

Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2006

Third Annual Survey

**David R. Garcia
Arizona State University**

**Alex Molnar
Arizona State University**

**Bruce Merrill
Arizona State University**

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Education Policy Studies Laboratory

Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
College of Education, Arizona State University
P.O. Box 872411, Tempe, AZ 85287-2411
Telephone: (480) 965-1886
Fax: (480) 965-0303
E-mail: epsl@asu.edu
<http://edpolicylab.org>

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David R. Garcia

Assistant Professor and Assistant Director
Education Policy Studies Laboratory
Arizona Education Policy Initiative
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Alex Molnar

Professor and Director
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Professor
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism
Arizona State University

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Introduction

Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2006 is the third-annual study of the opinion of Arizona parents on the issues facing public schools. The study is conducted by the Arizona Education Policy Initiative (AEPI), a collaboration of Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona, and it is a systematic effort to capture and track parental opinion over time. Parents, more than any other group, have the most at stake in the condition of Arizona's schools; the annual AEPI survey gives Arizona parents an opportunity to make their voices heard on major public education issues.

As in previous years, the 2006 survey was administered via telephone. The survey was conducted between March 18 and March 27, 2006. The respondents represent a statewide random sample of 410 Arizona parents that have children in public schools and an additional statewide sample of 101 Hispanic public school parents. Results are disaggregated by Anglo and Hispanic parents, making it possible to compare differences in opinion between Arizona's two largest racial/ethnic groups. In past years, the opinions

of Anglo and Hispanic parents varied little from each other. In 2006, however, we observed a sharp divergence in the opinion of these two parent groups. The differences are discussed throughout the report and highlighted in a special section.

Overview of Results

Many important aspects of parental opinion remain consistent since the first AEPI Arizona parent opinion survey in 2004. Parents continue to be pleased with their children's schools and teachers, and they believe that public schools do a good job teaching basic academic skills. Parents regard inadequate funding as the biggest challenge facing Arizona public schools. Also, Parental support for publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten has remained steadfast.

Parents favor the use of standardized testing to hold schools accountable and to evaluate schools. When schools are "underperforming" parents would rather provide assistance than impose sanctions. Of Arizona's two school accountability systems, more parents are aware of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) system than Arizona LEARNS. Despite the substantial criticism of NCLB, a majority of parents hold a favorable view of the federal school accountability system.

In addition, the majority of parents continue to oppose private school vouchers and parents that support other forms of public funding for students to attend private schools, such as tuition organizations and tuition tax credits, are in the minority. Parental opinion of private school tuition vouchers may be affected by the fact that most parents believe there is sufficient choice within the public school system to select the best school for their child.

There are notable changes in parental opinion as well. The percentage of parents who are supportive of students passing AIMS as a prerequisite to receive a high school diploma has increased substantially over the last year despite the fact that the AIMS graduation requirement is approaching this spring. Also, in a reversal of the 2004-2005 results, parents consider placing English Language Learners in classrooms where both English and their native language are spoken as the most beneficial strategy to teach students English.

A number of new issues were added for the 2006 survey. Parents, for example, expressed a commitment to public education by preferring to change the existing public school system rather than find to alternatives from outside the system. Parents also

believe strongly that closing the achievement gap between minority and non-minority students is an important public policy issue.

Finally, the opinions of Hispanic parents compared to Anglo parents show a trend toward a higher degree of dissatisfaction with Arizona public schools and Hispanics support more stringent accountability policies.

Survey Results

The *Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2006* survey consists of 48 questions covering some of the most important policies and issues in public education. The complete survey and responses are in the technical appendix (available on the AEPI website at: http://www.asu.edu/educ/epsl/AEPI/AEPI_2006_annual_survey.htm). For this report, the survey results are grouped into nine sections:

1. Educational Quality
2. Standardized Testing
3. School Accountability
4. School Choice
5. Minority Student Education
6. Language Acquisition
7. Early Education
8. School Report Cards
9. Special Section: The Divergence of Hispanic Parent Opinions

In the tables that follow, all numbers represent percentages. Please note, the differences between the 2004, 2005, and 2006 survey results are *not* statistically significant unless noted otherwise.

Educational Quality

In rating their children's schools, Arizona parents continue to exhibit opinions in a pattern consistent with parents nationally.¹ Arizona parents rate the schools that their children attend more favorably than Arizona public schools in general. Seventy-two percent of Arizona parents grade the school their oldest child attends an "A" or a "B" while only 34 percent of Arizona parents grade Arizona public schools in general an "A" or a "B."

Table 1: Grading Arizona Schools

	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
What grade would you give to the school your oldest child attends?	32	40	20	5	2	<1
What grade would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?	7	27	42	13	5	6

Notes: (1) The “A” category includes responses that rated schools either an “A” or “A+.” (2) Percents may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Additionally, parents hold a highly favorable opinion of the Arizona teachers responsible for their children’s education. Seventy-eight percent of parents grade the teachers in the school their oldest child attends an “A” or a “B.”

Table 2: Grading Arizona Teachers

	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
What grade would you give the teachers in the school your oldest child attends?	36	42	16	5	1	1

Notes: (1) The “A” response category includes responses that rated schools either an “A” or “A+.”

Parents were asked if there was a specific area where Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job. Forty percent of parents identified a specific area and their responses were collected using an open-ended question with no pre-determined categories. Overwhelmingly, the parents who identified a specific area felt that Arizona schools are doing a particularly good job “teaching the basics” to include reading and writing.

Table 3: Where Arizona Public Schools Do Particularly Well

Is there one area where you think the public schools in Arizona are doing a particularly good job?	
Teaching the basics (reading, writing, education in general)	35
Providing high-quality teachers	6
Quality arts and extra-curricular programs	6
Schools are doing fine, no other specifics provided	6

Notes: (1) Percentages include only those respondents who identified a specific area where Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job. Forty percent of all parents identified a specific area. (2) Individuals could provide more than one response and all responses were coded. (3) Percentages calculated based on the number of responses. (4) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the four most often cited responses are listed.

Likewise, parents were asked in an open-ended format to identify the single biggest challenge facing schools in their community. Parents could more easily articulate a problem facing Arizona public schools than identify a specific area to praise: 93 percent of parents stated a specific problem facing Arizona public schools. For the third year in a row, the strongest sentiment among parents is that the biggest challenge facing Arizona public schools is a lack funding and resources. Parents gave examples such as overcrowded schools, large classes, and low pay for teachers as specific funding challenges. A quartet of concerns, including non-English speaking students in the classroom, maintaining high academic standards, lack of discipline and keeping good teachers, are tied as the second biggest concern facing public schools.

Table 4: Challenges Facing Arizona Schools

What do you think is the biggest single challenge that the schools in your community face?	
Lack of funding, resources	20
Non-English speaking students in the classroom	10
Maintaining academic standards	10
Lack of discipline	10
Keeping good teachers	10

Notes: (1) Percentages include only those respondents who could identify a specific challenge facing Arizona public schools. Ninety-three percent of all parents identified a challenge. (2) Individuals could provide more than one response and all responses were coded. (3) Percentages calculated based on the number of responses. (4) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited responses are listed.

Standardized Testing

Standardized tests have become the most visible method by which school performance is judged and presented to the public. Standardized tests are the central academic performance indicator in both the state and federal school accountability systems (Arizona LEARNs and NCLB, respectively). These policies continue to receive support as 68 percent of Arizona parents favor the use of standardized test results to judge school performance.

