

## **Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2005**

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**Arizona Policy Education Initiative**  
A Collaborative Project of Arizona State University,  
the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University

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## Introduction

In 2004 the Arizona Education Policy Initiative (AEPI), a collaboration of Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona, conducted its first-annual survey of parents in a systematic effort to capture parent opinion and establish a framework for tracking parent views over time. Assessing parent opinion is important because no one has a larger stake in the condition of Arizona's schools than parents. *Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2005*, a follow-up to the 2004 report, gives parents statewide an opportunity to make their voices heard on major education issues.

As in 2004, the 2005 survey was conducted via telephone between March 18 and March 26, 2005. The respondents represent a statewide random sample of 398 Arizona parents and an additional statewide sample of 93 Hispanic 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.

A notable difference from last year's survey and report is that the 2005 sample is limited to parents with at least one student attending a public school (district or charter). The 2005 survey is limited to public school parents because the questions pertain to state policies that affect public, and not private, schools. Accordingly, in comparisons between the 2004 and 2005 results, the 2004 results have been recalculated to include only the responses of public school parents. The 2005 survey includes several questions from the 2004 version, as well as a number of revised and new questions.

## **Overview of Results**

Parental opinion remained consistent over the past year. Although there are notable shifts in parental opinion from the 2004 survey, none of the differences are statistically significant.

Parents continue to be pleased with their children's schools and teachers. Specifically, parents identified teaching basic academic skills and meeting the needs of all learners as two areas where schools are doing a particularly good job.

Parents favor the use of standardized testing to hold schools accountable and prefer to provide assistance to "underperforming" schools instead of punishing them. A slim majority of parents remain supportive of students passing AIMS as a prerequisite of high school graduation, but there is increased sentiment against high-stakes testing for students.

Arizona, like many states, has two functioning school accountability systems, state and federal. Arizona officials commonly point out the merits of the state system, Arizona LEARNS, over the much-criticized federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). However, more parents are aware of NCLB than Arizona LEARNS. Despite the substantial public criticism of NCLB, over 50 percent hold a favorable view of the federal school accountability system.

Arizona parents regard inadequate funding as the biggest challenge facing Arizona's schools. In addition, parents do not point to school-related policies and practices as the primary cause of low test scores and student dropout rates. They tend to view home and family factors as more likely reasons for student academic difficulties.

The majority of parents continue to oppose private school vouchers, perhaps because they do not regard providing public dollars to private schools as a means of improving public schools. Compared to last year, considerably more parents expressed

this belief. Support for tuition tax credits, however, has increased compared to last year. Arizona parents have many school choice options available including the largest concentration of charter schools in the country. Therefore, it is not surprising that Arizona parents report that there is sufficient choice available to find the best school for their child. Surprisingly, parents are not well informed about charter schools and do not consider them a significant factor in the state's education system.

A majority of parents believe it is more beneficial academically for non-English speaking students to be placed in classrooms where only English is spoken rather than in classrooms where both English and their native language are spoken. Hispanic parents are less likely to agree with this policy than Anglo parents.

As the debates continue in legislative circles about the merits of full-day kindergarten, over 75 percent of parents have expressed their support for publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten with an even higher level of support among Hispanic parents.

Finally, parents report a high level of involvement in their children's school and almost two-thirds have reviewed the school report card published by the Arizona Department of Education.

## Survey Results

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The *Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2005* survey consists of 46 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 web at: <http://www.asu.edu/educ/eps1/AEPI/Survey/EP5L-0504-101-AEPI-app.pdf>). Survey results are grouped into eight categories:

1. Educational Quality
2. Standardized Testing
3. School Accountability
4. School Choice
5. Student Achievement
6. Language Acquisition
7. Early Education
8. Parent Involvement

In the tables that follow, all numbers represent percentages.

## Educational Quality

In rating their schools, the opinions of Arizona parents exhibit a pattern consistent with parents nationally.<sup>1</sup> Arizona parents perceive the schools that their children attend more favorably than Arizona public schools in general. More than three-fourths of Arizona parents grade the school their oldest child attends an “A” or a “B” while only 39 percent of Arizona parents grade all Arizona public schools an “A” or a “B.”

Table 1: Grading Arizona Schools

	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
<b>What grade would you give to the school your oldest child attends?</b>	36	42	17	3	2	1
<b>What grade would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?</b>	7	32	37	10	5	9

Notes: (1) There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples. (2) The “A” response category includes responses that rated schools either an “A” or “A+.” (3) Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Additionally, parents hold a highly favorable opinion of the Arizona teachers responsible for their children’s education. Seventy-seven 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
<b>What grade would you give the teachers in the school your oldest child attends?</b>	40	37	15	5	1	2

Notes: (1) There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples. (2) The “A” response category includes responses that rated schools either an “A” or “A+.”

