Author: Carla Shirley, Ph.D.

Key Findings

- The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the District is on track to improve student achievement stayed approximately the same with 81% in 2017 and 80% in 2018. The percentage of stakeholders who completely agree rose from 23% in 2017 to 27% in 2018.
- The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the schools are on track to improve student achievement dropped slightly from 87% in 2017 to 83% in 2018. However, the percentage of stakeholders who completely agree rose from 31% in 2017 to 34% in 2018.
- A higher percentage of parents completely agree that their child(ren)'s schools are on track (44%) versus SCS schools in general (34%).
- Across all stakeholders, 25% report that SCS is of higher quality, 40% report that SCS is of similar quality, and 36% report that SCS is of lower quality than neighboring school districts. The higher quality rating increased (25% vs 21% in 2017) and the lower quality rating increased (36% vs 30% in 2017) since last year. By group, community members perceive the quality of SCS as lower than SCS Parents and Employees.
- The majority (80%) of SCS parents report that they will re-enroll their school-age children next year. Among parents who said that they would not re-enroll their children and provided an explanation, the main reasons were: Poor quality of education system (48%), Curriculum (20%), and Safety (20%).
- Priority schools have a range of one to ten community/business partnerships, with most schools having three to four partnerships.

Overview

The three key performance indicators (KPIs) addressed in this report are aligned to Priority 5 of Destination 2025: mobilize family and community partners.
This month's KPIs are:
- Priority 5, KPI 1: community survey data; stakeholder confidence and perceptions
- Priority 5, KPI 2: parent survey data; parents' intent to re-enroll students
- Priority 5, KPI 3: community/business partnerships with Priority schools

In April through July of 2018, SCS administered English and Spanish versions of the 2018 Communications and Engagement Survey. English and Spanish versions were available for SCS parents, and an English version was available for SCS employees and community members. This report combines the results of the shared questions in the surveys and combines the responses of the SCS parents from the English and Spanish versions.

The total number of respondents was 3,756, with 2,370 SCS parents, 1,208 school-based staff, and 178 community members. Even though a slightly higher number of SCS parents responded to the survey in 2018 compared to 2017, 14% fewer people (625) participated in 2018 with the decrease mainly due to lower numbers of SCS employees participating than the year before.
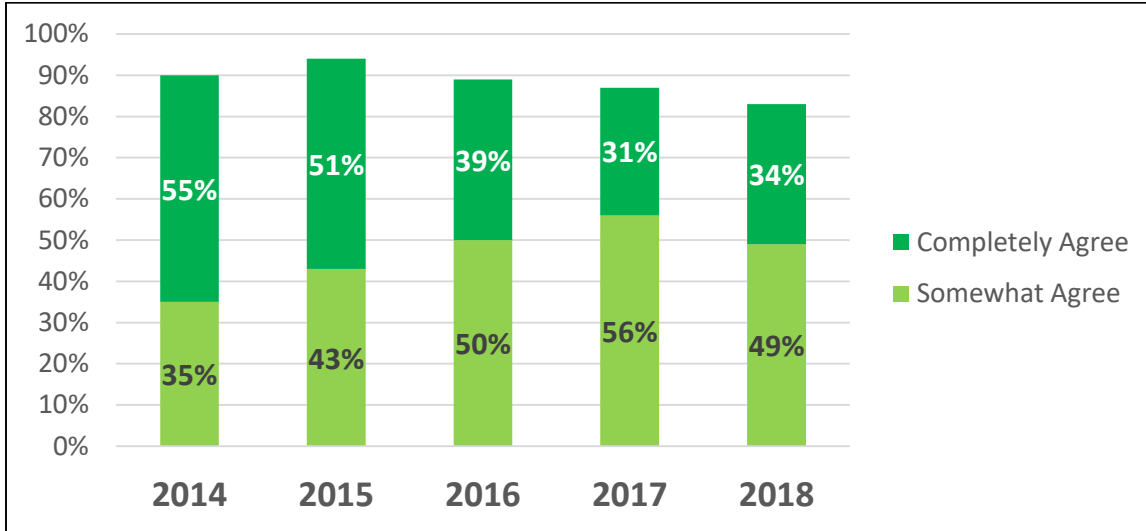
Stakeholder Confidence and Perceptions of SCS

On Track to Improve Student Achievement

The percentage of stakeholders who agree that the District is on track to improve student achievement stayed approximately the same with 81% in 2017 and 80% in 2018. The percentage of stakeholders who completely agree rose from 23% in 2017 to 27% in 2018 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percentage of Stakeholders Who Agree that the District is On Track to Improve Student Achievement


Although confidence in SCS schools themselves remains relatively high, the percentage of stakeholders who agree that the schools are on track to improve student achievement dropped slightly from 87% in 2017 to 83% in 2018 (see Figure 2). However, the percentage of stakeholders who completely agree rose from 31% in 2017 to 34% in 2018.