Table 5: Using Standardized Tests to Evaluate Schools

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Do you favor or oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing?	68	28	5

Notes: (1) Percents do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Arizona state leadership has praised Arizona’s school accountability system, Arizona LEARNs, as a more “comprehensive and fair” determinant of school performance than the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).² Many more parents, however, are aware of the federal accountability system than the state accountability system: 66 percent of parents say they are familiar with NCLB and less than 21 percent

of parents say they are familiar with Arizona LEARNS. Despite criticism of NCLB, 57 percent of parents familiar with NCLB hold a favorable opinion of the federal law. Likewise, 60 percent of parents familiar with Arizona LEARNS hold a favorable opinion of Arizona’s school accountability system.

Table 6: Opinion of NCLB and Arizona LEARNS

	Very Favorable	Generally Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	No Opinion
From what you have heard or read about NCLB, what is your opinion of the act?	19	38	25	15	3
From what you have heard or read about Arizona LEARNS, what is your opinion of Arizona’s school accountability system?	26	34	26	11	5

Notes: (1) Totals include only parents who are either very familiar or somewhat familiar with NCLB and Arizona LEARNS, respectively. (2) Percents may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

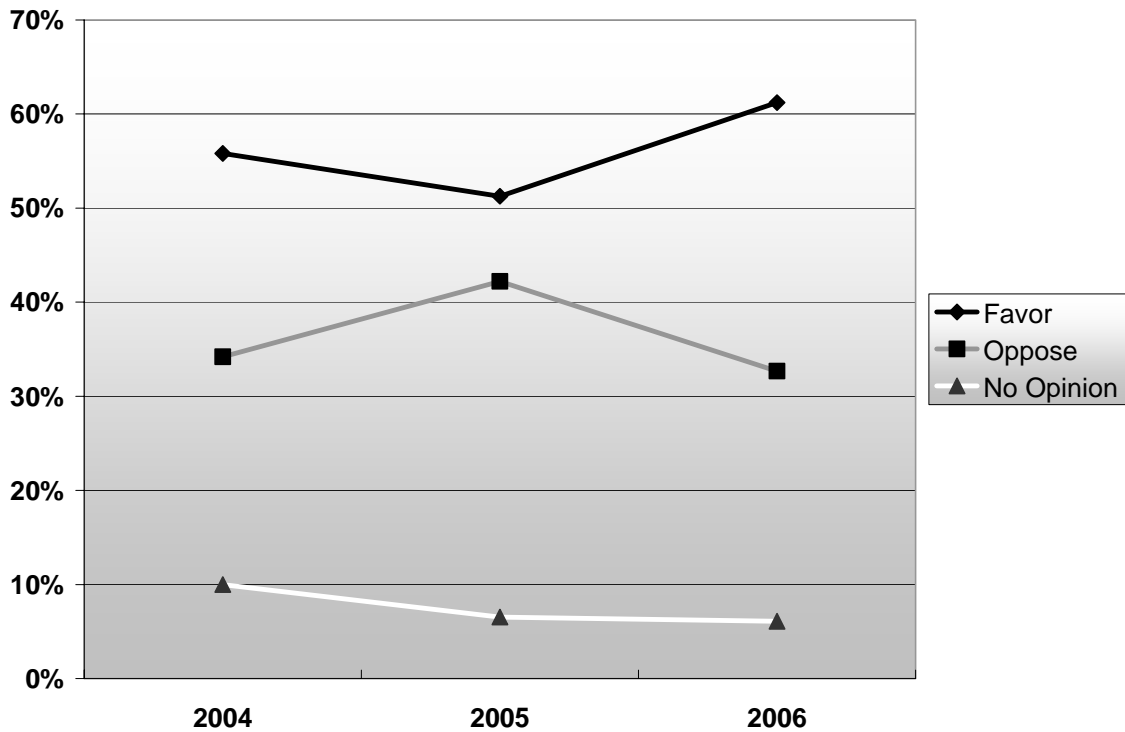
This spring, the Class of 2006 will become the first Arizona students required to pass Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) to graduate from high school. From 2004 to 2005, parental support for the use of AIMS as a graduation requirement declined by eight percent and in 2005 a slim majority of Arizona parents (51 percent) approved of using AIMS to determine whether students should receive a diploma. With the graduation requirement now on the horizon, parental support of AIMS has reversed course with 61 percent of parents now favoring the test as a graduation requirement, a 10 percent *increase* from last year and an 18 percent *increase* from 2004 (see Figure 1).

Since the 2005 parent survey, the legislature has relieved the pressure associated with AIMS as a graduation requirement by allowing course grades to be factored into students’ graduation decisions. As a result, far fewer students are expected to be denied a diploma than had been reported in previous years.³ These more optimistic reports may have helped shift public opinion on the use of AIMS as a graduation requirement.

Table 7: AIMS as a Graduation Requirement

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Do you favor or oppose of requiring students to pass the AIMS test before they graduate from high school?	61	33	6

Figure 1: AIMS as a Graduation Requirement, by Year



School Accountability

State and federal school accountability policies impose sanctions of increasing severity on schools that are classified consistently as “underperforming.” If a school has consistently low test scores, parents favor staffing changes as a means toward school improvement and oppose both state takeovers and converting the schools to charter schools. Parents feel strongly that underperforming teachers should be replaced and are split on whether to replace the principal. Also, one consistent finding across the three annual surveys is that parents prefer to help rather than to punish low-performing schools. Parents favor providing more state funds to low-performing schools and are opposed to withholding funds from these schools.

Table 8: Actions Directed Toward Underperforming Schools

If a school one of your children is attending consistently scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose each of the following:			
	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Replace underperforming teachers	82	14	4
Withhold funds from the school if they don't improve	19	80	1
Provide more state funds to the school	67	25	7
Replace the principal	40	41	20
State Takeover	28	63	9
Convert to charter school	21	66	13

Note: Percents do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

School Choice

Arizona parents have more public school choice options than any other state.⁴ Charter schools, open enrollment, and a public and private school tuition tax credit are all part of Arizona's educational landscape. Based on the public school choice options currently available, 62 percent of Arizona parents feel that sufficient choices are available to select the best school for their child. The percentage of parents who are satisfied with their school choice options in 2006 is consistent with the 2005 results.

Table 9: School Choice Options

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Do you feel you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child?	62	36	2

To learn more about school choice preferences, the 36 percent of parents who felt that they did not have sufficient choices available were asked to identify the type of

school they would choose for their child. Most commonly, these parents said they would, if possible, remove their child from public schools to attend a private school.

Table 10: The Favored School Choices of Parents Who Report Not Being Satisfied With the Choices Currently Available to Them

What type of school, which is currently not available, would you choose for your child?	
Private school	41
Charter school	17
Religious school	12
College preparatory	5

Notes: (1) Percentages include only those respondents who stated that the school choices available to them were insufficient for choosing the best school for their child. Thirty-two percent of all parents felt that the available public school choices are insufficient to select the best school for their child. (2) Individuals could provide more than one response and all responses were coded. (3) Percentages calculated based on the number of responses. (4) Percentages do not equal 100 because the four most often cited responses are listed.

