

Winter 2005

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Featured Article

"The edge of chaos: School Administrators and accountability"

Journal of Educational Administration

Author: Anthony H. Normore

To Read More go to IngentaConnect

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/>

Click [here](#) for abstract

Did you know...?

- 37% of respondents in a Gallup Poll stated they were "somewhat satisfied" when asked: "Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of education students receive in kindergarten through grade 12 in the U.S. today"...
- and 35% of respondents stated they were "somewhat dissatisfied"...

Reference: *The Gallup Poll: Education*

- 63% of Michigan 4th grade students' reading levels were **at or above** the NAEP *basic* level...
- 32% of Michigan 4th grade students' reading levels were **at or above** the NAEP *proficient* level...

Communication Myths

Parents vs. Community

Fact or fiction? Research can help you communicate more effectively? **FACT**. We have compiled a few other facts below about the differences in communication for parents and for your community.

Our experience in conducting community surveys for school districts shows that:

Myth #1: Parents are aware of **top issues** facing the district.

In most cases, at least one-third of parents and one-half of community members are **unsure** of the top issues facing their district. This suggests it is important for the district to continually communicate with parents and the community about issues the district is facing and responses to these issues.



Myth #2: The community wants different information than the parents.

Our findings show that the community and parents have **similar priorities** when it comes to a "district report card"

and what information they would find valuable. Information about the school environment, safety and discipline; and information regarding how much money was received and how it was spent were both top priorities for parents and community members. Remember that parents and community members want information about the schools year-round and not just when test results become available.

Myth #3: You can reach all parents through your newsletter and all community members through the newspaper.

When answering questions about where they receive information about the district, there is not **one** method of communication that is preferred by everyone. In many communities, information about the schools can travel informally through word-of-mouth from students and staff much quicker than through a newsletter or newspaper.

Reference: "The Nation's Report Card"

- In 2004, 85.4% of people age 25 and over had completed high school, compared to 13.5% of people in 1910...

Reference: "Digest of Educational Statistics"

Useful Links

[Tools for School Improvement Planning](#)

Information about using data and answers to questions about surveying

[School Matters: A Service of Standard & Poors](#)

Get statistics about your school district's performance

[NSPRA](#)

National School Public Relations Association; conference information for 2006

[NCES](#)

National Center for Educational Statistics: Check out the National Report Card, and the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rates for Public Schools

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Communicating effectively with the district parents and your community can be one of the most valuable objectives your district can work towards. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. provides information and services, which will allow you to strengthen your connection between parents, community, students, and staff members.

Benchmarking and Education

Not just a "look and see tour"



"Successful organizations are continually searching for new ideas, methods, and processes to catapult them to world-class performance."

(www.schoolmatters.com)

Benchmarking is a way for schools to evaluate, improve and grow their district by using resources and information learned through the benchmarking process.

The website

www.schoolmatters.com offers a complete article about best

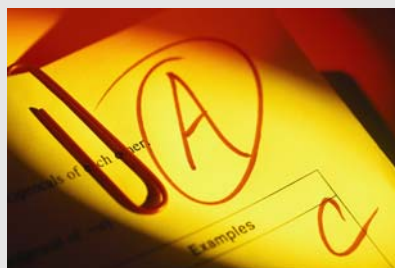
practices in benchmarking for educational organizations. The site offers methodology information, what components should be included in the study and what advantages result from the process.

In our experience conducting surveys for school districts, information can help school districts implement better planning procedures and more efficiently allocate resources. When used as a benchmark, surveys can offer objective evaluations on how effective programs have been in accomplishing their goals.

2006 Community Educational Accountability Survey

Purpose:

The **2005 Community Educational Accountability Survey** provided school districts with benchmarking information about their educational accountability to the community, compared to other districts of similar geography and size.



Methodology:

The **2005 Community Educational Accountability Survey** was a telephone survey of residents in 7 school districts. The districts that participated included: Battle Creek Public Schools,

Harper Creek Community Schools, Kalamazoo Public Schools, Lakeview School District, Mattawan Consolidated School District, Paw Paw Public Schools, and Portage Public Schools. A total of 400 district residents were interviewed in each of the 7 school districts.

Research Issues:

The **2005 Community Educational Accountability Survey** addressed six areas including: communication and information; trust and accountability; community engagement; fiscal responsibility and support; educational delivery; and school improvement. In addition, the **2005 Community Educational Accountability Survey** included several questions designed to provide a demographic profile of respondents including: gender, age, children attending district, years in district, and voted in a school election.

Our second annual Community Educational Accountability Survey, the **2006 Community Educational Accountability Survey**, will begin in early 2006. If you would like more information, have any questions, or to schedule a meeting to view a sample survey and sample report, contact us at (800) 724-9994 or info@perspec.com.

In the next issue: Look at this Book!



The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR

By: Al Ries & Laura Ries, Harper Business, 2002

Except from review:

“If your work involves public relations to any degree, you will find *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR* an interesting and thought-provoking book – that may inspire and invigorate your efforts.” Read the full review in the next issue and see how the book shows the importance of PR and how to run a successful campaign.

Did you receive the Educational CD-ROM?

We have developed a resource for school districts that outlines the services Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. offers. If you are interested in receiving the CD-ROM, please e-mail Katie at info@perspec.com and we will be happy to send it to you and anyone else in your district who might be interested.

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