Forty-two percent of parents believe there is a specific area where Arizona schools were doing a particularly good job. Parental opinion about where schools are doing a good job was collected using an open-ended question with no pre-determined

categories. Parents identified “teaching the basics” and “addressing the needs of all students” as the two specific areas where Arizona schools perform particularly well.

**Table 3: Where Arizona Public Schools Do Particularly Well**

<b>Is there one area where you think the public schools in Arizona are doing a particularly good job?</b>	
Teaching the basics (reading, writing, education in general)	41
Addressing the needs of all students, including Special Education and Gifted	18
Providing high-quality teachers	7
Quality arts and extra-curricular programs	5
Testing	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. (4) Fifty-eight percent of parents did not believe that public schools are doing a particularly good job in a specific area. (5) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited responses are listed.

Parents most often identified “lack of funding, resources” such as overcrowded schools, large classes, and low pay for teachers as the biggest challenges facing public schools. Lack of parental involvement and quality of education are a distant second.

**Table 4: Challenges Facing Arizona Schools**

<b>What do you think is the biggest single challenge that the schools in your community face?</b>	
Lack of funding, resources	43
Lack of parental involvement	8
Quality of education, standards	8
Lack of discipline	7
Keeping good teachers	5

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) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited responses are listed.

## Standardized Testing

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

Table 5: Using Standardized Tests to Evaluate Schools

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>Do you favor or oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing?</b>	68	24	8

Note: There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples.

In the past year, NCLB has come under heavy criticism and Arizona state leadership have praised the results of Arizona’s school accountability system, Arizona LEARNS, as a more “comprehensive and fair” determinant of school performance.<sup>2</sup> Many more parents, however, are aware of the federal NCLB accountability system than the state accountability system. Over 65 percent of parents are familiar with NCLB compared to less than 20 percent who are familiar with Arizona LEARNS. Despite heavy public criticism of NCLB, a majority of parents have favorable opinions of the federal law.

Table 6: Opinion of NCLB

	<b>Very Favorable</b>	<b>Generally Favorable</b>	<b>Somewhat Unfavorable</b>	<b>Very Unfavorable</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>From what you have heard or read about NCLB, what is your opinion of the act?</b>	12	43	30	13	2



Next spring, students in 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. Since the 2004 survey, two prominent events have occurred which could impact parental opinion of AIMS as a graduation requirement. First, the high school results have been reported twice and, in the lowest performing academic area, forty-nine percent of the Class of 2006 has not passed the math test.<sup>3</sup> Second, the legislature has engaged in vigorous debate about proposed bills that range from eliminating AIMS as a graduation requirement to alternative methods for students to receive a diploma other than passing AIMS. The test results and public debate about AIMS may be responsible for the declining support for AIMS as a graduation requirement. A slim majority of Arizona parents still approve of using AIMS to determine whether students should receive a diploma. Compared to the 2004 results, however, support for AIMS as a graduation requirement declined eight percent. This shift in parental opinion, although not statistically significant, is noteworthy.

Table 7: Using AIMS as a Graduation Requirement

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
<b>Do you approve or disapprove of requiring students to pass the AIMS test before they can graduate from high school?</b>	51	42	7

Note: There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples.

As policy makers have grappled with alternatives to the current high-stakes AIMS policy, proposals to award dual diplomas have received considerable attention. Under such a plan, students would receive some type of differentiated diploma based on whether or not they passed the AIMS test. Parents are strongly opposed to a differentiated diploma according to a student’s AIMS test results.

Table 8: Alternative Diplomas Based on AIMS Results

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
<b>Do you favor or oppose awarding students a different type of diploma based on whether or not they pass the AIMS test?</b>	22	67	11

## School Accountability

State and federal school accountability policies impose sanctions of increasing severity to schools that are continually classified as “underperforming.” In general, parents prefer to help rather than to punish low-performing schools. For example, parents approve providing more state funds to low-performing schools and are opposed to withholding funds from these schools. Although, parents feel strongly that underperforming teachers should be replaced.

Table 9: Actions Directed Toward Underperforming Schools

<b>If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose each of the following:</b>			
	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
<b>Provide more state funds to the school</b>	66	24	10
<b>Replace the principal</b>	33	45	23
<b>Replace underperforming teachers</b>	75	16	10
<b>Withhold funds from the school if they don't improve</b>	18	76	7

Notes: (1) There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples. (2) Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Anglo and Hispanic parents generally agree on the policies toward underperforming schools with the exception of replacing the principal. Anglo parents

are much more likely to favor replacing the principal of an underperforming school than Hispanic parents.

