



Saskatchewan Ministry of Education

Student Achievement Initiative Awareness
Study, September 2012

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Study Background

- In August 2012 the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education (the Ministry) contracted Insightrix Research to conduct an awareness and impressions study with residents of Saskatchewan regarding the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative.
- This initiative aims to improve achievement levels of Saskatchewan students by measuring students' progress and ensuring accountability of all stakeholders for student growth and success. This initiative is designed to monitor and aid the success of students from pre-kindergarten through to grade 12.
- This baseline study will be used to inform and direct future communication activities undertaken by the Ministry relating to student achievement messaging to students, parents, teachers, and other student learning supports.
- The findings collected in this research will be trended in subsequent waves in the future.

Study Objectives

Specific study objectives include:

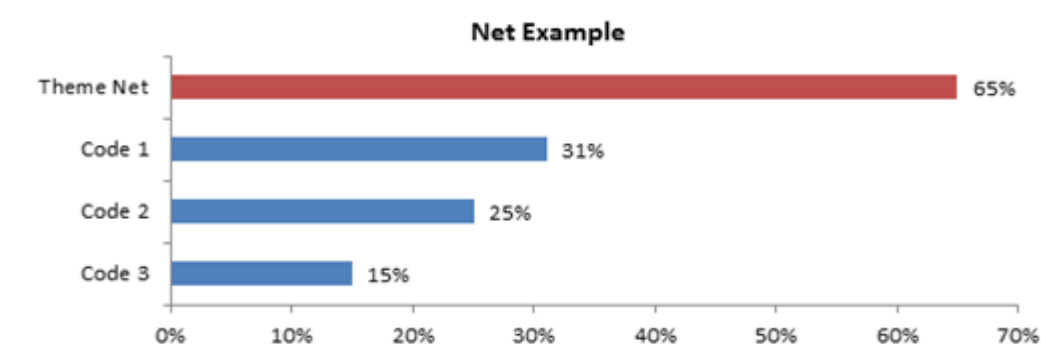
- Measuring awareness of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative among Saskatchewan residents,
- Understanding knowledge levels of the initiative,
- Gaining insight into the perceived effectiveness of the initiative, and
- Determining opinions as to what grade level Saskatchewan residents believe the initiative should be implemented.

Methodology

- To meet the stated objectives, an online quantitative research study was undertaken.
- To ensure a broad range of Saskatchewan residents participated in the study, the Inshtrix SaskWatch Research™ online panel comprised of over 10,000 Saskatchewan residents was utilized.
- Inshtrix Research, in consultation with the Ministry, developed the questionnaire to meet the outlined objectives.
- To ensure the study was representative of the population of Saskatchewan, quotas were set by age, gender, and geographic region.
- A total of 828 respondents participated in the study.
- Data were collected between September 17th and September 20th, 2012.

Research Notes

- Due to rounding, not all results will add to exactly 100%.
- Results for questions in which respondents are able to choose more than one option will total to more than 100%.
- Open-ended questions have been themed and coded into categories. The percentages from individual codes will add to more than the 100% as comments from each respondent could be relevant to more than one code.
- Similar themes have been organized into 'net' themes based on overarching commonalities (i.e. positive or negative mentions). The percentages of individual codes may not add up to the Net total as multiple responses may be possible.



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

- Awareness of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative is at baseline levels (15% total awareness among Saskatchewan residents).
- Most commonly, Saskatchewan residents believe the initiative is being implemented to customize teaching methods to help students succeed.
- Perceived effectiveness of the Student Achievement initiative is high. More than one-half of respondents believe the initiative will be at least somewhat effective in addressing:
 - Areas in which students need additional support (80%)
 - Parental awareness of how their children are doing in school (77%)
 - Student awareness of how they are doing in school (73%)
 - Parental engagement in their children's educational learning (70%)
 - Tailoring educator instruction to individual students (66%)
 - Improving academic performance of all students throughout Saskatchewan (64%)
 - Student preparation for life after high school (59%)
- A majority (64%) of respondents believe assessment of students should begin in grade three or lower.