Interestingly, 17 percent of parents who reported being dissatisfied with current choices available to them indicated they would choose a charter school for their student if available. This represents a small sub-set (6 percent) of all Arizona parents. These parents may, however, be particularly well informed because the majority of Arizona parents remain unfamiliar with charter schools. In 2005, sixty-six percent of parents had no opinion of charter schools. Therefore, this year we asked parents if they were familiar with charter schools before assessing their opinion. Fifty-five percent of parents did not consider themselves familiar enough with charter schools to provide an opinion of how charter schools are performing. The lack of familiarity among parents about charter schools has remained a constant finding across all three years of the survey. This finding remains surprising because Arizona’s charter school initiative has been in place for more than ten years and Arizona has the highest percentage of students attending charter schools of any state.⁵ Of the parents who were familiar with charter schools, 58 percent grade charter schools an A or B.

Table 11: Grading Charter Schools

	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
What grade would you give to charter schools?	22	36	25	10	4	3

Notes: (1) Totals include only parents who consider themselves familiar enough with Arizona charter schools to provide a grade. Forty-five percent of all parents report being familiar enough about charter schools to provide a grade. (2) The “A” response category includes responses that rated schools either an “A” or “A+.”

The 45 percent of parents who are familiar with charter schools also were asked about their impression of the standards that charter schools are held to in comparison to other public schools. By design, charter schools are held to different requirements than other public schools because they are granted autonomy from many state laws and regulations in return for increased accountability through both parental choice (charter schools that fail to attract students would be forced to close) and a performance contract with a chartering agency. Seventy-two percent of parents who said they are familiar with charter schools believe that charter schools are held to either higher or the same academic standards as other public schools.

Table 12: Charter Schools Held to Same Academic Standards as Other Public Schools

	Higher	Same	Lower	No Opinion
In your opinion, are charter schools held to higher academic standards than other public schools, lower academic standards than other public schools, about the same academic standards as other public schools?	38	34	24	3

Notes: (1) Totals include only parents who consider themselves familiar enough with Arizona charter schools to provide a grade. (2) Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Parents’ opinions are more solidified about private school vouchers. Fifty-five percent of parents oppose providing public money for students to attend private schools. Currently, Arizona does not have a traditional school voucher program in which students are provided money directly to attend private schools. Arizona policy makers, however,

have implemented policies that make public tax dollars available to private schools through tuition tax credits. Legally and politically, providing money to students to attend private schools through an intermediary organization is considered distinct from a traditional voucher program. Arizona parents, however, see little distinction between traditional vouchers and providing public money for private school scholarships through an intermediary organization funded by tax credit revenue. Fifty-one percent of parents oppose policies that provide public money to organizations to provide private school scholarships to students.

Table 14: Support for Tuition Vouchers

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Do you think Arizona should use public money to provide tuition vouchers to students who want to attend private schools?	38	55	7

Table 15: Support for Organizations to Provide Private School Scholarships

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Do you favor or oppose providing public money to organizations which then use the money to provide scholarships for students to attend private schools?	36	51	12

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

As part of the public debate about school vouchers, proponents often argue that school choice will improve public schools by forcing public schools to compete for students and funding. A minority of parents agree with the logic. In fact, 53 percent of parents believe that providing public money to private schools would be detrimental to public schools.

Table 16: Perceived Effect of Private School Vouchers on Public Schools

	Positive	Negative	Little or None	No Opinion
Do you think providing public money to private schools would have a positive effect, a negative effect or little to no effect on public schools?	25	53	14	7

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

In previous surveys, parental opinion of tuition tax credits has been split and a majority of parents have neither favored nor opposed tuition tax credits. Therefore, in 2006 we employed a more nuanced strategy to assess parental opinion of tuition tax credits. First, parents were asked if they were knowledgeable about tuition tax credits, and a substantial percentage of parents are unaware of tuition tax credits. Thirty-four percent of parents did not know about tuition tax credits, and among Hispanics 49 percent of parents were unaware of tuition tax credits. Of the 66 percent of parents who are aware of tuition tax credits, 62 percent are in favor of using tuition tax credits to support sending students to private schools. In total, 41 percent of all parents are well informed about tuition tax credits and in favor of tuition tax credits.

Table 17: Support for Tuition Tax Credits

Do you favor or oppose:	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Do you favor or oppose tuition tax credits to support sending children to private schools?	62	31	7

Note: Includes only parents who are aware of tuition tax credits. Sixty-six percent of parents reported being aware of tuition tax credits.

Arizona policy makers designed school choice policies to foster educational opportunities outside the existing public school system in order to improve the public school system through competition. Other states have tried different approaches to change public schools by improving the existing system. Parents were asked to provide their opinion of these two overarching opposing philosophies for improving public education; finding an alternative to the existing system and changing the existing public school system. Nearly two-thirds of parents believe that the focus of public policy should be to improve the existing public school system as opposed to finding an alternative to the existing system.

Table 18: Approaches to Improving the Public School System

	Change the system	Find alternative	No Opinion
In order to improve public education in Arizona, some people think we can continue to change the existing public school system. Others believe that at some point we should start over and develop an alternative to the existing public school system. In your opinion, which approach should be the primary focus?	64	28	8

Minority Student Education

Parents were asked a series of questions about the academic opportunities available to minority students. Statewide, sixty-six percent of parents believe minorities have the same academic opportunities as non-minorities. Hispanic and Anglo parents, however, hold different opinions on this issue. A lower percentage of Hispanic parents than Anglo parents believe that minority students are given the same academic opportunities as non-minority students, and a higher percentage of Hispanic parents than Anglo parents believe that minority students have fewer academic opportunities than non-minority students.

Table 19: Academic Opportunities for Minority Students

	Same	More	Fewer	No Opinion
In general, do you think minority students in the school your oldest child attends are given the same academic opportunities as non-minorities, more opportunities or fewer opportunities?	66	16	13	5

Table 20: Academic Opportunities for Minority Students, by Race/ Ethnicity

	Anglo		Hispanic	
	Same	Fewer	Same	Fewer
In general, do you think minority students in the school your oldest child attends are given the same academic opportunities as non-minorities, more opportunities or fewer opportunities?	72	10	65	19

The achievement gap between minority and non-minority students has been a persistent public policy issue for decades. Parents believe strongly that closing the achievement gap remains a priority; 89 percent of parents consider closing the achievement gap between minority and White students as either very important or somewhat important. Only seven percent of parents believe that closing the achievement gap is not important.

Table 21: Importance of Closing the Achievement Gap between Minority and White Students

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important	Not Important at all	No Opinion
Minority students generally score lower on standardized tests than white students. In your opinion, how important do you think it is to close the academic achievement gap between these groups of students?	66	23	4	3	3

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Language Acquisition

Arizona policy makers and stake holders vigorously debate the issues of language and schooling. Since the passage of Proposition 203, English Language Learners are required to be placed in classrooms where only English is spoken after one year of English immersion. Previously, Arizona policy allowed for students to be provided

instruction in their native language in addition to English. According to a majority of parents surveyed this year, it is most beneficial to have students in classrooms where both English and the students' native language are the language of instruction as opposed to classrooms where only English is spoken. This finding is in direct contrast to the 2005 results where a majority of parents felt that it was most beneficial for student to be instructed in English only.

Table 22: Beneficial Use of Language in the Classroom

	Both English and Native Language	English Only	Don't Know
Which do you think is most beneficial to the education of students' whose language is not English, putting them in classrooms where both English and the student's native language are spoken or classrooms where only English is the language of instruction?	56	38	6

The implementation of Arizona's complex language policies has required a tremendous amount of interpretive work by state policy makers and educators. State laws are clear that English is to be the language of instruction. Other implementation issues remain, however, such as when students are learning English should ELL students be educated in separate classes or included in classes with other students (also called mainstreaming). Of these two instructional strategies, parents overwhelmingly believe that ELL students should be instructed in separate classes as they learn English rather than mainstreamed into classes where only English is spoken Anglo and Hispanic parents, however, disagree on the best classroom strategy for students to learn English. Hispanic parents are more in favor of mainstreaming as opposed to separating ELL students while they learn English.