The 2017 and 2018 surveys asked SCS parents for their level of agreement on whether their children's schools are on track to improve student achievement. In 2018, 44% completely agreed and 39% somewhat agreed, which was a slight drop from 2017 (44% completely agreed and 42% somewhat agreed). A higher percentage of parents completely agree that their child(ren)'s schools are on track (44%) versus SCS schools in general (34%).

Figure 2. Percentage of Stakeholders Who Agree that Schools are On Track to Improve Student Achievement
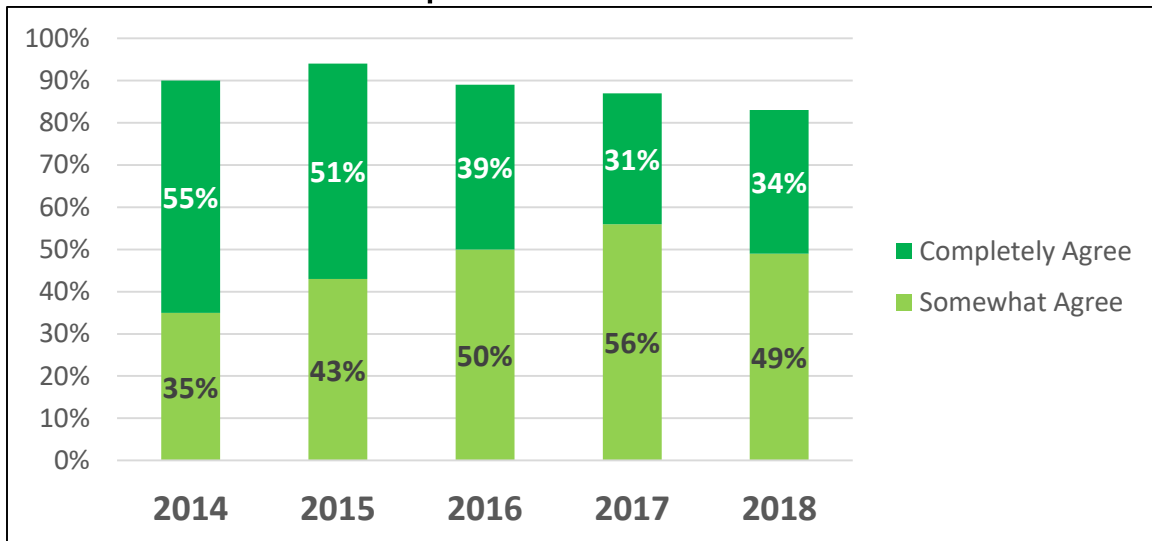
SCS Quality compared to Neighboring Districts

