2	72	+49	89
Ward 3	83	+71	103
Ward 4	73	+52	114
Ward 5	66	+36	115
Ward 6	79	+64	104
Ward 7	60	+30	101
Ward 8	70	+48	74

Charter school support is evident:

- Nearly 3 out of 4 D.C. voters (74%) have a favorable opinion of charter schools. Respondents were much more likely to say they favor charter schools than oppose them.
- 4 out of 5 District Parents are favorable to charter schools.
- Charter school favorability appears to vary with respect to age. Voters who are 35 years old or younger are more likely to support charter schools than those who are over 55 years old.

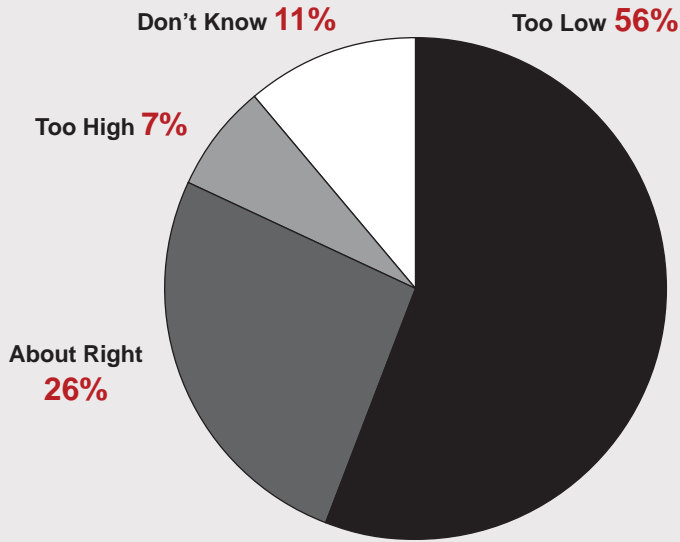
Q14. “The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship, worth up to \$7,500, can be used to cover the costs of tuition, school fees, and transportation to a participating private school. In general, how much do you favor or oppose the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program?”

	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” FAVOR (%)	FAVOR-OPPOSE GAP (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	74	+54	1,001
PK-12 Parent	82	+68	252
Democrat	74	+53	699
Republican	79	+63	62
Independent	72	+50	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	81	+67	95
26 – 35	75	+53	197
36 – 45	74	+53	244
46 – 55	73	+53	176
56 – 65	76	+54	128
Over 65	71	+50	154
Female	73	+51	535
Male	76	+57	466
African American	73	+53	498
Hispanic	95	+90	42
White	76	+56	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	77	+61	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	78	+62	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	77	+57	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	70	+46	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	66	+34	92
Over \$200,000	83	+67	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	77	+62	258
Some College	77	+61	195
College Graduate	74	+50	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	71	+45	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	69	+53	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	72	+46	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	70	+45	101
Ward 2	72	+47	89
Ward 3	79	+64	103
Ward 4	75	+54	114
Ward 5	79	+53	115
Ward 6	71	+47	104
Ward 7	72	+51	101
Ward 8	69	+45	74

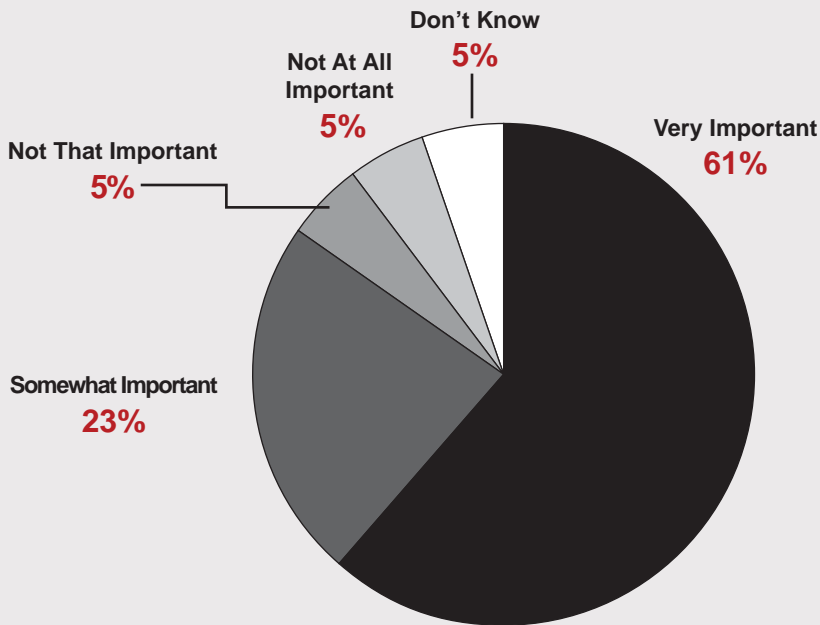
In 2009, the U.S. Department of Education published the results of a federally mandated evaluation, which found that students who had been given a chance to participate in the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program had made statistically significant progress compared to their peers who were not offered scholarships.¹³ Specifically, students who had been offered scholarships were performing at statistically higher levels in reading that amounted to approximately three months of additional learning. The report also found that families who had been offered a scholarship were more satisfied with their children’s school and safety.