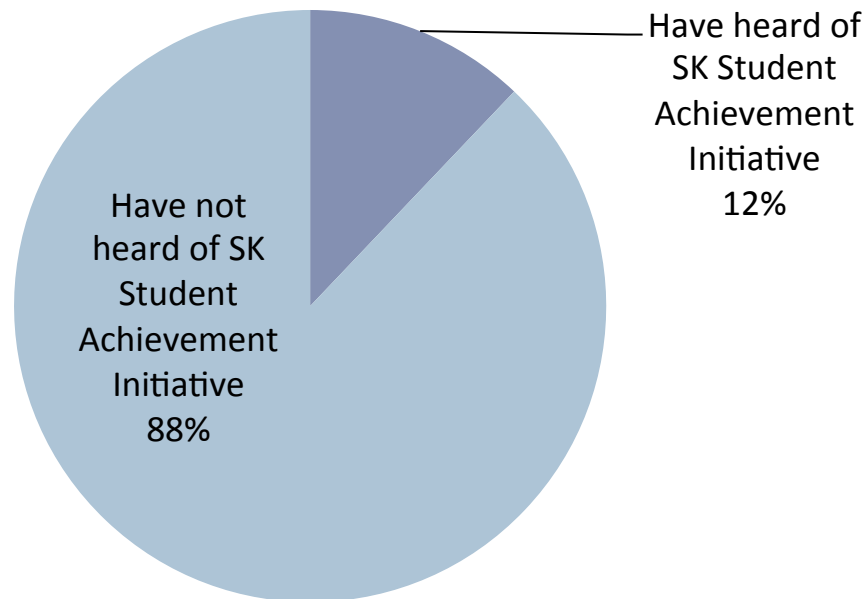
Conclusions

- As expected, awareness of the initiative is low. Through communication efforts, a goal of increasing awareness should be established. Setting a target awareness level, such as 30% by this time next year, is advised.
- While a majority of citizens believe the initiative will be effective at improving academic performance of all students throughout Saskatchewan, the perception of this effectiveness is weaker than with other attributes measured. As this criterion is a key component to the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative, it is advised that future messaging focus on communicating the benefits of the program in this area.
- The research confirms that a majority of Saskatchewan residents endorse students beginning assessment in early grades. As such, there may be minimal opposition if the Ministry commence with assessments at students enrolled in division one grades, kindergarten or pre-school.

STUDY RESULTS

Claimed awareness of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative is low.

