

# *Juneau School District Parent Survey 2010*

*Prepared for:*  
**Juneau School District**



Research-Based Consulting

Juneau  
Anchorage

*June 2010*

# *Juneau School District Parent Survey 2010*

*Prepared for:*

**Juneau School District**

*Prepared by:*



*Juneau • Anchorage*

*June 2010*

# Table of Contents

---

- Executive Summary** ..... 1
- Introduction and Methodology** ..... 3
- Elementary School Parents** ..... 4
  - Satisfaction with Teachers..... 4
  - Confidence in School..... 5
  - Satisfaction with Earlier School Start Time..... 5
- Middle School Parents** ..... 6
  - Satisfaction with Teachers..... 6
  - Confidence in School..... 6
  - Future High School Selection ..... 7
- High School Parents**..... 8
  - High School..... 8
  - Satisfaction with Teachers..... 8
  - Confidence in School..... 9
  - Satisfaction with Later School Start Time ..... 9
  - Feeling of Connectedness ..... 10
  - Participation in Activities..... 11
  - School Climate ..... 13
- Parents of Graduates and Non-Graduates** ..... 14
  - Post-Graduation Activities..... 14
  - Preparation for Life After Graduation ..... 14
  - Students Who Left the District Without Graduating ..... 15
- All Parents** ..... 16
  - Confidence in School District..... 16
  - Feeling Informed About Children’s Education ..... 17
  - Timeliness of Information ..... 17
  - Preferred Methods of Communication ..... 18
  - Starting Behind, Staying Behind ..... 19
- Sample Characteristics**..... 20
- Appendix** ..... 22
  - Open-Ended Responses ..... 22
  - Other Responses..... 24
  - Survey Instrument ..... 28

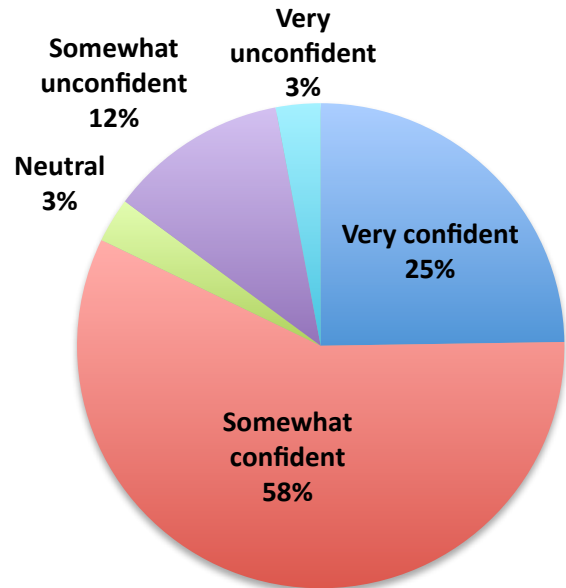
# Executive Summary

The Juneau School District contracted with McDowell Group, Inc., a Juneau-based research and consulting firm, to survey Juneau parents on their opinions and attitudes regarding their children's schools as well as the school district in general. The survey was conducted by telephone in early May 2010 with 452 randomly selected parents in the district, representing 810 students. Following are key findings from the survey.

## Confidence in Juneau School District

- Four out of five Juneau parents (83 percent) feel at least somewhat confident in the Juneau School District, including 25 percent who feel very confident. Just 15 percent do not feel confident in the district.
- Elementary parents feel the most confidence in the district (29 percent very confident), followed by middle school parents (25 percent), then high school parents (20 percent).
- Confidence in the district appears to have increased slightly since 2009, when 75 percent of parents felt somewhat or very confident, and 21 percent felt somewhat or very unconfident.

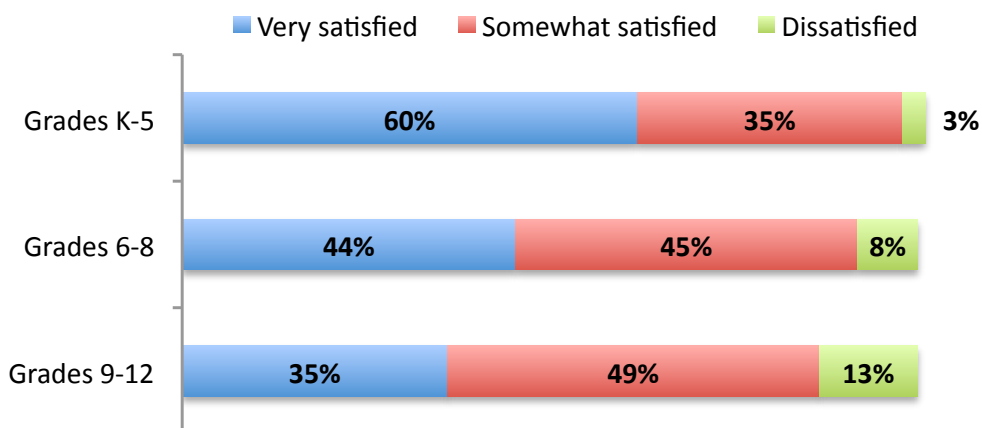
## Confidence in Juneau School District



## Satisfaction with Teachers

- Satisfaction with teachers is generally high among Juneau parents, with between 84 and 95 percent of parents at least somewhat satisfied with their children's teachers. Satisfaction was highest among elementary parents, 60 percent of whom were very satisfied, followed by middle school parents at 44 percent very satisfied, then high school students at 35 percent very satisfied.

## Satisfaction with Children's Teachers

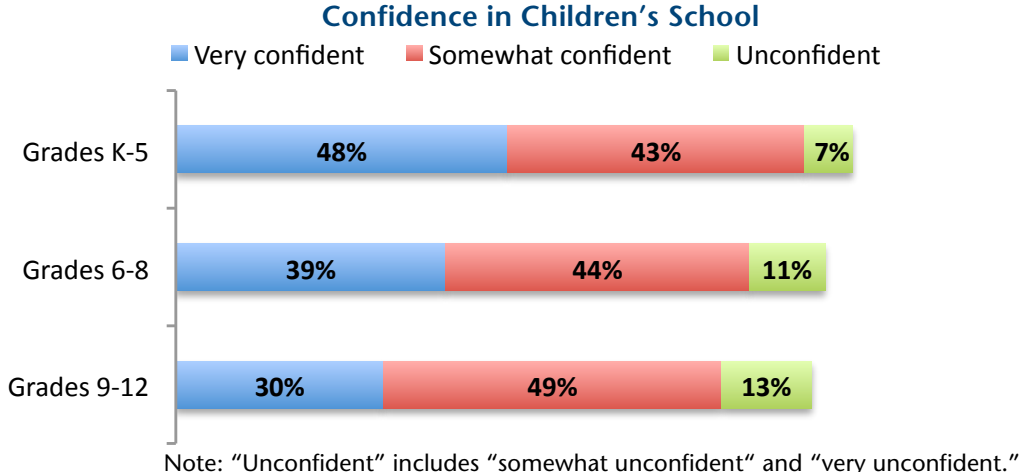


Note: "Dissatisfied" includes "somewhat dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied."