- In the survey, 74% say they “some-what” or “strongly” favor the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. Among parents of school-age children, 82% favor the program. Support for D.C Opportunity Scholarships appears to mirror support for public charter schools.
- All demographic subgroups are much more likely to favor Opportunity Scholarships rather than oppose the program.
- Within most subgroups, the favor-oppose gaps are at least +50 points.

Q15. “As of 2009, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program is able to provide scholarships for approximately 1,700 students. Do you believe that the number of scholarships in D.C. is at a level that is:”



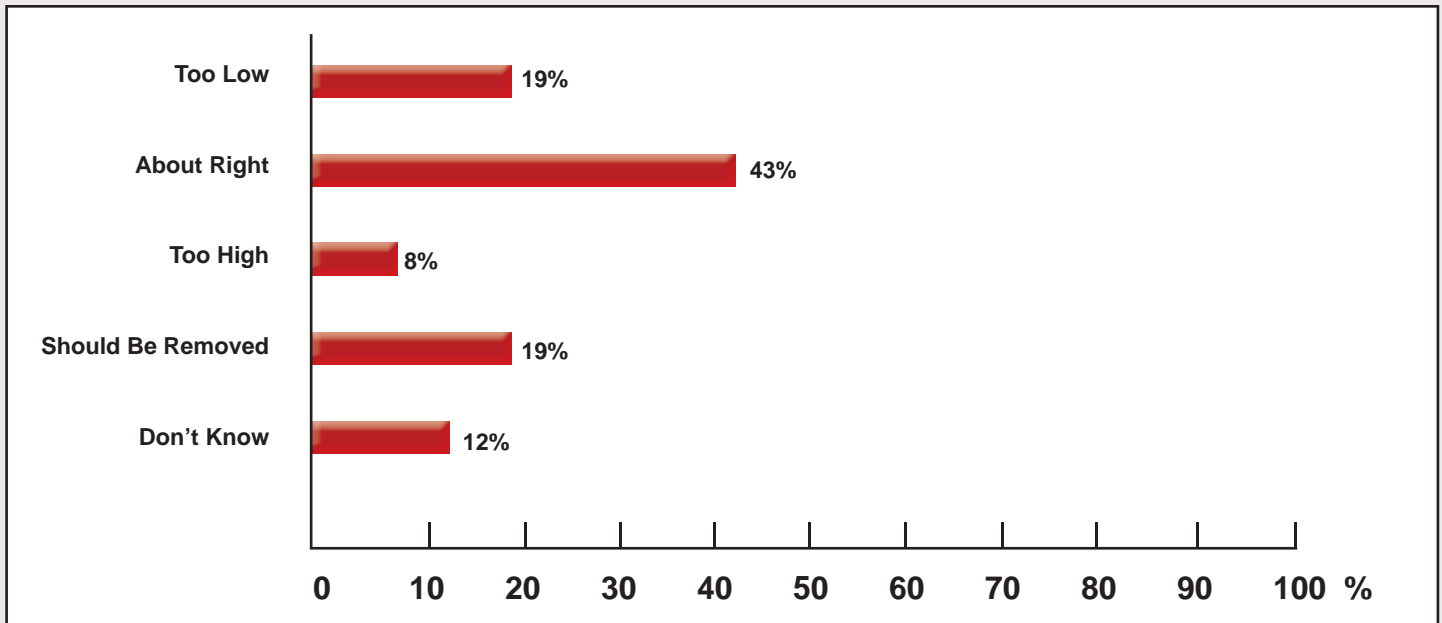
Q16. “In five years, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program has received approximately 7,800 student applications. How important is it that the Program supply as many scholarships as possible in order to meet demand?”



There are significant eligibility restrictions to enroll in the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. Funding has not been allocated at a level sufficient to allow all those who apply to the Opportunity Scholarship Program to be served. In all, over 8,000 students have applied to participate in the program.

- A majority of respondents (56%) say the number of scholarships offered through the program is “too low.”
- 61% of the respondents say it is “very important” that the scholarship program supply as many scholarships as possible to meet the demand for them.

Q17. “There is a requirement that in order for a family to be eligible for a D.C. Opportunity Scholarship, household income must be less than 185% of the federal poverty guideline. This is similar to eligibility for free and reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program. Do you think this requirement is too low, about right, too high, or should be removed?”



To be eligible for the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program students must be from D.C. families with incomes below 185% of the poverty line. According to the Washington Scholarship Fund, the average annual income for families who participated in the program in 2008-09 was about \$22,700—well below the eligibility level.¹⁴

- 43% responded that the current income limit was “about right.”
- 38% combined to say the restriction is “too low” or “should be removed.”

Q18. “Some members of Congress and some city public officials are planning to end the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. In general, how much do you favor or oppose this proposal?”