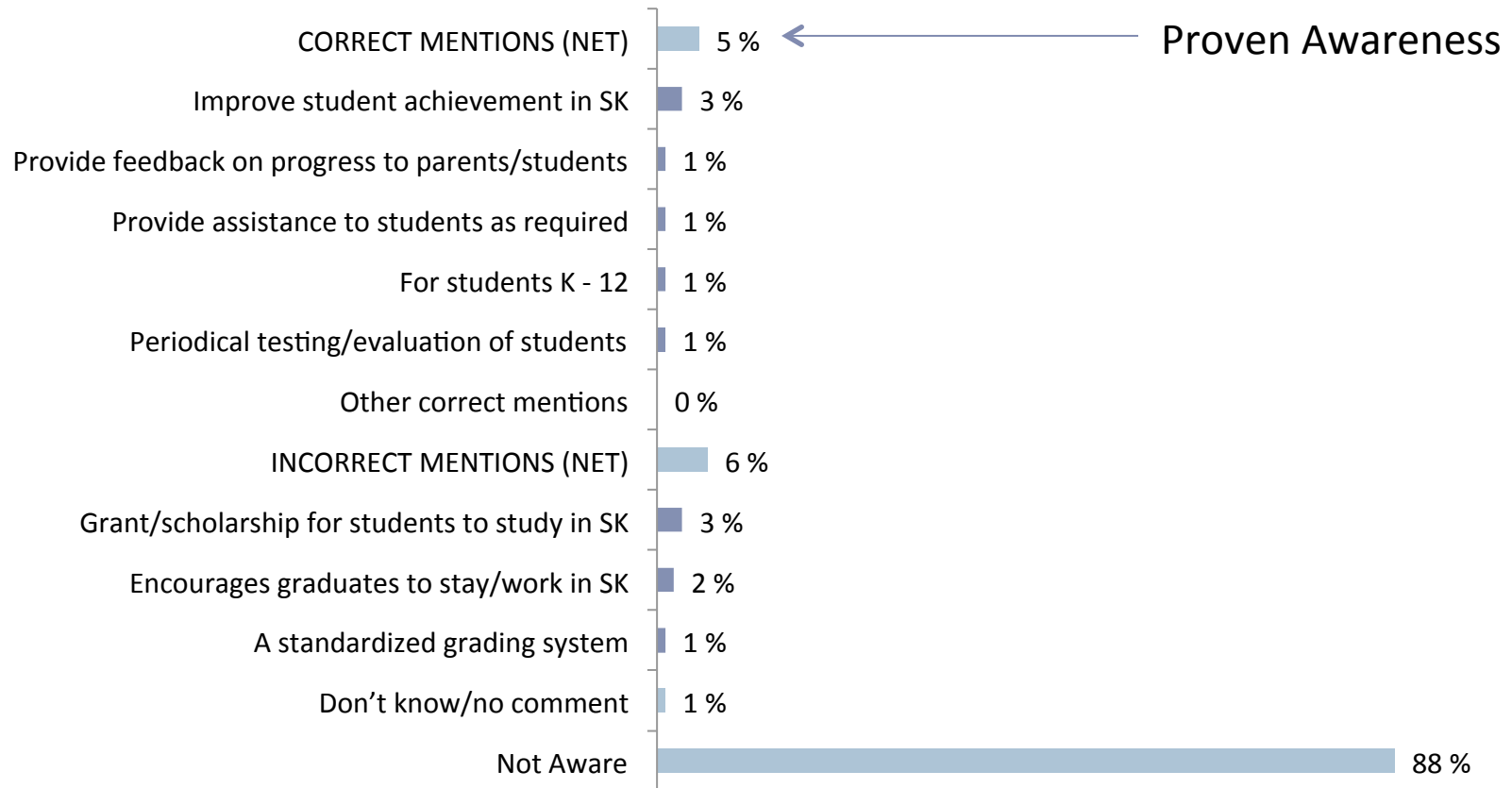
Respondents were first asked to indicate if they were aware of the initiative without being provided with a definition.



4. Have you heard of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative? Base: All respondents, n=828.

Proven awareness is low among those who claim to be aware of the initiative.

All Respondents

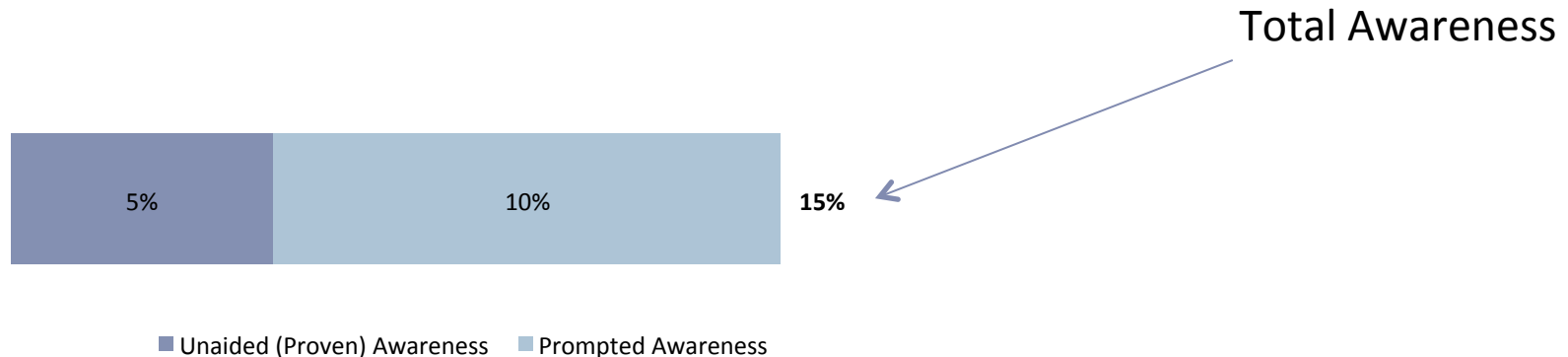


5. To the best of your knowledge, what is the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative? Base: All respondents, n=828.