Table 23: Separating or Mainstreaming ELL Students

	Separate	Mainstream	No Opinion
As a strategy for students who are learning English, do you think it is most beneficial for English Language Learners to be placed into separate classes not to exceed one year and given intensive English language instruction or placed into mainstream classes immediately where only English is spoken?	72	24	5

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Table 24: Separating or Mainstreaming ELL Students, by Race/Ethnicity

	Anglo			Hispanic		
	Separate	Mainstream	No Opinion	Separate	Mainstream	No Opinion
Do you think it is most beneficial for English Language Learners to be placed into separate classes not to exceed one year and given intensive English language instruction or placed into mainstream classes immediately where only English is spoken?	74	21	5	62	31	7

Over the past several months, Arizona lawmakers have struggled with funding for ELL students in response to a federal court order to improve education for these students. In a political context, the issue of ELL funding is debated in a competitive environment where funding to meet the court mandates affect the share of a finite resources available for all state programs. To simulate such a competitive atmosphere, parents were asked about their support for additional funding for ELL students given that ELL students may receive more funding than some other students. When ELL funding is framed in such a manner, parents are split on providing additional money to ELL students with a slightly larger percentage of parents favoring additional funding but there is no majority opinion on this issue.

Table 25: Funding for English Language Learner Programs

	Yes	No	No Opinion
Do you agree that the state should provide additional money to English Language Learners even if it means that schools will receive more money for English Language Learners than some other students?	47	41	12

Early Education

Full-day kindergarten remains a heated legislative issue in the state legislature. The issue is largely divided along party lines. Democratic Governor Napolitano has repeatedly advocated for universal, voluntary full-day kindergarten and the Republican legislative leadership stands in opposition. Among all parents—not just those with students in early education—publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten is a popular policy option. Seventy-three percent of parents are in favor of full-day kindergarten.

Table 26: Support for Full-Day Kindergarten

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
Do you favor or oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs?	73	22	5

The long-term benefits of full-day kindergarten programs are a major contention of the legislative debate surrounding this issue. To interject parental opinion into this debate, the parents who favor publicly-funded full-day kindergarten were asked an open-ended question about what they consider the primary benefits of these programs. Parents believe full-day kindergarten benefits students both educationally and socially by exposing them to schooling at a younger age and for a longer period of time.

Table 27: Benefits of Full-Day Kindergarten

In your opinion, what is the primary benefit of full-day kindergarten?	
Educational benefits of getting started earlier	35
Additional class time to adjust to school	35
Allow parents to work, more flexibility	12
Allows more time each day to learn	11

Notes: (1) Percentages include only those respondents who favor full-day kindergarten. Seventy-three percent of parents support full-day kindergarten. (2) Individuals could provide more than one response and all responses were coded. (3) Percentages calculated based on the number of responses. (4) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the four most often cited responses are listed.

School Report Cards

The Arizona Department of Education publishes School Report Cards as an information source for parents about school policies and academic performance. Sixty-five percent of parents have reviewed a School Report Card, but the number of Anglo parents reviewing the School Report Card is significantly higher than the number of Hispanic parents who report doing so. While 68 percent of Anglo parents have viewed a School Report Card, only 52 percent of Hispanic parents have done so. Hispanic parents may be less likely to have viewed a School Report Card because they are primarily distributed online and only 69 percent of Hispanic parents report having access to the internet compared to 95 percent of Anglo parents. If the School Report Card is the primary state-sponsored information source about schools, then the discrepancy between Hispanic and Anglo parents points to the need to make the School Report Cards available in multiple formats. A large majority of parents who have viewed a School Report Card hold a favorable opinion of them.

Table 28: Opinion of School Report Cards

	Very Favorable	Generally Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	No Opinion
What is your opinion of the School Report Cards?	29	49	13	6	4

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

The Divergence of Hispanic Parent Attitudes

Each year the AEPI parent opinion survey includes an “oversample” of Hispanic parents in order to compare the view of Hispanic parents on the issues facing public education to the view of Anglo parents. The Hispanic oversample, consisting of approximately 100 parents annually, is used to track how the opinions of Arizona’s largest and fastest growing minority group have changed over time.

In 2004, no significant differences existed between the opinions of Hispanic and Anglo parents on any of the issues presented in the survey. By 2005, Hispanic and Anglo parents exhibited differences on some issues, but no identifiable trends emerged.

This year, the opinions of Hispanic parents have diverged from Anglo parents in a clear and consistent direction. Hispanic parents expressed a greater dissatisfaction with the Arizona public school system and favored more stringent accountability policies than Anglo parents. All of the following differences between the opinions Hispanic and Anglo parents are statistically significant.⁶

When asked about two major options for improving public education—changing the existing public school system or creating an alternative system—Hispanic parents are more likely to favor creating an alternative system than changing the existing public school system. Sixty-nine percent of Anglo parents favor changing the existing system compared to 49 percent of Hispanic parents whereas 42 percent of Hispanic parents favor creating alternatives to the existing system versus 29 percent of Anglo parents.

Table 29: Approaches to Improving the Public School System, by Race/Ethnicity

In order to improve public education in Arizona, some people think we can continue to change the existing public school system. Others believe that at some point we should start over and develop an alternative to the existing public school system. In your opinion, which approach should be the primary focus?		
	Anglo	Hispanic
Change existing system	69	49
Develop alternate system	25	42
No opinion	6	9

Hispanic parents also are less likely to believe that they can choose the best school for their child within the existing public school system. Fifty-five percent of Hispanic parents compared to sixty-seven percent of Anglo parents believe that sufficient choices are available to select the best school for their child.

Table 30: School Choice Options, by Race/Ethnicity

Do you feel you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child?		
	Anglo	Hispanic
Yes	67	55
No	32	43
No opinion	2	2

Note: Percents may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Possibly as a result of their dissatisfaction with public schools, Hispanic parents favor more stringent accountability policies for students and schools than Anglo parents. A higher percentage of Hispanic parents than Anglo parents support AIMS testing. Eighty percent of Hispanic parents compared to seventy-one percent of Anglo parents favor the use of AIMS testing to hold schools accountable and 70 percent of Hispanic parents compared to fifty-seven percent of Anglo parents believe that students should pass AIMS as a prerequisite to graduating from high school.

Table 31: Standardized Testing Policies, by Race/Ethnicity

Do you favor or oppose of requiring students to pass the AIMS test before they graduate from high school?		
	Anglo	Hispanic
Favor	71	80
Oppose	29	20

Do you favor or oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing?		
	Anglo	Hispanic
Favor	57	70
Oppose	37	25
No Opinion	6	5

Hispanic parents also hold a more favorable opinion of NCLB, the federal school accountability system. Of the parents familiar with NCLB, 71 percent of Hispanic parents compared to 53 percent of Anglo parents hold either a favorable or generally favorable opinion of the policy.

