
KEY EDUCATION ISSUES – NATIONAL SURVEY (Parent Version)
May 2005

Introduction:

Hello. My name is _____ with Inshgtrix Research. We are working with researchers from the University of British Columbia, and four other Canadian Universities. Our national study asks parents and teachers about education issues, in particular key issues that influence teaching and learning in schools. In our knowledge-based society, schooling is becoming more and more important. Any information you provide will be kept confidential and you have the right to refuse to answer any question. The interview will take about 20 minutes. Do you have any questions before I begin?

May I please speak to a person in your household that is over 18 years of age?

Yes 1A

No..... 2

(DO NOT READ)

DOES NOT KNOW 3

REFUSED 4

TERMINATE

(RE-INTRODUCE YOURSELF, IF NECESSARY)

IA/ To begin, does anyone in the household teach in the K-12 system?

[No – continue with Question IB]

[Yes 1 – only one person, ask to speak with that person and skip to teacher version of questionnaire]

[Yes 2+ – two or more people, ask to speak with teacher who had most recent birthday and skip to teacher version of questionnaire]

[Record that the teacher was sampled using Random Digit Dialing and not from teacher database]

IB/ Including yourself, how many people live in your household? _____

[If = 1 –thank you and exit]

IA/ Are there any members of your household attending elementary or secondary school?

- Yes
- No *[thanks and exit]*
- Don't Know/Refused *[thanks and exit]*

IA/ Are you the parent (or legal guardian) of a school aged child(ren)?

- Yes *(Go to IB1)*
- No
- Don't Know/Refused

ID1/ Could I please speak with the parent who had the most recent birthday? *[If not the most recent but other parent is not available continue]*

(RE-INTRODUCE YOURSELF, IF NECESSARY)

IB1/ How many members in your household attend elementary or secondary school?
[Record exact number]

[If None—thanks and exit]
[If One or more go to IC]

IC/ For each members of your household that attends elementary or secondary school, what are their grade(s) levels and what is their gender?
[Capture grade and gender of each child attending school]

<i>Child:</i>	<i>Current Grade</i>	<i>Gender</i>
<i>One</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>
<i>Two</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>
<i>Three</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>
<i>Four</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>
<i>Five</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>
<i>Six</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>
<i>Seven +</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>M or F</i>

General Information:

GA/ To begin, students in schools are often given grades: A, B, C, D, or Fail to indicate the quality of their work. If the public schools in your community were graded the same way, what grade would you give them – A, B, C, D, or Fail.

- A
- B
- C
- D
- F
- Don't Know/Refused

GB/ Thinking about elementary and secondary education in your province, what would you say are the two most important issues or problems facing education?

First Response: _____
 Second Response: _____

GC/ Using a 4 point scale, where "1" is STRONGLY DISAGREE and "4" is STRONGLY AGREE, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:
[Rotate and Record Order]

All schools should be pretty much the same to ensure that all students receive an equal education.	1	2	3	4	D/K
There should be an annual report card for schools just as for students.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Parents should be able to send their children to another school if they are dissatisfied with their current school.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Standardized tests should be used to assess changes over time in a school's performance.	1	2	3	4	D/K

School Choice

CA/ What type (or types) of school do your children attend? Do you have any children in: (check all that apply)

- A public school
- An independent or private school
- Home schooling
- Other (please specify) _____

[If Public checked, ask CA.1 and CA.2]

CA.1/ Do any of your children attend a public non-religious school

- Yes, how many _____
- No

CA.2/ Do any of your children attend a public religious school

- Yes, how many _____
- No

[If Independent/Private School, ask CA.3 and CA.4]

CA.3/ Do any of your children attend a private non-religious school

- Yes, how many _____
- No

CA.4/ Do any of your children attend a private religious school

- Yes, how many _____
- No

[If Home schooling, ask CA.5]

CA.5/ How many of your children are home schooled? _____

[If Other, ask CA.6]

CA.6/ How many of your children attend _____ {pipe from CA}? _____

[If CA.1='yes' AND CA.2='yes']

CA.7/ You indicated you had a child in both a public non-religious and a public religious school. Please tell me, does your youngest child school-aged child attend the public non-religious school?

- Yes
- No

[If Public]

CB1/ Is your youngest child attending your local neighbourhood school?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know/Refused

[*ONLY ask if parent responds “public school” and “not independent / private or denominational or religious” in CA/*] **AND** [*Determined that the youngest child attends public non-religious/denominational school if happen to have children in both types*]

CB2/ Is your youngest child taking the regular provincial curriculum at their school or is he or she in a special program at the school (e.g., language immersion, an accelerated stream, a special needs program)?

