

Report: Findings of Surveys on Public Education Needs, School Choice and Charter Schools in the Greater Morgantown West Virginia Area

West Virginia Academy, Ltd.

Abstract

This report publishes the results of surveys of parents and students in the Greater Morgantown Area (primarily Monongalia, Marion, and Preston Counties) regarding traditional public schools, school choice, and public charter schools conducted by West Virginia Academy, Ltd. in Spring, 2020. The objective of this survey was to identify the extent to which there may be any unmet needs for students and families in this region, particularly those from underserved populations. The survey also assesses community demand for establishing a charter school in Monongalia County. A significant number of parents and students identify several aspects of traditional public schools in need of improvement, including unmet needs of students and underserved populations, as well as a lack of sufficient classroom and teacher resources. Respondents also were asked about the extent to which they supported the establishment of a charter school in their community and their interest level in enrolling their child (parents) or themselves (students) in the charter school. The level of support among parents varies dramatically from county to county as nearly two-thirds of the parents from Preston County support the establishment of a charter school whereas approximately one in three parents from Monongalia and Marion counties are supportive. Many parent respondents are undecided and the only county where a majority were opposed was Marion County. Lastly, the survey asked parents if they would enroll their child or children in a charter school if it were available and Projecting the survey data for parents who confirmed they would seek to enroll their child in a charter school weighted by the number of children in their respective homes across the entire enrollment in public schools indicates that up to 22.3% (or over six thousand students) in the Greater Morgantown Area would attend a charter school if one were available in their community. The largest projected enrollment would be in Monongalia County. As a result, this survey establishes a significant demand for a charter school option among parents and students in the Greater Morgantown Area.

Section 1: Parent Survey on Public Education Needs, School Choice and Charters

The questions included in the survey were adapted from a variety of prior surveys seeking to identify underserved populations, assess unmet needs in public education, and determine interest levels in charter schools that were deployed in other locations where successful charter schools have been founded. The full survey instrument for the survey of parents is included in Appendix A.

Due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), the West Virginia Department of Education Policy 4350, and school board policies, a survey sent to a random sample of students and families was not possible. A door-to-door survey was not feasible both because of the prohibitive cost of conducting such a survey and, more importantly, concerns related to the spread of COVID-19 through such a method. Based on these limitations, we determined that a survey accessible through targeted social media advertisements and community group posts would be the most effective available method. Additionally, social media usage has been at an all-time high through the first two quarters of 2020 due to higher work from home rates during this period. We selected Facebook as the social media platform for the survey because it is the most widely-used social media platform for parents of school age children and because Facebook ads can be directed to users based on age and location and can be viewed on both Facebook and Instagram.

The parent survey was conducted from April 16th until April 23rd 2020. Survey respondents were sought at random through advertisements on social media directed to users of Facebook and Instagram matching the specified age and geographic location. Advertisements for the parent survey were made available only to adults between the ages of 25 and 55 located in Monongalia County, Preston County, and Marion County. Both the parent and student surveys were also accessible through West Virginia Academy's Facebook page and were hosted primarily using the Surveys for Pages platform.¹ The parent survey was shared to various community pages in Facebook to illicit responses from interested members of the Greater Morgantown community.²

Respondents were only permitted to complete the survey once through their respective Facebook profiles to avoid duplicate responses. Additionally, to prevent multiple responses from the same household that could inadvertently "double count" potential enrollments, for purposes of the needs assessment in Section 1(c) we treat responses submitted from the same IP address as duplicate responses and deleted the later response in time. In all instances where an IP address appeared twice in our sample, the responses to required questions were identical, so the decision to delete the later in time response did not impact survey results to required questions.

¹ The parent survey was initially hosted through Survey Monkey and users were given a link either through our organization page or a Facebook advertisement, but the advertisement interface on Facebook and Survey Monkey was confusing and resulted low click-through rates and fewer completions. After a brief period, we discovered this problem and transferred the instrument to be hosted on Surveys for Pages, which interfaces more efficiently with Facebook and resulted in dramatically higher completion rates. All of the student survey responses and over 90% of the parent survey responses were collected while the survey was hosted on Surveys for Pages.

² Community pages where the survey was posted include "Metro Morgantown, Monongalia County WV Open Forum," the "Fairmont Community" page, the "Preston News and Journal" page, the "Fairmont and Marion County Wv Public Information Group," the "Moms of Morgantown" page, the "LDS Morgantown Members" page, the "Monongalia Area Homeschoolers Association" page, as well as community pages for the West Virginia University colleges of law, engineering, business, and medicine.

A. Parent Survey Demographics and Sample

Our survey titled “Opinion on Public Education and School Choice in West Virginia” sought responses from parents of K-12 age students in the Greater Morgantown Area, which we define as including Monongalia, Marion, and Preston Counties.³ Approximately 41% of all users who accessed the survey completed all required questions and data from incomplete survey responses was not otherwise collected or recorded. After attrition from blank or incomplete survey responses, there were 246 total survey respondents. The average time to complete the survey was just under two and a half minutes. 197 individuals accessed the survey through social media advertisements and the remainder of survey participants accessed the survey either through a link on one of the community pages or the Facebook page where the survey was hosted.

Consistent with the objectives of the survey and outreach efforts for participation, all survey respondents are residents of West Virginia and over 91% of survey respondents are residents of the Greater Morgantown Area. More specifically, 112 respondents (45.53%) are residents of Monongalia County, 95 respondents (38.62%) are residents of Marion County, 19 respondents (7.72%) are residents of Preston County, and 20 respondents (8.13%) are residents of West Virginia, but not necessarily in the Greater Morgantown Area.⁴

The demographics regarding respondent experience as parents of children in education systems in West Virginia within the last five years are reflected in Table 1.1.⁵

Table 1.1 Respondents’ Experience as Parents of Children in West Virginia in Different Education Systems		
In the last five years, respondent’s child or children have attended:	Responses	Percent
Public Elementary School in West Virginia	147	59.8%
Public Middle School in West Virginia	90	36.6%
Public High School in West Virginia	70	28.5%
Pre-K Program	55	22.4%
Private School	24	9.8%
Home School	23	9.3%
Public School Outside West Virginia	4	1.6%
A Charter School Outside West Virginia	0	0%
Did not have a child attend school in the last five years	40	16%

³ We define the Greater Morgantown Area to include these three counties because Morgantown is in Monongalia County and areas within Preston and Marion Counties are less than 20 minutes from Morgantown. Aggregation of these county populations into a single demographic aligns with the Morgantown-Fairmont WV Combined Statistical Area that includes all three of these counties and the Morgantown, WV MSA that includes Monongalia and Preston Counties.

