



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

*giving our students the world*

# RESEARCH BRIEF

## Research Services

Vol. 0502  
September 2005

Dr. Don Morris, Research Analyst  
Dale Romanik, Director

### **Preliminary Overview of the Results School Climate Surveys 2004-05**

The annual School Climate Surveys were conducted in January/February of 2005 and results were distributed to schools in June 2005. Approximately 74 thousand parents, 47 thousand students, and 24 thousand staff were surveyed. The staff survey, which has been administered on-line since 2002, continued to improve in response rate, with 63.5 percent responding in 2005, compared with 57.8 percent in 2004. Parent and student response rates, 46.9% and 80.6%, were in line with last year's rates. Overall, all of the responding groups save one (middle school students) continued an incremental increase in satisfaction with the public schools in Miami-Dade County.

Over the past year, changes in survey results for the district as a whole have been modest but in the main positive (Figure 1). The average increase across all items in percent agreement for staff ranged from 0.6 percentage points at the elementary school level to 1.5 points at the senior high level. Parents too indicated slightly more favorable attitudes, with increases ranging from 0.4 at the elementary level to 2.4 at the senior level. One notable change in the parent survey was a six percentage point increase in perceptions of safety in the middle-schools and a four percentage point improvement at senior high schools (Figure 2). Student responses at the elementary and senior levels also averaged fractional increases, but the middle school student responses averaged a decrease of 1.77 percentage points.

In the Zone schools, where staff and parent data for the past two years are currently available, results are mixed. Parents in the Zone schools have been less generous in their appraisals than the averages for the district. The average change at the elementary and senior levels was slightly negative, while the middle school average was slightly positive. The largest negative change was for Item 4 (the school maintains high academic standards), where the average percent agreeing at the senior high level went from 42 to 31 percent, a drop of eleven points. The largest positive item change was also at the senior level, where Item 26 (the school is free of substance abuse) increased by six percentage points, from 44% to 50%.

Zone school staffs, on the other hand, trended in opposite directions from the parents. The elementary and senior high levels showed fractional average increases of 0.9 percentage points each, while the middle-school responses averaged 3.8 lower than last year. There are six items with double-digit declines, and they are all from the middle-school survey. The items seem to reflect conflict and dissention related to administrative leadership. The two items with the greatest decline (thirteen percentage points each) are Item 5 (at my school I feel that my ideas are listened to and considered), which fell from 68% in 2004 to 55%, and Item 10 (my principal deals with conflict constructively), which dropped from 70% to 57% (Figure 3).