- Regular Curriculum [*If regular curriculum, go to CC*]
- Special program [*If special program, go to CB3*]
- Don't Know/Refused [*go to CC*]

CB3/ What type of program is this? [*Do Not Read*]

- Alternative language instruction (e.g. immersion)
- Gifted/enriched programs (e.g. Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, accelerated program)
- Special theme or focus (e.g. arts, science, or sports)
- Alternative programs (e.g. at-risk, storefront, alternative school)
- Special needs program
- Other [please specify] _____

CB4/ Do all students at the school take this same special program? That is, is your child in a special school or a special program within a school?

- Yes, all same
- No, special program
- Don't Know/Refused

CC/ Among the public schools in your area, do all schools offer the standard, regular curriculum or are there some schools which offer only specialized curricula (for example: language immersion schools, gifted or enriched schools)?

- All regular schools
- Some Specialized Schools
- Don't Know/Refused

CC2/ In your judgement, is there sufficient information available to help you make good educational choices about the best type of schooling for your child/children?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

CD/ Thinking about where you are now living how important was the quality of schooling to your choice of current residence? Was it?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not at all important
- Don't Know/Refused

CE/ Using a 4 point scale, where 1 is NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT and 4 is VERY IMPORTANT, how important were each of the following in helping you choose the school your (youngest) child currently attends? *[Rotate and Record Order]*

close to our home	1	2	3	4	D/K
sibling in the school	1	2	3	4	D/K
met our religious views	1	2	3	4	D/K
had a special theme or teaching method	1	2	3	4	D/K
friends recommended this school	1	2	3	4	D/K
school has a good academic reputation	1	2	3	4	D/K

Was anything else important in choosing the school your (youngest) child currently attends?

- Yes
- No (*Go to CF*)
- Don't Know/Refused (*Go to CF*)

Please indicate what else was important in choosing the school for your youngest child. *[Record]*

CF/ Have you ever checked school academic performance reports in newspapers or on education websites?

- Yes
- No (*Go to CH*)
- Don't Know/Refused (*Go to CH*)

CG/ Have you ever used such information to choose a school?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know/Refused

CH/ Using a 4 point scale, where 1 is STRONGLY DISAGREE and 4 is STRONGLY AGREE, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

[Rotate and record order]

There should be a greater variety of academic programs in public schools.	1	2	3	4	D/K
The amount of school choice available in my district is sufficient.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Government funding should follow the child, regardless of where he or she is enrolled. <i>[Ask equal half of parents and teachers, split by region]</i>	1	2	3	4	D/K
Government tax money should follow the child, regardless of where he or she is enrolled. <i>[Ask equal half of parents and teachers, split by region]</i>	1	2	3	4	D/K
All parents should have the right to choose their child's school.	1	2	3	4	D/K
School choice matters little because all schools are pretty much the same.	1	2	3	4	D/K

Safety and Discipline:

DA/ At your youngest child's school, do you consider student discipline and behavior to be

- A serious problem

- Somewhat of a problem
- Not at all a problem
- Don't Know/Refused

DB/ In the last three years at your children's school, have issues and concerns about student discipline and behaviour decreased, increased, or stayed about the same?

- Decreased
- Increased
- Stayed about the same
- Don't know / refused

DC/ Using a 4 point scale, where 1 is NOT AT ALL and 4 is TO A GREAT EXTENT, to what extent do each of the following contribute to classroom disruption at your youngest child's school?

[Rotate and Record Order]

Failure of parents to instill acceptable standards of behaviour	1	2	3	4	D/K
Large class sizes	1	2	3	4	D/K
One or a few problem students	1	2	3	4	D/K
Too great a mix of academic abilities	1	2	3	4	D/K
Too great a mix of special needs students	1	2	3	4	D/K

Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers' Unions:

UA/ Is the ability of teacher unions to influence what happens in schools?