Table 10: Actions Directed Toward Underperforming Schools, by Race/Ethnicity

<b>If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose the following:</b>		
	<b>Anglo: Favor</b>	<b>Hispanic: Favor</b>
<b>Replace the principal</b>	46	29

## School Choice

Arizona parents have more school choice options than any other state.<sup>4</sup> Charter schools, open enrollment, and a public and private school tuition tax credit are all part of the education landscape in Arizona. Based on the options provided in current education policy, a high percentage of Arizona parents are satisfied with the school choice options available to them. Sixty-eight percent of parents feel there are sufficient choices available to select the best school for their child.

Table 11: School Choice Options

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>Do you feel you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child?</b>	68	30	2

Many parents, however, are either not informed or ill-informed about charter schools. Sixty-six percent of parents had no opinion when asked to grade charter schools and almost 20 percent of parents mistakenly identified charter schools as private schools. The lack of parental knowledge is surprising given Arizona's status as a national leader in charter school choice. Furthermore, Arizona's charter school initiative has been in place and widely publicized for almost a decade. If parents are largely unaware of charter

schools, then the results suggest that when Arizona parents consider school choice, they think of options provided by district schools and they are satisfied with those options.

Table 12: Grading Charter Schools

	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
<b>What grade would you give to charter schools?</b>	7	10	8	7	3	66

Notes: (1) There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples. (2) The “A” response category includes responses that rated schools either an “A” or “A+.” (3) Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Table 13: Knowledge of Charter Schools

	Public	Private	Don’t Know
<b>Do you know if charter schools are public or private schools?</b>	58	19	24

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding.

The lack of parental opinion about charter schools may explain why Arizona parents do not consider charter schools as a significant factor in the state’s public education system. Fifty percent of parents feel charter schools have had little or no effect on public schools or had no opinion about the issue. Thirty-one percent of parents, however, believe that the presence of charter schools has had a positive effect on other public schools.

Table 14: Perceived Effect of Charter Schools on Public Schools

	Positive	Negative	Little or None	No Opinion
<b>Do you think charter schools have a positive effect, a negative effect or little to no effect on public schools?</b>	31	19	27	23

Note: There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples.

Parents had more solidified opinions about private school vouchers. Fifty-three percent of parents oppose providing public money for private schools and 47 percent of

parents oppose tuition tax credits for private schools. However, compared to 2004, parental support for tuition tax credits has increased by 11 percent.

Table 15: Support for Tuition Vouchers and Tuition Tax Credits

<b>Do you favor or oppose:</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>Using tax dollars to provide tuition vouchers to students who want to attend private schools?</b>	38	53	9
<b>Using public money in the form of tax credits to support sending children to private schools?</b>	45	47	8

Note: There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples.

Private school voucher proposals made a strong advancement toward becoming reality in the 2005 legislative session. As part of the public debate, proponents of private school vouchers often regard competition for students and money as a reform strategy to improve public schools. Parents, on the other hand, consider providing public money to private schools, through any policy, detrimental to the public school system. Nearly 60 percent of parents believe that providing public dollars to private schools will have a negative effect on public schools. This sentiment is a pronounced change from the 2004 results when 47 percent of parents felt that public dollars for private school vouchers would have a negative effect on public schools.

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

	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Little or None</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>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?</b>	22	59	13	7

Notes: (1) There are no statistically significant differences between the 2005 and 2004 statewide parent samples. (2) Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding.

## Student Achievement

According to nearly every statewide school achievement statistic, minority students as a group score lower than non-minority students.<sup>5</sup> Parents were asked a series of questions about the academic opportunities available to minorities and reasons for the lower level of academic achievement among minority students. Statewide, 75 percent of parents believe minorities have the same academic opportunities as non-minorities. Hispanic parents, however, are more likely than Anglo parents to feel that minorities have fewer opportunities than non-minorities. Fifteen percent of Hispanic parents feel minority students have fewer opportunities than non-minority students while only eight percent of Anglo parents share the same sentiment.

Table 17: Academic Opportunities for Minority Students

	Same	More	Fewer	No Opinion
<b>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?</b>	75	15	7	4

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Table 18: Academic Opportunities for Minority Students, by Race/ Ethnicity

	Anglo		Hispanic	
	More	Fewer	More	Fewer
<b>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?</b>	18	8	4	15

Parents are uniform in the reasons they cite for the minority/non-minority achievement gap and why students drop out of school. Parents who expressed an opinion feel strongly that the difference in test scores between minorities and non-minorities is

due mainly to non-academic factors, namely home background/lack of parental involvement and language barriers. Likewise, parents identified home background/lack of parental involvement as the main reason why students drop out of school.

**Table 19: Non–Academic Reasons for Minority and Non–Minority Test Score Differences**

<b>What is the main reason for the difference between minority and non-minority student academic achievement?</b>	
Home background, lack of parental involvement	31
Language barriers	25
Socio-economic disadvantages	8
Students not working hard enough	4

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 because only the four most often cited reasons are listed.