Across all stakeholders, 25% report that SCS is of higher quality, 40% report that SCS is of similar quality, and 36% report that SCS is of lower quality than neighboring school districts. The higher quality rating increased (25% vs 21% in 2017) and the lower quality rating increased (36% vs 30% in 2017) since last year. By group, community members perceive the quality of SCS as lower than SCS Parents and Employees (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage of Perceived Overall Quality of SCS Compared to Neighboring School Districts
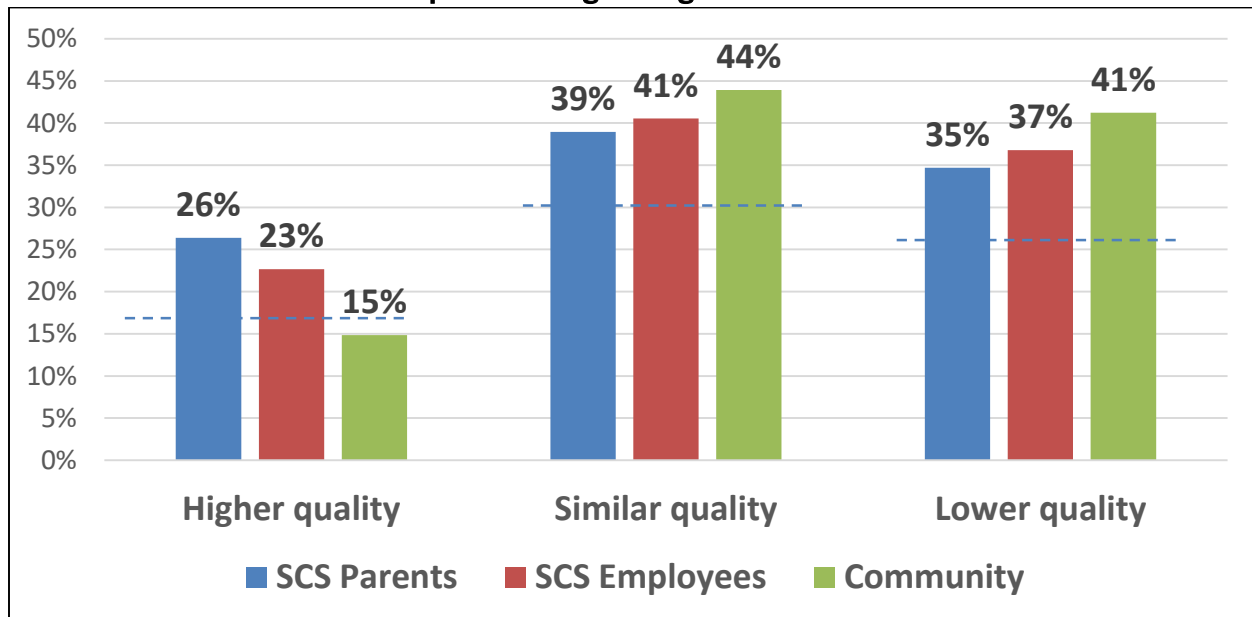
The respondents were asked to explain their rankings of SCS compared to neighboring districts. Those who ranked SCS as higher quality and some who ranked it as similar quality focused on these assets:

- Broad selection of programs, activities, and services

- More experienced leaders and teachers

- Diverse learning environment

- Better able to meet needs of all students

The following quotations illustrate these themes:

More options for our students. -SCS employee

Course offerings are more comprehensive. -SCS employee

More experience in running a school system. Better prepared for unforeseen events. More experienced teachers. -SCS Parent

I really like the teachers, they are doing an excellent job. -SCS Parent

SCS Optional programs exceed other districts. -SCS Parent

SCS is of higher quality because the system is an inclusive one, it doesn't improve its image by being biased in the acceptance of students. -SCS Parent

The majority of the stakeholders ranked SCS as of similar quality to neighboring school districts, but their reasons for doing so varied widely from SCS being the same as neighboring districts, all districts having positives and negatives, to SCS having both advantages and challenges.

The following quotations illustrate these themes.

Overall, our programs and services are similar. -SCS Parent

I have friends who teach in other districts and we are doing many of the same things. -SCS Employee

Most districts are made up of high and low performing schools and everything in between. -SCS Parent

It is a huge district with a deficit of funding. There are schools within SCS district that are just as good as the surrounding districts, but SCS has a larger piece to work with. -SCS Parent

Better in some respects, lacking in others. Great support services and extracurricular opportunities; however, the inconsistency in implementing and sticking with curriculum presents the perception that we don't know what's best for our students or how to get there. -SCS Employee

Some aspects of SCS are higher quality, yet the municipalities have advantages based on student/family incomes and resources. Our students in SCS need much higher investments in their academic and behavioral success. -Community Member

The stakeholders who ranked SCS as lower quality than neighboring districts described two main challenge areas: 1) Leaders, teachers, and curriculum and 2) Students, parents, and resources. The first area focused on these challenges:

- Ineffective leaders and teachers

- Low teacher morale

- Changes in curriculum

- Too much testing and teaching to the test

- Lack of collaborative decision making

The following quotations illustrate these themes:

Leadership quality is still a challenge for the district. SCS need more effective leaders in position to improve student achievement and increase district teacher morale. -SCS Employee

There is a great perception that SCS is top heavy and, people in key positions received their leadership opportunities based on who they know rather than what they are capable of accomplishing. -Community Member

Poor overall scores, failing schools, bad behavior, and teaching for TCAP not for learning experiences. -SCS Parent

