



### Oregon's Kitchen Table – ODE Kindergarten Assessment Consultation

Davis, Hibbitts, & Midghall, Inc. (DHM Research), in partnership with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and Oregon's Kitchen Table, conducted an online consultation with Oregon residents in December 2014 to better understand their opinions and values on early learning and various aspects of kindergarten assessment.

**Research Design:** The Oregon Department of Education in partnership with Oregon's Kitchen Table conducted an online consultation with key stakeholders across the state of Oregon. The consultation was conducted to help inform the efforts of the state's Early Learning Hubs, which are working across the state to make resources and supports more available, more accessible and more effective for children and families that have historically been overrepresented in the opportunity gap and underrepresented in services. DHM Research worked with staff of the National Policy Consensus Center to develop the content of the consultation.

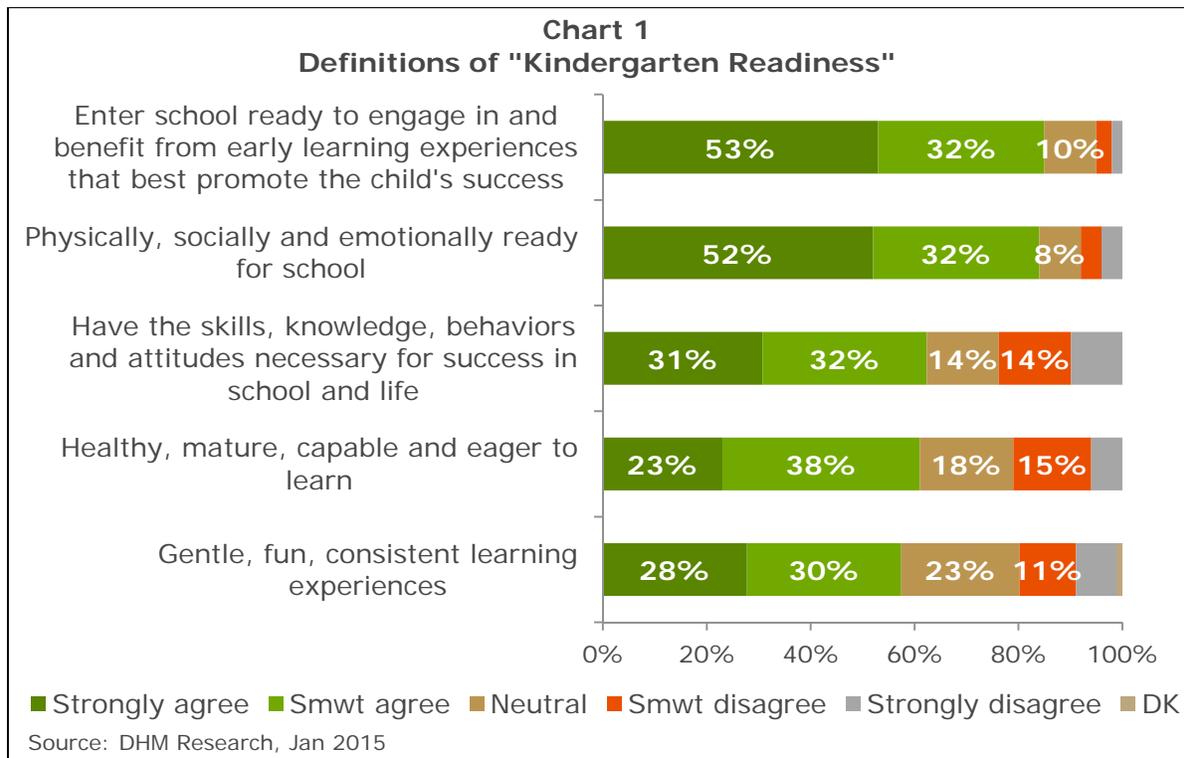
A total of 189 residents participated in the survey. Responses were received from participants across 95 unique zip codes across the state. It should be noted that 86% of respondents were women. Regional breakout and other demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in the table below.