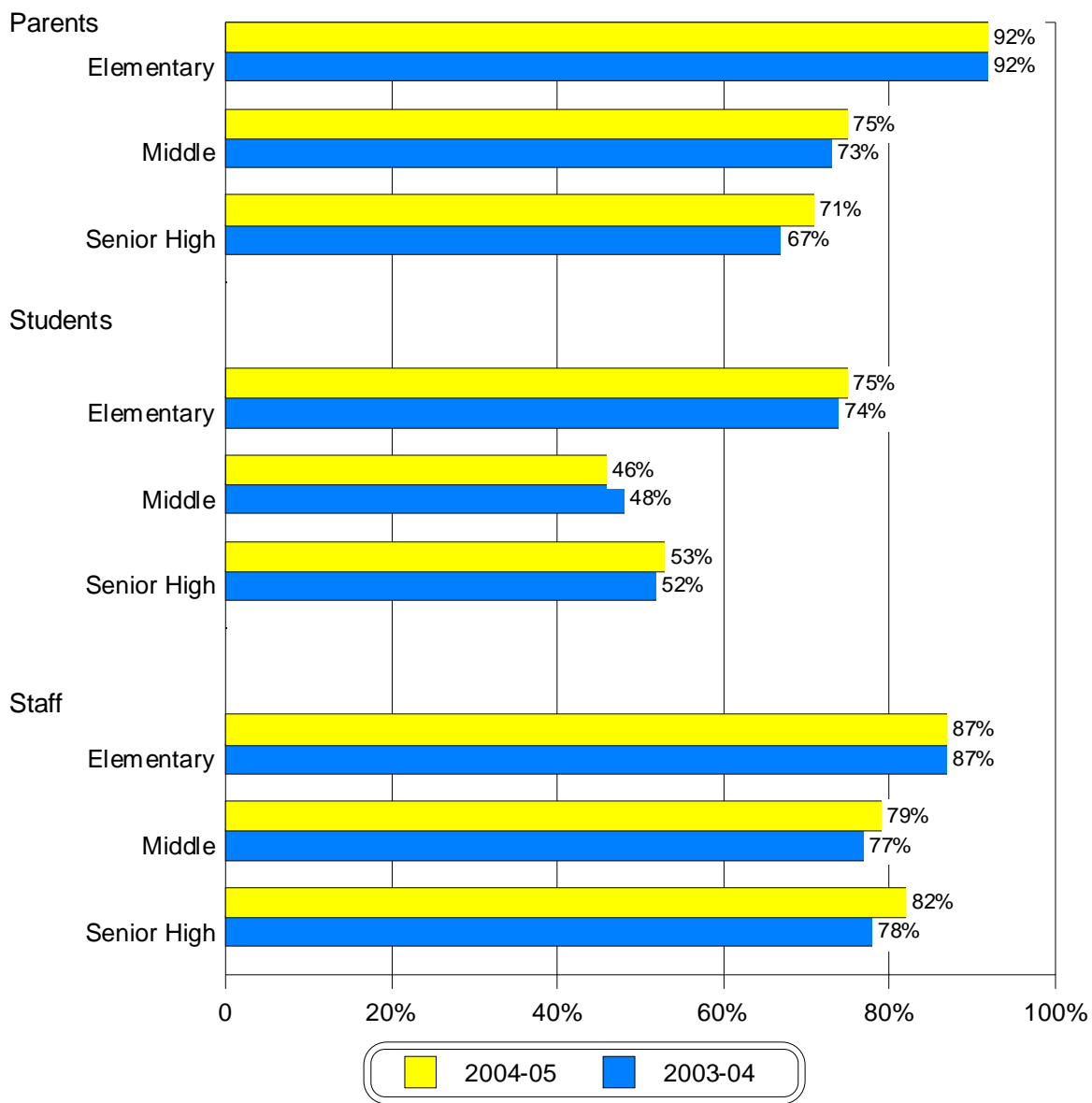
Only selected portions of the 2004-05 results are reported in this Research Brief. However, the interested reader is referred to the Research Services web site (<http://drs.dadeschools.net>) for complete results of the 2004-05 School Climate Surveys. Detailed results can also be obtained by calling Research Services at 305-995-7503.