**Table 20: Reasons Why Students Drop Out of School**

<b>What do you think is the single biggest reason high school students drop out of school before finishing their education?</b>	
Home background, lack of parental involvement	30
Don't see how school benefits them, lack of interest	11
Not motivated, lazy, no goals	9
Leave to make money, support families	6
Not prepared academically, get behind and never catch up	6

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited reasons are listed.

## Language Acquisition

English is not the primary language for almost 17 percent of Arizona public school students. In 2000, Arizona voters passed Proposition 203, requiring that after one year virtually all English Language Learners be placed in classrooms where only English is spoken. The majority of parents feel it is most beneficial to have students in classrooms where English is the language of instruction as opposed to classrooms that

include the students' native language. While Hispanic parents are split on this issue, more Anglo parents feel much more strongly that English is the most beneficial language of instruction.

Table 21: Beneficial Use of Language in the Classroom

	<b>Both English and Native Language</b>	<b>English Only</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
<b>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?</b>	36	56	8

Table 22: Beneficial Use of Language in the Classroom, by Race/Ethnicity

	<b>Anglo: English Only</b>	<b>Hispanic: English Only</b>
<b>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?</b>	68	50

## Early Education

Full-day kindergarten is one of the most heated legislative issues in the 2005 session. The issue is divided along party lines where 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. Over three-fourths of parents are in favor of full-day kindergarten.



Table 23: Support for Full-Day Kindergarten

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>Do you favor or oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs?</b>	76	20	4

The support for full-day kindergarten among both Anglo and Hispanic parents is extremely high, with even greater favor among Hispanic parents. Among parents with an opinion on full-day kindergarten, 80 percent of Anglo parents and almost 90 percent of Hispanic parents support full-day kindergarten.

Table 24: Support for Full-Day Kindergarten, by Race/Ethnicity

	<b>Anglo: Favor</b>	<b>Hispanic: Favor</b>
<b>Do you favor or oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs?</b>	80	88

## Parent Involvement

Parents self-report a high level of involvement in their children’s school. According to parents, 95 percent report being either very or somewhat involved in their children’s school.

Table 25: Degree of Parent Involvement

	<b>Very</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Not</b>
<b>How involved would you say you are in your children’s school?</b>	55	40	5

The Arizona Department of Education publishes School Report Cards as an information source for parents about school policies and academic performance. Sixty-four percent of parents have reviewed a School Report Card, but the incidence rate is significantly higher among Anglo parents. While 68 percent of Anglo parents have viewed a School Report Card, only 50 percent of Hispanic parents have done the same.

The preponderance of parents, 79 percent, hold a favorable opinion of the School Report Cards.

Table 26: Opinion of School Report Cards

	<b>Very Favorable</b>	<b>Generally Favorable</b>	<b>Somewhat Unfavorable</b>	<b>Very Unfavorable</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>What is your opinion of the School Report Cards?</b>	25	54	13	3	5

## Summary

Arizona parents think the schools their children attend and the teachers who teach their children are doing a good job. When students do not succeed academically, parents do not blame schools and they feel the biggest challenge facing Arizona schools is lack of funding. This combination of sentiments may explain why parental opinion is more solidified than last year on the negative effect on public schools of providing public money to private schools.

Parents feel there are sufficient options to choose the best school for their child. But many parents remain either uninformed or ill-informed about charter 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 slim majority of parents support the use of standardized tests (AIMS), as a graduation requirement. But after the first class of high school students took the test with high-stakes consequences and the ensuing round of public debate about the future of AIMS, more parents oppose high-stakes testing for students.

Finally, parents consider instruction in English only as beneficial to non-English speaking students and full-day kindergarten has wide support, particularly among Hispanic parents.

## Notes and References

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- <sup>4</sup> 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](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_24.htm)
- <sup>5</sup> Arizona student assessment results were retrieved April 14, 2005, from: <http://www.ade.az.gov/standards/>

## APPENDIX

### ARIZONA EDUCATION POLICY INITIATIVE

Arizona Education Policy Initiative (AEPI), a collaborative project of Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona, was launched in September 2003. AEPI utilizes the expertise of faculty at Arizona's public universities to provide policy makers and the public with high quality information about Arizona education policy and practice.

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## **TECHNICAL APPENDICES**

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## 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 398 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, 93 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 telephones numbers in the same prefix. Sixty-seven percent of the statewide sample of adult heads of household and 62 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:

	<b>Sampling Error</b>
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 with input from Arizona Education Policy Initiative steering committee members. 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 – 26, 2005. A CATI system was used to conduct the interviews. The data were analyzed using SPSS.