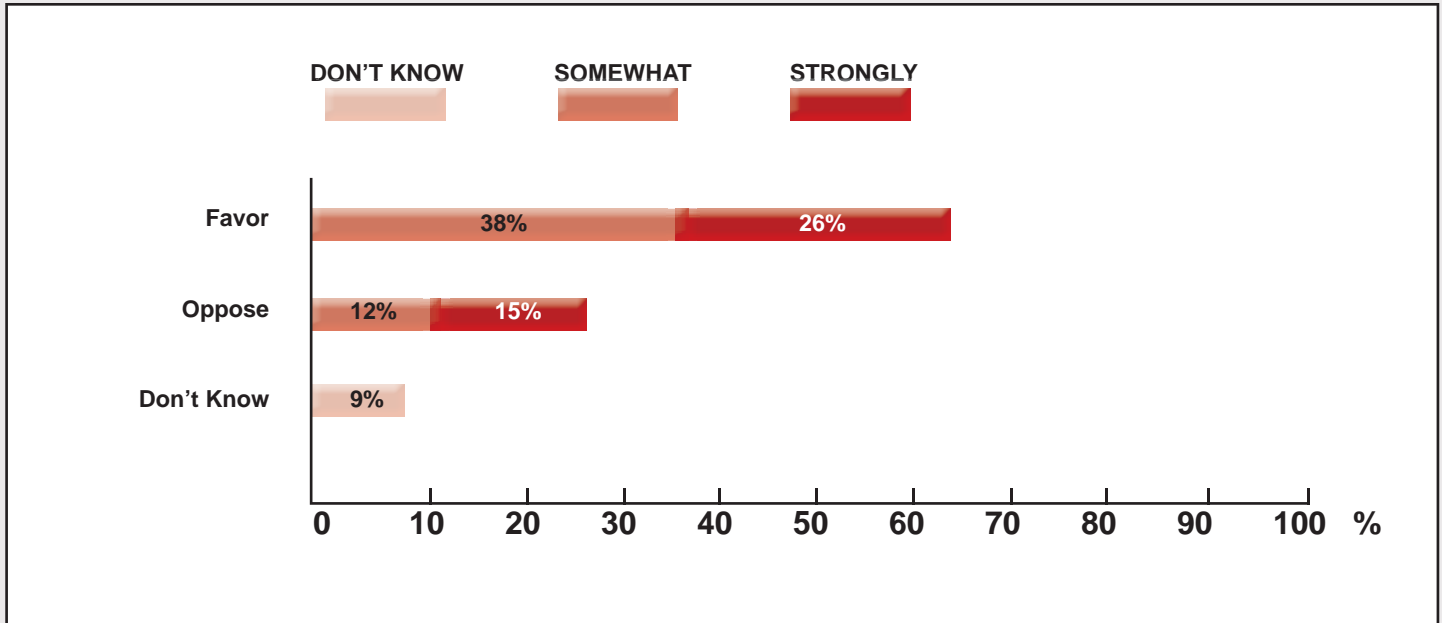
	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” FAVOR (%)	“SOMEWHAT” OR “STRONGLY” OPPOSE (%)	N =
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	27	68	1,001
PK-12 Parent	18	79	252
Democrat	28	67	699
Republican	34	61	62
Independent	19	75	159
AGE GROUP			
18 – 25	30	64	95
26 – 35	30	67	197
36 – 45	26	69	244
46 – 55	26	71	176
56 – 65	28	66	128
Over 65	23	66	154
Female	26	68	535
Male	28	67	466
African American	26	70	498
Hispanic	17	81	42
White	29	64	413
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Under \$25,000	23	71	142
\$25,000 - \$49,999	26	70	182
\$50,000 - \$74,999	27	69	201
\$75,000 - \$124,999	32	63	152
\$125,000 - \$200,000	23	71	92
Over \$200,000	25	70	64
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
HS or Less	24	70	258
Some College	26	70	195
College Graduate	28	67	230
Some Grad School or Grad Degree	28	65	312
SELF OR FAMILY IN D.C. GOVERNMENT?			
D.C. Government Ties	34	61	108
SELF OR FAMILY IN UNION?			
Union Ties	32	63	72
WARD (Landline Only)			
Ward 1	26	66	101
Ward 2	23	71	89
Ward 3	21	72	103
Ward 4	30	67	114
Ward 5	30	65	115
Ward 6	31	62	104
Ward 7	21	78	101
Ward 8	30	62	74

In 2009, the U.S. Congress and Obama Administration have taken significant legislative and procedural actions to end the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. This past April, the U.S. Department of Education told approximately 200 children who had been admitted into the Opportunity Scholarship Program that they would no longer be receiving scholarships for the 2009-10 school year.¹⁵

The decision to stop issuing scholarships to new students will likely phase out the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. A majority of the members of the D.C. City Council recently sent a letter to Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Mayor Adrian Fenty asking them to reverse this decision and save the Opportunity Scholarship Program.¹⁶

- 68% of respondents say they “somewhat” or “strongly” oppose efforts to end the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. The opposition outnumber those who favor by more than 2-to-1.
- Opposition to ending the program is even higher among the parents of school-aged children—79% oppose the plan. Among parents, the opposition outnumber those who favor by more than 4-to-1.