Research Services

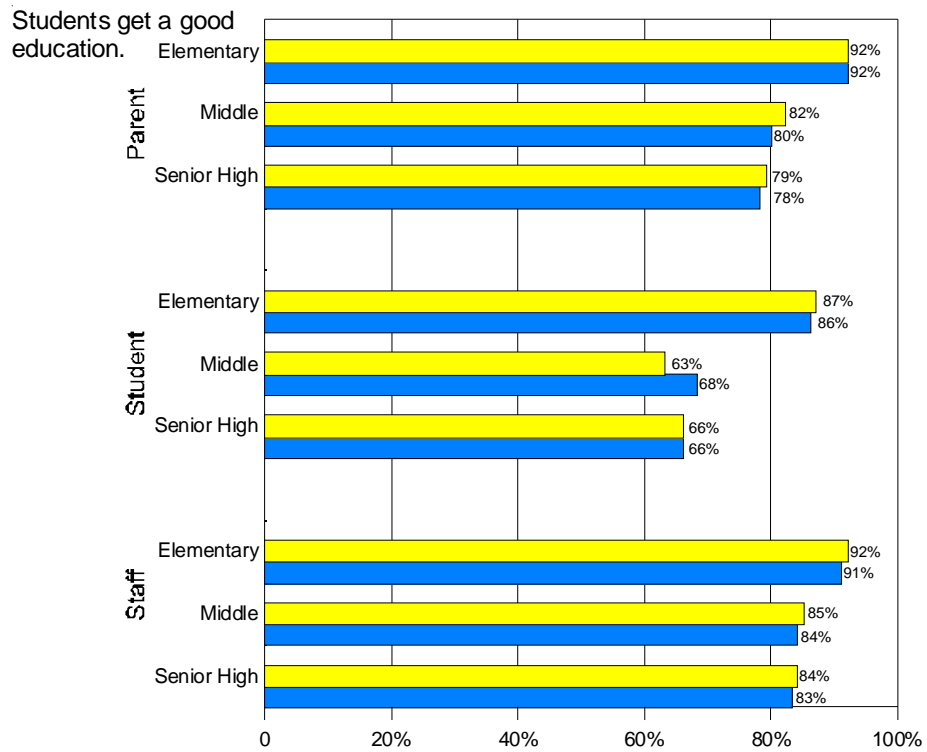
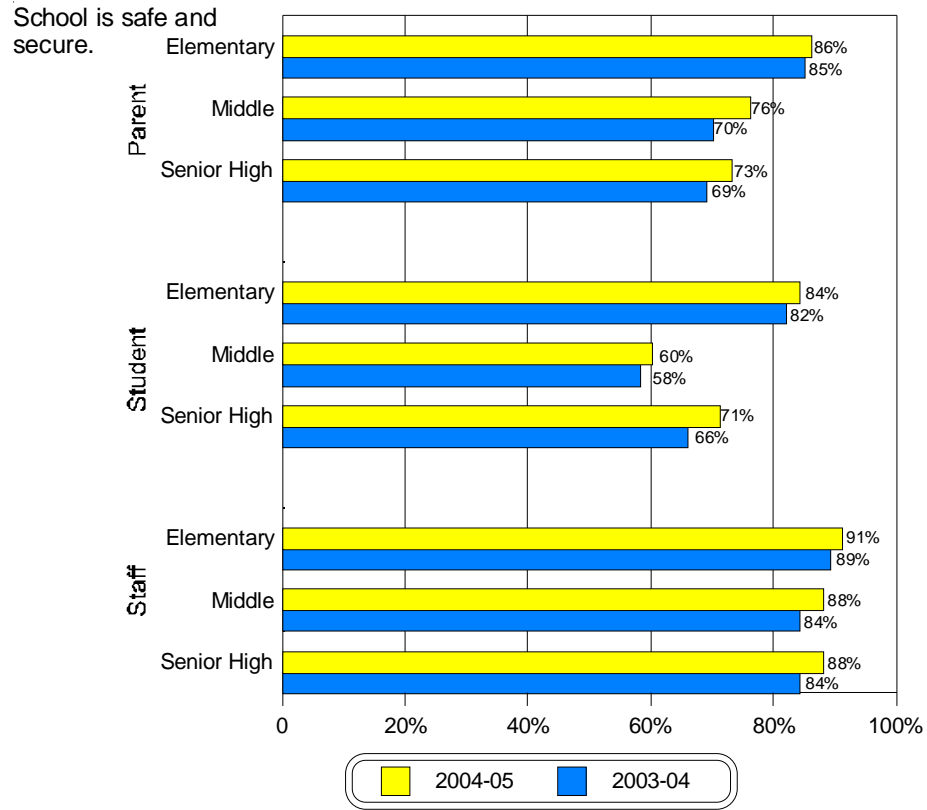
Office of Accountability and Systemwide Performance  
1500 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 225, Miami, Florida 33132  
(305) 995-7503 Fax (305) 995-7521

**Figure 1**  
**2004-05 School Climate Survey**  
**Overall Climate: Percent Agree**

The overall climate or atmosphere is positive and helps students learn.



**Figure 2**  
**2004-05 School Climate Survey**  
**Percent Agree on Selected Items**



**Figure 3**  
**School Climate Survey**  
**District vs. Zone**

Staff ideas are listened to.  
 (Staff survey)