Total awareness of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative is low.

Prompted awareness statement displayed to respondents:

As you may be aware, the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative is a new approach being undertaken by the Ministry of Education in Saskatchewan. A core element of this approach is that students from pre-school to Grade 12 will undergo individual provincial assessments (i.e. testing) on a regular basis to identify actions to help them succeed in school. The results of these provincial assessments will be shared with parents and students, which did not previously occur, along with any assistance that is required. The initiative will be fully implemented in four years.

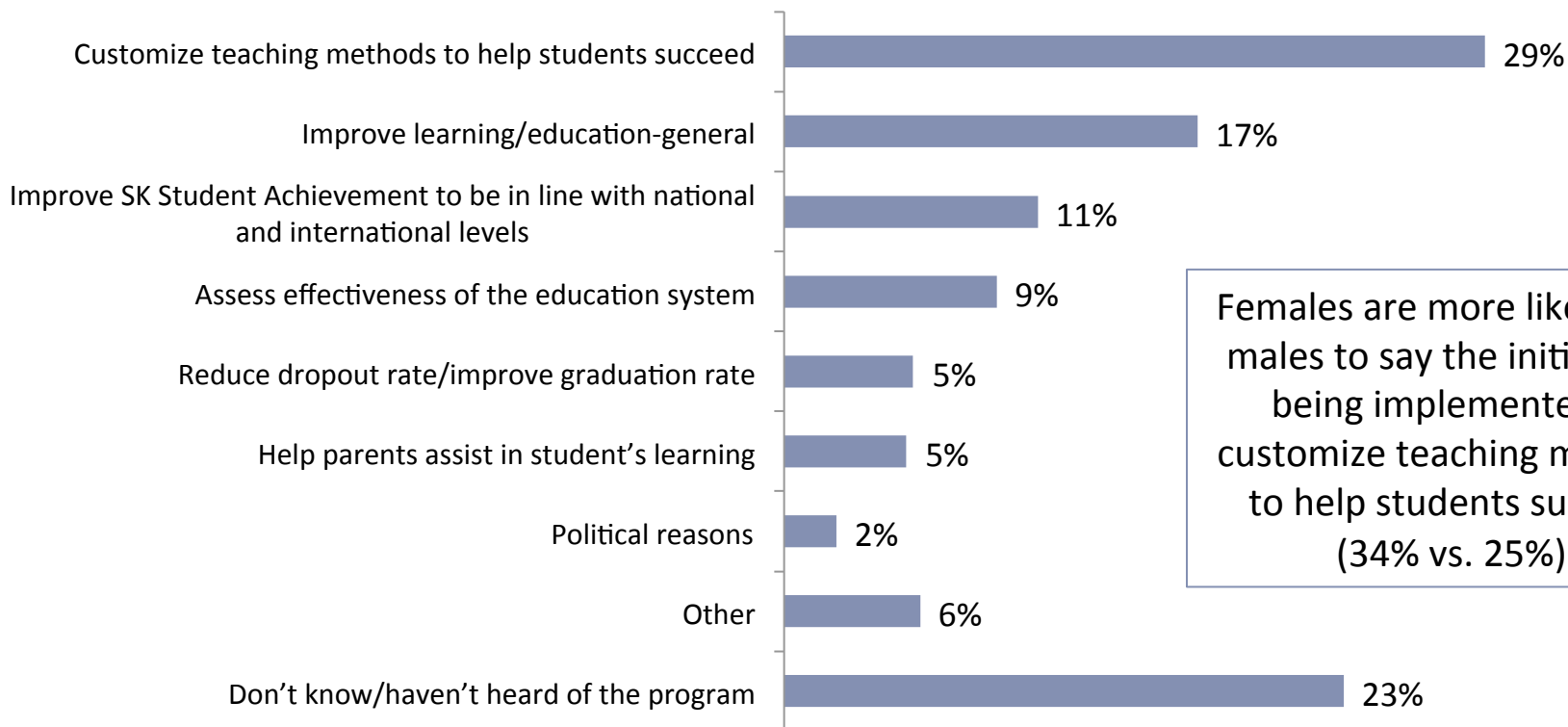


Those aged 55 or older are significantly more likely than those aged 18-34 to be aware of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative (25% vs. 15%).