[Ask half of parents and teachers, split by region]

- About right
- Too strong
- Not strong enough
- Don't Know/Refused

OR

Is the power of teacher unions to influence what happens in schools:

[Ask half of parents and teachers, split by region]

- About right
- Too strong
- Not strong enough
- Don't Know/Refused

UB/ How involved should teachers' unions be in each of the following areas, where 1 is NOT AT ALL INVOLVED and 4 is VERY INVOLVED? *[Rotate and Record Order]*

Salaries and working conditions	1	2	3	4	D/K
Class Size	1	2	3	4	D/K
Curriculum and assessments	1	2	3	4	D/K
Professional development	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teaching performance standards	1	2	3	4	D/K
Certification and licensing	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teacher discipline	1	2	3	4	D/K
Influencing public opinion on educational issues	1	2	3	4	D/K

UC/ Using a 4-point scale, where 1 is NOT AT ALL EFFECTIVE and 4 is VERY EFFECTIVE, how effective are provincial teacher unions in contributing to school improvement?

1 2 3 4 D/K

UD/ Do you understand teachers to be members of a union or of a profession? [*Do Not Read*]

- o Profession
- o Union
- o Both
- o Don't Know/Refused

Teacher Evaluation and Compensation:

TA/ Again on a 4 point scale, where 1 is NOT AT ALL EFFECTIVE and 4 is VERY EFFECTIVE, how effective would the following suggestions be in improving the quality of teacher's work?

[*Rotate and Record Order*]

Increase pay for all teachers	1	2	3	4	D/K
Reduce class sizes	1	2	3	4	D/K
Financially reward outstanding teachers	1	2	3	4	D/K
Increase professional development and training	1	2	3	4	D/K
Make it easier to dismiss ineffective teachers	1	2	3	4	D/K
Ensure job security for teachers	1	2	3	4	D/K

TB/ Using the same 4 point scale, where "1" is NOT AT ALL EFFECTIVE and "4" is VERY EFFECTIVE, how effective would the following be for evaluating teachers?

[*Rotate and Record Order*]

Student improvement on standardized tests	1	2	3	4	D/K
Evaluation by an outside education professional [<i>if needed, "as in the UK"</i>]	1	2	3	4	D/K
Principal's judgment	1	2	3	4	D/K
Evaluation by an experienced teacher	1	2	3	4	D/K
Parent evaluations	1	2	3	4	D/K
Student evaluations	1	2	3	4	D/K
Yearly exams for teachers	1	2	3	4	D/K

TC/ Using the same 4 point scale, where "1" is NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT and "4" is VERY IMPORTANT, how important do you think each of the following factors should be in determining a teacher's salary? [*Rotate and Record Order*]

Teaching skills	1	2	3	4	D/K
Years of teaching experience	1	2	3	4	D/K
Academic progress of their students	1	2	3	4	D/K
Professional development or training completed	1	2	3	4	D/K
Leadership responsibilities	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teaching in a more challenging school [<i>if needed, "more ESL, more special needs"</i>]	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teaching in an area of shortage, such as physics	1	2	3	4	D/K

TD/ If teacher salaries were based on performance, which method would be most effective for improving student achievement? (*choose only one*)

- Rewarding individual teachers
- Rewarding teams of teachers
- Rewarding all teachers in a school
- Don't Know/Refused

School Accountability:

AA/ Using a 4 point scale, where "1" is **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and "4" is **STRONGLY AGREE**, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

[Rotate and Recode Order]

School boards should be able to close poor performing schools.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Ranking school performance on standardized tests is unfair to some schools.	1	2	3	4	D/K
The school principal should be accountable to the parents for school performance.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Schools should do an annual survey of parent satisfaction.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Schools should have an annual improvement plan and report their progress.	1	2	3	4	D/K

Parent Involvement

PA/ Using the same 4 point scale, where "1" is **NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT** and "4" is **VERY IMPORTANT**, how important is parent participation in each of the following areas?

[Rotate and Record Order]

on school committees	1	2	3	4	D/K
in parent-teacher meetings	1	2	3	4	D/K
in hiring a school principal	1	2	3	4	D/K
in school improvement planning	1	2	3	4	D/K

PB/ Using a 4 point scale, where "1" is **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and "4" is **STRONGLY AGREE**, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement about your school?

[Rotate and Record Order]

Parents' present level of participation in schools is too low.	1	2	3	4	D/K
It is easy for parents to get involved in school activities.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Most often it is self-interested parents who participate in their school.	1	2	3	4	D/K

Standardized Assessments:

SA/ Using a 4 point scale, where 1 is **STRONGLY AGREE** and 4 is **STRONGLY DISAGREE**, how much do you agree or disagree with each statement: *[Rotate and Record Order]*