⁴ Of this last category, 10 respondents reside in Harrison County, WV, 7 respondents were from various other counties throughout West Virginia, and 3 respondents provided insufficient information to determine their precise location of residence, but all three respondents appear to reside in WV based on their other responses to the survey and data provided within the social media platform.

⁵ Because respondent parents may have multiple children or a single child that has attended multiple schools in the last five years, respondents could check multiple boxes on this response and, as such, the total percentage of responses will add up to more than 100%.

Because enrollments are sequential in the actual underlying student population and our survey inquiry included a timeframe over the last five years, we would expect the percentage of respondents listing that they had a child who attended high school in the last five years to be approximately similar to the percentage of actual current high school enrollments compared to the total student population. Whereas, the percentage of respondents with a child that attended middle school in the last five years should be significantly higher than the percentage of actual current middle school enrollments, and this response for elementary school should be dramatically higher than the percentage of actual current enrollments in elementary school.⁶ Out of the 23,767 total combined public school enrollment in Monongalia, Marion and Preston Counties for the 2018-2019 school year, 37.8% were enrolled in elementary school, 32.7% were enrolled in middle school, and 29.4% were enrolled in high school.⁷ Hence, Figure 1 provides strong evidence that the respondents to our survey provide a representative sample of the actual population of parents of children enrolled in public school in the Greater Morgantown Area.

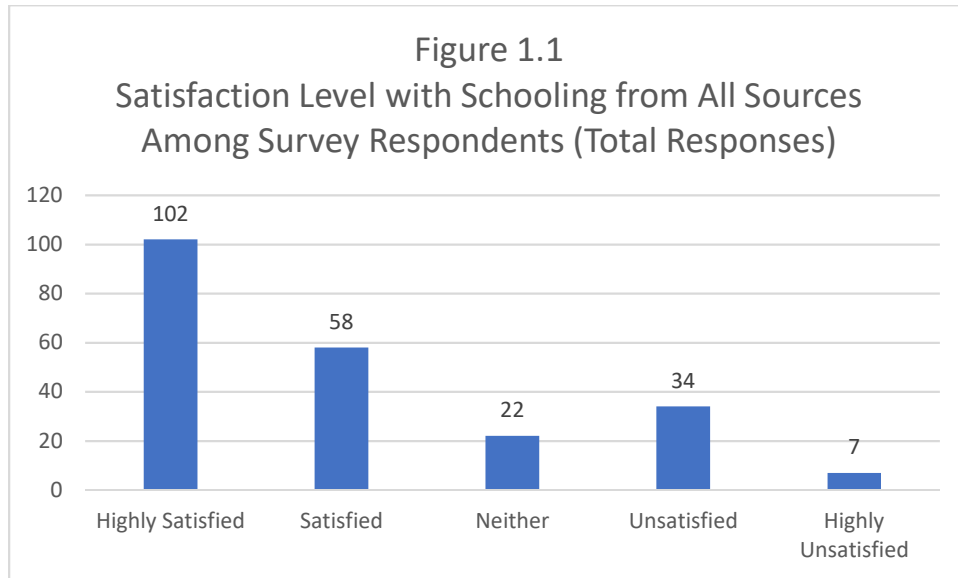
We submitted a FOIA request to each of the counties in the Greater Morgantown Area seeking the number of homeschool students and private school students to use as a baseline against which to vet our survey results, but our requests were denied because they do not track those numbers. A reliable confidence interval cannot be calculated without the total population of households with school age children. We do note that 9.3% of respondents to our survey had a child who homeschooled in the last five years and this percentage appears to be much higher than the 3.4% homeschool rate for the US estimated by the National Center for Education Statistics as of 2012.⁸ However, we expect the homeschool number in Figure 1 to be higher than the actual current homeschool population because of the five year lookback method in our inquiry and, consistent with this expectation, we note that nearly all respondents who indicated that they had a child homeschool over the last five years also indicated that they had a child in public school during that period. This suggests that populations of students who homeschool are quite transient between homeschooling and public school and may be indicative of unmet needs among such populations. Alternatively, some respondents may have interpreted the homeschool option to include instruction in the home for pre-K aged children because Pre-K Programs were included as an answer choice to this question. Taken together, we have no reason to believe the homeschool data or private school data in Figure 1 indicate that our sample diverges in any meaningful way from the actual parent populations in the Greater Morgantown Area.

⁶ For example, a respondent that is the parent of one student currently enrolled in high school likely would have also had a student in Public Middle School within the last five years and, depending on the age of the student, possibly would also have had a student in Public Elementary School within the last five years. A parent of one student currently enrolled in Elementary School, on the other hand, would not have also had a student in Public Middle School or Public High School. We also note that respondents included parents of children educated outside the public education system and so the percentages in Table 1 relating to public schools would be different if respondents with children educated outside of public school were removed.

⁷ Enrollment data for Monongalia, Marion, and Preston Counties are based on the most recently available West Virginia Department of Education Balanced Scorecard numbers for the 2018-2019 school year. Available at <https://wveis.k12.wv.us/essa/dashboard.html> (last visited June 12, 2020).

⁸ See Homeschool: Fast Facts, National Center for Education Statistics. Available at <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=91> (last visited 6/12/2020); Homeschooling in the United States: 2012, IES National Center for Education Statistics NCES 2016-096.REV. Available at <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2016/2016096rev.pdf> (last visited 6/12/2020) (documenting a significant positive upward trend in homeschool students in the years prior to 2012).

