

**School Climate Surveys 2005-06  
Responses from the  
Superintendent's School Improvement Zone**

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## **Overview**

The Miami-Dade County Schools' annual climate surveys were administered in January of 2006. As a regular byproduct of these surveys, district average results are produced by educational level for parents, staff, and students. In this report, averages for the schools in the Superintendent's Improvement Zone have been developed and compared to last year's results. In comparison to the district, the results for the zone schools were very similar to last year, showing lower average response rates and lower parent participation or activity rates than the district averages. In general, all groups of respondents from the zone schools differed from the district average with respect to many of the survey items, particularly those pertaining to school safety and quality of instruction. However, only a few items showed a zone school response for 2006 significantly different from that of 2005. Those differences are listed and their implications discussed.

This report contrasts School Climate Survey results for schools in the Superintendent’s Improvement Zone with their responses from the previous year and with reference to the district average. Results for the one K-8 Zone school have been included with the elementary school results. The reader is referred to the Appendix for a list of 2005-06 Zone schools.

### **Return Rates and Parent Participation**

In both 2005 and 2006, survey return rates in the Zone schools were lower than the District average. The zone-district difference was largest for parents (i.e., 16.6 percentage points in 2006) and lowest for staff (i.e., 8.9 percentage points in 2006). Response rates for students in the Zone schools were 3.8 percentage points lower during the 2006 administration.

**Table 1**  
**Survey Response Rates for District and Zone**

Percent Responding	Parents		Staff		Students	
	District	Zone	District	Zone	District	Zone
	2005	47.4	28.8	63.5	51.1	80.6
2006	47.6	31.0	72.1	63.2	81.4	69.5

The survey results also show that the Zone has fewer parents who reported participating in school activities. One of the demographic items on the parent survey asked how many school activities the respondent attended during the school year. Table 2 shows the activity rates for the Zone and the District. The data indicate that parent participation in school affairs was lower in the Zone than in the District in both years, and the increase over 2005 in the percent attending at least one activity was about the same for both. However, although the district average for percentages of respondents attending activities is higher, the percent of responding zone parents who indicated attending one or more activities exceeded 65 percent in 2005, and approached 70 percent in 2006. This represents a very high percentage of parents.

**Table 2**  
**Attendance at School Activities Reported by Parents**

Percent of Respondents	Activities			
	0 or Not Marked		1 or More	
	District	Zone	District	Zone
2005	23.3	34.1	76.7	65.9
2006	20.0	30.5	80.0	69.5

## Changes in Responses to Items: 2005 to 2006

The 2006 differences between Zone and District were very close to what they were in 2005. In 2005, Zone staff tended to differ most from the district average on items of safety and student preparation. Parents differed most on items of safety and academic quality. Zone students differed from the district on items of safety and school conditions. The relationship between district and zone shown last year and that found this year were highly correlated (the correlation coefficient  $r$  is 0.98 for students, 0.96 for parents, and 0.98 for staff).

Some differences in Zone school responses from 2005 to 2006 are large enough to be noted. The larger differences reported here are those that are two standard deviations larger or smaller than the average change from 2005 to 2006 (Table 3).

**Table 3**  
**Survey Items in Which the Zone School Average Responses**  
**Differ By More Than Two Standard Deviations From 2005 to 2006**

Item Number	Item	Percent Agree		
		2005	2006	Diff
<b>Parent Form:</b>				
Elementary				
3	The school is overcrowded to the degree that it affects learning.	30	28	-2
4	The school maintains high academic standards.	58	65	7
28	The principal is available and easy to talk to.	69	75	6
Middle				
6	The school makes available textbooks, equipment, and supplies needed for learning.	70	76	6
9	Teachers are friendly and easy to talk to.	78	72	-6
Senior				
1	The school is safe and secure.	51	41	-10
20	The school teaches use of computers.	64	71	7
24	The school is free of violence.	54	45	-9
<b>Staff Form:</b>				
Elementary				
15	I am limited by too many students in each class.	32	24	-8
26	I have a feeling of job security in my present position.	71	80	9
29	I frequently feel overloaded and overwhelmed while working at my school.	61	54	-7
Middle				
15	I am limited by too many students in each class.	52	34	-18
16	I am limited by student deficiencies in basic academic skills.	85	73	-12
<b>Student Form:</b>				
Middle				
4	There are too many students in my classroom and that affects how much I learn.	28	22	-6
18	Student drug and alcohol use are problems at my school.	28	21	-7
Senior				
26	The overall climate or feeling at my school is positive and helps me learn.	38	30	-8