This district pales to the municipality schools because it is constantly changing curriculums that do not resonate with our students nor is it teaching the fundamentals needed for students to be successful. This district does not use its best resources...its educators, when making decisions for the student population. -SCS Employee

The second area focused on these challenges:

- Low academic performance

- Student behavior issues

- Low parental involvement

- Fewer resources, greater needs

- Inequalities between schools (e.g., facilities, quality teachers, technology)

The following quotations illustrate these themes:

Lower test scores; not reading on grade level. -SCS Parent

Teachers, students, and parents are unhappy with curriculum, facilities, lack of leadership, achievement and a host of issues. -SCS Parent

As a whole, lack of parental involvement keeps the majority of the schools from thriving. I also think teachers are often overwhelmed with behavior problems and struggle to be able to teach. -SCS Parent

Municipalities have advantages based on student/family incomes and resources. Our students in SCS need much higher investments in their academic and behavioral success. -Community Member

Not all schools are equipped with needed technology and enough quality teachers. -SCS Parent

SCS' Greatest Strengths

Respondents selected what they view as SCS' greatest strength out of eleven characteristics. Overall, the top strength was *Variety of school & academic program options* (29%)*, followed by Effective teachers & school leaders* (23%). SCS employees, SCS parents, and community members also ranked these two characteristics as the top strengths. (See Figure 4). These were the same top two strengths identified in 2017.

Figure 4: Stakeholder's Rankings of SCS' Greatest Strengths Overall and by Group

District Characteristic	Overall Ranking	SCS Employee Ranking	SCS Parent Ranking	Community Ranking
Variety of school & academic program options	1	1	1	1
Effective teachers & school leaders	2	2	2	2

The high ranking of *Variety of school & academic program options* reflects the reasons listed above for stakeholders' higher or similar assessment of SCS compared to neighboring school districts.

SCS' Greatest Challenges

Respondents selected what they view as SCS' greatest challenge out of the same eleven characteristics. Overall, the top challenge was *Effective teachers & school leaders* (27%), followed by *Parent Involvement* (20%). These were the same top two challenges identified in 2017.

Each group also selected these two characteristics as top challenges, but SCS employees ranked *Parent Involvement* as the top challenge and SCS Parents and Community members ranked *Effective teachers and school leaders* as the top challenge. (See Figure 5).

Figure 5: Stakeholder's Rankings of SCS' Greatest Challenges by Group

District Characteristic	Overall Ranking	SCS Employee Ranking	SCS Parent Ranking	Community Ranking
Effective teachers & school leaders	1	2	1	1
Parent Involvement	2	1	2	2

6

The rankings of *Effective teachers & school leaders* and *Parent Involvement* as top challenges reflect the reasons listed above for stakeholders' lower assessment of SCS compared to neighboring school districts. It is important to note that stakeholders report *Effective teachers & school leaders* as both a strength and a challenge for the district, as the perceptions often vary by school or by people's different experiences within a school. Likewise, we see that SCS employees point to parents and parents and community members point to schools as the greatest source of challenge.

SCS District's Efforts to Keep Parents Informed of Important Information

The majority (90%) of parents report that SCS keeps parents informed of important information (see Figure 6). Sixty-two percent of parents report that SCS keeps them very informed and 28% report being somewhat informed. The percentage who reported being very informed rose from 55% in 2017 to 62% in 2018.