Respondents provided their individual satisfaction level with their child’s schooling over the last five years. These responses incorporate satisfaction levels based on all schooling over the past five years and, as such, should be interpreted as the satisfaction level of all respondents in the aggregate with public school, private school, and homeschool options. 24 respondents answered “not applicable” on this question and so those responses are not included in the figures below. The aggregate responses on respondent’s satisfaction with their child’s education are presented below in Figure 1.1.



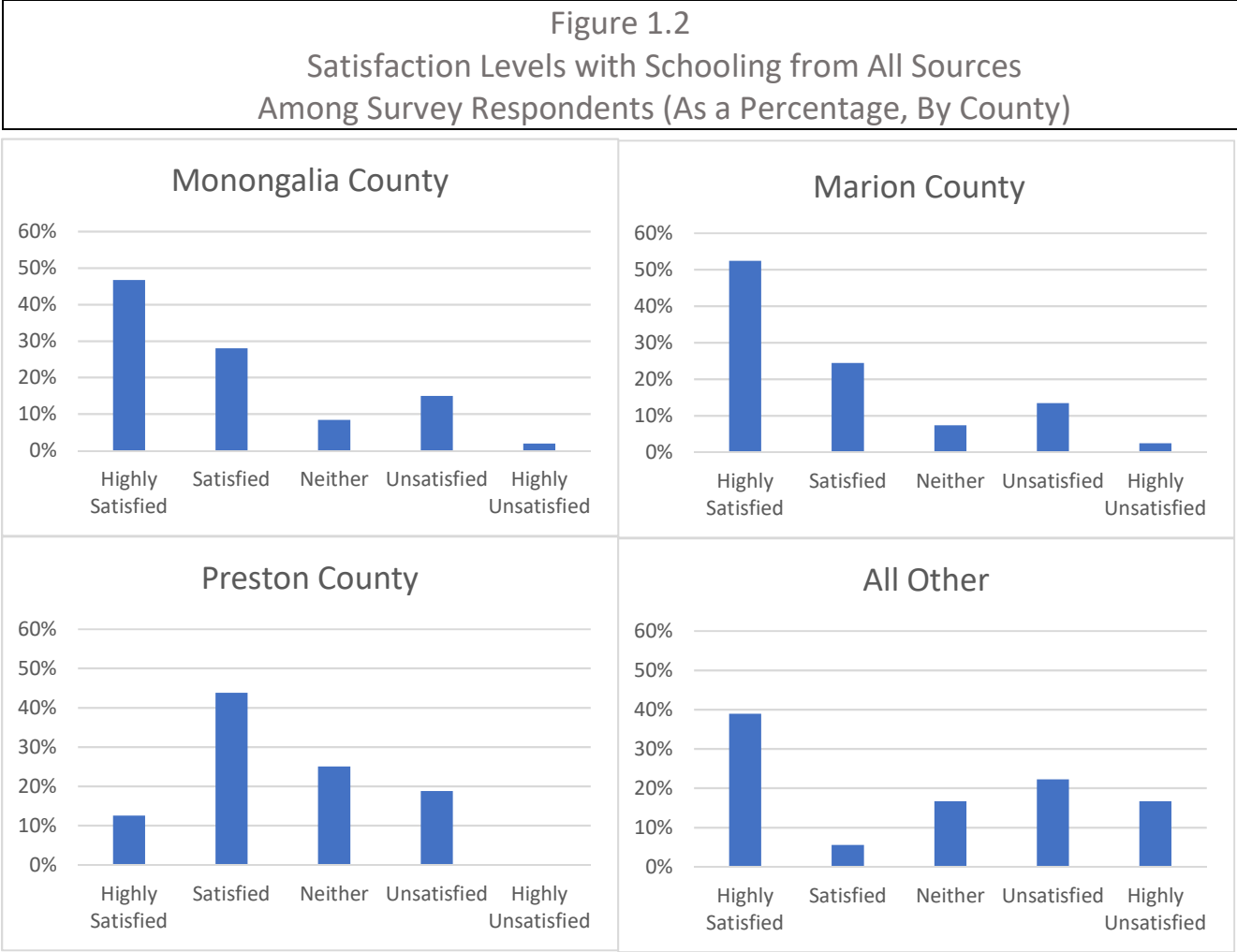
The responses above in Figure 1.1 indicate an overall satisfaction level with the quality of education of respondents’ children of 72%. This level of satisfaction across all education options is about 10% below the national average per a recent Gallup Poll indicating an 82% satisfaction rate with the education of surveyed individuals’ oldest child, which covered satisfaction in education from both private and public sources.⁹ However, because that survey did not provide respondents with the option of selecting “neither satisfied nor unsatisfied,” the satisfaction levels of the undecided group in this survey would likely increase both the satisfied and unsatisfied groups if that option were eliminated. Assuming the group that is neither satisfied nor unsatisfied divided along the same lines as the satisfied and unsatisfied groups, the total satisfaction would be 81% among all survey respondents. Hence, the results of the education satisfaction survey question indicate that the satisfaction across all education options in the Greater Morgantown Area is anywhere from 1% to 10% lower than the national average satisfaction rate.

Satisfaction rates for respondent parents varied based on the number of children under 18 residing in their home. The largest group of respondents were the “two child” home parents (accounting for 40% of all respondents to this question) and these respondents expressed the greatest satisfaction. Respondents with one child under 18 in their home indicate a satisfaction rate of 72%, the “two child”

⁹ See Saad, Americans' Satisfaction With U.S. Education at 15-Year High (Gallup, August 29, 2019). <https://news.gallup.com/poll/266063/americans-satisfaction-education-year-high.aspx> (last visited 6/12/2020). The satisfaction level on this metric was 79% after the 2016 school year. See Swift, Americans' Satisfaction With Schools Edges Up From 2016 (Gallup, August 21, 2017). Available at <https://news.gallup.com/poll/216611/americans-satisfaction-schools-edges-2016.aspx> (last visited 6/12/2020).

home parent satisfaction rate is 76%, the “three child” home parent satisfaction rate is 70%, the “four or more children” home parent satisfaction rate is 65%, and the rate for respondents who no longer have children under 18 residing in their home is 63%. These trends are consistent across all counties. These satisfaction rates suggest that satisfaction across all education options in the Greater Morgantown Area declines as family size increases.