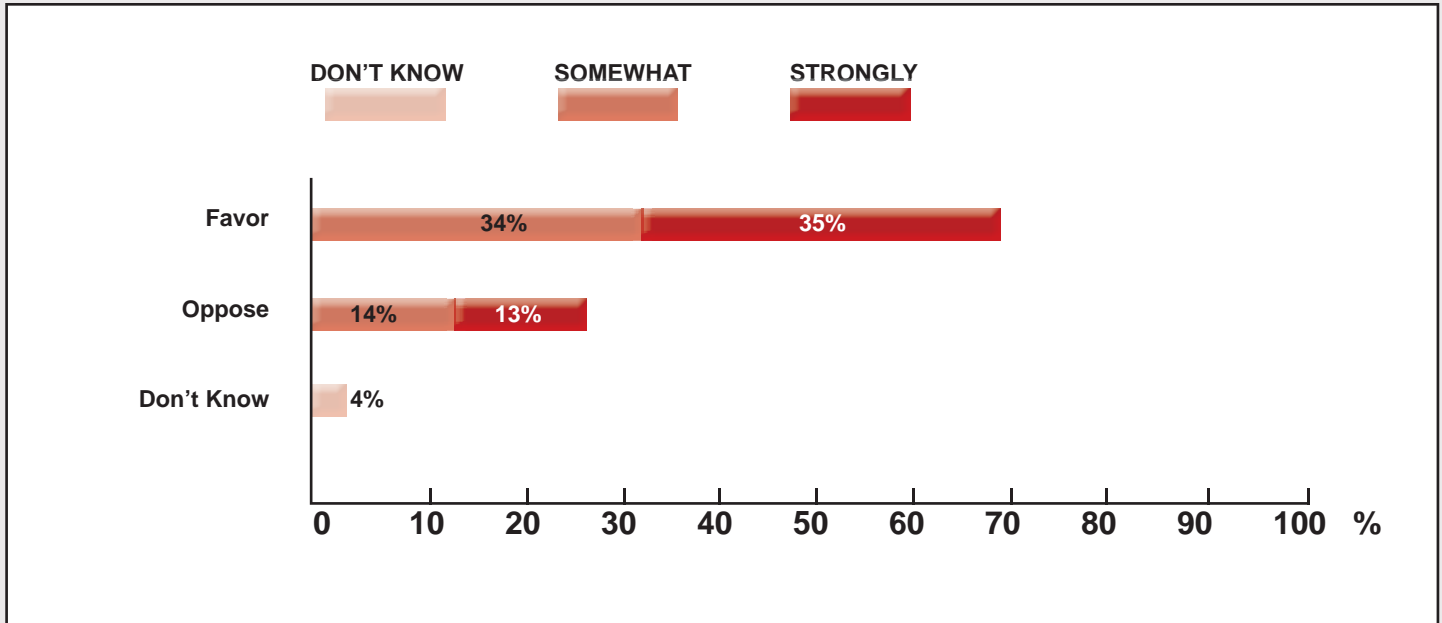
Q19. “As you may know, Congress recently gave the District \$39 million of federal money for an education plan. In this plan, \$13 million went to D.C. regular public schools, \$13 million to D.C. public charter schools, and \$13 million to the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. In general, how much do you favor or oppose this plan?”



The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program is part of a federal “three-sector” education initiative that was requested, shaped, and championed by DC leaders and launched in Spring 2004 to support D.C. schools – Public, Public Charter, and Opportunity Scholarships. This approach to education funding provides an infusion of new federal money for the District. As a result of this “three-sector” federal policy, D.C. public schools and public charter schools have received over \$120 million in additional federal funding over the last four years.

- 64% of respondents say they “somewhat” or “strongly” favor the three-sector approach.
- The favor-oppose gap is +37 points.

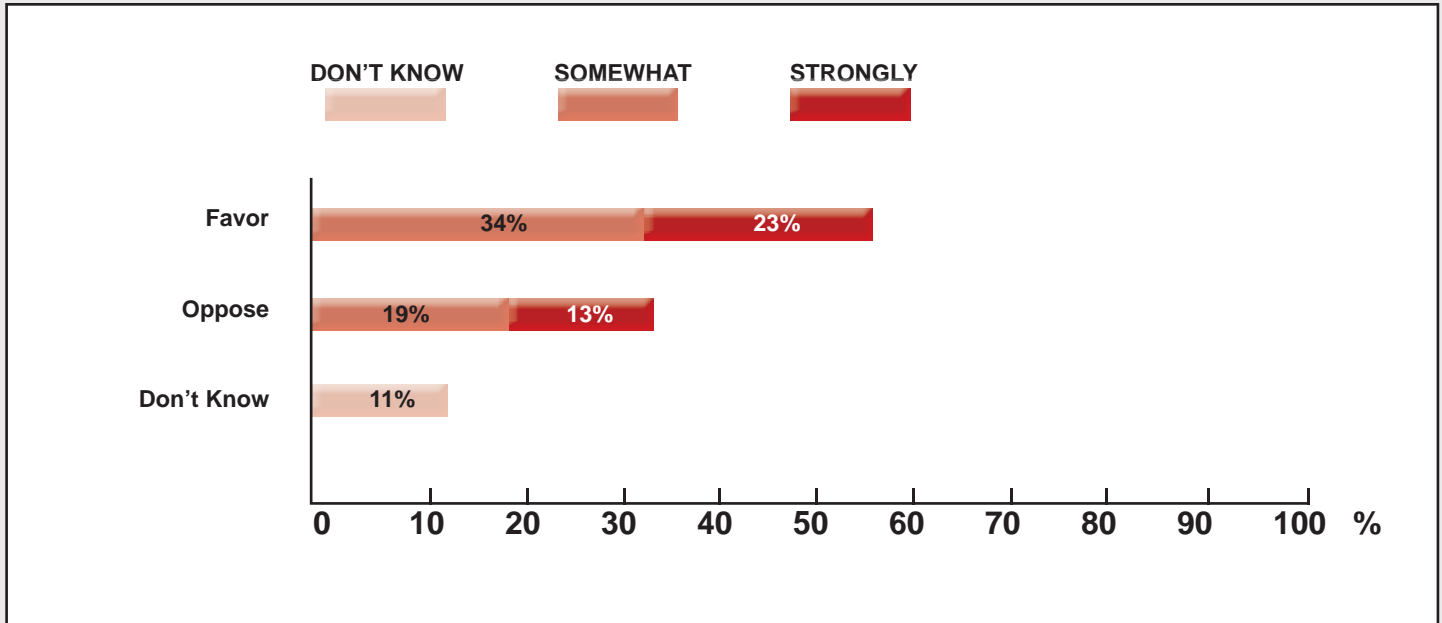
Q20. “How much would you favor or oppose financially rewarding teachers whose students make more academic progress—in terms of measurable outcomes—when compared to similar students taught by other teachers?”