## TECHNICAL APPENDIX B

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

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 people 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

1. Do you have children living in your household attending a public or charter school in grades K-12? (Table 1)

Thank you for agreeing to help with the survey. Your answers will be completely confidential. Sometimes people really 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.

2. First, students are given the grades A+, A, B, C, D and Failing to indicate the quality of their school work. Using the same A+, B, C, D and Failing scale, what grade would you give the quality of the school your oldest child attends? A+, A, B, C, D, F, or No opinion (Table 2)

3. Next, what grade would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?  
A+, A, B, C, D, F or No opinion (Table 3)

4. From your experience, what grade would you give to the teachers in the school where your oldest child attends? A+, B, C, D, F? 6. n.o. (Table 4)

5. What grade would you give to charter schools? , A+, A, B, C, D, F, or No opinion (Table 5)

6. Do you believe there is one area where you think the public schools in Arizona are doing a particularly good job? (Table 6)

7. What is the one area in which you think Arizona public schools are doing a particularly good job? (ASK OPEN ENDED) (Table 7)

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

9. How involved would you say you are in your children's school? 1. Very involved, 2. Somewhat involved, 3. Not involved, 4. No opinion (Table 9)



10. As a parent, do you think you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child? 1. Yes, 2. No, 3. No opinion (Table 10)
11. Do you know if charter schools are public or private schools? 1. Public, 2. Private, 3. No opinion (Table 11)
12. Do you think charter schools have a positive effect, a negative effect, or little or no effect on public schools? 1. Positive effect, 2. Negative effect, 3. Little or no effect, 4. No Opinion (Table 12)
13. Do you think providing public dollars to private schools will have a positive effect, a negative effect, or little or no effect on public schools? 1. Positive effect, 2. Negative effect, 3. Little or no effect, 4. No opinion (Table 13)
14. Do you favor or oppose using public money to provide tuition vouchers to students who want to attend private schools? 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 14)
15. Do you favor or oppose using public money in the form of tax credits to support sending children to private schools? 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 15)
16. Do you favor or oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs? 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 16)
17. Students in Arizona's schools are tested each year, using a standard, statewide test to determine how students are performing academically. Do you favor or oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing? 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 17)
18. In Arizona, students must demonstrate academic competence by passing a test called the AIMS Test before they can graduate from high school. Do you approve or disapprove of requiring students to pass the AIMS Test before they can graduate high school? 1. Approve, 2. Disapprove, 3. No opinion (Table 18)
19. Some people have proposed giving students who do not pass the AIMS Test a different type of diploma. Do you favor or oppose awarding students a different type of diploma based on whether they pass the AIMS test? 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 19)
20. How familiar would you say you are with the No Child Left behind Act – the federal education bill passed by Congress in 2001? Would you say you are very familiar, somewhat familiar, not very familiar, or not at all familiar with the act? 1. Very familiar, 2. Somewhat familiar, 3. Not very familiar, 4. Not at all familiar (Table 20)
21. From what you have read or heard about the act, is your opinion of the No Child Left Behind Act very favorable, generally favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable? 1. Very favorable, 2. Generally favorable, 3. Somewhat unfavorable, 4. Very unfavorable, 5. No opinion (Table 21)

22. How familiar would you say you are with AZ LEARNS – Arizona’s School Accountability System? Would you say you are very familiar, somewhat familiar, not very familiar, or not at all familiar with the act? 1. Very familiar, 2. Somewhat familiar, 3. Not very familiar, 4. Not at all familiar, 5. No opinion (Table 22)

23. From what you have read or heard about the AZ LEARNS, is your opinion of Arizona’s School Accountability System very favorable, generally favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable? 1. Very favorable, 2. Generally favorable, 3. Somewhat unfavorable, 4. Very unfavorable, 5. No opinion (Table 23)

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

24. Withhold funds from the school if they don’t improve. 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 24)

25. Provide more state funds to the school. 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 25)

26. Replace the principal. 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 26)

27. Replace underperforming teachers (2004 question included all teachers, not limited to underperforming). 1. Favor, 2. Oppose, 3. No opinion (Table 27)

28. 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 than non-minorities? 1. Same opportunities, 2. More opportunities, 3. Fewer opportunities, 4. No opinion, 5. Refuse to answer (Table 28)

29. As a group, minority students generally do not perform as well on academic achievement tests as non-minorities. What do you think is the main reason they don’t perform well? (Open-ended question) (Table 29)

30. Many high school students in Arizona drop out before graduating. What do you think is the single biggest reason high school students drop out of school before finishing their education? (Open-ended question) (Table 30)

31. 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? 1. English and native language, 2. English only, 3. No opinion, 4. Refuse to answer (Table 31)

32. 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, 3. Don’t know (Table 32)