Table 32: Opinion of NCLB, by Race/Ethnicity

From what you have heard or read about NCLB, what is your opinion of the act?		
	Anglo	Hispanic
Very Favorable	18	19
Generally Favorable	36	52
Somewhat Favorable	30	22
Very Unfavorable	17	6

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Finally, while the preponderance of Anglo parents oppose state takeover to improve underperforming schools, Hispanic parents are mixed on their opinion of state takeover as a school reform strategy.

Table 33: State Takeover of Underperforming Schools, by Race/Ethnicity

If a school one of your children is attending consistently scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose state takeover?		
	Anglo	Hispanic
Approve	25	39
Oppose	68	49
No Opinion	7	12

Summary

The highlights of the *Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2006* survey reveal both consistency and change in the views of Arizona’s parents. Arizona parents continue to think their schools and teachers are doing a good job and parents feel there are sufficient options to choose the best school for their child. Across all three years, parents identified “lack of resources” as the biggest challenge facing public schools. The use of standardized testing in school accountability policies, such as Arizona LEARNs and NCLB, continues to receive a high level of parental support. A majority of parents remain opposed to policies to allow students to attend private schools with public funds. Finally, parents remain strongly supportive of full-day kindergarten programs.

Parents have changed their opinion on other issues. With the AIMS graduation requirement approaching in only a few months, parent support for AIMS as a graduation requirement increased significantly. Parents also reversed course on language issues and now support instruction in both English and the students’ native language as the most beneficial instructional method. Most notably, in comparison to Anglo parents, Hispanic parents expressed more dissatisfaction with the public school system and greater support for stringent accountability policies.

Notes and References

- ¹ Rose, L.C. & Gallup, A.M. (2005, September). The 37th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*. Retrieved April 6, 2006, from <http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kpollpdf.htm>
- ² Arizona Department of Education. (2004, September 1). *Arizona schools chief announces 82 percent of Arizona schools makes adequate yearly progress (AYP)*. Phoenix: Author. Retrieved April 14, 2005, from <http://www.ade.az.gov/pio/Press-Releases/2004/pr09-01-04.pdf>
- ³ *Arizona Republic* (2006, March 27). AIMS results won't hold many seniors back., B9.
- ⁴ Greene, J.P. (2001). *Education Freedom Index*. New York: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. Retrieved April 14, 2005, from http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_24.htm
- ⁵ Lake, R.L. & Hill, P.T. (Eds.) (2005, November). Hopes, fears and reality: A balanced look at American charter schools in 2005. University of Washington: National Center for Charter School Research. Retrieved April 4, 2006, from http://www.crpe.org/ncsrp/pubs/2005_HopesFears.shtml
- ⁶ For all 2x2 tables, $p < 0.05$ according to Fisher's Exact χ^2 test. For all other tables, $p < 0.10$ according to Pearson's χ^2 test.

Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2006

TECHNICAL APPENDICES

David R. Garcia
Arizona State University

Alex Molnar
Arizona State University

Bruce Merrill
Arizona State University

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Education Policy Studies Laboratory
Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
College of Education, Arizona State University
P.O. Box 872411, Tempe, AZ 85287-2411
Telephone: (480) 965-1886
Fax: (480) 965-0303
E-mail: epsl@asu.edu
<http://edpolicylab.org>

TECHNICAL APPENDIX A SURVEY METHODS

The survey results in this report are based on telephone interviews with a statewide random sample of adult heads of household living in Arizona. The sample, based on 410 interviews, generalizes to all adult heads of household living in Arizona with children attending public schools, including charter schools. The samples were stratified by county to ensure they were representative of all adults living in Arizona. In addition, 101 adult heads of households with Hispanic surnames and children attending public schools in Arizona, including charter schools, were sampled.

If an interview was not successfully completed after eight callbacks, random substitution was allowed with telephone numbers in the same prefix. Sixty-five percent of the statewide sample of adult heads of household and 69 percent of the additional Hispanic respondents were successfully interviewed. Respondents were given the option of giving the interview in Spanish or English.

The sampling error for the statewide sample when the proportion giving a response to a question is 50 percent (and assuming the 95 percent level of significance) is plus or minus 4.9 percent. The sampling error for the Hispanic sub-sample when the proportion answering a question is 50 percent is plus or minus 8.2 percent. Sampling error varies based on the percentage of the sample that answers a question in a particular way. Sampling errors for various percentages when the sample size is 400 are shown below:

	Sampling Error
50%	4.9%
40% or 60%	4.8%
30% or 70%	4.5%
20% or 80%	3.9%
10% or 90%	2.9%

The questions were designed by Dr. David R. Garcia, Dr. Alex Molnar, and Dr. Bruce Merrill of Arizona State University. The interview schedule was pre-tested and the interviews conducted by professional interviewers at the Summit Group in Phoenix,

Arizona during the period March 18-27, 2006. A CATI system was used to conduct the interviews. The data were analyzed using SPSS.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Arizona Education Policy Initiative
Parent Survey
2006**

Note: The capitalized text is instructions for the survey administrators.

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling for the Education Policy Studies Laboratory at Arizona State University. We are doing a very important survey on how parents feel about public education in Arizona. The survey will take about 10 minutes. You may choose to stop taking the survey at any time. Will you help us by answering a few questions?

Are you the (male/female) head of your household?

IF NO: Is either the male or female head of the household at home?

IF NO: Thank and end the interview

Do you have children living in your household attending a public or charter school in grades K-12?

IF NO: Thank and end interview

IF YES: This survey is very important and you have been randomly selected to represent other parents in Arizona. Your answers will be completely confidential.

Sometimes people don't have opinions about some of the questions I will ask. If you don't have an opinion just tell me and I'll go onto the next question.

1. First, students are given the grades A+, A, B, C, D and Failing to indicate how well they are doing in school. Using the same A+, A, B, C, D and Failing scale, what grade overall would you give the school your oldest child attends?

1. A+ 2.A 3.B 4.C 5.D 6.F 7.no opinion

2. Next, what grade overall would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?

1. A+ 2.A 3.B 4.C 5.D 6.F 7.no opinion

3. From your experience, what grade overall would you give to the teachers in the school where your oldest child attends?

1. A+ 2.A 3.B 4.C 5.D 6.F 7.no opinion

4. The next three questions pertain to charter schools in Arizona, are you familiar enough with charter schools to give them a grade? 1. Yes, 2. No.

5. IF YES, ASK: What grade overall, A+, A, B, C, D or F would you give to the job charter schools in Arizona are doing?

1. A+ 2.A 3.B 4.C 5.D 6.F 7.no opinion

6. In your opinion, are charter schools held to 1. higher academic standards than other public schools, 2. lower academic standards than other public schools, 3. about the same academic standards as other public schools? 4. No opinion

7. Do you believe there is one area in which Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job? IF YES: what is the one area in which you think Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job? ASK OPEN-ENDED AND CODE

8. What do you think is the biggest single challenge facing schools in your community? ASK OPEN-ENDED AND CODE

9. As a parent, do you feel you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child? 1.Yes 2. No 3.No Opinion.

10. IF NO, ASK: What type of school, which is currently not available, would you choose for your child? ASK OPEN-ENDED AND CODE

11. In order to improve public education in Arizona, some people think we can continue to change the existing public school system. Others believe that at some point we should start over and develop an alternative to the existing public school system. In your opinion, which approach should be the primary focus? 1. changing the existing public school system, or 2. finding an alternative to the existing public school system, 3. No opinion

12. Do you think Arizona should use public money to provide tuition vouchers to students who want to attend private schools? 1. Yes, 2. No, 3.No opinion

13. What effect do you think providing public money to students to attend private schools would have on public schools? 1. a positive effect, 2. a negative effect or 3. little or no effect on public schools? 4. No Opinion.