The item inquiring about classroom overcrowding appears several times in the table; from parents at the elementary level; staff at the elementary and middle levels; and students at the middle school level. The change reflects a decrease in those agreeing with it from the previous year, indicating that it is considered less of a problem now. This is confirmation that an improvement in overcrowded classrooms, no doubt related to the class size amendment, is a recognized and appreciated phenomenon.

All changes in staff items are in a favorable direction. Perhaps the most notable is the item in which staff were asked whether they feel limited by student deficiencies in basic skills. The percent agreeing dropped from 85 percent in 2005 to 73 percent this year, a decrease of 12 percentage points.

Changes in parent and student responses were mixed. While the changes were more favorable than unfavorable (6 of 11 for parents and students combined), parents were more concerned about safety at the senior high level, and about access at the middle school level. Response to “teachers are friendly and easy to talk to” went down from 78 to 72 percent. Middle school students were more concerned about drugs and alcohol during 2005-06 than they were last year, while senior high students were generally less complimentary regarding the overall climate.

The reader is referred to the Appendix for a summary of the 2005-06 climate ratings for Zone parent, student, and staff groups.

## **Appendices**

Listing of Schools in the Superintendent's Improvement Zone  
Summary of Zone Parent Responses  
Summary of Zone Staff Responses  
Summary of Zone Student Responses

## **Listing of Schools in the Superintendent's Improvement Zone: 2005-06**

Bunche Park Elementary School  
Paul Lawrence Dunbar Elementary School  
Edison Park Elementary School  
Florida City Elementary School  
Holmes Elementary School  
Thena Crowder Elementary School\*  
Martin Luther King Elementary School\*  
Lakeview Elementary School  
Leisure City K-8 Center  
Laura C. Saunders Elementary School  
Little River Elementary School  
Toussaint L'ouverture Elementary School  
Morningside Elementary School  
Myrtle Grove Elementary School  
Norland Elementary School  
Opa-locka Elementary School  
Santa Clara Elementary School  
Shadowlawn Elementary School  
West Little River Elementary School  
Phillis Wheatley Elementary School

Allapattah Middle School  
Brownsville Middle School  
Campbell Drive Middle School  
Charles R. Drew Middle School  
Jose De Diego Middle School  
Madison Middle School  
Horace Mann Middle School  
Miami Edison Middle School  
Norland Middle School  
Parkway Middle School  
Westview Middle School

Hialeah-Miami Lakes Senior High School  
Homestead Senior High School  
Miami Central Senior High School  
Miami Edison Senior High School  
Miami Jackson Senior High School  
Miami Norland Senior High School  
Miami Northwestern Senior High School  
Booker T. Washington Senior High School

\*These schools have no classes above Grade 2. Since administration of the student survey begins with grade 4 there are no student response data reported for these schools.