The satisfaction levels by County are presented below in Table 1.3, represented as percentages and excluding respondents who answered N/A.



The combined satisfaction levels in Figure 1.2, including highly satisfied and satisfied responses, is 75% for Monongalia County, 77% for Marion County, 56% for Preston County, and 44% for all others, respectively. Adjusting these data by re-allocating the percentages that are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied suggests that both Marion County and Monongalia County are approximately equal to the national average in terms of parent satisfaction with their students’ education from all sources, whereas respondents from Preston County and all other counties represented in the survey are substantially below the national average.

B. Parent Survey Opinions about Aspects of Public Schools Needing Improvement

Respondents were asked what areas of Public Education stand in the greatest need of improvement. This question provided 11 fixed answer choices along with an “other” answer choice where respondents were permitted to provide a free response for their own answer or answers. The fixed answer choices were based on (i) areas where West Virginia ranks near the bottom in the US as identified in prior research (e.g. teacher resources, standardized test outcomes, and facilities), (ii) areas identified as declining or facing funding shortages in public schools as described in the popular press (opportunities for disabled or underprivileged students, extra-curricular activities, and enrichment classes), and (iii) other areas that may be important to parents that are commonly included on charter school interest surveys (e.g. curricular delivery and design). On average, respondents selected slightly more than three answer choices total on this question. These responses are provided in the aggregate with the total number of respondents who selected that response as well as the percentage of respondents who selected that response in Table 1.2 below.

	Number of Responses	% of All Respondents
Resources and classroom aids to support teachers	117	47.6%
Curriculum design and instructional delivery in STEM topics (science, technology, engineering, and math)	91	37.0%
Experiential learning and field trips	83	33.7%
Curriculum design and instructional delivery for classes supporting reading comprehension and writing	76	30.9%
Facilities including classrooms and school grounds	62	25.2%
Support and options for children with disabilities	61	24.8%
Offerings of enrichment classes like art, music, and physical education	61	24.8%
Access to educational opportunities for underprivileged students	55	22.4%
Parent involvement opportunities	40	16.3%
Offerings of extra-curricular activities and team sports	33	13.4%
Outcomes on standardized tests and college entrance exams	32	13.0%
Other (Various Free Responses)		
Indicated No Aspect of Public Schools Needs Improvement	15	6.1%
Improved Curriculum and Instructional Design	9	3.7%
Improved Opportunities for Gifted or High Achieving Students	7	2.8%
Teacher Quality, Training, or Incentives	7	2.8%
Increased Funding	7	2.8%
Behavior Issues and Safety	6	2.4%
Idiosyncratic (fewer than 1% of responses similar)	15	6.1%

Free responses by respondents who selected “other” were grouped and are presented by category in instances where there were more than 2 (or greater than 1% of the sample) provided a

similar response. Fewer than 1% of respondents mentioned class size as a significant concern. Taken together, these data suggest that public school areas in greatest need of improvement relate to curriculum design and instructional delivery, experiential learning and field trips, as well as resource allocations to classrooms and facilities.

The breakdown of responses from county to county was fairly consistent with the overall sample. By way of example, Monongalia County residents, the largest population in the survey, identified four of the same top five aspects needing improvement and in largely the same order. The fixed answer responses for Monongalia County are provided below in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Aspects of West Virginia Public Education in Greatest Need of Improvement (Monongalia County Respondents)		
	Number of Responses	% of All Respondents
Resources and classroom aids to support teachers	58	51.8%
Experiential learning and field trips	42	37.5%
Curriculum design and instructional delivery in STEM topics (science, technology, engineering, and math)	40	35.7%
Curriculum design and instructional delivery for classes supporting reading comprehension and writing	32	28.6%
Offerings of enrichment classes like art, music, and physical education	23	20.5%
Facilities including classrooms and school grounds	22	19.6%
Parent involvement opportunities	21	18.8%
Support and options for children with disabilities	20	17.9%
Access to educational opportunities for underprivileged students	19	17.0%
Offerings of extra-curricular activities and team sports	17	15.2%
Outcomes on standardized tests and college entrance exams	15	13.4%

C. Parent Demand and Support for a Charter School

In this section, we report survey results from questions relating to Charter schools in an effort to assess demand for the establishment of a charter school in the Greater Morgantown Area and/or one of its counties. The three primary questions inquire about: (i) the respondents’ level of support or opposition to a charter school opening in the community, (ii) parent respondents’ current interest in enrolling their child in a charter school if such a school were opened, and (iii) the distance parent respondents would be willing to drive, if any, to have their child attend a charter school conditional on the parent having any interest in the same. This section will proceed with the responses to these inquiries, which are provided in the aggregate as well as by county.

Because this section of the report is designed to assess the actual demand for a charter school within Monongalia, Marion, and Preston Counties, we include only responses by respondents residing in these counties that currently have a child under 18 living in their home. We also limit responses to one response per household to avoid double counting children in projections of demand levels. Of the 246

total respondents, 34 were removed because the respondents did not have a child under the age of 18 residing in their home, then 10 were removed because of duplicate IP addresses, then 12 were removed because they did not identify themselves as residing in Monongalia, Preston, or Marion County.¹⁰ After this sample attrition, the sample includes 190 total respondents that consists of 95 (50.0%) Monongalia County residents, 80 (42.1%) Marion County residents, and 15 (7.9%) Preston County residents.

We also note that selection concerns can impact the overall accuracy of this survey as applied to the actual populations of parents. While the survey provides value by providing the first data in a previously unexplored area, because participants opt-in to responding to the survey, individuals with strong opinions in both directions could be over-represented in the sample and undecided individuals could be underrepresented. We employed several measures to ensure the survey results are robust including seeking a large sample of respondents, employing best practices to avoid misleading survey questions, randomizing social media advertisements seeking participants, and applying multiple measures to eliminate the possibility of duplicate responses. To the extent that selection issues remain a concern, then a reasonable interpretation of these results would be that the survey represents a likely upper-bound on respondents strongly supportive and strongly opposed to charter schools.

i. Level of Parental Support for Establishing a Charter School

Our first question asked respondents how they feel about a charter school being established in their community (i.e. whether they are strongly supportive, mildly supportive, indifferent, mildly opposed, or strongly opposed). The level of support for charter schools has been a matter of significant debate among unions and policy makers. Educators' unions have repeatedly stated that an overwhelming majority of West Virginia citizens (88%) oppose the establishment of charter schools.¹¹ However, a 2019 MetroNews West Virginia Poll indicated that 35% of voters support charter schools, 40% of voters oppose charter schools, and 25% have no stated preference.¹² Given the disparate nature of these two sources, Inferences from either the teachers' union figure or the MetroNews Poll provide little predictive value for identifying the opinions of parents in the Greater Morgantown Area.