14. Do you 1. favor or 2. oppose providing public money to organizations which then use the money to provide scholarships for students to attend private schools? 3. No opinion

15. Do you know what a tuition tax credit is? 1. Yes, 2. No

16. IF YES ABOVE, ASK: Do you 1.favor or 2.oppose tuition tax credits to support sending children to private schools? 3. No Opinion.

17. Do you 1.favor or 2.oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs? 3. No Opinion.

18. IF FAVOR, ASK: In your opinion, what is the primary benefit of full-day kindergarten? ASK OPEN-ENDED AND CODE

19. Students in Arizona's schools are tested each year, using a standard, statewide, test to determine how they are performing academically. Do you 1.favor or 2.oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing? 3. No Opinion.

20. Arizona students must demonstrate academic competence by passing a test called AIMS before they can graduate from high school. Do you 1.approve or 2. disapprove of requiring students to pass the AIMS Test before they can graduate from high school? 3. No opinion

21. How familiar would you say you are with the No Child Left Behind Act - the federal education bill passed by Congress in 2001? 1. very familiar 2.somewhat familiar or 3. not very familiar or 4.not at all familiar with the act? 5. No Opinion.

22. IF VERY OR SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR ABOVE, ASK: From what you have heard or read about the act, is your opinion of the No Child Left Behind Act 1.Very favorable 2.Generally favorable 3.Somewhat unfavorable or 4.Very unfavorable 5.No Opinion.

23. How familiar would you say you are with Arizona LEARNS - Arizona's School Accountability System? 1. very familiar 2.somewhat familiar 3.not very familiar or 4. not at all familiar with the act? 5. No Opinion.

24. IF VERY OR SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR ABOVE, ASK: From what you have heard or read about Arizona LEARNS, is your opinion of Arizona's School Accountability System 1.Very favorable 2.Generally favorable 3.Somewhat unfavorable or 4. Very unfavorable? 5.No Opinion.

If the school your oldest children is attending consistently scored low on statewide tests, would you favor or oppose each of the following –

25. withhold funds from the school
1.approve 2.oppose 3.No Opinion.

26. provide more state funds to the school
1.approve 2.oppose 3.No Opinion.

27.replace the principal
1.approve 2.oppose 3.No Opinion

28. require the state to takeover control of the school
1. approve 2. oppose 3. No Opinion

29. convert the school into a charter school
1. approve 2. oppose 3. No Opinion

30. replace under-performing teachers
1.approve 2.oppose 3.No Opinion
31. In general, do you think minority students in the school your oldest child attends are given the 1.same academic opportunities as non-minorities, 2.more opportunities or 3.fewer opportunities than non-minorities? 4. No Opinion.
32. Minority students generally score lower on standardized tests than white students. In your opinion, how important do you think it is to close the academic achievement gap between these groups of students? 1. Very important, 2. Somewhat important, 3. Not too important, 4. Not important at all, 5. No opinion
33. Which do you think is most beneficial to the education of students' whose native language is not English, putting them in classrooms where both English and the student's native language are spoken or classrooms where only English is the language of instruction? 1. Both English and Spanish 2.English only 3. Don't know
34. As a strategy for students who are learning English, do you think it is most beneficial for English Language Learners to be 1.placed into separate classes, not to exceed one year, and given intensive English language instruction 2. placed into mainstream classes immediately where only English is spoken, 3. No opinion
35. A federal judge has ordered the state to take appropriate steps to improve the education of English Language Learners in Arizona. Do you agree that the state should provide additional money to English Language Learners even if it means that schools will receive more money for English Language Learners than some other students? 1. Yes, 2. No, 3. Don't know.
36. The Arizona Department of Education publishes School Report Cards for each school in Arizona. Have you ever reviewed a School Report Card? 1.Yes 2. No
37. IF YES ABOVE, ASK: Is your opinion of the School Report Cards 1.very favorable 2. generally favorable 3.somewhat unfavorable or 4.very unfavorable? 5. No Opinion.
38. Does your oldest child attend a 1.elementary school, a 2.middle school or 3. a high school?
39. Does your oldest child attend a charter school? 1 Yes, 2. No, 3. Don't know
40. Do you have a child or children under the age of 6? 1.Yes, 2. No
41. Which of the following best characterizes your household:
1. We only speak English in our household
2. We speak mainly English but another language as well
3. We speak little or no English in our household
42. In terms of race or ethnicity, which of the following do you most identify with?

ASK OPEN-ENDED AND CODE BELOW

1. White or Anglo
 2. Hispanic or Latino
 3. Native American
 4. African American
 5. Two or more races mentioned
 6. other
43. How many years of formal education have you completed – 1.high school or less
2. some college or trade school 3.graduated from a four year college or university
4. NA
44. Do you have access to the internet? 1. Yes 2. No
45. Were you born in the United States? 1.Yes 2. No
46. Are you registered to vote in Arizona? 1.Yes 2. No
47. SURVEY ADMINISTRATORS ONLY: Gender: 1. female 2.male
48. SURVEY ADMINISTRATORS ONLY: This interview was conducted in:
1. English only
 2. Spanish only
 3. Both English and Spanish

TECHNICAL APPENDIX C SURVEY REPORT TABLES

The following tables report the percentage of respondents, by response category, for each question in the survey. The table numbers correspond to the question numbers in the survey in Appendix B. The results are presented by year for those questions that have remained consistent enough over time to yield comparable results across years. In 2004, the survey was administered to public and private school parents. The 2004 results presented below include only public school parents. The percentages in each table may not total to 100 due to rounding.

Public school parents are defined as respondents with at least one child enrolled in an Arizona district or charter school in grades kindergarten to twelve. The number of parents (n) who responded to each question per year is as follows, unless otherwise noted:

- 2004 – 351
- 2005 – 398
- 2006 - 410

Table 1: Parents Grade the Public School Their Oldest Child Attends
What grade overall would you give the school your oldest child attends?

	2004	2005	2006
A+	N/A	6.5	5.1
A	27.1	28.9	27.1
B	44.4	42.5	39.5
C	20.8	16.8	20.2
D	4.8	2.8	5.4
F	1.7	1.8	2.4
No opinion	1.1	0.8	0.2

Note: Question modified from 2004 to 2005.

Table 2: Grading Arizona Public Schools

What grade overall would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?			
	2004	2005	2006
A+		1.0	0.7
A	4.8	6.3	6.6
B	25.6	31.7	26.6
C	44.2	37.2	42.2
D	12.0	10.3	12.7
F	4.2	4.8	4.9
No opinion	8.8	8.8	6.3

Note: Question modified from 2004 to 2005.

Table 3: Grading Arizona's Teachers

From your experience, what grade overall would you give to the teachers in the school where your <u>oldest</u> child attends?			
	2004	2005	2006
A+	N/A	6.0	3.4
A	39.9	33.9	32.2
B	39.9	37.4	41.5
C	15.1	15.1	15.9
D	2.0	4.8	5.1
F	1.1	0.8	1.2
No opinion	2.0	2.0	0.7

Note: Question modified from 2004 to 2005.

Table 4: Knowledge of Charter Schools

Are you familiar enough with charter schools to give them a grade?	
	2006
Yes	45.4
No	54.6

Table 5: Grading Arizona's Charter Schools

What grade overall would you give to the job charter schools in Arizona are doing?	
	2006 (n=186)
A+	7.0
A	15.1
B	36.0
C	24.7
D	10.2
F	3.8
No opinion	3.2

Note: Question modified from 2004 to 2005.