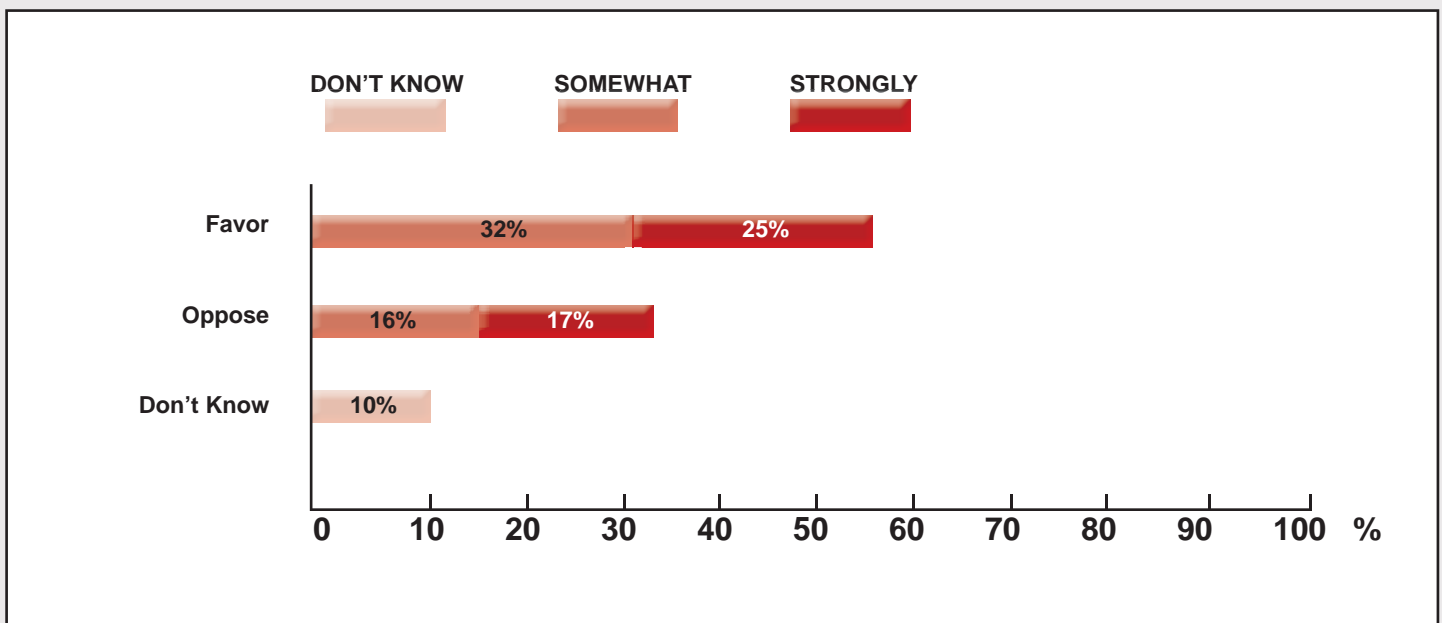
Researchers have identified teacher quality as a critical factor affecting students’ academic achievement.¹⁷ In recent years, policymakers across the country have begun adopting new strategies for compensating teachers—including “merit” or “performance” pay—that aim to provide incentives and rewards for teachers who are most effective.

- 69% of voters say they favor financially rewarding teachers whose students make more academic progress—in terms of measurable outcomes—when compared to similar students taught by other teachers.
- The favor-oppose gap is +42 points.

Q21. “Based on what you have heard or read, how much do you favor or oppose allowing tenure for public school teachers?”



Q22. “D.C. public officials recently proposed changing guidelines for teacher tenure, seniority status, and salaries. This plan would pay a public school teacher a substantially higher salary in exchange for voluntarily giving up tenure or seniority status. How much do you personally favor or oppose this proposal?”



In the summer of 2008, D.C. Chancellor Michelle Rhee proposed reforming the District's system for compensating teachers. Her plan would offer teachers the opportunity to choose one of two tiers for receiving compensation. One tier would offer teachers the opportunity for significantly higher pay raises and performance bonuses if they choose to relinquish tenure for a school year, exposing them to dismissal without appeal. New teachers would be required to take this track. Teachers who choose the other track would keep their tenure but be eligible for less generous pay increases.¹⁸

- 57% of respondents say they favor allowing tenure for public school teachers.
- 57% say they favor “the plan to provide teachers with substantially higher pay in exchange for voluntarily giving up tenure or seniority status.” This plan was similarly favored by PK-12 Parents (58%) and those who have ties to a labor/teacher union (57%).
- The favor-oppose gaps are equal (+25 points) on both of these questions.

