

February 9-12, 2011
501 Respondents

**LESTER & ASSOCIATES
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CITYWIDE SURVEY
FREQUENCIES**

Q.1 Are you 18 years or older and live in the District of Columbia?

	Total
Yes	100
No	-
Don't know.....	-

Q.2 Respondent's gender

	Total
Male	43
Female	57

Q.3 Generally speaking, do you think things in D.C. are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

	Total
Right direction	69
Wrong track	18
(Don't know/refused)	13
Right direction - Wrong track	51

Q.4 In your opinion, which one of the following issues should be the top priority of the D.C. government?

	Total
Improving public education.....	43
Working to improve the economy and create jobs	19
Reducing crime and making the streets safer	11
Providing more affordable housing	9
Providing better paying jobs	6
Reducing taxes.....	4
Reducing the flow of drugs in our neighborhoods.....	3
Preserving and protecting the environment	1
Improving transportation	1
(Don't know/Not sure)	2

Here is a list of people. Please tell me whether, in general, you have a very favorable, favorable, unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of each one. If you have no opinion or have never heard of someone, please say so.

	Very Fav	Fav	Unfav	Very Unfav	DK/No Op	Famil No Op	Nvr Hrd	Total Fav	Total Unfav
5 Vincent Gray	10	59	13	2	4	9	4	69	15
6 Kwame Brown	5	50	15	2	7	14	6	55	18
7 Eleanor Holmes Norton	35	48	8	3	2	2	2	83	10
8 Kaya Henderson.....	4	16	3	0	20	9	48	19	3
9 The Council of the District of Columbia.....	4	53	20	3	6	10	4	57	23

Now let's change the subject:

Q.10 Generally speaking how would you rate the D.C. Public School System? Would that be excellent, good, just fair or poor?

	Total
Excellent	2
Good	16
Just fair	46
Poor.....	33
(Don't know/refused)	4
Excellent/Good	18
Just Fair/Poor.....	79
Excellent/Good - Fair/Poor	-61

Q.11 What one word comes to mind when you think of the D.C. Public School System?

Q.12 Do you think the DCPS has improved in recent years?

	Total
Yes	69
No	23
Not sure.....	8

Q.13 Would that be greatly improved, somewhat improved, improved just a little or not improved at all?

	Total
Greatly improved	15
Somewhat improved	37
Improved just a little.....	17
Not improved at all	23
Don't know.....	9
Total improved.....	69

Q.14 Approximately how much do you think is currently spent on each student in the D.C. Public School system? Your estimate will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.

	Total
\$4,000-\$8,000	25
\$8,000-\$10,000	21
\$10,000-\$12,000	13
\$12,000-\$15,000	8
\$15,000-\$18,000	12
Don't know.....	21

Q.15 Actually around \$17,000.00 per pupil is spent in DCPS. Do you think this is too much, just about right or not enough to adequately fund the public schools?

	Total
Too much.....	17
Just about right.....	28
Not enough.....	40
Don't know.....	15

Q.18 Are you familiar with Charter Schools?

	Total
Yes	85
No	14
Not sure.....	1

Q.19 Generally speaking are you supportive of Charter Schools? Would that be very supportive, somewhat supportive, not very supportive or not supportive at all?

	Total
Very supportive	35
Somewhat supportive.....	43
Not very supportive	9
Not supportive at all.....	6
Don't know/ Not sure	7
Total Supportive	77
Total Not supportive.....	15
Supportive - Not supportive.....	62

Q.20 Do you think the number of Charter schools should be expanded, should stay about the same or should be decreased?

	Total
Should be expanded.....	34
Stay about the same	34
Should be decreased	18
Don't know/ Not sure	14

Q.21 Are you familiar with school vouchers?

	Total
Yes	76
No	21
Not sure.....	3

Q.22 Generally speaking, do you approve of the use of vouchers or opportunity scholarships or do you disapprove?

	Total
Approve	61
Disapprove.....	28
Don't know.....	11
Approve - Disapprove.....	32

Q.23 Low-income families who live in the District of Columbia are eligible to use federally funded scholarships to pay tuition for sending their child to a private school. This program is called the 'D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.' How much do you know about the program? Would that be a great deal, a little bit, not so much or nothing at all?

	Total
A great deal.....	8
A little bit.....	33
Not so much.....	26
Nothing at all	32
Don't know.....	1
A great deal/a little bit.....	41
Not so much/nothing at all	58

Q.24 Generally speaking, do you approve of D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program or do you disapprove?

	Total
Approve	64
Disapprove.....	17
Don't know.....	18
Approve - Disapprove.....	47

Q.25 In 2004, the D.C. Scholarship Opportunity Program became the first program to provide federally funded education vouchers to students. It awarded up to \$7,500 per child for tuition and allowed approximately 3,000 students to attend the school of their choice. Students who received the vouchers could use them to attend private or religious schools of their choice. Most students enrolled in the program would have been forced to attend a low performing school had it not been for the opportunity scholarship they received. The program is funded by the Federal government , not from city dollars, and Congress will vote this spring to re-authorize funding. If funding is not re-authorized, the program will be phased out. Generally speaking, would you be in favor of re-authorizing funding for the program or would you be in favor of phasing it out?