We asked respondents how they feel about a charter school being established in their community to observe the level of support or opposition in the Greater Morgantown Area. We then asked an optional follow-up free response question about what factors influenced their opinion. Table 1.4 provides the responses to this question for all respondents as well as respondents by county.

¹⁰ There were 20 total respondents outside of the Greater Morgantown Area represented in the prior sections in this report and all 20 were removed, but after making cuts to remove households without children as well as duplicate IP addresses, only 12 remained in the sample to remove with the third cut on this basis.

¹¹ For example, Fred Albert of the AFT-WV asserted that 88% of West Virginia citizens oppose charter schools and bases this assertion on participation at education listening tours conducted by the West Virginia Board of Education. WV MetroNews Radio Interview (November 14, 2019). Available at <https://twitter.com/WVMetroNews/status/1194998742639730688> (last visited 6/12/2020).

¹² B. McElhinny, West Virginia Poll: Concern About Public School Performance But Distrust of Charters (WV MetroNews, Sept. 9, 2019). Available at <http://wvmetronews.com/2019/09/09/west-virginia-poll-concern-about-public-school-performance-but-distrust-of-charters/>

	Monongalia		Preston		Marion		Total	
Strongly Supportive	19	20.0%	5	33.3%	21	26.3%	45	23.7%
Mildly Supportive	12	12.6%	4	26.7%	8	10.0%	24	12.6%
Indifferent	17	17.9%	2	13.3%	4	5.0%	23	12.1%
Mildly Opposed	8	8.4%	0	0.0%	6	7.5%	14	7.4%
Strongly Opposed	39	41.1%	4	26.7%	41	51.3%	84	44.2%

Combining respondents that were strongly and mildly opposed as well as strongly and mildly supportive indicates that parent respondents in Preston County expressed the strongest support for establishing a charter school. 60.0% of parent respondents from Preston County support establishing a charter school in their community while only 26.7% are opposed to it. The next most supportive county was Monongalia where 32.6% of parents are supportive of charter schools and 49.5% are opposed with 17.9% indifferent. Parent respondents in Marion County expressed the greatest opposition to charter schools as this was the only county where a majority (58.8%) indicate they are opposed to establishing a charter school, but still over a third (36.3%) of parents in that county are supportive.

Next, in an optional free response question, we asked respondents what factors informed or influenced their opinion about a charter school being established in their community. 94 of the 190 respondents (49.5%) provided an answer to this optional question and we list the most common answers categorized by respondents' level of support for or opposition to charter schools in Table 1.5 below. In the "indifferent" category, no two responses were similar enough to group together and so no factors are listed in that category.

Level of Support of Establishment of Charter	Groupings of Specifically identified factors
Strongly Supportive	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Specific experiences with, or research about, successful charter schools in other states (10 Responses) 2) School choice/Providing an alternative educational experience for students other than traditional public schools (7 responses) 3) Belief that traditional public schools are ineffective or that public charter schools will be better than traditional public schools (4 responses)
Mildly Supportive	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) School choice/Providing an alternative educational experience for students other than traditional public schools (5 responses) 2) Innovative learning environments (2 responses)
Indifferent	None
Mildly Opposed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Concerns over reduced funding for traditional public schools (4 responses) 2) Positive view of public schools renders charter schools unnecessary (3 responses)

Table 1.5 (continued)	
Strongly Opposed	1) Concerns over reduced funding for traditional public schools (19 responses) 2) Specific experiences with, or research about, failed charter schools in other states (15 Responses) 3) Concerns that charter schools are for-profit and/or lack accountability (4 responses) 4) Belief that traditional public schools are effective and that public charter schools will be no better than traditional public schools (4 responses)

The most common factor across all respondents in favor of establishing a charter school was the desire to provide school choice for parents and students. The most common factor across all respondents opposed to establishing a charter school was the impact of reduced funding to traditional public schools. Interestingly, two of the common categories of responses of individuals strongly in favor were essentially the same response in reverse common categories of responses of individuals strongly opposed. The top response for those strongly in support was that respondents had had positive experiences or researched favorable information about charter schools in other states. The second most common response by those strongly opposed to charter schools was that respondents had had negative experiences or researched negative information about charter schools in other states. Additionally, the respondents belief about the quality of current public schools and prospects for improvement on such quality through the charter system motivated respondents on both ends of the spectrum.

ii. Respondent Parents’ Desire to Enroll Their Child in a Charter School

This section of the survey results addresses the demand for charter schools among parents of school age children. Our first question in this section inquires whether respondents would seek to enroll their own child or children in a charter school if one were established in their community. Respondents could choose among the answer choices yes, no, unsure, or not applicable. Only two respondents selected “not applicable,” both from Marion County, and so those responses were removed from the numbers and percentages represented in Table 1.6 below. We also provide an initial projected “upper bound” charter enrollment number for each county by multiplying the percentage of parents indicating that they would enroll their child in a charter by the total enrollment (full academic year FY19) in each county.

Table 1.6 Respondents That Would Seek to Enroll Their Child or Children If A Charter School Were Established in Their Community								
	Monongalia		Marion		Preston		Total	
Yes	19	20.0%	19	24.4%	4	26.7%	42	22.3%
No	51	53.7%	43	55.1%	3	20.0%	97	51.6%
Not Sure	25	26.3%	16	20.5%	8	53.3%	49	26.1%
Initial Projected Charter Enrollment	2076		1926		1063		5065	

Responses to this inquiry suggest that a significant percentage and thousands of students in the Greater Morgantown Area would seek to be enrolled in a charter school if a public charter school were established in their community. The highest enrollment after combining interest level with the total population of students would be in Monongalia County.

