



EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE CHARTER CHAT NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME BACK STUDENTS,
FACULTY AND STAFF!!

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REMINDERS

- MAPSA Conference, Cobo Center, Nov 2-3, 2009; visit Web at www.charterschools.org
- Next Administrators Meeting, November 17, 2009, 11:00am, 205 Welch

STUDENT FEES

Is it legal for a Michigan public school to ever charge its students a fee? *Public school students are entitled by law to a free education. Accordingly, in 1970, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that school districts may not collect fees for items that are necessary elements of a school's activities or an integral, fundamental part of elementary and secondary education. (Bond, et al v. Ann Arbor School District).*

Specific Guidance

School Districts must provide the following items free of charge for any required or elective course:

Pencils, paper, crayons, scissors, glue sticks, etc.; Textbooks (regular and supplemental); Weekly readers or other periodicals if required for classroom use.

School Districts may not make charges related to any required or elective course for:

Towels, locks, and lockers; Home Economic materials; Workbooks; Materials in science class; School education trips that are required to successfully achieve course credit; Vocational or special education.

School Districts may charge students, on a participant basis only, for:

Class or organizational dues; Lunch; Fees for external tests, such as National Merit and college entrance exams; Yearbooks; Bus transportation; Voluntary school sponsored education trips not directly related to the curriculum; Summer school courses or programs not part of a scheduled year-round program; Caps and gowns.

- Larry Barkoff

RE-CAP OF PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

The 2008-09 school year marked the seventh year of our parent survey. This research tool is designed and administered by the Charter Schools Office at Eastern Michigan University (EMU) in order to gather information from parents of students who attend one of our nine charter schools. It provides us with vital feedback on school performance during the academic year. The survey is an 11-item, self-administered questionnaire which addresses parent satisfaction with their child's (children's) educational experience.

A total of 1,350 households received the questionnaire, and a total of 349 (approximately 26 percent) questionnaires were completed and returned in time for analysis. The following are highlights of this annual assessment.

The primary reasons our charter school parents sent their child (children) to one of EMU's authorized schools are as follows:

- A. Academic Programs – 48%
- B. School Environment – 12%
- C. Size of School – 12%
- D. Teachers – 12%
- E. Location of School – 7%

These rankings have changed only slightly over the years.

Ninety-three percent of the parents were satisfied with their child's (children's) progress during the

past school year, which remains unchanged from previous years.

Ninety-one percent responded they were satisfied with their child's (children's) teachers during the past academic year, consonant with prior year results.

Ninety percent of the parents were satisfied with their charter school administrators, showing an increase when compared with previous survey results.

Again, there has been no growth in the satisfaction level (83 percent) of the locations of our various charter school buildings.

Forty percent of the parents indicated that they had two or more children enrolled in their respective charter school during the 2008-09 academic year as was the case last year.

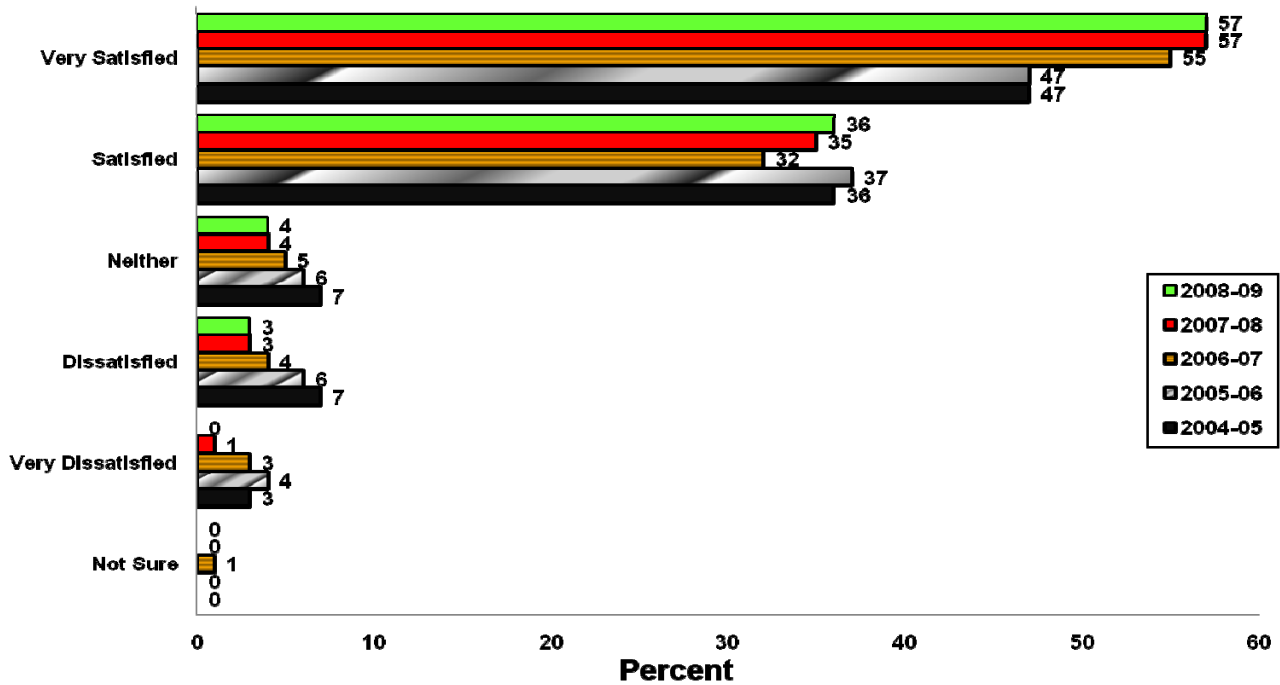
Eighty-five percent indicated that their children will return to their charter school in the fall, the same percentage tabulated last year.