Table 6: Charter School Standards

In your opinion, are charter schools held to ...	
	2006 (n=186)
Higher academic standards than other public schools?	38.2
Lower academic standards than other public schools?	24.2
The same academic standards as other public schools?	34.4
No Opinion	3.2

Table 7: Public Schools Doing a Good Job

Do you believe there is one area in which Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job?		
	2005	2006
Yes	41.7	40.2
No	58.3	59.8

Table 7a: Area Where Public Schools Doing a Good Job

What is the <u>one</u> area in which you think Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job?	
	2006
Teaching reading, reading programs	15
Teaching math	13
Teaching basics	7
Providing quality or motivated teachers	6
Schools are doing okay	6
Providing fine arts or music programs	6
Communicating with parents	4
Special education programs	4
Promoting racial harmony or cultural diversity	2
Physical education programs	2
Teaching science	2
Looking after or taking care of students	2
Teaching English	2
AIMS testing	2
Honors programs or preparing kids for college	2
Motivating students	2
All day kindergarten	1
Extra curricular activities	1
No Child Left Behind	1
Giving individual attention	1
Providing small classes	1
Single mentions	18

Notes: (1) Percentages calculated excluding no opinion, missing, or don't know responses. (2) Individuals could provide more than one response and all responses were coded. (3) Percentages calculated based on the number of responses. (4) Forty percent of parents identified a specific area where public schools are doing a particularly good job.

Table 8: Biggest Challenge Facing Public Schools

What do you think is the biggest <u>single</u> challenge facing schools in your community?	
	2006
Lack of financial support	20
Establishing or maintaining academic standards	10
Non-English speaking students in classrooms	10
Disciplining or controlling students	10
Getting or keeping quality teachers	10
Class size	7
Lack of support form parents	7
Overcrowded schools	4
Low pay for teachers	4
Gangs or violence in schools	3
Administration or too many administrators	3
AIMS testing	2
More or better curriculum	2
Poor communications to parents from schools	1
Drop out rate	1
Extra curricular activities	1
More emphasis on cultural diversity	1
Single mentions	4

Notes: (1) Percentages calculated excluding no opinion, missing, or don't know responses. (2) Individuals could provide more than one response and all responses were coded. (3) Percentages calculated based on the number of responses. (3) Ninety-three percent of parents identified a challenge facing public schools.

Table 9: School Choice Options

As a parent, do you feel you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child?		
	2005	2006
Yes	68.1	62.2
No	29.2	36.3
No opinion	2.8	1.5

Table 10: If Best Choice not Available, Type of School Parents Would Choose

What type of school, which is currently not available, would you choose for your child?	
	2006 (n=149)
A private school	41
A charter school	17
Christian or parochial school	12
College preparatory	5
Focus on special education students	4
Vocational	4
School with focus on students	3
Other mentions	14

Notes: (1) Percentages calculated excluding no opinion, missing, or don't know responses. (2) Only includes respondents who stated that the best school choice for their child is not currently available. (3) Thirty-six percent of parents provided an alternative school choice.

Table 11: Start Over or Change Current Education System

In order to improve public education in Arizona, some people think we can continue to change the existing public school system. Others believe that at some point we should start over and develop an alternative to the existing public school system. In your opinion, which approach should be the primary focus?	
	2006
Changing the existing public school system	63.7
Finding an alternative to the existing public school system	28.3
No opinion	8.0

Table 12: Tuition Vouchers

Do you think Arizona should use public money to provide tuition vouchers to students who want to attend private schools?			
	2004	2005	2006
Yes	34.5	38.4	38.3
No	51.9	53.0	54.6
No opinion	13.7	8.5	7.1

Note: Question modified from 2005 to 2006.

Table 13: Effect of Public Funding for Private Schools on Public Schools

What effect do you think providing public money to students to attend private schools would have on public schools?			
	2004	2005	2006
Positive effect	21.7	30.7	25.4
Negative effect	46.7	19.1	53.4
Little or no effect	19.4	27.1	14.1
No opinion	12.3	23.1	7.1

Note: Question modified from 2005 to 2006.

Table 14: Opinion of Public Money for Scholarships

Do you favor or oppose providing public money to organizations which then use the money to provide scholarships for students to attend private schools?	
	2006
Favor	36.3
Oppose	51.2
No opinion	12.4

Table 15: Knowledge of Tax Credits

Do you know what a tuition tax credit is?	
	2006
Yes	66.3
No	33.7

Table 16: Tax Credits for Private School Students

Do you favor or oppose using public money in the form of tax credits to support sending children to private schools?			
	2004	2005	2006 (n=272)
Favor	33.6	45.2	62.1
Oppose	51.9	47.0	31.3
No opinion	14.5	7.8	6.6

Note: In 2004 and 2005, this question was asked to all respondents. In 2006, the table includes only those who answered yes to the previous question (Table 15).

Table 17: Publicly-Funded, Full-Day Kindergarten

Do you favor or oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs?		
	2005	2006
Favor	76.4	72.7
Oppose	19.6	22.4
No opinion	4.0	4.9

Table 18: Primary Benefit of Full-Day Kindergarten

In your opinion, what is the primary benefit of full-day kindergarten?	
	2006 (n=298)
Educational benefits of getting head start, learn more	35
Gives time to get ready, adjust, learn social skills	35
Allows parents to work, more flexibility	12
Allows more time to learn	11
Longer days would be more stimulating	1
Other comments	1
Don't know, not sure	5

Note: Only includes respondents who favored full-day kindergarten (Table 17).

Table 19: Use of Statewide Tests to Determine School Performance

Do you favor or oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing?			
	2004	2005	2006
Favor	69.2	68.8	67.6
Oppose	20.2	23.6	27.8
No opinion	10.5	7.5	4.6

Table 18: Using AIMS as a Graduation Requirement

Do you approve or disapprove of requiring students to pass the AIMS Test before they can graduate high school?			
	2004	2005	2006
Approve	55.8	51.3	61.2
Disapprove	34.2	42.2	32.7
No opinion	10.0	6.5	6.1

Table 21: Familiarity with No Child Left Behind

How familiar would you say you are with the No Child Left Behind Act - the federal education bill passed by Congress in 2001?		
	2005	2006
Very familiar	17.1	26.9
Somewhat familiar	48.5	39.6
Not very familiar	26.6	24.2
Not at all familiar	7.8	9.3

Table 22: Opinion of No Child Left Behind Act

From what you have read or heard about the act, what is your opinion of the No Child Left Behind Act?		
	2005 (n=261)	2006 (n=272)
Very favorable	12.3	19.1
Generally favorable	42.5	37.5
Somewhat favorable	30.3	25.4
Very unfavorable	13.4	14.7
No Opinion		3.3

Note: Only includes respondents who answered “very familiar” or “somewhat familiar” to Question 21 (Table 21).

Table 23: Familiarity with Arizona LEARNS

How familiar would you say you are with Arizona LEARNS – Arizona’s School Accountability System?		
	2005	2006
Very familiar	4.5	9.8
Somewhat familiar	14.6	11.3
Not very familiar	33.9	25.8
Not at all familiar	45.7	53.1
No opinion	1.3	0

Table 24: Opinion of Arizona LEARNS

From what you have heard or read about Arizona LEARNS, is your opinion of Arizona’s School Accountability System...		
	2005 (n=76)	2006 (n=86)
Very favorable	4.0	25.6
Generally favorable	57.9	33.7
Somewhat favorable	22.4	25.6
Very unfavorable	9.2	10.5
No opinion	6.6	4.7

Note: Only includes respondents who answered “very familiar” or “somewhat familiar” to Question 23 (Table 23).