The initial projected charter enrollment numbers in Table 1.6 assume that parents will enroll in their children in charter schools at the same rate, on average, regardless of the number of children in the household. However, in the satisfaction portion of our survey we found an inverse relationship between the number of children under 18 residing in the home and a common factor influencing respondents' who strongly favor charter schools was concerns over the quality of traditional public schools. Based on these observations, it is possible that larger families (families with three or more children) may exhibit a stronger preference for seeking to enroll their children in charter schools on average than smaller families (families with one or two children). If this is the case then the raw percentages of parents indicating they would seek to enroll their child or children in a charter school may actually understate the total demand for charter schools.

Hence, to provide a more accurate upper-bound on the number of actual children that would seek to enroll in a charter school if it were available in their respective communities, we restate Table 1.6 expressed as the total number of children under 18 residing with the respondents for each category of response by county in Table 1.7 below. We then restate the percentages and provide an "adjusted projected charter enrollment" based on this more precise methodology. For purposes of this analysis, we categorize all respondent parents with "4 or more" children as 4 child households.

	Monongalia		Marion		Preston		Total	
Yes	49	24.0%	42	29.0%	8	40.0%	99	26.8%
No	103	50.5%	87	60.0%	5	25.0%	195	52.8%
Not Sure	52	25.5%	16	11.0%	7	35.0%	75	20.3%
Adjusted Projected Charter Enrollment	2493		2290		1594		6377	

Consistent with our expectations, measuring projected enrollment based on the number of children of parents who indicated they would seek to enroll their child predicts a higher percentage of enrollments in charter schools than simply applying the average. We consider these numbers to be an appropriate upper-bound on possible charter school enrollments in areas where a charter school is readily available and accessible to families. While some parents in the undecided group may convert to seeking enrollment, enrollments would almost certainly experience some attrition when a school site is identified and travel times are assessed by the actual population of parents and students.

In an effort to address travel concerns and allow for more precise projections based on a charter school's location in the Greater Morgantown Area, we sought responses about the distance that parents would be willing to travel, if any, to enroll their child in a charter school and present these results in Table 1.7 broken out by County.

	Monongalia	Marion	Preston	All
0 miles - my child would only attend if transportation were provided to my residence	12 (46)	7 (37)	0 (11)	19 (97)
1 - 5 miles	8 (34)	3 (30)	1 (11)	12 (78)
6-10 miles	11 (26)	6 (27)	1 (10)	18 (66)
11 - 15 miles	7 (15)	7 (21)	6 (9)	20 (48)
16 - 20 miles	5 (8)	11 (14)	3	19 (28)
More than 20 miles	3	3	0	6
I have no interest in my child attending a charter school	49	43	4	96

We include responses as numbers and also include responses of greater distances in the response to lesser distances in parenthesis (i.e. if an individual selected 6-10 miles then they were included in the 6-10 mile number and then also included in the sum total in parenthesis in the 1-5 mile number as well as the 0 miles (transportation provided) number). Relatively few respondents interested in having their child attend a charter indicated that they would not be willing to provide transportation (10.0%), although this figure could be low if many parents lack interest in charter schools based on an assumption that transportation would not be provided. We note that the responses to this question do not align perfectly with the responses in Table 1.5 above. Two respondents from Monongalia County who had answered the prior question in the negative provided a distance that they would be willing to travel in this question. Additionally, one respondent from Preston county who responded “not sure” to the prior question indicated in this question that they have no interest in their child attending a charter school. Otherwise, all respondents who answered “not sure” provided a distance in their responses. Ultimately, this figure allows for a reasonable estimate of the attrition of interest in enrolling in a charter school based on the distance to the actual location of the school.

Section 2: Student Survey on Public Education Needs, School Choice and Charters

In addition to the parent survey, we conducted a survey of student populations in the Greater Morgantown Area. The questions were adapted from the parent survey so that the voicing is directed at a student, but otherwise the inquiries were identical. Additionally, a question about the student’s age and which school the student attends was added as an additional validation check on their location of residence. The survey instrument for the student survey is attached hereto as Appendix B.

The methodology of the survey was largely the same as for the parent survey, except for the differences noted here. The student survey was conducted from May 23rd to June 1st 2020. Advertisements for the student survey were made available only to adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18 that were located in Monongalia County, Preston County, and Marion County (children under 13 are not permitted to create a Facebook profile). The ads were available for approximately the same amount of time for the student survey as for the parent survey with a similar budget for such ads, but both the click-through rate on the ads and the completion rate on the survey were much lower among the student population than among parents, resulting in a small sample. Additionally, Facebook does not

permit individuals younger than 13 to obtain a Facebook profile and, perhaps due to this limitation, community pages for posting the survey within Facebook that would target groups of students in the community were not as readily available as for parents. Due to these factors, we relied exclusively on randomized ads to source respondents for the student survey.