- Some differences existed among sub-groups in terms of teacher satisfaction: non-Native parents were more satisfied than Native parents, and parents who felt very informed about their child’s education were more satisfied than parents who felt only somewhat or not informed. (Further details on these differences are provided in the body of the report.)

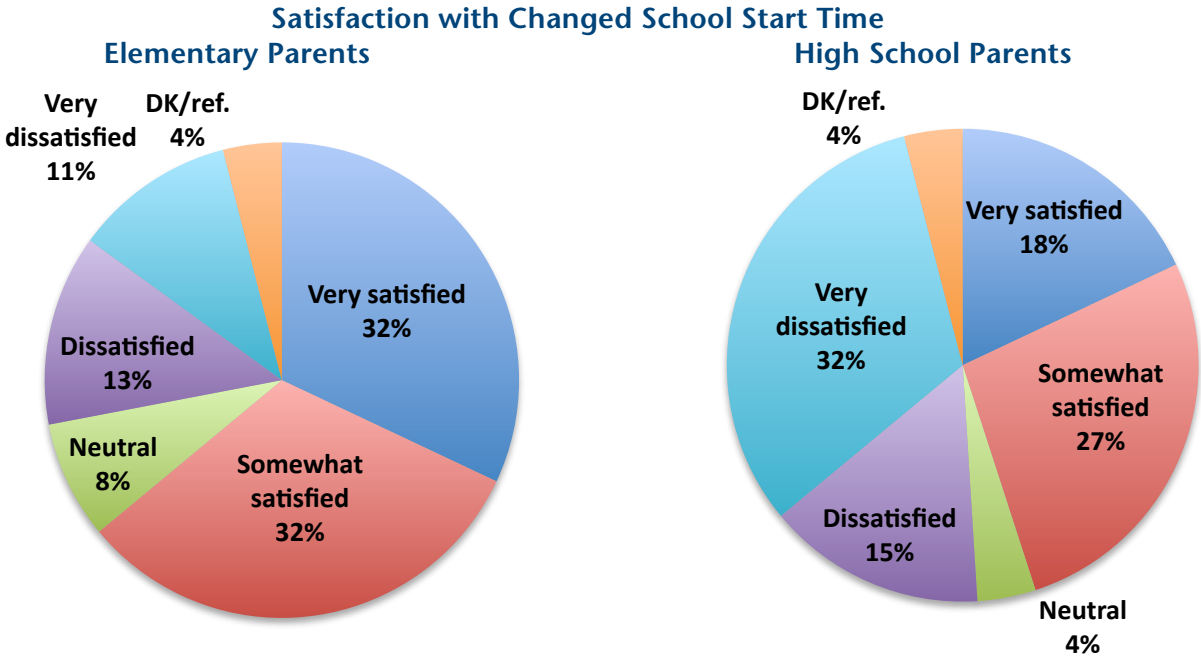
**Confidence in Children’s School**

- Juneau parents are generally confident in their children’s schools, with between 79 and 91 percent at least somewhat confident. Similar to the teacher ratings, elementary parents expressed the highest confidence at 48 percent very confident, followed by middle school parents at 39 percent, then high school parents at 30 percent.



**Satisfaction with Changed School Start Time**

- Elementary parents were much more likely to be satisfied (64 percent) than dissatisfied (24 percent) with the earlier school start time. In contrast, high school parents were about evenly split on the later school start time: 45 percent were satisfied, and 47 percent were dissatisfied.



# Introduction and Methodology

---

The Juneau School District contracted with McDowell Group, Inc., a Juneau-based research and consulting firm, to survey Juneau parents on their opinions and attitudes regarding their children's schools as well as the school district in general.

The survey was designed by the McDowell Group study team in cooperation with Juneau School District staff. Many of the questions were duplicated or modified from a parent survey conducted in 2009; where applicable, results from the two surveys are compared in the analysis.

Survey fielding was conducted in early May 2010. A total of 452 parents were contacted, randomly selected from a list of all K-12 students in the district with parents' contact phone numbers. These 452 parents had a total of 810 students currently enrolled in the district, plus 59 who had graduated in 2008 or 2009. The total sample has a maximum margin of error of  $\pm 4.3$  at the 95 percent confidence level. (Sub-samples have higher margins of error.)

The table below shows the sample sizes for the survey. There are two sample sizes for each age group: one is the total number of parents surveyed for each age group, and the second is the number of children represented by these parents (some questions were repeated if a parent had more than one child within each age group).

**Juneau School District Parent Survey 2010  
Sample Sizes**

	Sample Sizes
Total number of parents surveyed	452
Total number of students in surveyed households	810
K-5 parents surveyed	256
K-5 students in surveyed households	363
Middle school parents surveyed	176
Middle school students in surveyed households	196
High school parents surveyed	210
High school students in surveyed households	251
Graduates (2008 or 2009) parents surveyed	54
Graduates in surveyed households	59

Survey results are presented by grade group: elementary, middle, then high school parents. The final section presents results for the questions asked of all parents. The Appendix includes answers to open-ended questions and uncoded responses, as well as the survey instrument.

# Elementary School Parents

---

The survey identified 256 parents who had at least one child in Kindergarten through fifth grade. These parents had a total of 363 children in those grades.

## Satisfaction with Teachers

- Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with their elementary children’s teachers, with six out of ten very satisfied and 35 percent satisfied. (Parents were asked the question for each child.) Only 3 percent were dissatisfied.
- Parents who said they were “very informed” about their child’s education were much more satisfied than those who were only somewhat or not informed: 76 percent very satisfied, compared to 44 percent very satisfied.
- Non-Native parents were more likely to be very satisfied with their child’s teachers at 63 percent, compared to 49 percent of Native parents.