Ninety-two percent would recommend their child's (children's) charter school to a friend or relative. This response is also the same as last year's.

The eighth installment of EMU's parent survey will be conducted in the spring of 2010.

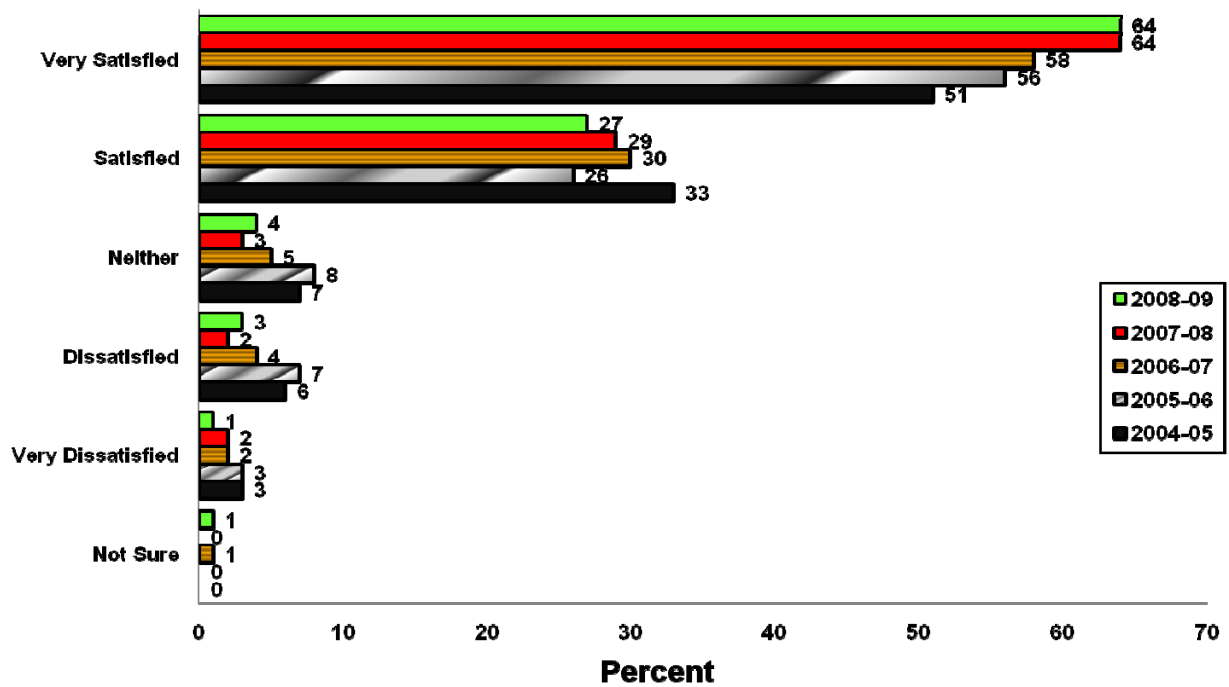
- Malverne Winborne