Figure 6: Percentage Rating of SCS District's Efforts to Keep Parents Informed of Important Information
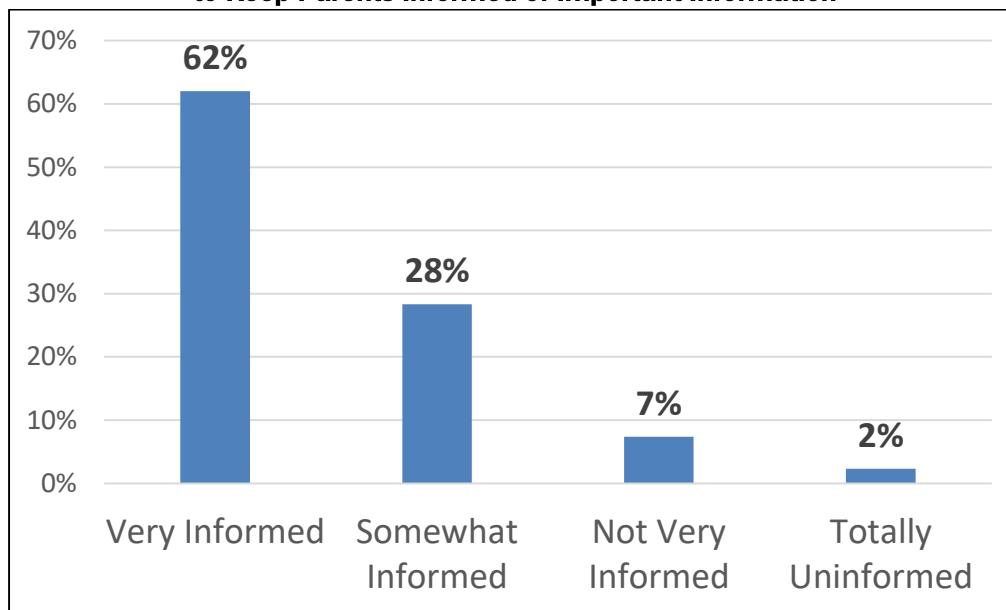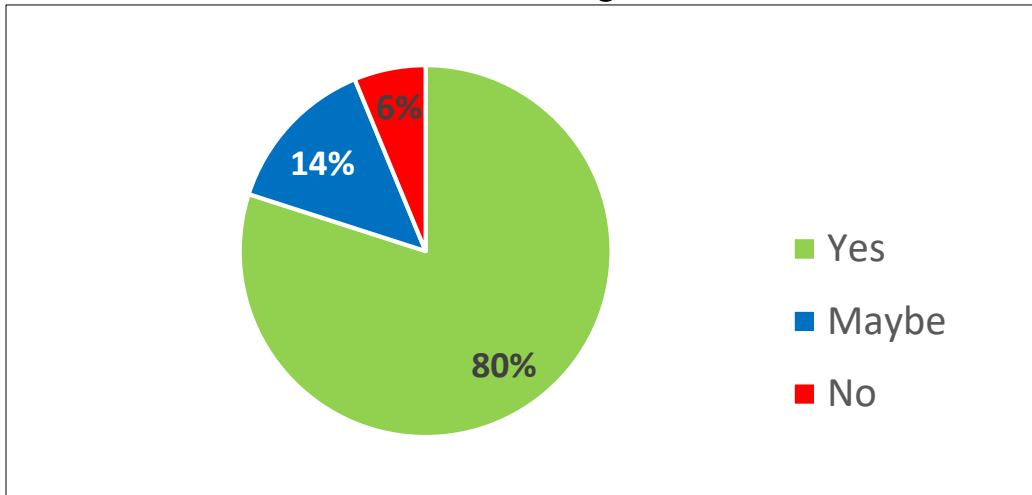

Parents' Intent to Re-enroll Students

The majority (80%) of SCS parents report that they will re-enroll their school-age children next year (see Figure 7). These percentages are the same as in 2017.

Figure 7: Percentage of SCS Parents/Family Members who Intend to Re-Enroll their School-Age Children Next Year

In 2018, 93% of parents completing the Spanish version said Yes, they would re-enroll their children compared to 76% of parents completing the English version. The 93% is an increase from 82% last year.

Among parents who answered No they would not re-enroll their children and provided an explanation (50), the main reasons were:

- Poor quality of education system (48%)

- Curriculum (reading and Eureka Math, focus on testing) (20%)

- Safety (bullying, classroom disruptions) (20%)