**In general, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with his or her teachers?**

Base: Has at least one K-5 child; question asked for each child

	<b>% of Base n=363</b>
Very satisfied	60%
Somewhat satisfied	35
Neutral	-
Somewhat dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Don’t know/refused	2

## Confidence in School

- Confidence in their children’s school was high among parents of elementary students, with about half saying they are very confident and another 43 percent saying they were somewhat confident. Just 7 percent were not confident.
- As in the previous question, very informed parents gave much higher confidence ratings (65 versus 34 percent very confident).

### Overall, are you very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or very unconfident with your children’s school?

Base: Has at least one K-5 child; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=256
Very confident	48%
Somewhat confident	43
Neutral	3
Somewhat unconfident	5
Very unconfident	2
Don’t know	-

## Satisfaction with Earlier School Start Time

- Parents were much more likely to be satisfied (64 percent) than dissatisfied (24 percent) with the earlier school start time.

### Regarding this year’s earlier school start time, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

Base: Has at least one K-5 child; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=256
Very satisfied	32%
Somewhat satisfied	32
Neutral	8
Somewhat dissatisfied	13
Very dissatisfied	11
Don’t know/refused	4

# Middle School Parents

The survey identified 176 parents who had at least one child in middle school. These parents had a total of 196 children in middle school.

## Satisfaction with Teachers

- Parents tended to be satisfied with their middle school children’s teachers, with nearly half very satisfied and 46 percent satisfied. (Parents were asked the question for each child.) Only 9 percent were dissatisfied. However, middle school parents were less satisfied than elementary school parents, 60 percent of whom were very satisfied.
- As with elementary school parents, Native parents gave lower satisfaction ratings than non-Native parents (33 versus 46 percent very satisfied); and very informed parents gave higher satisfaction ratings (57 versus 32 percent very satisfied).

### In general, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with his or her teachers?

Base: Has at least one child grade 6-8; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=196
Very satisfied	44%
Somewhat satisfied	45
Neutral	2
Somewhat dissatisfied	5
Very dissatisfied	3
Don’t know/refused	1

## Confidence in School

- Parents also tended to be confident in their children’s middle school, with 83 percent at least somewhat confident, and only 11 percent not confident.
- Parents who feel very informed about their children’s education were more confident than parents who feel somewhat or not informed (52 versus 26 percent very confident).

### Overall, are you very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or very unconfident in your children’s middle school?

Base: Has at least one child grade 6-8

	% of Base n=176
Very confident	39%
Somewhat confident	44
Neutral	1
Somewhat unconfident	8
Very unconfident	3
Don’t know/refused	6

## Future High School Selection

- The children in surveyed households were about equally likely to attend Juneau Douglas High School and Thunder Mountain High School. The choice of future high school was uncertain for 13 percent of students.

### Can you tell me which high school this student is most likely to attend?

Base: Has at least one child grade 6-8; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=196
Juneau-Douglas HS	44%
Thunder Mountain HS	42
Other	1
Don't know/refused	13

- Location was the most important factor in the decision of which high school to attend, mentioned by 59 percent of parents. Curriculum was the second most-common factor, followed by friends, sports/activities, teachers, and siblings.
- Other responses included several mentions of special needs students and mentions of specific programs (AP and honor classes, drama, orchestra, music, Tlingit), among others. A full list of other responses can be found in the Appendix.
- Location was mentioned more often by parents of Thunder Mountain-bound students (76 percent, compared to 52 percent of parents of JDHS-bound students). Sports/activities was mentioned more often by parents of JDHS-bound students (18 versus 4 percent).
- A similar question was asked on the 2009 survey. The number one response was location, mentioned by 47 percent of parents. The second most-common response was themed academies/learning communities, mentioned by 16 percent. All other responses were mentioned by less than 10 percent of respondents. Direct comparison is difficult due to the difference in question style; in 2009, a list of potential reasons was read to respondents, whereas the 2010 question was asked in an open-ended style.

### What are the two most important factors in the decision of which high school your children will attend?

Base: Has at least one child grade 6-8

	% of Base n=175
Location	59%
Curriculum	23
Friends	10
Sports/activities	10
Teachers	10
Siblings	10
Themed academics	6
Student's decision	4
Learning communities	2
Other	22
Don't know/refused	6

# High School Parents

The survey identified 210 parents who had at least one child in high school. These parents had a total of 251 children in high school.

## High School

- Nearly two-thirds of children in surveyed households attend JDHS, while 34 percent attend TMHS and 3 percent attend Ya'Koos. These figures closely reflect the actual attendance figures of 58 percent for JDHS, 33 percent for TMHS, and 8 percent for Ya'Koos.

### Which high school does he or she attend?

Base: Has at least one child grade 9-12; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=251
Juneau-Douglas HS	63%
Thunder Mountain HS	34
Ya'Koos	3
Don't know/refused	-

## Satisfaction with Teachers

- Parents tended to be satisfied with their high school student's teachers, with 84 percent at least somewhat satisfied and only 13 percent dissatisfied. However, satisfaction ratings were lower than for either middle school or elementary students. Just over one-third of high school parents (35 percent) were very satisfied, compared to 60 percent of K-5 parents and 44 percent of middle school parents.
- As with middle and elementary school parents, non-Native parents were more satisfied than Native parents with their children's teachers: 50 versus 34 percent very satisfied. Also similar to previous results, very informed parents were more satisfied (46 versus 28 percent).

### In general, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with his or her teachers?

Base: Has at least one child grade 9-12; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=251
Very satisfied	35%
Somewhat satisfied	49
Neutral	2
Somewhat dissatisfied	10
Very dissatisfied	3
Don't know/refused	1

## Confidence in School

- The vast majority of high school parents expressed confidence in their high school students' school, with 79 percent confident and 13 percent unconfident. As with satisfaction with teachers, confidence levels were lower among high school parents (30 percent very confident) compared with middle school parents (39 percent very confident) and elementary school parents (48 percent very confident).
- Confidence was somewhat higher among TMHS parents, with 36 percent very confident compared to 27 percent of JDHS parents. Ten percent of TMHS parents were unconfident, compared to 15 percent of JDHS parents.
- Parents who felt very informed about their children's education were much more likely to feel very confident in their children's school (47 percent, versus 19 percent of those who felt only somewhat or not informed).

### Overall, are you very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or very unconfident with your children's school?