| Age                               | N=189 |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 18-34                             | 12%   |
| 35-54                             | 59%   |
| 55+                               | 25%   |
| Income                            |       |
| Less than \$50k                   | 14%   |
| \$50-\$75k                        | 19%   |
| \$75-\$100k                       | 16%   |
| \$100+\$150k                      | 39%   |
| Party                             |       |
| Republican                        | 11%   |
| Democrat                          | 51%   |
| Non-affiliated                    | 16%   |
| Other                             | 3%    |
| Role in early childhood education |       |
| Parent                            | 32%   |
| Early childhood advocate          | 30%   |
| Early learning provider           | 22%   |
| K-12 administrator                | 20%   |

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| K-12 teacher                   | 16% |
| Other early childhood resource | 22% |
| <b>Region<sup>1</sup></b>      |     |
| Metro                          | 47% |
| Willamette Valley              | 29% |
| Rest of State                  | 24% |

**Most participants agreed that kindergarten readiness means young children are “physically, socially and emotionally ready for school” (84%) and that young children “enter school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child’s success” (85%).**

Given five definitions of kindergarten readiness, participants were most likely to agree that it means young children are “physically, socially and emotionally ready for school” (84%) and that young children “enter school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child’s success” (85%). There were no significant differences between K-12 teachers and administrators and those who have other roles in early childhood education.



**Interpersonal and self-regulation skills were regarded as the most important skills measured by the Early Learning Assessment.**

When ranking skills measured by the Early Learning Assessment, interpersonal and self-regulation skills were seen as the most important by 83% of participants, ahead of early literacy (11%) and early math (3%). Although interpersonal and self-regulation skills were most important, slightly less emphasis was placed on this by K-12 administrators (70%) and more emphasis was placed by this group on early literacy (23%).

<sup>1</sup> Metro: Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas; Willamette Valley: Lane, Marion, Linn, Yamhill, Polk, Benton; Rest of State: Jackson, Douglas, Deschutes, Josephine, Umatilla, Klamath, Coos, Lincoln, Columbia, Clatsop, Malheur, Union, Tillamook, Wasco, Curry, Hood River, Jefferson, Baker, Crook, Morrow, Lake, Grant, Harney, Wallowa, Gilliam, Sherman, Wheeler

## Most Important Skills

**Interpersonal skills and Self-regulation – 83%**

**Early literacy – 11%**

**Early math – 3%**

Participants were given the opportunity to leave additional comments regarding components that should have more or less focus. Common responses centered around more focus on parental/family readiness, interpersonal skills, and social and emotional skills.

*"Family Readiness. We can worry about getting a head start in math and reading all we want, but if the child does not have a stable home environment that is ready, willing, and able to support their learning then they will not be capable of achieving their own potential and/or the outcomes that we are working towards."*

*"Self-regulation should be the highest focus as it has been proven to be a strong indicator of future success."*

*"Social/Emotional skills are essential for success in learning. Children struggle to learn if they cannot control their environment and their experience through interpersonal and coping skills."*