33. Is your opinion of the School Report Cards very favorable, generally favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable? 1. Very favorable, 2. Generally favorable, 3. Somewhat unfavorable, 4. Very unfavorable, 5. No opinion (Table 33)

34. Does your child attend an elementary school, a middle school, or a high school? 1. Elementary school, 2. Middle school, 3. High school (Table 34)

35. If the school your oldest child attends is public, does your child attend a charter school? 1. Yes, 2. No., 3. Don't know. (Table 35)

36. Do you have a child or children under the age of 6? 1. Yes, 2. No (Table 36)

37. How many years have you lived in Arizona? 1. Less than 10 years, 2. 10 to 20 years, 3. 21 or more years, 4. No response (Table 37)

38. 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
- (Table 38)

39. In terms of race or ethnicity, which of the following do you most identify with? (Open ended question and coded)

1. White or Anglo
  2. Hispanic or Latino
  3. Native American
  4. African American
  4. Two or more races mentioned (Not an option in 2004)
  5. Something else
  6. Refused
- (Table 39)

40. How many years of formal education have you completed? (2004 survey asked for male and female education separately) 1. High school or less, 2. Some college or trade school, 3. Graduated college, 4. No answer (Table 40)

41. Do you have access to the internet? 1. Yes, 2. No (Table 41)

42. Were you born in the United States? 1. Yes, 2. No (Table 42)

43. Are you registered to vote and in Arizona? 1. Yes, 2. No (Table 43)

44. In what county do you reside? 1. Maricopa, 2. Pima, 3. Other (Table 44)

45. Was parent male or female? 1. Male, 2. Female (Table 45)

46. Language interview conducted. 1. English, 2. Spanish, 3. Both (Table 46)

TECHNICAL APPENDIX C  
SURVEY REPORT TABLES

Table 1: Children who attend public or charter school in grades K-12

<b>Do you have children living in your household attending a public or charter school in grades K-12?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	100	100
<b>No</b>	0	0

Table 2: Parents Grade the Public School Their Oldest Child Attends

<b>What grade would you give the quality of the school your <u>oldest child</u> attends?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>A+</b>	N/A	6.5
<b>A</b>	27.1	28.9
<b>B</b>	44.4	42.5
<b>C</b>	20.8	16.8
<b>D</b>	4.8	2.8
<b>F</b>	1.7	1.8
<b>No opinion</b>	1.1	0.8

Note: Question modified from 2004 version.

Table 3: Grading Arizona Public Schools

<b>What grade would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>A+</b>		1.0
<b>A</b>	4.8	6.3
<b>B</b>	25.6	31.7
<b>C</b>	44.2	37.2
<b>D</b>	12.0	10.3
<b>F</b>	4.2	4.8
<b>No opinion</b>	8.8	8.8

Note: Question modified from 2004 version.

Table 4: Grading Arizona's Teachers

<b>From your experience, what grade would you give to the teachers in the school where your oldest child attends?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>A+</b>		6.0
<b>A</b>	39.9	33.9
<b>B</b>	39.9	37.4
<b>C</b>	15.1	15.1
<b>D</b>	2.0	4.8
<b>F</b>	1.1	0.8
<b>No opinion</b>	2.0	2.0

Note: Question modified from 2004 version.

Table 5: Grading Arizona’s Charter Schools

<b>What grade would you give to charter schools in Arizona?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>A+</b>		1.0
<b>A</b>	6.3	5.8
<b>B</b>	17.9	9.6
<b>C</b>	13.4	7.5
<b>D</b>	4.0	7.0
<b>F</b>	2.8	2.5
<b>No opinion</b>	55.6	66.3
<b>Refused</b>		0.3

Note: Question modified from 2004 version.

Table 6: Is There One Area Where Public Schools are Doing a Good Job

<b>Do you believe there is one area where you think the public schools in Arizona are doing a particularly good job?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	41.7
<b>No</b>	58.3

Table 7: Where Arizona Public Schools Do Particularly Well

<b>Is there one area where you think the public schools in Arizona are doing a particularly good job?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Teaching the basics (reading, writing, education in general)</b>	41
<b>Addressing the needs of all students, including Special Education and Gifted</b>	18
<b>Providing high-quality teachers</b>	7
<b>Quality arts and extra-curricular programs</b>	5
<b>Testing</b>	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. (4) Fifty-eight percent of parents did not believe that public schools are doing a particularly good job in a specific area. (5) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited responses are listed.

Table 8: Challenges Facing Arizona Schools

<b>What do you think is the biggest single challenge that the schools in your community face?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Lack of funding, resources</b>	43
<b>Lack of parental involvement</b>	8
<b>Quality of education, standards</b>	8
<b>Lack of discipline</b>	7
<b>Keeping good teachers</b>	5

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) Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited responses are listed.