## Response Summary of School Improvement Zone: 2005-06 Parent Responses

Survey Item	Percent Responding*								
	Elementary			Middle			Senior		
	A	D	U	A	D	U	A	D	U
1. The school is safe and secure.	82	8	10	61	22	17	41	36	23
2. The school is kept clean and in good condition.	83	9	8	50	31	19	44	37	19
3. The school is overcrowded to the degree that it affects learning.	28	51	22	32	42	26	33	38	28
4. The school maintains high academic standards.	65	11	23	46	26	27	35	38	28
5. The school uses adequate disciplinary measures in dealing with disruptive students.	65	11	23	62	19	20	54	24	22
6. The school makes available textbooks, equipment, and supplies needed for learning.	88	5	8	76	13	11	63	22	16
7. The school serves lunches that are nutritious and taste good.	70	13	17	38	38	24	32	43	26
8. The school keeps bathrooms clean and in good condition.	53	23	25	25	52	23	20	60	20
9. Teachers are friendly and easy to talk to.	92	4	4	72	12	16	66	13	21
10. Teachers make learning interesting and relevant.	88	3	9	67	12	21	56	18	26
11. Teachers motivate students to learn.	90	3	7	73	11	15	64	15	22
12. Teachers take an interest in students' educational future.	89	3	9	71	10	18	67	14	20
13. Teachers are knowledgeable and understand their subject matter.	88	2	10	73	8	19	64	11	26
14. Teachers assign meaningful homework that helps students learn.	91	5	4	74	15	11	65	17	18
15. Teachers do their best to include me in matters directly affecting my child's progress in school.	89	6	6	71	15	15	54	27	19
16. The school teaches students the basic academic skills in reading.	91	3	7	81	8	11	75	10	16
17. The school teaches students basic academic skills in mathematics.	89	4	8	82	8	10	75	11	15
18. The school teaches students to speak and write correctly in English.	91	4	6	78	10	12	72	12	16
19. The school teaches how to solve problems in science.	71	5	24	72	9	18	61	16	24
20. The school teaches use of computers.	86	4	10	76	12	12	71	13	16
21. The school teaches students to think critically.	81	5	15	74	9	18	65	12	23
22. The school teaches students to develop good study and work habits.	88	3	9	73	12	15	61	19	20
23. The school teaches students to get along with different kinds of people.	85	5	10	66	15	20	59	19	22
24. The school is free of violence.	75	14	11	59	24	17	45	35	20
25. The school is free of gang activity.	74	12	14	58	21	21	44	34	22
26. The school is free of substance abuse.	75	11	14	59	16	25	45	29	27
27. The principal does an effective job running my child's school.	81	7	12	64	14	23	52	23	26
28. The principal is available and easy to talk to.	75	8	17	51	19	31	43	28	31
29. The assistant principals are effective administrators.	73	6	20	60	12	28	50	21	29
30. Guidance counselors are concerned about and try to help students with educational and personal problems.	76	5	20	72	12	16	64	19	17
31. Staff in the principal's office treat me with respect when I contact my child's school.	88	6	6	77	10	13	65	17	19
32. School staff respond to my needs and concerns in a reasonable period of time.	82	7	11	66	14	21	51	24	24
33. My child is getting a good education at this school.	87	5	8	70	15	15	65	19	16
34. The overall climate or atmosphere at my child's school is positive and helps my child learn.	84	6	10	59	20	21	48	30	23
35. What overall grade would you give to your child's school?									

\* A = agree, D = disagree, U = undecided/unknown



## Response Summary of School Improvement Zone: 2005-06 Staff Responses

Survey Item	Percent Responding*								
	Elementary			Middle			Senior		
	A	D	U	A	D	U	A	D	U
1. At my school I feel safe and secure.	83	11	7	73	21	6	68	21	11
2. At my school the school building is kept clean and in good condition.	70	23	7	63	32	5	51	40	10
3. At my school personnel work together as a team.	73	18	9	64	27	9	58	28	14
4. At my school administrators solve problems effectively.	73	17	11	56	29	15	55	28	18
5. At my school I feel that my ideas are listened to and considered.	75	15	11	60	24	17	55	24	21
6. At my school adequate disciplinary measures are used to deal with disruptive behavior.	60	28	12	47	44	9	47	40	13
7. My principal is an effective administrator.	79	12	9	68	16	16	70	14	16
8. My principal represents the school in a positive manner.	86	5	9	84	7	9	83	7	10
9. My principal demonstrates good interpersonal skills.	80	11	9	72	17	11	70	19	12
10. My principal deals with conflict constructively.	74	12	15	65	15	19	64	15	22
11. My principal responds in a reasonable time to my concerns.	80	9	11	73	11	16	69	13	19
12. My principal treats me with respect.	87	6	7	86	8	7	81	9	9
13. My principal is receptive to constructive criticism.	70	12	18	58	13	29	54	15	32
14. My principal is supportive of teachers.	80	10	10	72	15	13	69	15	16
15. I am limited by too many students in each class.	24	66	10	34	56	10	38	49	13
16. I am limited by student deficiencies in basic academic skills.	68	25	8	73	21	5	78	13	9
17. I am limited by lack of concern/support from parents.	74	19	7	79	15	6	77	11	11
18. I am limited by lack of concern/support from the principal.	11	79	11	13	73	14	14	69	17
19. I am limited by lack of concern/support from the district administration.	21	52	27	20	46	33	26	42	32
20. I am limited by insufficient resources (e.g., funds, books, equipment, supplies, etc.).	32	58	10	39	53	9	52	36	12
21. I am limited by school violence.	19	72	10	32	57	11	30	51	19
22. I am limited by student gang activity.	4	85	11	12	71	17	18	56	26
23. I am limited by student substance abuse.	3	86	11	8	70	22	19	50	31
24. Students generally come to my class at the beginning of the term prepared for the grade level or courses I teach.	28	59	12	25	63	12	20	66	14
25. I feel satisfied concerning how my career is progressing at this school.	71	14	14	63	24	13	63	20	18
26. I have a feeling of job security in my present position.	80	11	9	73	11	16	70	14	16
27. I like working at my school.	81	9	10	75	13	13	78	11	11
28. Staff morale is high at my school.	53	31	16	36	45	19	31	46	22
29. I frequently feel overloaded and overwhelmed while working at my school.	54	36	10	61	30	9	58	32	11
30. Annual teacher evaluations are fair and reasonable.	79	3	18	75	4	21	69	4	27
31. Annual teacher evaluations are used to improve teacher performance.	72	7	21	64	11	25	56	13	31
32. Inservice programs keep me informed of the latest educational strategies.	82	10	8	75	13	12	70	18	12
33. I believe children attending my school are receiving a good education.	80	8	12	71	14	16	65	16	19
34. The overall climate or atmosphere at my school is positive and helps students learn.	75	13	13	63	24	13	58	26	16
35. What overall grade would you give to this school?									