	Total
Reauthorizing funding	74
Phasing it out	21
Don't know.....	5
Reauthorizing funding - Phasing it out.....	53

Q.26 The U.S. Department of Education's (DOE) Institute for Education Sciences (IES) found that Opportunity Scholarship Program student gains had among the largest gains of any of the programs studied so far. The Department of Education's own _What Works Clearinghouse_ validated the research behind the program. Four consecutive studies from Georgetown University and the University of Arkansas also found overwhelming parental satisfaction with the program. Is this a very convincing reason, somewhat convincing reason, not very convincing reason or not at all convincing reason to keep the program in place?

	Total
Very convincing reason	41
Somewhat convincing reason	35
Not very convincing reason	11
Not at all convincing reason	9
Don't know/refused.....	5
Total Convincing.....	75
Total Not convincing.....	20
Convincing - Not convincing.....	56

Q.27 It is unfair that students who live in disadvantaged neighborhoods do not have educational options like other kids from middle and upper class neighborhoods. The Opportunity Scholarship Program gives parents and students the options and possibilities of attending better schools and obtaining a better education. This option should not be taken away from low-income families in disadvantaged neighborhoods. All options should be on the table. Is this a very convincing reason, somewhat convincing reason, not very convincing reason or not at all convincing reason to keep the program in place?

	Total
Very convincing reason	51
Somewhat convincing reason	25
Not very convincing reason	11
Not at all convincing reason	9
Don't know/refused.....	3
Total Convincing.....	77
Total Not convincing.....	20
Convincing - Not convincing.....	56

Q.28 Everyone agrees much more needs to be done to improve DCPS. Yet at best, it is going to take several years to fix the D.C. schools. In the meantime, if some deserving students can benefit from the D.C. Scholarship Opportunity Program they should have the right to. Do you strong agree with this statement, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the statement?

	Total
Strongly agree.....	58
Somewhat agree.....	25
Somewhat disagree.....	9
Strongly disagree.....	7
Don't know/ Not sure.....	2
Total Agree.....	83
Total Disagree.....	15
Agree - Disagree.....	67

Now let me ask you something different.

Q.29 Mr. Smith says the DC Scholarship Opportunity Program is a good program and has provided opportunities for 3,000 students, most of whom are making academic progress and experiencing considerably higher graduation rates than students in public schools. Mr. Smith says many of these students have gone on to college and probably would not have if the program was not in place. Mr. Smith says while the program may only affect a small percentage of the students in DCPS, it is a worthwhile investment because education is the key to success. Congress and President Obama should re-authorize funding and all options should be on the table for children in low-income families.

Mr. Jones says the D.C. scholarship Opportunity Program does not solve the fundamental problems of providing a good education because it only reaches a small number of students. Mr. Jones says Congress would be better off to put the money into the D.C. public school system to improve it for all of the students, not just a few. Mr. Jones says we should address the issues in DCPS and focus on making our public schools better instead of simply providing an opportunity for some students to opt out of the system. Mr. Jones says Congress and President Obama should not reauthorize funding.

Whom do you agree with the most? Mr. Smith who says funding should be re-authorized or Mr. Jones who says funding should not be re-authorized?

	Total
Mr. Smith.....	56
Lean Mr. Smith.....	3
Mr. Jones	30
Lean Mr. Jones.....	4
Don't know.....	7
Total Mr. Smith	60
Total Mr. Jones	33
Mr. Smith - Mr. Jones	27

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes.

Q.30 Do you have school age children attending schools in grades K to 12?

	Total
Yes	27
No	72
Not sure.....	1

[136 Respondents]

Q.31 (IF YES IN Q.30) Would that be the Public schools, private schools or parochial schools?

	Total
Public	62
Private.....	28
Parochial	7
Don't know.....	4

Q.32 Which of the following categories best describes your age?

	Total
18-24	3
25-29	2
30-34	5
35-39	9
40-44	12
45-49	15
50-59	38
60 or older	14
(Don't know/Not sure)	1

Q.33 What is the last grade in school you completed?

	Total
Grade school	-
Some high school	5
High school graduate	16
Some college	15
College graduate	25
Graduate school	37
Technical school	2
(Don't know/refused)	1

Q.34 What is your current marital status - are you married, single, widowed, or divorced?

	Total
Married	43
Single	42
Widowed	4
Divorced	9
(Don't know/refused)	2

Q.35 For statistical purposes only, we need to know your total family income for 2010. Will you please tell me which of the following categories best represents your total family income?

	Total
Less than \$20,000	13
\$20,000-\$30,000	6
\$30,000-\$40,000	6
\$40,000-\$50,000	6
\$50,000-\$75,000	13
\$75,000-\$100,000	12
Over \$100,000	31
(Don't know/refused)	14

Q.36 Please tell me your race?

	Total
African-American/ Black.....	54
Caucasian/ White.....	41
Hispanic/Latino.....	1
Asian-American.....	1
Other/Refused.....	3

Ward

	Total
1.....	9
2.....	9
3.....	13
4.....	16
5.....	13
6.....	11
7.....	15
8.....	15
East.....	54
West.....	46
Far East	30
Far West	28