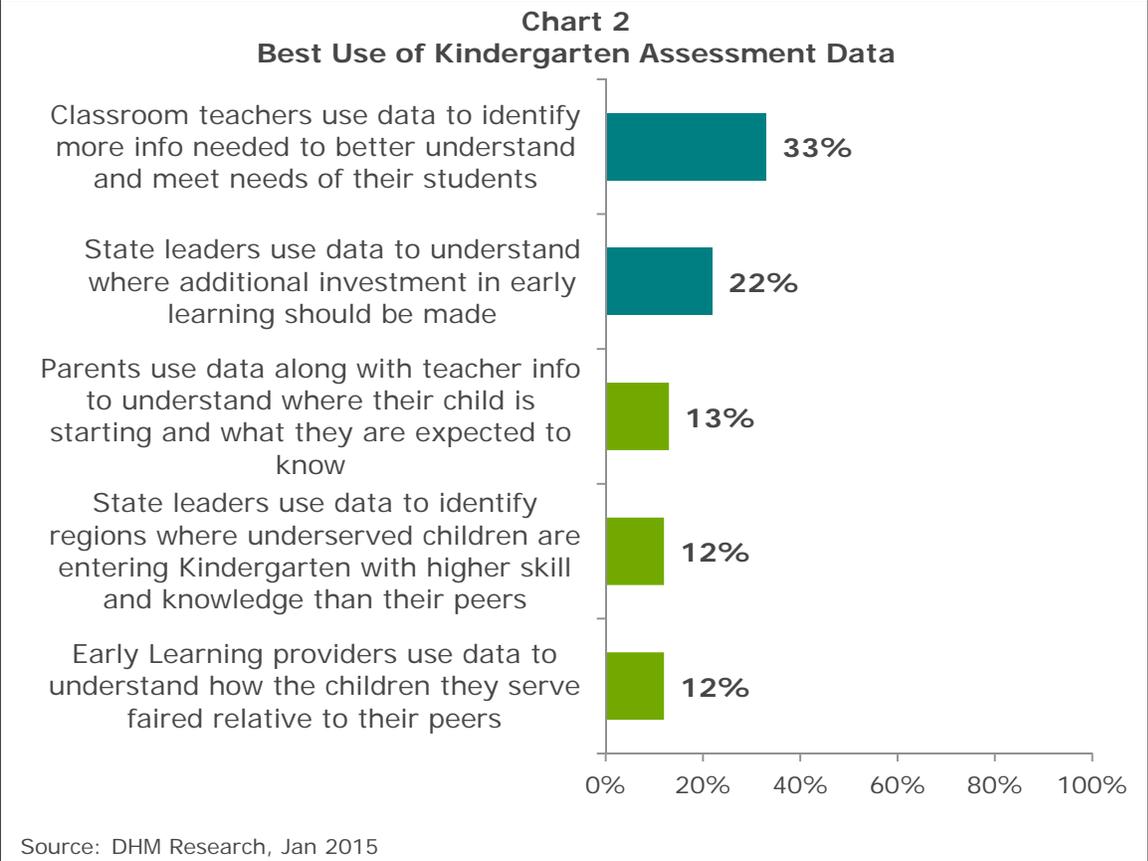
*"There needs to be MUCH more focus on whether children are socially and emotionally ready for Kindergarten. If they have the self-regulatory skills they need, they will learn math and literacy."*

*"More focus on health, family stability, and social-emotional competence in the early years. Less focus on academic knowledge and testing."*

\*All responses to this question were provided to the Oregon Early Learning Division and are available upon request from Oregon's Kitchen Table.

### **Participants believed that kindergarten assessment data should be used to better meet the needs of students as well as help direct additional state investments in early learning.**

Participants felt the best option for the usage of assessment data was for classroom teachers to identify where more information is needed to better understand and meet the needs of their students. School district administrators use the assessment data to plan programs that better meet the needs of the entering kindergarten class (33%). Also, state leaders use the data to understand where additional investments in early learning systems should be made (22%). These were also seen as the best use of data by K-12 teachers and administrators.



Participants agreed that statewide success with the Kindergarten Assessment would mean all children enter school with high levels of early literacy, early math, and approaches to learning as shown through the Kindergarten Assessment (41%) and that children in poverty and children of color do as well as their peers on the kindergarten assessment (36%). A year over year increase in assessment scores was not believed to be an indicator of success (8%).

**A majority of participants supported a statewide snapshot of students’ skills and knowledge when they enter kindergarten.**

One in three strongly (32%) or somewhat (29%) supported a statewide snapshot of students’ skills and knowledge when they enter kindergarten. Equal levels of strong support were seen among K-12 teachers and administrators. One in four opposed this assessment.

Participants were given the opportunity to list, in their own words, characteristics of the ideal kindergarten experience. While responses varied, some common elements were observed. Small classrooms were mentioned by many. Other popular characteristics included creating a fun and supportive environment to help foster a “love for learning,” play-based curriculum, and family involvement.