Part 2 | Topline Results & Questionnaire

July 6 - 13, 2009
 N = 1,001 Registered Voters
 Response Rate = 29.7%

“For this brief interview, if you are completely unsure about your answer or have no feelings for an answer, you can say ‘I Don’t Know’.” [ENTER AS “DK”]

1. I am going to name several issues facing the District of Columbia, and I would like you to select the one that is most important to you. **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES TO AVOID BIAS]**

K-12 Education & Schools	29.3%
Economy & Jobs	27.6%
Crime	17.5%
Housing	8.2%
Congressional Voting Representation	8.1%
Taxes	5.9%
Undecided/Other	3.5%

2. How much do you approve or disapprove of the way Adrian Fenty is handling his job as Mayor? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Strongly Approve	15.0%
Somewhat Approve	47.4%
Somewhat Disapprove	16.5%
Strongly Disapprove	15.7%
Don't Know	5.5%

3. How much do you approve or disapprove of the way the D.C. City Council is handling its job? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Strongly Approve	11.3%
Somewhat Approve	53.4%
Somewhat Disapprove	18.8%
Strongly Disapprove	8.3%
Don't Know	8.2%

4. How much do you approve or disapprove of the way Michelle Rhee is handling her job as D.C. Public Schools Chancellor? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Strongly Approve	26.8%
Somewhat Approve	34.9%
Somewhat Disapprove	14.1%
Strongly Disapprove	14.6%
Don't Know	9.7%

5. How would you rate the D.C. Public School system? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Excellent	3.1%
Good	17.0%
Fair	38.2%
Poor	37.7%
Don't Know	4.1%

6. What ONE WORD best describes your impression of the D.C. Public School system? Just the one word that best describes D.C.'s education system. **[OPEN-END. IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK". ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR SECOND RESPONSE]**

Displaying verbatim and coded(*) impressions, frequency ≥ 11 responses.

Poor	96
Don't Know*	88
Fair	70
Good	57
Improving*	55
Lacking*	29
Needs Improvement	27
Bad	20
Failing*	20
Horrible*	19
Troubled	19
Inadequate	18
Okay	18
Struggling	16
Chaotic*	14
Under-funded	13
Disorganized*	12
Mediocre	11
Terrible	11

7. Do you believe that public school funding in D.C. is at a level that is: **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]**

Too High	7.4%
Too Low	53.3%
About Right	31.1%
Don't Know	8.2%

8. Approximately how much do you think is currently spent on each student in the D.C. Public School system? Your estimate will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments. **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]**

Less than \$4,000	24.9%
\$4,001 – \$8,000	26.4%
\$8,001 – \$12,000	18.4%
\$12,001 – \$15,000	7.0%
Over \$15,000	8.6%
Don't Know	14.8%

9. What do you see as the biggest challenge confronting the D.C. Public School system? **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES TO AVOID BIAS]**

Poor Student Discipline & Self-control	22.3%
Lack of Funding	18.1%
Lack of Accountability	17.0%
Too Much Bureaucracy	16.5%
Overcrowding Classrooms, Schools	13.4%
Undecided/Other	8.4%
Limited Parental Choice	4.4%

10. If it was your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child? [RANDOMIZE RESPONSES TO AVOID BIAS. IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Private School	47.0%
Public Charter School	23.2%
Regular Public School	23.1%
Homeschooling	3.3%
Virtual School	0.3%

“For the remainder of this interview, if you are completely unsure about your answer or have no feelings for an answer, feel free to say ‘I Don’t Know.’” [CONTINUE TO ENTER AS “DK”]

11. How much do you know about public charter schools? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

A Great Deal	13.3%
Quite A Bit	20.7%
Only Some	32.6%
Very Little	22.0%
Nothing At All	10.5
Don’t Know	1.0%

12. Charter schools are independent public schools that are free to be more innovative. They are accountable for student achievement and school operations. In general, how much do you favor or oppose public charter schools? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Strongly Favor	32.6%
Somewhat Favor	41.0%
Somewhat Oppose	10.8%
Strongly Oppose	9.4%
Don’t Know	6.3%

13. Low-income families who live in the District of Columbia are eligible to use federally funded scholarships to pay tuition for sending their child to a private school. This policy is called the “D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.” How much do you know about the program? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

A Great Deal	10.1%
Quite A Bit	12.7%
Only Some	24.9%
Very Little	23.5%
Nothing At All	28.3%
Don’t Know	0.6%

14. The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship, worth up to \$7,500, can be used to cover the costs of tuition, school fees, and transportation to a participating private school. In general, how much do you favor or oppose the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Strongly Favor	36.0%
Somewhat Favor	38.4%
Somewhat Oppose	11.0%
Strongly Oppose	9.5%
Don’t Know	5.2%

15. As of 2009, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program is able to provide scholarships for approximately 1,700 students. Do you believe that the number of scholarships in D.C. is at a level that is: **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Too High	6.8%
Too Low	56.1%
About Right	26.4%
Don't Know	10.7%

16. In five years, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program has received approximately 7,800 student applications. How important is it that the Program supply as many scholarships as possible in order to meet demand? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Very Important	61.2%
Somewhat Important	23.4%
Not That Important	5.4%
Not At All Important	5.2%
Don't Know	4.8%

