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# Houston Independent School District: 2009 Image and Satisfaction Survey

## **Executive Summary**

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## **Objective**

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) hired Creative Consumer Research (CCR), a local marketing research company, to conduct the second wave of a research study to determine the overall image of HISD among parents, the general population, and community leaders within the Houston area, and to track and compare the results from the 2007 survey to the 2009 survey in order to determine any areas of improvement or decreases in performance.

This report is a summary of the results from the 2009 study including analysis of strengths and weaknesses of HISD, as well as some comparisons to the 2007 results. A full report is available under a separate cover.

## **Methodology**

A total of 1,308 telephone interviews were conducted among various segments of Houston residents between February 27, 2009, and March 10, 2009 (300 with Parents and 1,008 with the General Population, 203 of which were Community Leaders). Various measures were taken to ensure the 2009 Wave mirrored the 2007 Wave in order to compare the results.

Telephone numbers for both the Parents and the Community Leaders were provided by HISD. Numbers for the General Population were pulled by CCR using a map to define regions within the district on a street by street basis.

In order to participate in the study, Parents and General Population were required to be the head of household and at least 18 years of age, not work in Market Research, and live within the district.

Respondents were told the study was being conducted for HISD and, on average, took 13 minutes to complete the survey. The survey was available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese (157 respondents chose to complete the interview in Spanish while no respondents chose to complete it in Vietnamese).

In order to obtain a representative mix of the segments, quotas were enforced within the Parents and the General Population (excluding the Community Leaders). Respondents' gender, age, and HISD zone were tracked and controlled so that a particular group was not over-sampled.

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## **Executive Summary**

The core of the survey includes three sections, Trueness of statements concerning HISD values and goals, Agreement with general statements regarding HISD, and Satisfaction with various aspects of HISD. For this summary, we will focus mainly on the findings from these core areas.

**The General Population gives significantly fewer top box ratings than Parents to almost all factors mentioned.** The important thing to note about this finding is that in almost every case, the General Population gives significantly more 'don't know' responses. Basically, Parents are more educated about the system, and are pleased with it, while the General Population is somewhat pleased, but a large percentage are not aware enough to give any rating, be it positive or negative.

**From 2007 to 2009, the majority of ratings increased.** While this is seen more often in the Parents' ratings, the General Population's increased as well. Only one factor in the survey showed a statistically significant decrease, the rating given to the Superintendent; all others stayed statistically the same.

**Parents' ratings increased for factors in many areas of the schools.** Committed to improving Houston, Student safety, Schools set high academic performance, Provides adequate up-to-date technology, Has enough computers in its schools, and Parents as valued partners all receive significantly higher scores in 2009 than in 2007.

**Both Parents and the General Population rate the following aspects higher in 2009 than in 2007:** HISD uses good educational practices in running its schools, HISD uses sound business practices in running its schools, HISD schools are safe and secure, HISD uses taxpayer dollars wisely & effectively, Effective student learning & academic achievement, Safety takes precedence over all else, and Everyone is treated courteously & with respect.

**Education and impact on students' lives are strengths of HISD.** The district is seen as a positive aspect for students and the community, shown by the high ratings for factors relating to these areas.

**Various aspects include:** HISD provides an education that helps students improve their way of life, HISD provides quality education, Schools set high standards for academic performance, and Committed to improving the Houston community.

**Technology and bureaucratic systems are an area of opportunity.** While not necessarily all negative, in 2009, the ratings for equipment and technology are not as high as other areas. While it could be that respondents are disconnected from the administration element of the district, these areas also receive fewer positive ratings.

**Various aspects include:** HISD central administration offices, HISD regional administrative offices, HISD has enough computers in its schools, and HISD provides adequate equipment and up-to-date technology.

**Familiarity is key to positive ratings.** Because there are so few negative ratings, there are fewer areas for opportunity the district needs to focus on. However, efforts should be made to educate those who are currently unaware so that these 'don't know' responses could potentially shift to positive ratings.

### **More Specifics...**

As would be expected, and seen with the General Population, those aspects of the schools where Parents have less contact receive more neutral ratings. So while teachers, school buildings, facilities, and grounds, commitment to improving the Houston community, principals, and student safety all receive high positive ratings, the following aspects shift more towards uncertain: superintendent, board of education, central office administration, regional office administration, and school bus drivers. (Detailed information on Chart 1)

Agreement with statements increased in 2009 from 2007. 'HISD provides an education that helps students improve their way of life' is the statement most respondents agree with while 'HISD has enough computers in its schools' is agreed with the least. (Detailed information on Charts 2-3)

Trueness of statements increased in 2009 over 2007 including Parents are valued partners, Everyone is treated courteously and with respect, Safety takes precedence over all else, Effective student learning and academic achievement, and HISD uses taxpayers dollars wisely and effectively. While the taxpayers' dollars statement increased from 2007, it receives significantly fewer true ratings than the other statements. (Detailed information on Charts 4-5)