Overall Satisfaction with Student Progress at Charter Schools



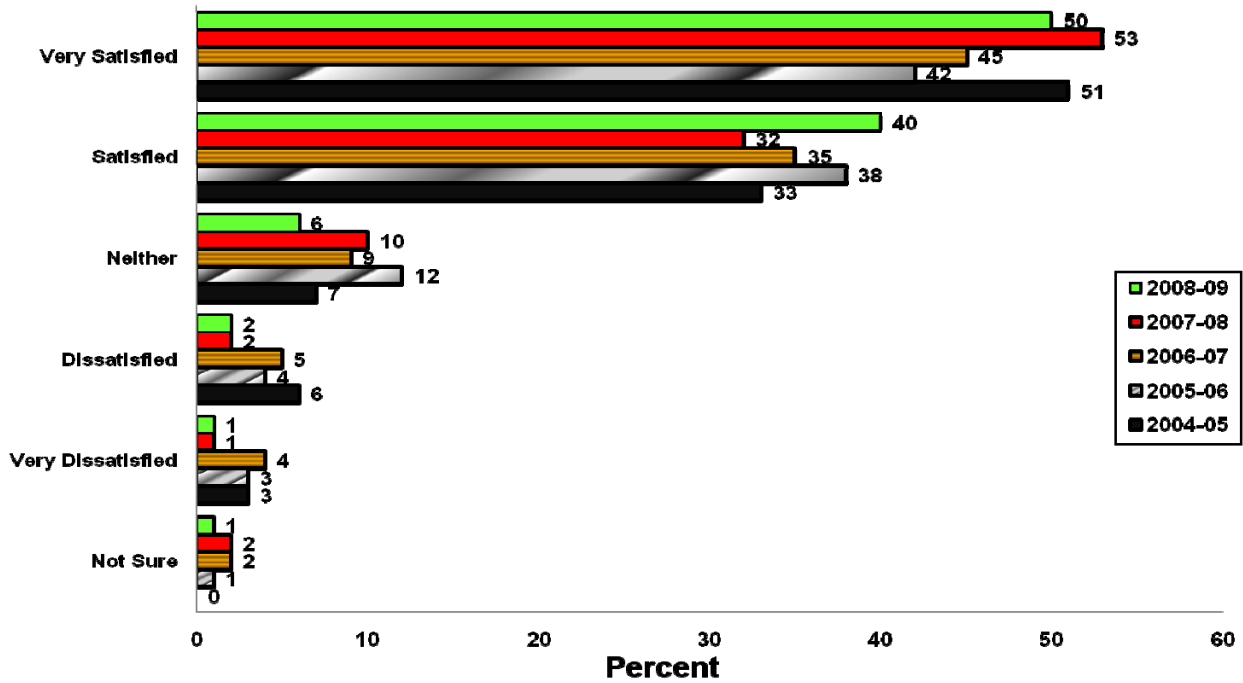
Eastern Michigan Charter Schools Parent Survey 2009

Overall Satisfaction with Charter Schools Teachers



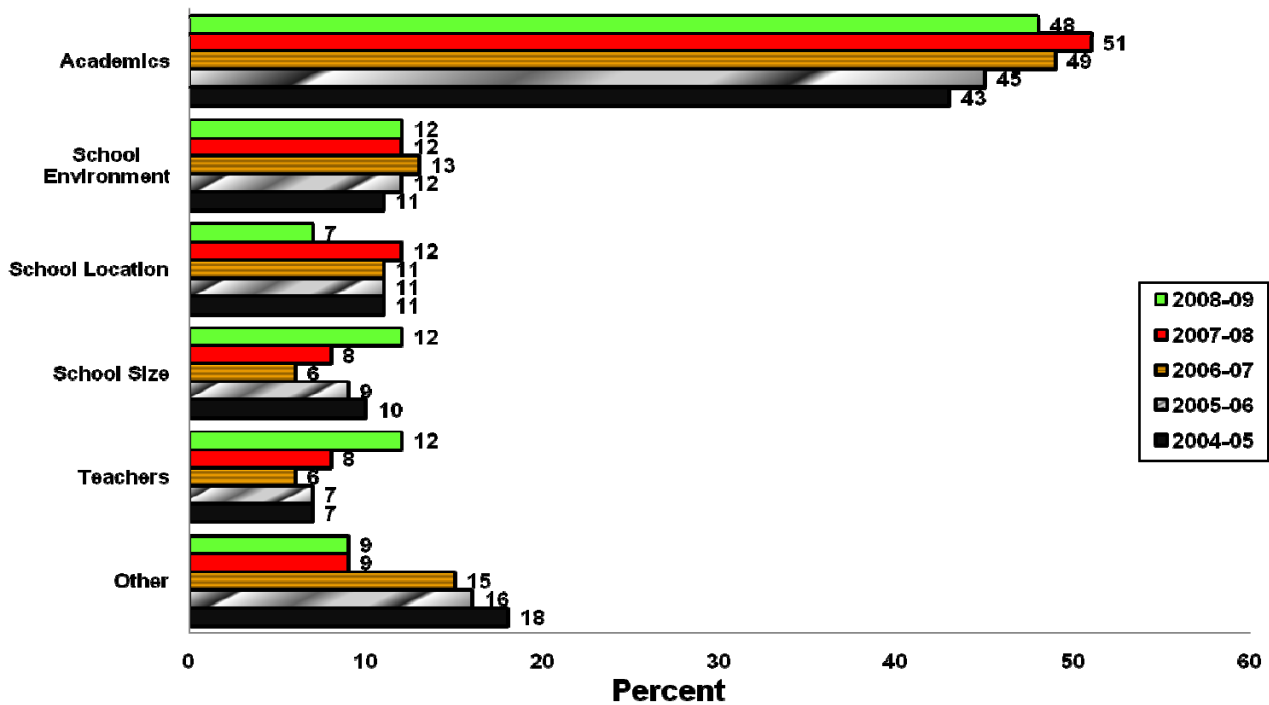
Eastern Michigan Charter Schools Parent Survey 2009