17. There is a requirement that in order for a family to be eligible for a D.C. Opportunity Scholarship, household income must be less than 185% of the federal poverty guideline. This is similar to eligibility for free and reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program. Do you think this requirement is too low, about right, too high, or should be removed? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Too High	7.9%
Too Low	18.6%
About Right	42.9%
Should Be Removed	18.5%
Don't Know	12.2%

18. Some members of Congress and some city public officials are planning to end the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. In general, how much do you favor or oppose this proposal? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Strongly Favor	11.9%
Somewhat Favor	14.8%
Somewhat Oppose	23.8%
Strongly Oppose	43.9%
Don't Know	5.7%

19. As you may know, Congress recently gave the District \$39 million of federal money for an education plan. In this plan, \$13 million went to D.C. regular public schools, \$13 million to D.C. public charter schools, and \$13 million to the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. In general, how much do you favor or oppose this plan? **[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]**

Strongly Favor	26.3%
Somewhat Favor	37.7%
Somewhat Oppose	15.2%
Strongly Oppose	12.4%
Don't Know	8.5%

20. How much would you favor or oppose financially rewarding teachers whose students make more academic progress—in terms of measurable outcomes—when compared to similar students taught by other teachers? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Strongly Favor	35.3%
Somewhat Favor	33.9%
Somewhat Oppose	13.9%
Strongly Oppose	12.8%
Don't Know	4.2%

21. Based on what you have heard or read, how much do you favor or oppose allowing tenure for public school teachers? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Strongly Favor	23.0%
Somewhat Favor	33.8%
Somewhat Oppose	19.4%
Strongly Oppose	13.3%
Don't Know	10.6%

22. D.C. public officials recently proposed changing guidelines for teacher tenure, seniority status, and salaries. This plan would pay a public school teacher a substantially higher salary in exchange for voluntarily giving up tenure or seniority status. How much do you personally favor or oppose this proposal? [IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Strongly Favor	25.3%
Somewhat Favor	32.3%
Somewhat Oppose	15.6%
Strongly Oppose	16.5%
Don't Know	10.4%

DEMOGRAPHICS

“Now we have a few questions to make sure that we have an accurate sampling of respondents... Again for this section, if you are completely unsure about your answer, you can say ‘I Don’t Know’.” [CONTINUE TO ENTER AS “DK”]

23. Are you currently the parent or guardian of any school-age children from pre-school through 12th grade?

Yes	25.2%
No	74.4%
Don't Know/Refused	0.4%

[IF QUESTION 23 ANSWER IS “YES”, GO TO QUESTION 24, OTHERWISE GO TO QUESTION 29]

24. Do you have a child (or children) attending a Charter School?

Yes	25.4%
No	74.6%
Don't Know	0.0%

25. Do you have a child (or children) attending a Homeschool?

Yes	3.2%
No	96.8%
Don't Know	0.0%

26. Do you have a child (or children) attending a Private School?

Yes	20.2%
No	79.8%
Don't Know	0.0%

27. Do you have a child (or children) attending a Regular Public School?

Yes	56.7%
No	42.5%
Don't Know	0.8%

28. Do you have a child (or children) attending a Virtual School? (sometimes called an "Online School" or "Cyber School")

Yes	1.6%
No	97.6%
Don't Know	0.8%

29. Do your political views most closely reflect those of a:

Democrat	69.8%
Libertarian	3.1%
Republican	6.2%
D.C. Statehood/Green	0.8%
Other Party Affiliation	0.2%
Independent/No Party Affiliation	15.9%
Don't Know/Refused	4.0%

30. What is your zip code? (varies)

31. Which of the following age categories do you fall in?

18 – 25	9.5%
26 – 35	19.7%
36 – 45	24.4%
46 – 55	17.6%
56 – 65	12.8%
Over 65	15.4%
Don't Know/Refused	0.7%

32. Are you:

African American	49.6%
Asian	1.4%
Hispanic	4.2%
Native American	0.8%
White	41.3%
Other	0.6%
Don't Know/Refused	2.2%

33. What is your religion, if any?

Catholic	19.3%
Jewish	5.9%
Muslim	1.1%
Baptist	31.5%
Lutheran	0.9%
Methodist	5.0%
Presbyterian	2.7%
Other Protestant	4.9%
Other Religion	4.4%
None	19.3%
Don't Know/Refused	5.1%

34. Would you tell me into which of the following categories your total family income falls?

Under \$25,000	14.2%
\$25,000-\$49,999	18.2%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	20.1%
\$75,000 - \$124,999	15.2%
\$125,000 - \$200,000	9.2%
Over \$200,000	6.4%
Don't Know/Refused	16.8%

35. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Some High School	6.1%
High School Graduate	19.7%
Some College	19.5%
College Graduate	23.0%
Some Graduate School	5.8%
Post-Graduate Degree (such as Masters, Ph.D., or professional equivalent)	25.4%
Don't Know/Refused	0.6%

36. Are you or anyone in your family an employee of the District of Columbia government?

Yes	10.8%
No	87.8%
Don't Know/Refused	1.4%

37. Are you or anyone in your family a union (teacher or labor) member?

Yes	7.2%
No	91.4%
Don't Know/Refused	1.4%

38. [DO NOT READ. RECORD]

Male	46.6%
Female	53.4%

Other Demographics (information obtained external to phone interview)

Residence located in: (Landline Respondents Only, n = 801)

Ward 1	10.9%
Ward 2	8.9%
Ward 3	10.3%
Ward 4	11.4%
Ward 5	11.5%
Ward 6	10.4%
Ward 7	10.1%
Ward 8	7.4%
Don't Know (Cell Phone Respondents Only, n =200)	20.0%

Cell Phone or Landline Respondent?