4. Have you heard of the Saskatchewan Student Achievement initiative? Q6. Based on this description, have you heard of this initiative before? Base: All respondents, n=828.

Most commonly, the perceived reason for implementing the initiative is to customize teaching methods to help students succeed.

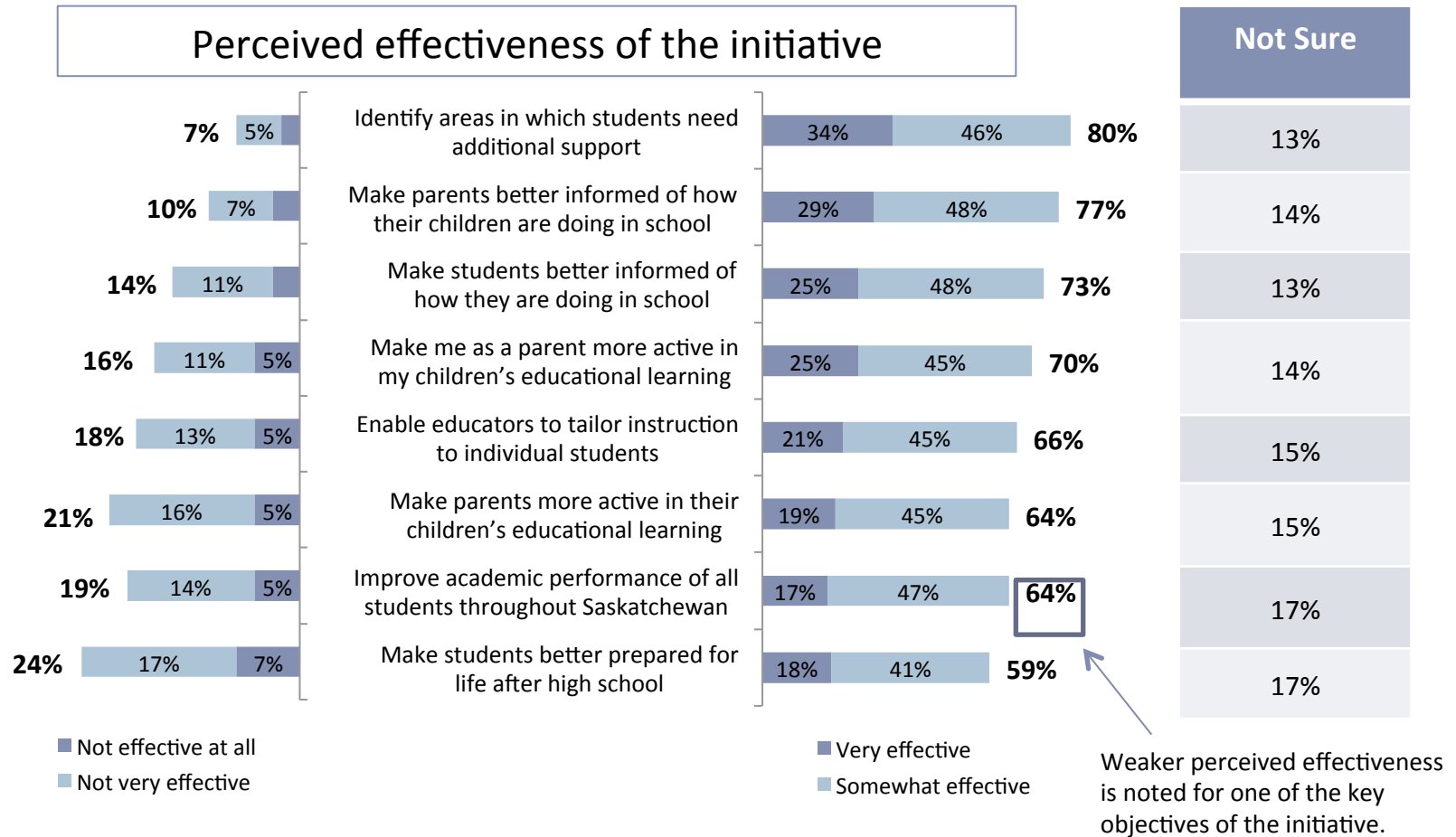
Perceived reasons for implementing the initiative