Overall Satisfaction with Charter Schools Administrators



Eastern Michigan Charter Schools Parent Survey 2009

Main Reasons for Sending Child to Charter School



Eastern Michigan Charter Schools Parent Survey 2009

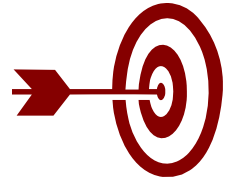
PARENT SURVEY GIFT CARD

As a way of increasing the number of household participants in our annual parent survey, Eastern Michigan University's (EMU) Charter Schools Office has sponsored a special drawing for those who completed and returned our parent survey. In this special drawing, a \$25.00 "Target Gift Card" was sent to one parent/guardian randomly selected from each of EMU's nine charter schools. This is the second year we've conducted the parent survey in conjunction with the Target gift card. We will include this incentive as a way of increasing household participation during our 2009-10 school year survey which will be distributed to parents in the spring.

The recipients of the 2008-09 random drawing are:

- Monica Bell, ABTE
- Carol Suttles, ABTS

- Janelle Kowalski, AALC
- Martha Yancey, CCDA
- T. Haley, EOPSA
- Raja Collazo, Gaudior
- Monica Blackwell, GBA
- LaToya Dennard, GLA
- Stephanie Thomas, Hope



To those individuals who completed and returned the parent surveys to the Charter Schools Office, we appreciate your input since it provides us with valuable information in assisting each of our schools in fulfilling their academic mission.

- Patricia Walker

FINANCIAL CORNER

What season is it? It's football season! "Go Lions!" "Go Wolverines!" "Go Spartans!" "Go Eagles!" To your favorite team: "Go, Rah Rah!"

It's also back-to-school season. "Go students! No...really, get off the web, get out of Facebook and Twitter, put the iPod and iPhone down and get back in school! And learn!!!

Aaaaahhhh! I love this season! Campuses come to life! Kids on the go, refreshed and eager, renewing friendships, revisiting dreams, reinventing outcomes!

Oh, and did I mention it's also Audit Season! "Go Auditors!" Ok... Ok...I'm sorry, but stay with me a moment longer. This fall will not see much change in audit methodology; no major new auditing standards for auditors and schools to contend with. Many schools will, however, experience their first federal single audit this year due to the increased federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The additional federal funding received in the 2008-09 school year has put many more schools over the \$500,000 threshold that requires them to obtain an audit of federal programs, the single audit.

But, hey, that's a good thing, right? It could have been worse without the boost in funding. The single audit is filed electronically with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.

One thing that is new on the audit scene this year for all Michigan schools is the Michigan Department of Education's requirement for electronic filing. Beginning with the 2008-09 financial audit report, audit reports must be filed electronically with MDE. And, of course, as with any governmental reporting, there is a specified method and order to the documentation that needs to be filed. Until notified by the state, schools will still need to submit financial audit reports separately to the Department of Education and the Department of Treasury. Once submitted and reviewed, the state makes the audit reports publicly available on its website at: <http://web1mdcs.state.mi.us/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates&fn=default.htm&vid=mofa:fa>

- Mike Collett



AUTUMN

The green leaves are turning to yellow, red and brown.
And when the wind comes whistling by
They'll all come sailing down.

www.teachingfirst.net

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The Charter Schools Office at Eastern Michigan University was created January 1, 1996 to provide leadership and oversight to administrators and staff in the daily operations of their charter schools.

Eastern Michigan University is the authorizer of nine charter schools:

Academy for Business and Technology Elementary, Academy for Business and Technology Secondary, Ann Arbor Learning Community, Commonwealth Community Development Academy, Edison Oakland Academy, Gaudior Academy, Grand Blanc Academy, Great Lakes Academy and Hope Academy.

Information on all of the schools can be obtained on our web site at www.emich.edu/charter.