**Please list the characteristics of the ideal kindergarten experience.**

*"Well qualified teacher(s); a fun academic environment; fully engaged children eager to learn; families ready to support their child's education journey."*

*"Gain significant increase in social skills, ability to focus and learn, have positive experience to help set the stage for the rest of the school years."*

*"Developmentally appropriate practices, which includes play based learning; concrete, active learning experiences; content at an appropriate level for a 5-year-old's brain development; nurturing, responsive teachers; opportunities for peer interaction and social skill development; high quality, research based instruction; inclusive settings for children of all abilities."*

*"Play based learning where the education and support of whole child is the primary focus. High level of engagement with families and links to community resources."*

*"Kindergarten can be many things: for some it is their first school experience and others it is not. Whether it is their first experience or not Kindergarten should be a way to for students to learn how get use to a learning environment that has expectations. Students should be exposed to the curriculum that they are expected to know and learn, be provided with unique learning experiences that connect them to the world around them, and be provided with support on how to maintain social relationships. It is so hard to fit all that is needed in a 2 1/2 hour day with all the new standards. If we truly wan students to students to succeed from the beginning why not give them the time needed to learn what they need to and make Kindergarten full day. This will give teachers the opportunity to provide the support to those who are struggling and dive deeper into those critical foundations that need to be set before moving on to 1st grade."*

\*All responses to this question were provided to the Oregon Early Learning Division and are available upon request from Oregon's Kitchen Table.

**Oregon Kitchen Table Survey—Online  
Statewide; N=189; December 2014  
DHM Research  
Kindergarten Assessment**

**INTRODUCTION**

Oregon has administered a Kindergarten Assessment to all incoming kindergarteners for the last two years. The assessment provides a snapshot of some of the early literacy, early math, and interpersonal and self-regulation skills and knowledge students have when they enter kindergarten

In January, the data from the second year of assessments will be publicly available. We are interested in your opinions on how that data should be communicated and used. The information you provide will help inform the efforts of the state’s Early Learning Hubs, which are working across the state to make resources and supports more available, more accessible and more effective for children and families that have historically been overrepresented in the opportunity gap and underrepresented in services. Each Hub identifies the underserved children in their region, evaluates the needs of those children and families, and then works to ensure that programs and services reach them and effectively meet their needs.

For some basic information on the assessment, please refer to:

Parent Information Brochure

English: [http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/kindergarten/parentltr\\_viewer.pdf](http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/kindergarten/parentltr_viewer.pdf)

Spanish: [http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/kindergarten/parentltr\\_printersp.pdf](http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/kindergarten/parentltr_printersp.pdf)

Kindergarten Assessment Specifications

[http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/testing/dev/testspecs/asmtkindergartentestspe  
cs\\_1415.pdf](http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/testing/dev/testspecs/asmtkindergartentestspe<br/>cs_1415.pdf)

## QUESTIONS

“Kindergarten readiness” can mean a wide variety of things. Here are some examples of what it means to some people. Please indicate how strongly you either agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

| Response Category  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree | DK |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|----|
| 1. Kindergarten Readiness means young children “have the skills, knowledge, behaviors and attitudes necessary for success in school and in life.”                        |                |       |         |          |                   |    |
| Total, N=189   | 31%            | 32%   | 14%     | 14%      | 10%               | 0% |
| K-12 Teachers/Admin, N=66  | 27%            | 38%   | 11%     | 12%      | 12%               | 0% |
| 2. Kindergarten Readiness means young children are “healthy, mature, capable, and eager to learn.”   |                |       |         |          |                   |    |
| Total, N=189   | 23%            | 38%   | 18%     | 15%      | 6%                | 0% |
| K-12 Teachers/Admin, N=66  | 18%            | 42%   | 20%     | 12%      | 8%                | 0% |
| 3. Kindergarten Readiness means young children have “gentle, fun, and consistent learning experiences.”  |                |       |         |          |                   |    |
| Total, N=189   | 28%            | 30%   | 23%     | 11%      | 8%                | 1% |
| K-12 Teachers/Admin, N=66  | 24%            | 26%   | 26%     | 14%      | 9%                | 2% |
| 4. Kindergarten Readiness means young children are “physically, socially and emotionally ready for school.”  |                |       |         |          |                   |    |
| Total, N=189   | 52%            | 32%   | 8%      | 4%       | 4%                | 0% |
| K-12 Teachers/Admin, N=66  | 50%            | 33%   | 6%      | 6%       | 5%                | 0% |
| 5. Kindergarten Readiness means that young children “enter school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child’s success.” |                |       |         |          |                   |    |
| Total, N=189   | 53%            | 32%   | 10%     | 3%       | 2%                | 0% |
| K-12 Teachers/Admin, N=66  | 53%            | 33%   | 5%      | 5%       | 5%                | 0% |