Base: Has at least one child grade 9-12; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=251
Very confident	30%
Somewhat confident	49
Neutral	3
Somewhat unconfident	9
Very unconfident	4
Don't know/refused	4

## Satisfaction with Later School Start Time

- High school parents were about evenly split on this year's later school start time, with 45 percent satisfied and 47 percent dissatisfied. (High school parents were less satisfied with the changed start time than elementary parents, 64 percent of whom were satisfied and 24 percent dissatisfied.)
- Parents of JDHS and TMHS students gave similar satisfaction ratings to the later school start time.

### Regarding this year's later school start time, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

Base: Has at least one child grade 9-12

	% of Base n=213
Very satisfied	18%
Somewhat satisfied	27
Neutral	4
Somewhat dissatisfied	15
Very dissatisfied	32
Don't know/refused	4

- Sports/activities and after-school activities were the top reasons for dissatisfaction with the later school start time, followed by disruptive to home/family life and not enough time for homework.
- Other responses included “too much freedom,” “cuts out teaching time,” and “not a reflection of real life.” A complete list of other responses, along with the verbatim responses that were grouped into the responses below, can be found in the Appendix.

**Why aren't you satisfied?**

Base: Dissatisfied with later school start time

	<b>% of Base n=98</b>
Sports/activities	29%
After school job	29
Disruptive to home/family life	18
Not enough time for homework	18
Transportation	12
Less sleep/stay up late	12
Child/sibling care	11
Other	25
Don't know/refused	4

**Feeling of Connectedness**

- About four out of five high school parents believe their students feel at least somewhat connected to their school, while 20 percent were perceived as feeling disconnected.
- Parents of JDHS students were twice as likely to say their child feels disconnected when compared to parents of TMHS students (24 versus 11 percent).
- Native and non-Native parents gave similar ratings to their children’s feeling of connectedness.
- This question was asked of all parents in 2009, not just high school parents. The question was also worded slightly differently. In any case, 44 percent of students were said to be “very connected/involved” 41 percent were said to be “somewhat connected/involved,” 11 percent were said to be “somewhat disconnected/not involved,” and 3 percent were said to be “very disconnected/not involved.” These results are comparable to the percentages in 2010.

**Would you say that this student feels very connected, somewhat connected, somewhat disconnected, or very disconnected from their school?**

Base: Has at least one child grade 9-12; question asked for each child

	<b>% of Base n=251</b>
Very connected	40%
Somewhat connected	39
Neutral	<1
Somewhat disconnected	16
Very disconnected	4
Don't know/refused	1

- Parents of children perceived as disconnected cited relationship with teachers as the most common problem, followed by not engaging/challenging, social problems, and doesn't like school.
- Other responses included "no school spirit," "not into activities," and "just moved here," among others. A complete list of other responses can be found in the Appendix.

**Why do you think this student does not feel connected to their school?**  
 Base: Student feels disconnected

	% of Base n=50
Relationship with teachers	33%
Not engaging/challenging	23
Social problems	21
Doesn't like school	19
Home-schooled	4
Other	27
Don't know/refused	4

**Participation in Activities**

- Three-quarters of students in the surveyed households participated in school district-sponsored sports or other extra-curricular activities during the last school year.
- Native parents reported a much lower rate of participation among their children: 50 percent, compared to 78 percent reported by non-Native parents.
- JDHS and TMHS parents reported similar rates of participation (76 and 80 percent, respectively).
- A similar question was asked in 2009: "Do your children currently participate in Juneau School District sponsored sports or other extra-curricular activities?" In response, 63 percent of students were reported to be participating. This is lower than the 2010 rate of 74 percent, but the difference is likely due to the use of the word "currently" in the 2009 question, as opposed to "at any point in the last school year."

**At any point during the last school year, did he/she participate in Juneau School District-sponsored sports or other extra-curricular activities?**  
 Base: Has at least one child grade 9-12; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=251
Yes	74%
No	26
Don't know/refused	-

- The most common reason cited for students not participating in sports or activities was “not interested.” Other activities including after-school job, non-school activities, and homework accounted for the bulk of additional responses.
- Cost was only mentioned by 2 percent of parents as a reason for their student not participating. (While the 2009 survey included a similar question, for which 7 percent of parents mentioned cost, the difference is likely due to the fact that the 2009 survey included cost as a suggested response in the question.)
- Other responses included “drug testing policy, invasion of privacy,” and “homeschooled,” among others. A list of other responses can be found in the Appendix.

**What are the main reasons your child didn’t participate in any school-sponsored activities?**  
 Base: Student does not participate

	<b>% of Base n=64</b>
Not interested	52%
After-school job	6
Other (non-school) activities	6
Busy with homework	4
No time	3
Child’s lack of ability	3
Don’t like programs offered	3
Cost too much	2
Lack of transportation	-
Other	21
Don’t know/refused	14

## School Climate

Parents were read a series of four statements related to school climate and asked whether they agreed or disagreed.

- The statement with the highest level of agreement was “My student’s school encourages mutual respect between students and school personnel:” 85 percent of parents agreed and only 13 percent disagreed.
- Parents also tended to agree with the statements “My student’s teachers know his or her academic abilities well” (83 percent agreement) and “My student’s school provides a personal, caring environment” (80 percent agreement).
- The statement with the lowest level of agreement was “My student’s teachers are familiar with his or her life outside of school,” with 52 percent agreeing and 42 percent disagreeing.
- Native parents were more likely to strongly agree with the statement “My student’s school provides a personal, caring environment” (36 versus 20 percent).
- TMHS parents were more likely to agree with the statement “My student’s school provides a personal, caring environment” and less likely to agree with the statement “My student’s teachers are familiar with his or her life outside of school” when compared to JDHS parents. Otherwise responses between the two groups were similar.

**Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements as they apply to your child’s high school.**  
Question asked for each child

N=251	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don’t know/Refused
My student’s school provides a personal, caring environment.	23%	57%	16%	4%	3%
My student’s school encourages mutual respect between students and school personnel.	23	62	9	4	5
My student’s teachers know his or her academic abilities well.	25	58	13	3	4
My student’s teachers are familiar with his or her life outside of school.	12	40	32	10	11

# Parents of Graduates and Non-Graduates

---

The survey identified 54 parents who had at least one child who graduated in 2008 or 2009. These parents had a total of 59 children who had graduated. The survey also identified eight parents with a child who had left the school district in 2008 or 2009 without graduating.