Table 25: Withholding Funds from Low-Scoring Schools

If the school your <u>oldest</u> child is attending consistently scored low on statewide tests, would you favor or oppose withholding funds from the school if they don’t improve?			
	2004	2005	2006
Favor	21.4	17.8	19.0
Oppose	67.2	75.6	80.0
No opinion	11.4	6.5	1.0

Table 26: Provide More Funds for Low-Scoring Schools

If the school your <u>oldest</u> child is attending consistently scored low on statewide tests, would you favor or oppose providing more state funds to the school?			
	2004	2005	2006
Favor	67.0	66.3	67.1
Oppose	15.7	23.6	25.4
No opinion	17.4	10.1	7.3

Table 27: Replace the Principal at Low-Scoring Schools

If the school your <u>oldest</u> child is attending consistently scored low on statewide tests, would you favor or oppose replacing the principal?			
	2004	2005	2006
Favor	29.3	32.7	39.5
Oppose	49.6	44.5	40.5
No opinion	21.9	22.9	20.0

Table 28: State Takeover of Low-Scoring Schools

If the school your oldest child is attending consistently scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose a required state takeover of the school?	
	2006
Favor	28.3
Oppose	63.2
No opinion	8.5

Table 29: Converting Low-Scoring Schools to Charter Schools

If the school your oldest child is attending consistently scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose converting the school into a charter school?	
	2006
Favor	20.7
Oppose	65.9
No opinion	13.4

Table 30: Replace Underperforming Teachers at Low-Scoring Schools

If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose replace underperforming teachers?			
	2004	2005	2006
Favor	28.5	74.6	81.7
Oppose	49.6	15.8	14.1
No opinion	21.9	9.6	4.1

Notes: (1) Question modified from 2004 to 2005. (2) Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 31: Opportunities for Minority Students

In general, do you think minority students in the school your <u>oldest child</u> attends are given the same academic opportunities as non-minorities, more opportunities, or fewer opportunities than non-minorities?		
	2005	2006
Same opportunities	74.6	66.1
More opportunities	14.6	16.3
Fewer opportunities	6.5	12.9
No opinion	3.8	4.6
Refused	0.5	0

Table 32: Importance of Closing the Achievement Gap

Minority students generally score lower on standardized tests than White students. In your opinion, how important do you think it is to close the academic achievement gap between these groups of students?	
	2006
Very important	65.5
Somewhat important	23.4
Not too important	4.4
Not important at all	3.2
No opinion	3.4

Table 33: Most Beneficial Language of Instruction

Which do you think is most beneficial to students' education, putting students in classrooms where both English and the student's native language are spoken, or classrooms where only English is the language of instruction?		
	2005	2006
English and Spanish	35.7	55.9
English only	56.0	38.3
Don't Know	7.8	5.9
Refused to answer	0.5	0

Table 34: Method for teaching English Language Learners

As a strategy for students who are learning English, do you think it is most beneficial for English Language Learners to be ...	
	2006
Placed into separate classes, not to exceed one year, and given intensive English language instruction	71.5
Placed into mainstream classes immediately where only English is spoken	23.7
No opinion	4.9

Table 35: More Money for English Language Learners

A federal judge has ordered the state to take appropriate steps to improve the education of English Language Learners in Arizona. Do you agree that the state should provide additional money to English Language Learners even if it means that schools will receive more money for English Language Learners than some other students?	
	2006
Yes	47.1
No	40.5
No opinion	12.4

Table 36: Knowledge of State School Report Cards

The Arizona Department of Education publishes School Report Cards for each school in Arizona. Have you ever reviewed a School Report Card?		
	2005	2006
Yes	64.1	65.2
No	34.2	34.8
Don't Know	1.8	0

Table 37: Opinion of School Report Cards

Is your opinion of the School Report Cards very favorable, generally favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?		
	2005 (n=255)	2006 (n=262)
Very favorable	25.0	29.4
Generally favorable	54.3	48.5
Somewhat favorable	13.3	12.6
Very unfavorable	2.7	5.7
No opinion	4.7	3.8

Note: Only includes respondents who answered “yes” to Question 36 (Table 36).

Table 38: Child’s School Level

Does your <u>oldest</u> child attend a...			
	2004	2005	2006
Elementary	38.7	37.4	42.0
Middle school	20.2	18.6	20.0
High school	41.0	43.7	37.1
Refused	0	0.3	1.0

Table 39: Child Attend a Charter School

Does your oldest child attend a charter school?		
	2005	2006
Yes	22.9	15.9
No	76.9	84.1
No opinion	0.3	0

Table 40: Children Under Age 6

Do you have a child or children under the age of 6?			
	2004	2005	2006
Yes	28.2	30.7	36.8
No	71.8	69.4	63.2

Table 41: Language Spoken in Household

Which of the following best characterizes your household?			
	2004	2005	2006
We speak only English in our household	84.3	82.9	79.0
We speak mainly English, but another language as well	15.7	17.1	17.6
We speak little or no English in our household	N/A	0	3.4
Refused to answer	N/A	0	0

Table 42: Race/Ethnicity of Surveyed Parents

In terms of race or ethnicity, which of the following do you <u>most</u> identify with?			
	2004	2005	2006
White or Anglo	77.5	73.9	67.1
Hispanic or Latino	11.7	14.1	18.0
Native American	3.4	3.3	3.9
African American	4.0	1.8	2.7
Two or more races	N/A	4.0	4.6
Other	3.4	2.3	3.7
Refused to answer	0	0.8	0

Table 43: Parents' Education

How many years of formal education have you completed?		
	2005	2006
High school or less	15.6	18.8
Some college or trade school	42.0	41.7
Graduated college	42.2	38.5
Refused to answer	0.3	1.0

Table 44: Access to the Internet

Do you have access to the internet?		
	2005	2006
Yes	91.2	87.6
No	8.8	12.4

Table 45: Born in United States

Were you born in the United States?			
	2004	2005	2006
Yes	92.9	92.7	90.5
No	7.1	7.3	9.5

Table 46: Registered to Vote in Arizona

Are you registered to vote and in Arizona?			
	2004	2005	2006
Yes	92.6	93.7	91.0
No	7.4	6.3	9.0

Table 47: Gender of Parent Surveyed

	2004	2005	2006
Male	45	44.2	41.5
Female	55	55.8	58.5

Table 48: Language Used for Survey

	2004	2005	2006
English	98.6	100	96.3
Spanish	0.9	0	3.2
Both English and Spanish	0.6	0	0.5

Table 49: County of Residence

In what county do you reside?			
	2004	2005	2006
Maricopa	61.5	63.6	58.7
Pima	16.5	14.3	19.8
Mohave			3.7
Cochise			3.2
Pinal			3.2
Yavapai			3.2
Coconino			2.7
Yuma			2.7
Navajo			1.0
Apache			0.5
Gila			0.5
Graham			0.5
Santa Cruz			0.5
LaPaz			0.2
Other	21.9	21.9	N/A
Refused	0	0.3	N/A

Note: This question is not part of the survey. The county of residence is determined through the CATI automated phone system.