6. The Kindergarten Assessment gathers information on children’s early literacy, early math, as well as interpersonal and self-regulation skills, through the Approached to Learning component. Please rank those skills in order of importance:

| Response Category   | Rank 1      |                       | Rank 2      |                       | Rank 3      |                       |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|   | Total N=189 | K-12 Teach/Admin N=66 | Total N=189 | K-12 Teach/Admin N=66 | Total N=189 | K-12 Teach/Admin N=66 |
| Early literacy  | 11%         | 23%                   | 78%         | 68%                   | 7%          | 5%                    |
| Early math  | 3%          | 3%                    | 12%         | 17%                   | 81%         | 76%                   |
| Approaches to Learning (Interpersonal skills and Self-regulation) | 83%         | 70%                   | 6%          | 11%                   | 8%          | 15%                   |
| Don’t know  | 3%          | 5%                    | 3%          | 5%                    | 3%          | 5%                    |

*Comment Box* - Is there a component you would like to see more or less focus on? Please explain.

*See Verbatim file*

7. Please rank the following options for how you would like the Kindergarten Assessment data to be used.

| Response Category   | Rank 1         |                                 | Rank 2         |                                 | Rank 3         |                                 |
|---|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
|   | Total<br>N=189 | K-12<br>Teach/<br>Admin<br>N=66 | Total<br>N=189 | K-12<br>Teach/<br>Admin<br>N=66 | Total<br>N=189 | K-12<br>Teach/<br>Admin<br>N=66 |
| a. Classroom teachers use the assessment data to identify where more information is needed to better understand and meet the needs of their students. School district administrators use the assessment data to plan programs that better meet the needs of the entering kindergarten class | 33%            | 35%                             | 17%            | 15%                             | 20%            | 17%                             |
| b. The assessment data is used by early learning providers to understand how the children they serve fared relative to their peers and to adjust their practices based on the results   | 12%            | 14%                             | 17%            | 21%                             | 25%            | 23%                             |
| c. State leaders use the data to identify regions where underserved children are entering kindergarten with a higher level of skills and knowledge than their underserved peers elsewhere and work to understand and replicate successful practices statewide                               | 12%            | 15%                             | 19%            | 20%                             | 12%            | 15%                             |
| d. State leaders use the data to understand where additional investments in early learning systems should be made   | 22%            | 23%                             | 18%            | 18%                             | 16%            | 20%                             |
| e. Parents use the data along with other information from the classroom teacher to understand where their child is starting and what they are expected to know and be able to do so that they can provide additional support at home  | 13%            | 8%                              | 22%            | 20%                             | 20%            | 20%                             |
| Don't know  | 8%             | 6%                              | 8%             | 6%                              | 8%             | 6%                              |

8. Please indicate which statement below most closely aligns with your views about what statewide success on the Kindergarten Assessment would look like.

| Response Category  | Total<br>N=189 | K-12<br>Teach/Admin<br>N=66 |
|--|----------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Statewide kindergarten assessment scores increase year over year  | 8%             | 8%                          |
| b. Children in poverty and children of color do as well as their peers on the kindergarten assessment  | 36%            | 33%                         |
| c. All children enter school with high levels of early literacy, early math, and approaches to learning as shown through the Kindergarten Assessment | 41%            | 42%                         |
| Don't know   | 15%            | 17%                         |

9. If you heard a teacher say that the kindergarten assessment scores went up in her classroom this year, what conclusions would you draw about the cause of the increase in scores?

\*All responses to this question were provided to the Oregon Early Learning Division and are available upon request from Oregon's Kitchen Table.