## Post-Graduation Activities

- Two-thirds of students who had graduated had gone on to college, while 28 percent were employed as their main activity. No parents mentioned training, military, or other activities.
- When this question was asked in the 2009 survey, 65 percent of students had gone on to college; 11 percent had gotten a job; 10 percent were receiving training; and 4 percent had joined the military.

### What was his/her main activity in the year following graduation?

Base: At least one child graduated in 2008 or 2009; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=59
College	67%
Job	28
Training	-
Military	-
Other	-
Don't know/refused	11

## Preparation for Life After Graduation

- Four out of ten parents thought the Juneau School District had prepared their student well or very well for life after graduation, while another 37 percent said the district had prepared them “adequately.” Sixteen percent felt the district had prepared them poorly or very poorly.
- When a similar question was asked in the 2009 survey, 68 percent of respondents said that the district had prepared the student well for “their post-secondary experience.” It is difficult to compare the results directly, because the previous question was yes-or-no rather than scaled.

### Do you feel the Juneau School District prepared this student very well, well, adequately, poorly, or very poorly for their life after graduation?

Base: At least one child graduated in 2008 or 2009; question asked for each child

	% of Base n=59
Very well	17%
Well	27
Adequately	37
Poorly	14
Very poorly	2
Don't know/refused	3

## Students Who Left the District Without Graduating

- Only eight parents reported having students who left the school district without graduating. Below are the reasons their parents cited for leaving (one response per parent).

Had a child
Transferred to different district
Bullying at high school, not enough time
Bullying situation, later resolved
Couldn't pass exam
Didn't feel like it
Problems with authority
Put into home school-bridge program

This section presents results to questions asked of all 452 parents contacted for the survey. In total, these parents reported 810 students in their households currently enrolled in the Juneau School District.

## Confidence in School District

- Four out of five Juneau School District parents (83 percent) feel at least somewhat confident in the Juneau School District, including 25 percent who feel very confident. Fifteen percent do not feel confident in the district.
- In keeping with results throughout the survey, elementary parents expressed the highest confidence in the Juneau School District (29 percent very confident), followed by middle school parents (25 percent), then high school parents (20 percent very confident). In general, however, most parents were at least somewhat confident (85 percent among elementary parents, 81 percent among middle school parents, and 77 percent among high school parents).
- Parents who feel very informed about their children’s education are much more likely to feel very confident in the Juneau School District (42 percent, versus 9 percent of other parents).
- This question was asked of parents in the 2009 survey. In response, 24 percent were very confident (compared to 25 percent in 2010); 51 percent were somewhat confident (compared to 58 percent in 2010); 16 percent were somewhat unconfident (compared to 12 percent in 2010); and 5 percent were very unconfident (compared to 3 percent in 2010). Confidence appears to have increased slightly since last year.

### Overall, are you very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or very unconfident in the Juneau School District?

	% of Total n=452
Very confident	25%
Somewhat confident	58
Neutral	3
Somewhat unconfident	12
Very unconfident	3
Don't know/refused	<1

- Parents who said they were somewhat or very unconfident in the Juneau School District were asked why. A list of verbatim responses can be found in the Appendix. Responses covered a wide variety of themes, including:
  - Lack of communication
  - Lack of discipline
  - Lack of academic rigor
  - Problems with teachers
  - High drop-out rate
  - Principal turnover

## Feeling Informed About Children’s Education

- About half of Juneau School District parents felt very informed about their children’s education, while a similar number felt somewhat informed. Only 6 percent did not feel informed.
- Parents of elementary, middle, and high school students responded similarly, although high school parents were slightly less likely to feel very informed (39 percent, compared to 46 percent of elementary and 48 percent of middle school parents). There was no difference between JDHS and TMHS parents’ responses.
- As noted earlier in the report, parents who felt very informed tended to feel more confident in their children’s schools and more satisfied with their children’s teachers.

### Overall, do you feel very informed, somewhat informed, or not informed about your children’s education?

	% of Total n=452
Very informed	46%
Somewhat informed	47
Not informed	6
Don’t know/refused	1

## Timeliness of Information

- Over one-third of parents felt the information they received was very timely, and over one-half felt it was somewhat timely. Just 7 percent felt the information was not timely.
- High school parents were slightly less likely to feel the information they receive is very timely (29 percent, compared to 38 percent of elementary school parents and 39 percent of middle school parents). There was little difference in responses between TMHS and JDHS parents.
- Very informed parents were much more likely to feel the information they receive is very timely (58 percent, compared to 19 percent of other parents).

### Overall, is the information you receive about your children’s education very timely, somewhat timely, or not timely?

	% of Total n=452
Very timely	37%
Somewhat timely	54
Not timely	7
Don’t know/refused	1

## Preferred Methods of Communication

- By far, the most preferred method for receiving information from teachers was email, selected by 71 percent of parents. Other methods, including teacher phone calls, letters, and conferences, were each selected by one-third of parents.
- Other responses included six mentions of “PowerSchool.” A list of all other responses can be found in the Appendix.
- Parents of different age children tended to respond similarly on the preferred methods of communication, although elementary parents were more likely to favor letters sent home (38 percent, versus 26 percent of middle school parents and 22 percent of high school parents).

### Which of the following are the best ways for you to receive information from your children’s teachers?

	% of Total n=451
Email	71%
Teacher phone calls	34
Letters sent home	31
Parent/teacher conference	29
Other	4
Don’t know/refused	<1

- Two-thirds of parents selected email as a preferred method of receiving information from the Juneau School District office. Automated phone calls were chosen by half of parents, while letters sent home were chosen by one-third of parents.

### Which of the following are the best ways for you to receive information from the Juneau School District office?

	% of Total n=451
Email	65%
Automated phone calls	48
Letters sent home	34
Parent/teacher conference	12
School district website	12
Radio	9
Newspaper	6
Other	<1
Don’t know/refused	-

## Starting Behind, Staying Behind

- Parents were asked a question about success in school, to compare to national survey statistics. About four in ten parents felt that a child starting kindergarten with few basic skills will catch up to other children within a year or two, while 35 percent felt the child will stay behind throughout their school years. One-quarter did not know or did not answer. (Research has shown that children starting with few basic skills will stay behind throughout their school years, and that most parents believe otherwise.)
- Parents with a higher level of education were more likely to believe that children who start behind will stay behind (48 percent of MA/PhD holders, compared to 39 percent of college graduates and 30 percent of high school graduates).