Table 9: Parent Involvement in Schools

<b>How involved would you say you are in your children's school?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Very involved</b>	55.3
<b>Somewhat involved</b>	40.3
<b>Not involved</b>	4.3

Table 10: School Choice Options

<b>Do you think you have sufficient choices available to choose the best school for your child?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	68.1
<b>No</b>	29.2
<b>No opinion</b>	2.8

Table 11: Knowledge of Charters

<b>Do you know if charter schools are public or private schools?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Public</b>	57.5
<b>Private</b>	18.8
<b>No opinion</b>	23.6

Table 12: Effect of Charter Schools on Public Schools

<b>Do you think charter schools have a positive effect, a negative effect, or little or no effect on public schools?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Positive effect</b>	34.2	30.7
<b>Negative effect</b>	14.5	19.1
<b>Little or no effect</b>	27.6	27.1
<b>No opinion</b>	23.6	23.1



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

<b>Do you think providing public dollars to private schools will have a positive effect, a negative effect, or little or no effect on public schools?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Positive effect</b>	21.7	30.7
<b>Negative effect</b>	46.7	19.1
<b>Little or no effect</b>	19.4	27.1
<b>No opinion</b>	12.3	23.1

Table 14: Tuition Vouchers

<b>Do you favor or oppose using public money to provide tuition vouchers to students who want to attend private schools?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	34.5	38.4
<b>Oppose</b>	51.9	53.0
<b>No opinion</b>	13.7	8.5

Table 15: Tax Credits for Private School Students

<b>Do you favor or oppose using public money in the form of tax credits to support sending children to private schools?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	33.6	45.2
<b>Oppose</b>	51.9	47.0
<b>No opinion</b>	14.5	7.8

Table 16: Publicly-Funded, Full-Day Kindergarten

<b>Do you favor or oppose publicly-funded, full-day kindergarten programs?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	76.4
<b>Oppose</b>	19.6
<b>No opinion</b>	4.0

Table 17: Use of Statewide Tests to Determine School Performance

<b>Do you favor or oppose using statewide tests to determine how schools are performing?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	69.2	68.8
<b>Oppose</b>	20.2	23.6
<b>No opinion</b>	10.5	7.5

Table 18: Using AIMS as a Graduation Requirement

<b>Do you approve or disapprove of requiring students to pass the AIMS Test before they can graduate high school?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Approve</b>	55.8	51.3
<b>Disapprove</b>	34.2	42.2
<b>No opinion</b>	10.0	6.5

Table 19: Different Diploma Based on AIMS Results

<b>Do you favor or oppose awarding students a different type of diploma based on whether they pass the AIMS test?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	21.6
<b>Oppose</b>	66.8
<b>No opinion</b>	11.6

Table 20: Familiarity with No Child Left Behind

<b>How familiar would you say you are with the No Child Left behind Act?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Very familiar</b>	17.1
<b>Somewhat familiar</b>	48.5
<b>Not very familiar</b>	26.6
<b>Not at all familiar</b>	7.8

Table 21: Opinion of No Child Left Behind Act

<b>From what you have read or heard about the act, what is your opinion of the No Child Left Behind Act?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Very favorable</b>	12.3
<b>Generally favorable</b>	42.5
<b>Somewhat favorable</b>	30.3
<b>Very unfavorable</b>	13.4

Table 22: Familiarity with Arizona LEARNS

<b>How familiar would you say you are with Arizona LEARNS – Arizona’s School Accountability System?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Very familiar</b>	4.5
<b>Somewhat familiar</b>	14.6
<b>Not very familiar</b>	33.9
<b>Not at all familiar</b>	45.7
<b>No opinion</b>	1.3

Table 23: Opinion of Arizona LEARNS

<b>What is your opinion of Arizona’s School Accountability System?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Very favorable</b>	4.0
<b>Generally favorable</b>	57.9
<b>Somewhat favorable</b>	22.4
<b>Very unfavorable</b>	9.2
<b>No opinion</b>	6.6

Table 24: Withholding Funds From Low-Scoring Schools

<b>If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose withholding funds from the school if they don't improve?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	21.4	17.8
<b>Oppose</b>	67.2	75.6
<b>No opinion</b>	11.4	6.5

Table 25: Provide More Funds for Low-Scoring Schools

<b>If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose provide more state funds to the school?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	67.0	66.3
<b>Oppose</b>	15.7	23.6
<b>No opinion</b>	17.4	10.1

Table 26: Replace the Principal at Low-Scoring Schools

<b>If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose replace the principal?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	29.3	32.7
<b>Oppose</b>	49.6	44.5
<b>No opinion</b>	21.9	22.9.