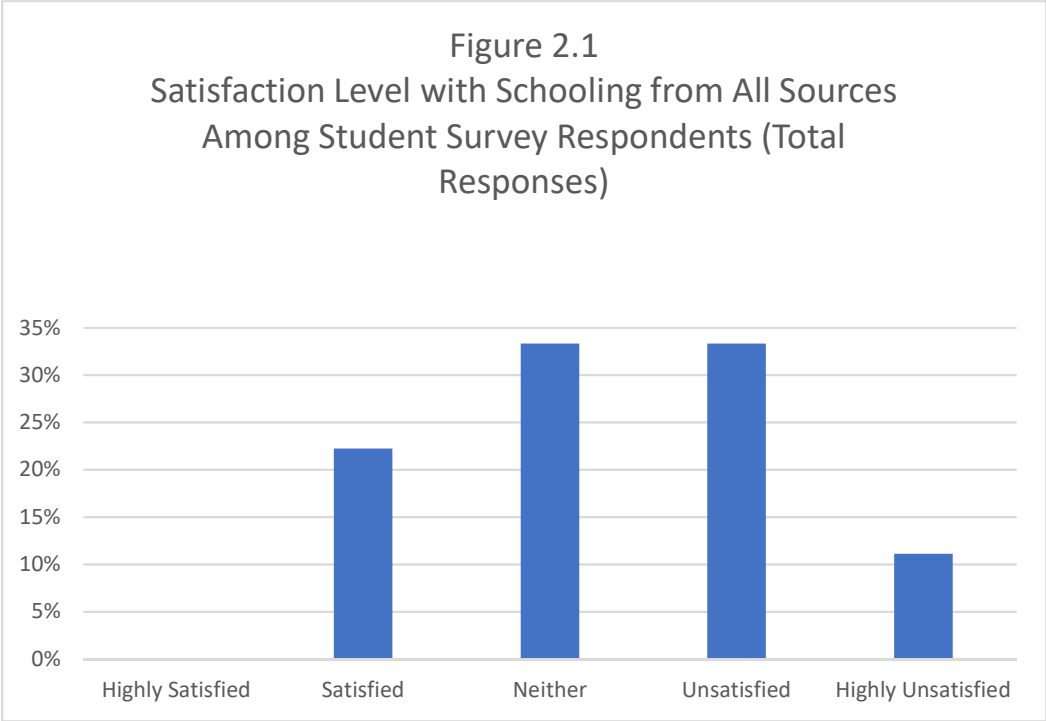
In spite of a similar advertising budget, only 61 individuals accessed the student survey via social media advertisements and of those individuals only 19 participants completed the full survey. We removed one respondent who is over 18 years of age and resides outside of Monongalia, Preston, and Marion Counties, resulting in a total of 18 responses. Ten respondents indicated they were between the ages of 16 and 18, seven respondents were between the ages of 12 and 15, and one respondent was between the ages of 8-11. Because of the small sample size, the student survey data is presented only in the aggregate and is not broken out by county.¹³ We caution that the results of the student survey are less robust and more prone to selection concerns because of the much lower sample size. We primarily provide results of the survey in this section as the survey methodology and the interpretation of the results is similar to the content reported above with respect to the parent survey.

Table 2.1 presents the experience of student respondents with various education options, it being noted that Facebook does not allow children under 13 to set up a profile and so student respondents were much more heavily weighted toward middle school and high school than the parent respondent population.

Table 2.1 Respondents' Experience as Students in Different Education Systems		
In the last five years, respondent's child or children have attended:	Responses	Percent
Public Elementary School in West Virginia	6	33.3%
Public Middle School in West Virginia	16	88.9%
Public High School in West Virginia	14	77.8%
Pre-K Program	2	11.1%
Private School	1	5.5%
Home School	0	-
Public School Outside West Virginia	0	-
A Charter School Outside West Virginia	0	-
Because respondent students likely have attended multiple schools in the last five years, respondents could check multiple boxes on this response and, as such, the total percentage of responses will add up to more than 100%.		

¹³ We note that the small sample size presents a limitation of this study, but further note that, in the absence of County School Administrations providing reliable student contact information or direct access to students for conducting such a survey, large sample data on student opinions about school choice is unlikely to be achievable for students in the Greater Morgantown Area.

Figure 2.1 presents the student satisfaction rates with their schooling over the last five years.



The student population indicated a much lower satisfaction rate with schooling than the parent satisfaction survey, with only a 22% overall satisfaction rate among students in the Greater Morgantown Area and none of the student respondents indicated that they were highly satisfied with their education.

Table 2.2 presents results on student respondents’ views of the aspects of public school that stand in the most need of improvement.

	Number of Responses	% of All Respondents
Experiential learning and field trips	11	61.1%
Offerings of extra-curricular activities and team sports	8	44.4%
Resources and classroom aids to support teachers	8	44.4%
Offerings of enrichment classes like art, music, and physical education	7	38.9%
Outcomes on standardized tests and college entrance exams	7	38.9%
Support and options for children with disabilities	7	38.9%

Facilities including classrooms and school grounds	6	33.3%
Access to educational opportunities for underprivileged students	6	33.3%
Curriculum design and instructional delivery for classes supporting reading comprehension and writing	5	27.8%
Curriculum design and instructional delivery in STEM topics (science, technology, engineering, and math)	5	27.8%
Parent involvement opportunities	4	22.2%
Other	4	22.2%

Consistent with lower satisfaction levels, students identified more aspects of public school needing improvement on average than the parent respondents by making over four selections per student respondent. Also, students placed substantially higher weight on the importance of improving outcomes on standardized test scores, extra-curricular activities, and offerings of enrichment classes than parents. A higher percentage of students also indicated concern about opportunities for students with disabilities and underprivileged students than the parent respondents. Some responses were consistent across both surveys including improvement to experiential learning and field trips as well as classroom resources and aids to support teachers.

Table 2.3 presents student opinions about a charter school being established in their community.

Strongly Supportive	1	5.6%
Mildly Supportive	1	5.6%
Indifferent	9	50.0%
Mildly Opposed	2	11.1%
Strongly Opposed	5	27.8%

The views on the establishment of charter schools among student respondents varied from the parent survey because the largest group by far (50.0%) indicated that they were indifferent (only 12.1% of parent respondents indicated they were indifferent on this question). One potential explanation for the large population of indifferent students may be that the majority of student respondents are high school age students who would be unlikely to be impacted by the establishment of a charter school. 38.9% of students expressed opposition to the establishment of a charter school and 11.1% of students expressed support.

Table 2.4 presents student opinions on whether they would seek to enroll in a charter school if one were established in their community.

Table 2.4 Student Responses to Whether They Would Seek To Enroll If A Charter School Were Established in Their Community		
Yes	2	11.1%
No	6	33.3%
Not Sure	8	44.4%
Not Applicable	2	11.1%

Responses are consistent with what we might expect based on the student responses to the prior question as a large percentage of students were not sure if they would seek to enroll in a charter school or not. Two respondents (11.1%) indicated that this was not applicable, likely because they were high school seniors. Rates of students interested in enrolling are consistent with expectations given that a majority of student respondents are already enrolled in high school, which is a limitation of this study.