**I'd like to ask your opinion on how a child's success in school is affected by beginning kindergarten with very few basic skills. Do you believe a child with few skills will catch up to other children within a year or two, or do you believe the child with few skills will stay behind other children throughout their kindergarten, middle, and high school years?**

	<b>% of Total n=452</b>
Catch up within year or two	41%
Behind through school years	35
Don't know/refused	24

# Sample Characteristics

---

- The survey included a question on parent ethnicity. Surveyed parents were most likely to be White/Caucasian at 67 percent, followed by Alaska Native/American Indian at 21 percent.
- The average household size was 4.0 people.
- Women accounted for 76 percent of survey respondents.

## Demographics

	% of Total
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
White	67%
Alaska Native/American Indian	21
Asian	6
Hispanic or Latino	3
Pacific Islander/Pacific Islander	3
Black or African American	<1
<b>Household size</b>	
One	1%
Two	6
Three	23
Four	40
Five	19
Six plus	11
Average household size	4.0
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	24%
Female	76

- The table shows the percentage of the total sample with children in their household by age group: elementary, middle, and high school. It also shows the average number of children of each age group based to all surveyed households.

### Ages of Children in Household

	% of Total n=452
Has grade K-5 children in household	57%
Average number of grade K-5 children	0.8
Has grade 6-8 children in household	49%
Average number of grade 6-8 children	0.4
Has grade 9-12 children in household	47%
Average number of grade 9-12 children	0.6
Had children in Class of 2008 or 2009	12%
Average number of graduates	0.1
Had children who did not graduate	2%

- Over one-third of parents had attained a Bachelor’s degree, including 15 percent who had attained a Master’s, PhD, or other advanced degree.

### Education Level

	% of Total n=452
HS or less	21%
Some college	42
Bachelor’s	22
Master’s/PhD/professional degree	15
Don’t know/refused	<1

## Open-Ended Responses

### *Why aren't you confident in the Juneau School District?*

Three kids with disabilities, not at grade level meeting core.

Academic needs more work. Also harder school lessons for children.

Academically the district falls short of resources and education for students.

Agenda-driven. Pure politics. School board, the NEA, the assembly, are all connected to money and produce nothing. Parents have all the responsibility, schools want all the credit.

A lot of policies that she doesn't agree with from the school board.

Bad experience, wasn't flexible with signing up for high school, 30 to 40% drop out rate, not doing much to stop it.

Bad performance over the years.

Because it's a public school and lacking in higher curriculum.

Because of the lack of timely feedback of inquiries. Because of recent changes with start times and the change in new every other Monday getting out early for teacher conferences is not good for working families.

Because of their union charter, gotten too far away from the basics.

Because there constantly starting a new initiative, then dropping it and starting again. They have terrible English teachers and the kids end up not being able to write a paper.

Because they don't teach the basics.

Clear lack of discipline, kids get away with anything. Less safe sending my son to school.

Concerned about how they handled opening of new high school and establishment of program at that school.

Concerns about what she has heard about the high schools.

Does not feel the teachers know how to deal with teens, they treat them like children, wait too long to tell parents about a recurring problem, was told three months after the problem started (problem=son would get up walk out of class).

Elementary: loses her child several times, irresponsible. School bus is late. High School: inappropriate articles in school newspaper made by students, disrespectful, made me really angry.

Feel low bar set here.

Feel there is a disconnect with teachers and parents.

Gaps in education system, can have really good teachers and some really bad teachers. Teachers seem afraid to extend themselves, seem to switch teachers around. Having a 3rd grade teacher teach 5th grade, or a 5th grade teacher teach 2nd grade without previous experience.

Give more school control, not the children.

Have not been impressed by teachers, curriculum and faculty.

High school - three principals in three years. Teachers - unhappy, DZ waste of time, lack of leadership, goals, academics, poor judgment

I don't agree with certain decisions i.e. I don't receive as many emails as I used to from the teachers and

the kindergarteners cannot take the bus home. None are available yet they bus high school students all over after school.

I don't like the curriculum, the way they are training and teaching. I don't like the way they educate to pass the test, they focus on 25% of failing students to graduate them then 75% of successful students are being left behind or ignored.

I don't think start time is appropriate and some schools have only half days on Fridays.

I have had a daughter drop out to get GED. Problems with teachers and higher authority. Has to defend daughter against these people.

I have had older children from Juneau district not prepared for outside universities after graduation.

I just feel like there is a lack of connection between teachers and parents. Teachers don't call parents back. The counselors are wonderful.

I see racism against Natives.

I think opening the second school was a grave error on the district's part.

Lack of communication between parent and teachers.

Lack of communication, don't deal with problems in a timely manner, parents need to know things quickly.

Lack of skills in basic education, advanced students, and disabled kids.

Need to focus on k-12 and leave preschool to someone else, also need to drop special programs and focus on the basics making kids strong in writing and math.

Needs more help in special education program. Also more exercise

Not happy with a lot of the teachers, not happy with my children's response to the schools, teachers are not teaching what they should be.

Not happy with what he's viewed from two children graduating the district. Teachers too disconnected, no personal contact between teacher and students, no personal knowledge or connection shared in class.

Priorities are not straight.

Seems like they are still trying to figure things out.

Spend too much time on attitudes, clothing and emotional disabilities rather than curriculum and teaching.

Teachers' lack of attention to each child. Teachers don't know kids, they are in and out the door. My student is generally performing okay, but not once have we had a teacher call us when he is getting F's. No feedback offered freely.

Teachers/staff are not confidential.

The bar is set too low for students. The goal is just to get them through the system at all cost. For some students, vocational training is okay. There needs to be more focus on voc. tech.

The climate of tension between groups of students in the high school, such as racism. Concerned the district is moving toward one reading program at elementary level, this is a bad idea.

The dropout rate, the problems in school are worrisome, no communications between parents and staff.

The experiences I have had with my children have been negative. One issue is method of handling disciplinary action. Protecting the bullies, didn't believe parents' feedback/information. Lots of problems with communication around transfer between schools.

The fundamentals are not being taught and no consequences or no expectations.

The lack of action to a teacher for verbally abusing, talking down to students and yelling at them. She and a group of parents went to the administration and they have not fired him. They say they are working on it, this teacher admits doing this and says it is fine.

The main reason is that they don't do a very good job preparing the students for college.

There is no stability because teachers keep getting changed.