Provinces should administer standardized tests at key stages of schooling. <i>[Ask equal half of parents and teachers, split by region]</i>	1	2	3	4	D/K
Provinces should administer standardized assessments at key stages of schooling. <i>[Ask equal half of parents and teachers, split by region]</i>	1	2	3	4	D/K
Canada should have national standards indicating what students should know or be able to do at various grade levels.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teacher evaluations of students are better indicators of student performance than are standardized tests.	1	2	3	4	D/K
All students should pass a test of basic skills in language and mathematics before being allowed to graduate from high school.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Standardized tests are unfair to students from disadvantaged family backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	D/K

Teacher Training and Professional Development:

PDA/ Using a 4 point scale, where "1" is **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and "4" is **STRONGLY AGREE**, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? *[Rotate and Record Order]*

New teachers are not adequately prepared to work in today's schools.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teachers need specific training when major curriculum changes are introduced.	1	2	3	4	D/K
My child's teacher is doing a good job..	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teacher professional development days detract from time for student learning.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Teachers should be paid extra for attaining additional university degrees.	1	2	3	4	D/K

School Leadership:

LA/ Does your youngest child's school have a written annual improvement plan?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know/Refused

LB/ Focusing on the performance of the principal at your school, and using the same 4 point scale where "1" is **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and "4" is **STRONGLY AGREE**, please indicate how much you agree or disagree that your principal is: *[Rotate and Record Order]*

Creating a safe, caring, and respectful environment.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Responding to my needs.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Providing a sense of vision and purpose.	1	2	3	4	D/K
Communicating to parents.	1	2	3	4	D/K

DEMOGRAPHICS:

Moving into our final section, now.

DEM1/What is the highest level of education you have finished? *[Do Not Read]*

- Completed Elementary
- Some High school
- High school Graduate
- Some community college/vocational/trade school/CEGEP
- Graduated from Community college/vocational/trade school/CEGEP
- Some university
- University Graduate
- Post-graduate university/professional school
- Refused / Don't know

DEM2/ In what year were you born? _____
[Open ended and code all four digits of year] 9999 (DK/Refused)

DEM3/What is your postal code? _____
[Open ended and code all six digits of postal code) 999999 (DK/Refused)

DEM4/ If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for? *[Do Not Read]*

- Bloc Québécois *[Only code Bloc in Quebec, if elsewhere code Other]*
- Conservatives
- Liberals
- New Democratic Party
- Other – please specify _____
- Don't Know/Refused

DEM5/ In political matters, people talk of “the left” and of “the right.” Using a ten point scale where 1 is left and 10 is right, where would you place yourself on most political issues?

Left 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Right

- Don't Know/Refused

DEM8/ How many different RESIDENTIAL phone lines; that is non-business lines, do you have in your household? We need the number of non-business phone lines, NOT the actual number of telephones. *[This question is for your weighting purposes.]*

[Open ended and code actual number of residential lines]

Actual Number _____

- Don't know/Refused
-

Four final questions about schooling:

FA/ What is the population size of the city or community of your children(s) school?

- under 10,000
- 10,000 - 50,000
- 50,001 – 100,000
- 100,001 - 500,000
- Over 500,000

[If over 500,000]

Is the school located closer to....

- The city centre
- More in the suburbs

FB/ Which one of the following best describes the income level of most families of students attending your children(s) school?

- Low-income,
- Middle-income *[if people say “wide mixture / very diverse” use this category]*
- High-income
- Don’t Know/Refused

FC/ Since January, have you had an opportunity to do any of the following: *[Rotate and Record]*

Volunteer in a classroom/library/fieldtrip/other school activity	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> D/K
Meet individually with your child’s teacher	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> D/K
Attend a parent/school committee meeting	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> D/K
Attend a school event like sports, drama, music	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> D/K
Write a letter to anyone at the school	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> D/K

FD/ On average, how often do you help your child(ren) with homework?

- Every day
- Two or three times a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Rarely or never

And finally a couple questions for classification purposes:

FE/ What is your ethnic or ancestral background?
(if needed, “e.g., Scottish, Chinese, Cree”) *(code multiple backgrounds)*

[Open ended and record] 99 (DK/Refused)

FF/ Could you please tell me your total annual family income from all sources before taxes. Is it?

- Under \$20,000
- \$20,000 to less than \$35,000
- \$35,000 to less than \$50,000
- \$50,000 to less than \$65,000
- \$65,000 to less than \$80,000
- \$80,000 to less than \$95,000
- \$95,000 and over
- Don't Know/Refused

RECORD GENDER

- Male
- Female

RECORD LANGUAGE

- French
- English

And could I just verify your phone number, is it. _____

These are all the questions I had. Thank you very much for participating in our survey. Have a great day/evening!