Table 27: Replace Underperforming Teachers at Low-Scoring Schools

<b>If a school one of your children is attending scored low on the statewide tests, would you favor or oppose replace underperforming teachers?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Favor</b>	28.5	74.6
<b>Oppose</b>	49.6	15.8
<b>No opinion</b>	21.9	9.6

Note: Question modified from 2004 version.

Table 28: Opportunities for Minority Students

<b>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?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Same opportunities</b>	74.6
<b>More opportunities</b>	14.6
<b>Fewer opportunities</b>	6.5
<b>No opinion</b>	3.8
<b>Refused to answer</b>	0.5

Table 29: Non-Academic Reasons for Minority and Non-Minority Test Score Differences

<b>What is the main reason for the difference between minority and non-minority student academic achievement?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Home background, lack of parental involvement</b>	31
<b>Language barriers</b>	25
<b>Socio-economic disadvantages</b>	8
<b>Students not working hard enough</b>	4

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 because only the four most often cited reasons are listed.

Table 30: Reasons Why Students Drop Out of School

<b>What do you think is the single biggest reason high school students drop out of school before finishing their education?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Home background, lack of parental involvement</b>	30
<b>Don't see how school benefits them, lack of interest</b>	11
<b>Not motivated, lazy, no goals</b>	9
<b>Leave to make money, support families</b>	6
<b>Not prepared academically, get behind and never catch up</b>	6

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 because only the five most often cited reasons are listed.

Table 31: Most Beneficial Language of Instruction

<b>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?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>English and Spanish</b>	35.7
<b>English only</b>	56.0
<b>No opinion</b>	7.8
<b>Refused to answer</b>	0.5

Table 32: Knowledge of State School Report Cards

<b>The Arizona Department of Education publishes School Report Cards for each school in Arizona. Have you ever reviewed a School Report Card?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	64.1
<b>No</b>	34.2
<b>No opinion</b>	1.8

Table 33: Opinion of School Report Cards

<b>Is your opinion of the School Report Cards very favorable, generally favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Very favorable</b>	25.0
<b>Generally favorable</b>	54.3
<b>Somewhat favorable</b>	13.3
<b>Very unfavorable</b>	2.7
<b>No opinion</b>	4.7

Table 34: Child's School Level

<b>Does your child attend an elementary school, a middle school, or a high school?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Elementary</b>	38.7	37.4
<b>Middle school</b>	20.2	18.6
<b>High school</b>	41.0	43.7
<b>Refused</b>	0	0.3

Table 35: Child Attend a Charter School

<b>If the school your oldest child attends is public, does your child attend a charter school?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	22.9
<b>No</b>	76.9
<b>No opinion</b>	0.3

Table 36: Children Under Age 6

<b>Do you have a child or children under the age of 6?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	28.2	30.7
<b>No</b>	71.8	69.4

Table 37: Years Lived in Arizona

<b>How many years have you lived in Arizona?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Less than 10 years</b>	23.1	18.3
<b>10 to 20 years</b>	23.9	31.6
<b>21 or more years</b>	52.4	48.5
<b>No response</b>	0.2	1.51

Table 38: Language Spoken in Household

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

Table 39: Race/Ethnicity of Surveyed Parents

<b>In terms of race or ethnicity, which of the following do you most identify with?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>White or Anglo</b>	77.5	73.9
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	11.7	14.1
<b>Native American</b>	3.4	3.3
<b>African American</b>	4.0	1.8
<b>Two or more races</b>	N/A	4.0
<b>Something else</b>	3.4	2.3
<b>Refused to answer</b>	0	0.8



Table 40: Parents' Education

<b>How many years of formal education have you completed?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>High school or less</b>	15.6
<b>Some college or trade school</b>	42.0
<b>Graduated college</b>	42.2
<b>Refused to answer</b>	0.3

Table 41: Access to the Internet

<b>Do you have access to the internet?</b>	
	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	91.2
<b>No</b>	8.8

Table 42: Born in United States

<b>Were you born in the United States?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	92.9	92.7
<b>No</b>	7.1	7.3

Table 43: Registered to Vote in Arizona

<b>Are you registered to vote and in Arizona?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Yes</b>	92.6	93.7
<b>No</b>	7.4	6.3

Table 44: County of Residence

<b>In what county do you reside?</b>		
	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Maricopa</b>	61.5	63.6
<b>Pima</b>	16.5	14.3
<b>Other</b>	21.9	21.9
<b>Refused</b>	0	0.3

Table 45: Gender of Parent Surveyed

	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>Male</b>	45	44.2
<b>Female</b>	55	55.8

Table 46: Language Used for Survey

	<b>Percent in 2004</b>	<b>Percent in 2005</b>
<b>English</b>	98.6	100
<b>Spanish</b>	0.9	0
<b>Both</b>	0.6	0