10. Please indicate your support or lack of support for a statewide snapshot of students' skills and knowledge when they enter kindergarten on the scale provided below:

| Response Category          | Total<br>N=189 | K-12<br>Teach/Admin<br>N=66 |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Strongly support           | 32%            | 35%                         |
| Somewhat support           | 29%            | 23%                         |
| Neither support nor oppose | 12%            | 14%                         |
| Somewhat oppose            | 15%            | 18%                         |
| Strongly oppose            | 10%            | 9%                          |
| Don't know                 | 3%             | 2%                          |

11. Please list the characteristics of the ideal kindergarten experience.

\*All responses to this question were provided to the Oregon Early Learning Division and are available upon request from Oregon's Kitchen Table.

12. Please indicate below your role in early childhood education

| Response Category                  | Total<br>N=189 | K-12<br>Teach/Admin<br>N=66 |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| K-12 teacher                       | 16%            | 47%                         |
| K-12 administrator                 | 20%            | 56%                         |
| Early learning provider            | 22%            | 9%                          |
| Early childhood advocate           | 30%            | 27%                         |
| Parent                             | 32%            | 32%                         |
| Other early childhood resource     | 22%            | 5%                          |
| Other (Specify) <i>Contact Box</i> | 20%            | 15%                         |
| Don't know                         | 1%             | 0%                          |

The information you provide here will be helpful for the state’s Early Learning Hubs as they work to make resources and supports more available, more accessible and more effective for children and families that have historically been overrepresented in the opportunity gap and underrepresented in services.

13. How familiar are you with the work of the Early Learning Hub in your region?

| <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Very familiar            | 37%                    | 23%                                  |
| Somewhat familiar        | 29%                    | 30%                                  |
| Slightly familiar        | 15%                    | 23%                                  |
| Unfamiliar               | 17%                    | 18%                                  |
| Don't know               | 2%                     | 6%                                   |

Gender

| <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Male                     | 12%                    | 18%                                  |
| Female                   | 86%                    | 82%                                  |
| No answer                | 2%                     | 0%                                   |

Age

| <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Under 18                 | 1%                     | 0%                                   |
| 18-24                    | 1%                     | 0%                                   |
| 25-34                    | 10%                    | 9%                                   |
| 35-54                    | 59%                    | 64%                                  |
| 55-64                    | 21%                    | 23%                                  |
| 65+                      | 4%                     | 3%                                   |
| No answer                | 4%                     | 2%                                   |

Education

| <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Less than High School    | 1%                     | 0%                                   |
| Some college/technical   | 9%                     | 0%                                   |
| College graduate         | 29%                    | 11%                                  |
| Post college degree      | 58%                    | 88%                                  |
| No answer                | 3%                     | 2%                                   |

Ethnicity

| <b>Response Category</b>        | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| African American/Black          | 1%                     | 0%                                   |
| Hispanic/Latino                 | 2%                     | 2%                                   |
| Native American/American Indian | 1%                     | 2%                                   |
| White/Caucasian                 | 83%                    | 77%                                  |
| Multi-Racial                    | 3%                     | 6%                                   |
| Other                           | 2%                     | 5%                                   |
| Refuse to answer                | 8%                     | 9%                                   |

Income

| <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Less than \$30,000       | 4%                     | 2%                                   |
| \$30,000-49,999          | 10%                    | 5%                                   |
| \$50,000-74,999          | 19%                    | 14%                                  |
| \$75,000-99,999          | 16%                    | 17%                                  |
| \$100,000-149,999        | 22%                    | 33%                                  |
| \$150,000 or more        | 17%                    | 29%                                  |
| Refused/No answer        | 12%                    | 2%                                   |

Party Affiliation

| <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Total<br/>N=189</b> | <b>K-12<br/>Teach/Admin<br/>N=66</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Republican               | 11%                    | 14%                                  |
| Democrat                 | 51%                    | 50%                                  |
| Non-affiliated           | 16%                    | 21%                                  |
| Other                    | 3%                     | 3%                                   |
| No answer                | 20%                    | 12%                                  |