There is sort of a "dumbing down" of the culture that comes about in middle school does not do kids good when they hit high school.

They are not enough individual attention on to the students based on the student's academic needs

They are way too liberal. They don't even say Pledge of Allegiance in school here.

They could do more after school programs for elementary. They could have better special ed like Anchorage.

They let kids get away with too much. Let parents know when children are failing behind.

They seem to have a lot of difficulty with staff.

They try to do too much at once. They need to concentrate on basic skills and stop catering to Native students.

We have had horrible principals and it trickles down affecting the whole atmosphere. Also there is not enough emphasis on academics and there is a bias and negative attitude against EL from leaders.

## **Other Responses**

***What are the two most important factors in the decision of which high school your children will attend?***

Alumni.

Drama program and orchestra.

Facility is new.

Flexibility, results.

History.

It's new and safe.

1. AP & Honor classes. 2. I know how the Administration will handle drug problem.

Likes the school.

More opportunity.

Music program.

My preference.

New facility.

New school.

Newer, cooler

Not as crowded.

Parking.

Reputation.

Safe route to school, whether walk or bus.

Size.

Size of student body.

Smaller class size, special classes for autistic children.

Special Ed.

Special Ed.

Special needs for autism.  
Start time.  
Student diversity/population.  
Support services for students.  
The Drama Department.  
Thunder Mountain is not prejudiced.  
Tlingit Learning.  
Tradition.  
We are familiar with their programs.  
Whether the school is established.

***Why do you think this student does not feel connected to their school?***

Bad atmosphere.  
Hasn't had opportunity to make choices relating to her education.  
He's a teen.  
Just moved here.  
My child is into drugs.  
No school spirit.  
Not in after school activities.  
Only taking two classes, sports are over.  
Overwhelmed by transition to high school.  
Personal matter.  
Personality differences with other kids.  
Short time senior.  
Special ED.

***What are the main reasons your child didn't participate in any school-sponsored activities?***

Couldn't make up mind of what to do.  
Drug testing policy, invasion of privacy.  
Goes to UAS mainly.  
Homeschooled.  
Medical reasons.  
Mental handicap.  
None available.  
Racism.  
She is busy with AL, advanced learning.  
Student wanted to minimize time at school, negative feelings towards the school.  
Too focused on school.  
Wasn't treated equally.  
Grades (bad).

Pregnant.

***Why aren't you satisfied with the later school start time?***

Go early, get up earlier and could have an afternoon job.

Academics have gone down. Kids not sleeping....go to bed late, no structure. Please change back.

Family sleep, son is up too late and disrupts the parents' sleep because he sleeps in too late.

Kids stay up later.

Kids stay up later.

Kids stay up later, it has not accomplished what they thought it would. It is training/ teaching kids the wrong thing! GET UP!

Later bed times.

Less sleep.

Makes younger students go in early because of bus schedules, just to accommodate the high school. Allows teens to have another reason to stay up late. It has had a negative effect.

Sleep habits. Student staying up too late, impacts the whole family.

Sleeping in doesn't prepare for work after graduation.

Stays up later and now has a harder time getting up, not adapting to new time.

Younger high schooler stays up later.

Doesn't prepare student for working world.

Doesn't prepare them for working world.

Doesn't show responsibility. It only allows them to stay up later and sleep in. Get their butts out of bed. Hasn't helped grades.

Good the way it was, promotes laziness.

Kids need to get up early, train for real world.

All schools should be on same schedule.

Alone in morning.

Because it has to shorten class time. It is more advantageous to staff than kids.

Children wanted to start earlier.

Dismissal time is too late.

Family dinner.

Get out too late.

Hard to correspond schedules.

Has not shown improved academics.

Home life.

I don't see that student at all. He's not here for dinner.

I have to take lunch at 8:45 am just to drive student to school-weather does not permit student to walk.

I used to be able to take them to school before work, the change messed up our schedule.

Inconvenience, too late.

It cuts out teaching time.

It makes for a long day.  
Kids waste morning time, less time after school.  
Late often with new time because mother cannot drop child off.  
Later on Friday, get out too late. Zero hour was great.  
Leaves before kid.  
Longer day for child, ripple effect on all other extra curricular activities.  
Making kids sleep in, staying up late, missing bus and she has to leave work to bring them to school.  
No way to ensure they go to school because parents leave to work.  
Not a reflection on real life.  
Personal reasons. NO family time if parents work. Sleeping in. It has affected the whole life of family. PLEASE GO BACK!!!!  
Real life starts earlier than 9:00. It cuts down on family time.  
Rework schedule for whole family.  
Schedules all messed up with block schedules.  
She doesn't get to see as much of the kids due to schedule change, goes to work before they are up and they get home later.  
Son does not like later start time.  
Student hates it, Friday thing is ridiculous, family has to cope with timing.  
Teens should get up earlier, however, keeps them off street and not robbing houses.  
They didn't need to do it.  
They're home alone in the morning, miss dinner because of late arrival home.  
Throws off her schedule.  
Too difficult to move kids between schools and get them there on time. High school son used to pick up sibling from school, now he can't due to schedule.  
Too late to get out, no time for social/personal life.  
Too late to go to school.  
Too much freedom, too much flexibility when students needs structure. Teacher cannot keep attendance, school district reports tardy/absent when she is present.  
Trying to get two students to different schools at the same time is difficult.  
Unproductive and doesn't teach the right values.  
Unrealistic expectations for students and parents.  
Wasted day, no morning time.

***Which of the following are the best ways for you to receive information from your children's teachers?***

"Parent Connect"  
Attendance phone calls  
Automated phone calls.  
Conferences don't work.  
E-mails - hit or miss on getting them.

Face to face when picking up kids.  
He is their teacher.  
Kids tell us.  
Meet with teachers as needed.  
Newsletter.  
None - talk to teachers at school.  
None seem to work, everyone hands you off.  
Notebook, pass notes.  
Notes from teacher.  
Power School (6 mentions).  
Too many useless email.  
Weekly progress letters.

### **Survey Instrument**

See attached.

# Juneau School District: Parent Survey 2010

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

SURVEY # \_\_\_\_\_

INTERVIEWER NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
# \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ Control

Hi, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with the McDowell Group. We are conducting a survey of Juneau parents for the Juneau School District. I would like to ask you a few questions.