Cell Phone	20.0%
Landline	80.0%

CALL DISPOSITIONS

Below are full dispositions for all sampled landline and cell phone numbers. We calculate the response rates using the following equation: $RR = \text{Contact Rate} \times \text{Cooperation Rate} \times \text{Completion Rate}$

LANDLINE	CELL PHONE	
3,707	2,322	Total Numbers Dialed
108	5	Non-residential
59	3	Fax/Computer
5	-	Cell Phone
-	34	Landline
517	681	Disconnected
3,018	1,599	Working Numbers
81.4%	68.9%	Working Rate
436	287	No Answer
27	17	Busy
454	201	Voice Mail
2	1	Other Non-Contact
2,099	1,093	Contacted Numbers
69.5%	68.4%	Contact Rate
367	109	Callback
821	484	Refusal
911	500	Cooperating Numbers
43.4%	45.8%	Cooperation Rate
16	14	Language Barrier
-	50	Under 18
80	13	Not Registered to Vote
5	208	Did Not Reside in DC
810	215	Eligible Numbers
88.9%	43.0%	Eligibility Rate
9	15	Break-off
801	200	Completes
98.9%	93.0%	Completion Rate
29.8%	29.1%	Response Rate
Overall Response Rate = 29.7%		

NOTES

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² Dan Keating and V. Dion Haynes, "Can D.C. Schools Be Fixed?" *The Washington Post*, June 10, 2007, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/09/AR2007060901415.html> (July 21, 2009).

³ Council of the District of Columbia, "An Introduction," at <http://www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us/aboutthecouncil> (July 17, 2009).

⁴ Office of Mayor Adrian Fenty, "Mayor Adrian M. Fenty Announces Education Initiative," January 4, 2007, at: <http://www.dc.gov/mayor/news/release.asp?id=1034&mon=200701> (July 17, 2009).

⁵ *The Wall Street Journal*, "Rhee-Forming D.C. Schools," November 22, 2008.

⁶ Christopher B. Swanson, "Closing the Graduation Gap: Educational and Economic Conditions in America's Largest Cities," Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, April 2009.

⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "National Assessment of Educational Progress: Trial Urban Districts 2007," (http://nationsreportcard.gov/tuda_reading_2007/r0024.asp) and (http://nationsreportcard.gov/tuda_math_2007/m0029.asp), July 20, 2009.

⁸ Bill Turque, "D.C. Schools Show Progress on Tests," *The Washington Post*, July 14, 2009.

⁹ National Center for Education Statistics, "Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2006-07," Table 6, published March 2009.

¹⁰ Regular public school enrollment (2008-2009) obtained from Bill Turque, "DCPS: Enrollment Numbers Not a Problem," *The Washington Post*, July 8, 2009, accessed at: http://voices.washingtonpost.com/dc/2009/07/dcps_enrollment_numbers_not_a.html. Public charter school enrollment information obtained from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, District of Columbia Public Schools and Public Charter Schools Enrollment Census Report SY 2008-2009, October 6, 2008. Private school enrollment estimate obtained from Stephen Broughman, Nancy Swaim, and Patrick Keaton,

Characteristics of Private Schools in the United States: Results From the 2007-08 Private School Universe Survey (NCES 2009-313). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences (U.S. Department of Education, 2009), Table 15.

¹¹ Bill Turque, "Study Confirms DCPS Enrollment Decline," *The Washington Post*, March 17, 2009.

¹² D.C. private school enrollment estimate obtained from Stephen Broughman, Nancy Swaim, and Patrick Keaton, *Characteristics of Private Schools in the United States: Results From the 2007-08 Private School Universe Survey* (NCES 2009-313). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences (U.S. Department of Education, 2009), Table 15.

¹³ Patrick Wolf *et al.*, "Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After Three Years," U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, March 2009, at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20094050/pdf/20094050.pdf> (July 18, 2009).

¹⁴ Washington Scholarship Fund, "D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program," at: <http://www.washingtonscholarshipfund.org/programs/index.html> (July 21, 2009).

¹⁵ *The Washington Post*, "Presumed Dead," April 11, 2009, at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/10/AR2009041003073.html> (July 21, 2009).

¹⁶ A copy of the June 22, 2009 letter is available from the website of D.C. Children First, at: <http://www.dchildrenfirst.org/website/download.asp?id=77> (July 21, 2009).

¹⁷ See: William L. Saunders and Sandra P. Horn, "Research Findings from the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) Database: Implications for Educational Evaluation and Research," *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, at: http://www.sas.com/govedu/edu/ed_eval.pdf (July 21, 2009); Eric A. Hanushek, "Teacher Quality," from the book, *Teacher Quality*, Hoover Institution, June 27, 2006, at: http://media.hoover.org/documents/0817929320_1.pdf (July 21, 2009).

¹⁸ Bill Turque, "Two Years of Hard Lessons For D.C. Schools' Agent of Change," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2009.

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