\* A = agree, D = disagree, U = undecided/unknown

## Response Summary of School Improvement Zone: 2005-06 Student Responses

Survey Item	Percent Responding*								
	Elementary			Middle			Senior		
	A	D	U	A	D	U	A	D	U
1. I feel safe at my school.	70	18	12	42	39	19	42	40	18
2. My school building is kept clean and in good condition.	30	54	16	22	64	14	24	60	15
3. Students in my school usually follow school rules.	16	68	17	9	78	13	12	74	14
4. There are too many students in my classroom and that affects how much I learn.	29	60	12	22	59	19	26	57	17
5. My teachers require that I work very hard for the grades I get.	85	7	8	79	8	13	79	11	10
6. My school has enough books and equipment to help me learn.	75	16	9	52	30	19	42	43	15
7. Food served for lunch at my school looks good and tastes good.	36	45	19	17	65	18	19	61	21
8. Bathrooms in my school are clean and in good condition.	12	81	8	7	86	7	9	81	10
9. My teachers are friendly and easy to talk to.	74	14	12	52	25	24	60	21	19
10. My teachers make learning fun and interesting.	78	11	11	51	27	22	47	31	23
11. My teachers make me want to learn.	82	9	9	57	23	20	49	29	22
12. My teachers know a lot about the subjects they teach.	87	5	8	74	10	16	70	14	16
13. My teachers give me meaningful homework that helps me learn.	82	10	8	57	24	19	53	29	19
14. My teachers are interested in how I do in the future.	77	9	14	59	20	21	55	22	22
15. My teachers let me know how I am doing on my schoolwork.	88	6	6	78	12	10	71	19	11
16. Violence is a problem at my school.	58	28	14	63	18	18	59	22	20
17. Gangs are a problem at my school.	35	52	13	36	41	24	37	37	26
18. Student drug and alcohol use are problems at my school.	20	69	11	21	53	26	35	37	28
19. My principal does a good job running the school.	78	12	11	48	30	21	37	36	27
20. The assistant principals are available when needed.	64	20	16	46	28	27	33	40	28
21. My guidance counselor helps me with school and personal problems.	74	10	17	51	23	26	53	28	20
22. Adults at my school care about me as an individual.	63	18	19	40	30	30	30	39	32
23. Adults at my school help me when I need it.	74	13	13	49	28	23	42	33	25
24. I like coming to my school.	63	24	13	43	40	18	44	37	19
25. I am getting a good education at my school.	82	7	12	58	21	21	51	23	27
26. The overall climate or feeling at my school is positive and helps me learn.	68	12	20	35	35	30	30	38	31
27. What overall grade would you give to your school?									

\* A = agree, D = disagree, U = undecided/unknown