**1. Are you the parent or guardian of at least one student currently enrolled in the Juneau School District?**

1  Yes (skip to Q2)

2  No → **1a. Are you the parent or guardian of at least one student who graduated from the Juneau School District or left the district without graduating in either 2008 or 2009?**

(If No, thank and end survey) 1  Yes (skip to Q26)

## GRADES K-5

**2. How many children in your household are currently enrolled in kindergarten through 5th grade?**

# \_\_\_\_\_ children (if 0, skip to Q8)

1  Don't know/refused (skip to Q8)

(if 1, skip to Q3)

(if 2+ I'm going to ask you about your oldest K-through-5 child first.)

**3. In general, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with his or her teachers?**

1  Very satisfied

3  Somewhat dissatisfied

5  Neutral

2  Somewhat satisfied

4  Very dissatisfied

6  Don't know/refused

**IF 1 CHILD, SKIP TO Q6**

**4. In general, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the teachers of the second student?**

1  Very satisfied

3  Somewhat dissatisfied

5  Neutral

2  Somewhat satisfied

4  Very dissatisfied

6  Don't know/refused

**IF 2 CHILDREN, SKIP TO Q6, if 3 children continue**

**5. In general, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the teachers of the third student?**

1  Very satisfied

3  Somewhat dissatisfied

5  Neutral

2  Somewhat satisfied

4  Very dissatisfied

6  Don't know/refused

**6. Overall, are you very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident or very unconfident in your children's school?**

1  Very confident

3  Somewhat unconfident

5  Neutral

2  Somewhat confident

4  Very unconfident

6  Don't know/refused







**24. Regarding this year's later school start time, are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?**

- 1  Very satisfied (skip to Q26)      3  Somewhat dissatisfied      5  Neutral (skip to Q26)  
2  Somewhat satisfied (skip to Q26)      4  Very dissatisfied      6  Don't know/refused (skip to Q26)

**24a. Why aren't you satisfied with the later school start time?** (Do not read, check all that apply)

- 1  Sports/activities      4  Transportation      6  Don't know/refused  
2  After school job      5  Child/sibling care      7  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
3  Not enough time for homework

---

## GRADUATES

**26. Did any children in your household graduate from the Juneau School District in 2008 or 2009?** (if yes, how many?/if no enter zero)

# \_\_\_\_\_ children (if 0, skip to Q31)      1  Don't know/refused (skip to Q31)

(if 1, skip to Q27)

(if 2+, I'm going to ask you about the oldest graduate first)

**27. What was their main activity in the year following graduation? Did they go to college, get a job, attend training, join the military, or do something else?** (Check only one.)

- 1  College      3  Training      5  Don't know/refused  
2  Job      4  Military      6  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**28. Do you feel the Juneau School District prepared your student very well, well, adequately, poorly or very poorly for their life after graduation?** (Read 1-5)

- 1  Very well      3  Adequately      5  Very poorly  
2  Well      4  Poorly      6  Don't know/refused

### IF 1 GRADUATE, SKIP TO Q31

**29. What was the main activity of the second graduate in the year following graduation? Did they go to college, get a job, attend training, join the military, or do something else?** (Check only one.)

- 1  College      3  Training      5  Don't know/refused  
2  Job      4  Military      6  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**30. Do you feel the Juneau School District prepared this student very well, well, adequately, poorly or very poorly for their life after graduation?**

- 1  Very well      3  Adequately      5  Very poorly  
2  Well      4  Poorly      6  Don't know/refused

---

## NON-GRADUATES

**31. Did any children in your household leave the Juneau School District in 2008 or 2009 without graduating?**

- 1  Yes      2  No (skip to Q33)      3  Don't know/refused (skip to Q33)

**32. What was the main reason they left without graduating?** (Do not read, check only one)

- 1  Get a job      3  Transfer to different district      5  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
2  Have a child      4  Join the military      6  Don't know/refused

## IF NO children currently in school skip to Q37 READ

### ALL RESPONDENTS

[Read] I have just a few more questions.

**33. Which of the following are the best ways for you to receive information from your children's teachers?** (Read 1-4, check all that apply, probe)

- 1  Letters sent home                      5  Don't know/refused  
2  Email                                      6  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
3  Teacher phone calls  
4  Parent/teacher conferences

**34. Which of the following are the best ways for you to receive information from the Juneau School District office?**

(Read 1-7, check all that apply, probe)

- 1  Letters sent home                      4  Parent/teacher conferences    7  Newspaper  
2  Email                                      5  School District website        8  Don't know/refused  
3  Automated phone calls              6  Radio                                  9  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**35. Overall do you feel very informed, somewhat informed, or not informed about your children's education?**

- 1  Very informed                              4  Don't know/refused  
2  Somewhat informed  
3  Not informed

**36. Overall, is the information you receive about your children's education very timely, somewhat timely or not timely?**

- 1  Very timely                                4  Don't know/refused  
2  Somewhat timely  
3  Not timely

[Read] **Next, I'd like to ask your opinion on how a child's success in school is affected by beginning kindergarten with very few basic skills.**

**37. Do you believe a child with few skills will catch up to other children within a year or two, or do you believe the child with few skills will stay behind other children throughout their kindergarten, middle, and high school years?**

- 1  Catch up within year or two  
2  Behind through school years        3  Don't know/refused

**38. Overall, are you very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident or very unconfident in the Juneau School District?**

- 1  Very confident (skip to Q39)        3  Somewhat unconfident        5  Neutral (skip to Q39)  
2  Somewhat confident (skip to Q39) 4  Very unconfident                6  Don't know/refused (skip to Q39)

**38a. Why aren't you confident in the Juneau School District?**                      1  Don't know/refused

---

---

**39. How many people, including children, presently live in your household?**

- # \_\_\_\_\_ people                      1  Don't know/refused

**40. What is the highest level of education you've had the opportunity to obtain? (Do not read.)**

- |                                                                               |                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 01 <input type="checkbox"/> High school degree or less                        | 05 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know  |
| 02 <input type="checkbox"/> Some college/Associate's/Certificate/Trade school | 06 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| 03 <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's                                        | 07 <input type="checkbox"/> Refused     |
| 04 <input type="checkbox"/> Master's/PhD/Professional degree (lawyer/doctor)  |                                         |

**41. Which racial or ethnic group do you most closely identify yourself with?**

(do not read, check all that apply)

- |                                            |                                                      |                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> White           | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Alaska Native   | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino        | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/ref.                     |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                     | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                         |

***Thank you for participating in this important project!***

**42. Gender (DO NOT ASK)**