Lastly, Table 2.5 presents student opinions on the distance they would be willing to travel to attend if a charter school were available in their community.

Table 2.5 Student Respondents' Answers Indicating Distance They Would Be Willing to Travel to Attend A Charter School		
0 miles - I would only attend if transportation were provided to my residence	0 (10)	(55.6%)
1 - 5 miles	3 (10)	(55.6%)
6-10 miles	1 (7)	(38.9%)
11 - 15 miles	2 (6)	(33.3%)
16 - 20 miles	3 (4)	(22.2%)
More than 20 miles	1	5.6%
I have no interest in attending a charter school	8	44.4%

Similar to the parent survey, we include responses as numbers and also include responses of greater distances in the response to lesser distances in parenthesis. We also provide combined distances as percentages of total respondents. Interestingly, none of the surveyed students indicated that provision of transportation from their residence was a limitation in their willingness to attend. This difference from the parent survey could be a manifestation of the differences in age groups of represented students in the student survey versus the parent survey or may simply be a reflection of who likely bears the actual financial burden of providing transportation to and from school.

Appendix A

Parent Survey Instrument

Survey Title: Opinion on Public Education and School Choice in West Virginia

Survey Description: The following survey is being conducted by an educational non-profit organization to assess areas of need in West Virginia public education and the level of interest in developing a charter school within your community. We thank you for your time and honesty in advance.

<p>* What is your zip code?</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>* How many children do you have residing in your home?</p>		
<input type="radio"/> None	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2
<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4 or more.	
<p>* Which of the following has your child (or children) attended in the last five years (select all that apply)?</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Elementary School in West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Middle School in West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Public High School in West Virginia
<input type="checkbox"/> Public School Outside of West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> A Charter School Outside West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Private School
<input type="checkbox"/> Home School	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K Program	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a child that has attended school in the last five years
<p>* How satisfied have you been overall with your child's (or children's) education over the last five years?</p>		
<input type="radio"/> Very Satisfied	<input type="radio"/> Satisfied	<input type="radio"/> Neither Satisfied Nor Unsatisfied
<input type="radio"/> Unsatisfied	<input type="radio"/> Highly Unsatisfied	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable

* In your opinion, what aspects of West Virginia public education stand in most need of improvement (select all that apply)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum design and instructional delivery for classes supporting reading comprehension and writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes on standardized tests and college entrance exams	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources and classroom aids to support teachers
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities including classrooms and school grounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent involvement opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiential learning and field trips
<input type="checkbox"/> Offerings of extra-curricular activities and team sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to educational opportunities for underprivileged students	<input type="checkbox"/> Support and options for children with disabilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Offerings of enrichment classes like art, music, and physical education	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum design and instructional delivery in STEM topics (science, technology, engineering, and math)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

* How do you feel about a charter school being established in your community?

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Supportive	<input type="radio"/> Mildly Supportive	<input type="radio"/> Indifferent
<input type="radio"/> Mildly Opposed	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Opposed	

What factors have informed or influenced your opinion about a charter school being established in your community (optional)?

* If a charter school were available in your community would you seek to enroll your child or children?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not Sure
<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable		

* If a charter school option were available, how far would you be willing to travel in order for your child or children to attend?

<input type="radio"/> More than 20 miles	<input type="radio"/> 16 - 20 miles	<input type="radio"/> 11 - 15 miles
<input type="radio"/> 6 - 10 miles	<input type="radio"/> 1 - 5 miles	<input type="radio"/> 0 miles - my child would only attend if transportation were provided to my residence
<input type="radio"/> I have no interest in my child attending a charter school		

Any Additional Comments (optional)?

Appendix B

Student Survey Instrument

Survey Title: Student Opinions on Public Education and School Choice in West Virginia

Survey Description: The following survey is being conducted by an educational non-profit organization to assess areas of need in West Virginia public education and the level of interest in developing a charter school within your community. We thank you for your time and honesty in advance.

* What is your zip code?

* What is your age?

<input type="radio"/> 4-7	<input type="radio"/> 8-11	<input type="radio"/> 12-15
<input type="radio"/> 16-18	<input type="radio"/> Over 18	

* Which of the following have you attended in the last five years (select all that apply)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Public Elementary School in West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Middle School in West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Public High School in West Virginia
<input type="checkbox"/> Public School Outside of West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> A Charter School Outside West Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Private School
<input type="checkbox"/> Home School	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K Program	<input type="checkbox"/> I have not attended school in the last five years

* How satisfied have you been overall with your education over the last five years?

<input type="radio"/> Very Satisfied	<input type="radio"/> Satisfied	<input type="radio"/> Neither Satisfied Nor Unsatisfied
<input type="radio"/> Unsatisfied	<input type="radio"/> Highly Unsatisfied	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable

* In your opinion, what aspects of West Virginia public education stand in most need of improvement (select all that apply)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Access to educational opportunities for underprivileged students	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum design and instructional delivery in STEM topics (science, technology, engineering, and math)	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiential learning and field trips
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum design and instructional delivery for classes supporting reading comprehension and writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes on standardized tests and college entrance exams	<input type="checkbox"/> Offerings of enrichment classes like art, music, and physical education
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources and classroom aids to support teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> Support and options for children with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities including classrooms and school grounds
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent involvement opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Offerings of extra-curricular activities and team sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

* How do you feel about a charter school being established in your community?

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Supportive	<input type="radio"/> Mildly Supportive	<input type="radio"/> Indifferent
<input type="radio"/> Mildly Opposed	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Opposed	

What factors have informed or influenced your opinion about a charter school being established in your community (optional)?

* If a charter school were available in your community would you want to attend?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Not Sure
<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable		

* If a charter school option were available, how far would you be willing to travel in order to attend?

<input type="radio"/> More than 20 miles	<input type="radio"/> 16 - 20 miles	<input type="radio"/> 11 - 15 miles
<input type="radio"/> 6 - 10 miles	<input type="radio"/> 1 - 5 miles	<input type="radio"/> 0 miles - I would only attend if transportation were provided to my residence
<input type="radio"/> I have no interest in attending a charter school		

Any Additional Comments (optional)?

What public school boundaries do you live in?