The reasons are also reflected in the explanations listed above for parents' and other stakeholders' lower assessment of SCS compared to neighboring school districts.
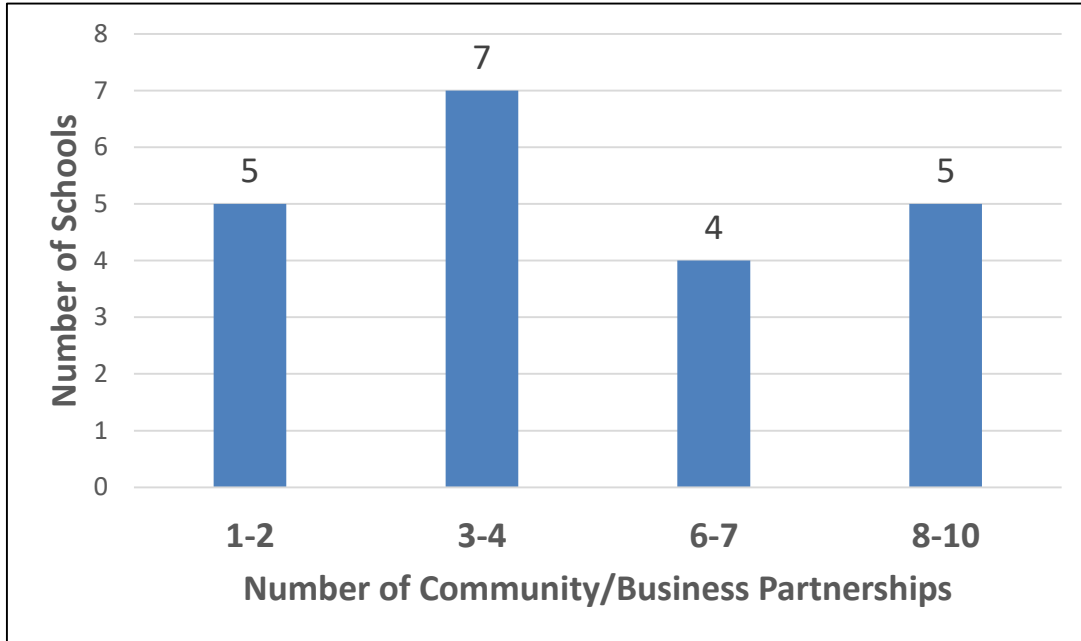

Community/Business Partnerships with Priority Schools

Based on the last assessment of partnerships in Spring 2018, priority schools had a range of one to ten community/business partnerships. A third of the priority schools (33%; 7) had three to four community/business partnerships.

Figure 8: Number of Community/Business Partnerships with Priority Schools

District Recommendations

In 2017, the following district recommendations were made based on the KPI data analyses. The table below presents each recommendation and notes progress made since last year.

2017 KPI Recommendations	Progress Since Then
Continue to communicate the wide variety of school and academic program options, including support services and extracurricular activities, that SCS offers to meet the needs of all students	• County-wide awareness campaign about all of the great options we have in SCS featuring 30 bilingual outdoor, digital, and multi-media ads, as well as a school choice guide that includes a summary of our schools and programs • Series of workshops for principals and school marketing teams prior to the start of choice season and shared promotion and outreach strategies • School Performance Scorecard; prioritized communication support for school leaders to ensure they were prepared to inform families and communities about their own scorecard results by training and providing a bilingual toolkit with sample letters, a fact-sheet, video, presentation and overview key messages. • Online registration, summer learning academies & Pre-K awareness campaigns (e.g., flyers printed for every child in English and Spanish were distributed prior to Spring Break to promote the start of registration and summer learning academy sign-up; paid social media ads in English and Spanish.)

Highlight positive news and accomplishments from a wider range of schools in the district	• Placed at least two positive stories per week to help balance any negative coverage, which brought our media tonality for the school year to 85% • Conducted multiple media prep and briefing sessions related to sensitive projects or initiatives • Strategically sponsored posts for District-wide campaigns, events, and activities that directly highlight our students and schools • Surpassed social media goal of increasing our followers and engagement reaching 98,754 followers and 8.2M impressions • Produced 354 videos highlighting the efforts of our students, teachers and schools and shared through all of our social media channels

Highlight the various ways that the Parent Welcome Center can serve parents and students and provide information and resources	• Used SCS Website, social media, flyers, and automated telephone calls to families to convey information about the Center's services, including the capacity to:
	
	   o Assist customers who contact SCS via telephone, emails to SCShelp, or visits to Welcome Center
	
	   o Offer bilingual assistance
	
	   o Provide computer access for parents and volunteers
	
	   o Assist with online registration and provide information on transfer options
	
	   o Answer questions about school zone and transportation (based upon address)
	
	   o Provide information about District programs and services, as well as family and community services
	
	   o Utilize Parent Liaisons to research and assist with individual parent/student concerns
	
	• Used Celebrity Call Event to promote registration and attendance

Use community/business partnerships as opportunities to share information about SCS' strengths and improvements	• Restructured the Department of Family and Community Engagement to align services to support community relations and increase community partners. • Conducted community partner focus groups to establish engagement strategies in alignment with District priorities. • Realigned the Adopt-A-School Partnership program to support schools and increase overall impact. • Coordinated community based events that connected families to local resources and promoted opportunities for District partnerships. • Developed a web presence for Department of Family and Community Engagement including volunteer process and District community updates.