Females are more likely than males to say the initiative is being implemented to customize teaching methods to help students succeed (34% vs. 25%).

7. To the best of your knowledge, why is the Government of Saskatchewan implementing this new initiative? Base: All respondents, n=828.

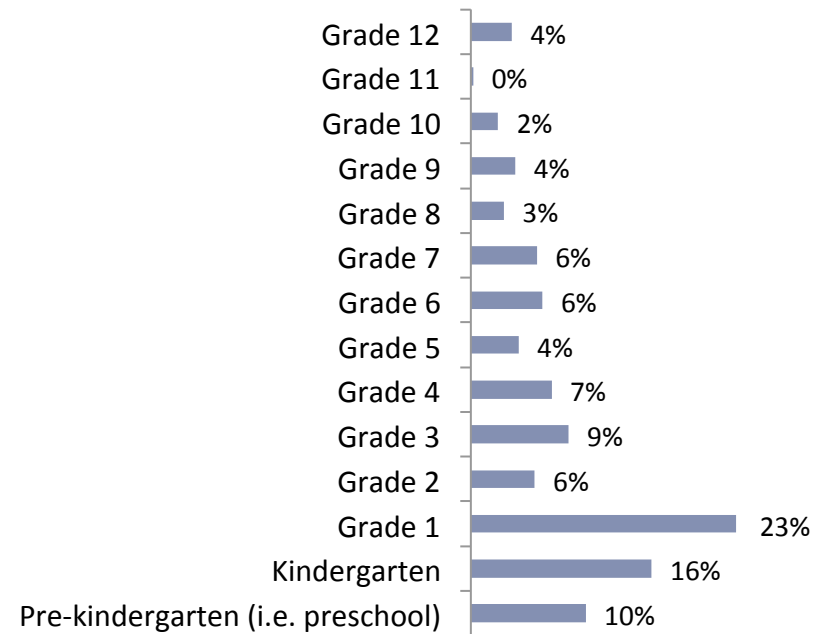
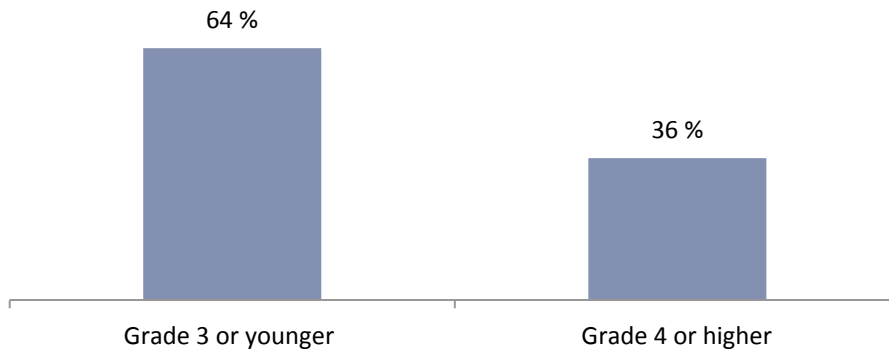
Perceived effectiveness of the Student Achievement initiative is high with . More than one-half of residents cite all categories as being at least somewhat effective.



8. Based on what you have heard about this program, how effective do you think it will be at addressing each of the following? Base: All respondents, n=828. NOTE: the statement "makes me as a parent more active..." includes only those with children under the age of 18 at home, n=289

A majority of Saskatchewan residents suggest assessment should begin in early grades.

Student Assessment should begin in...



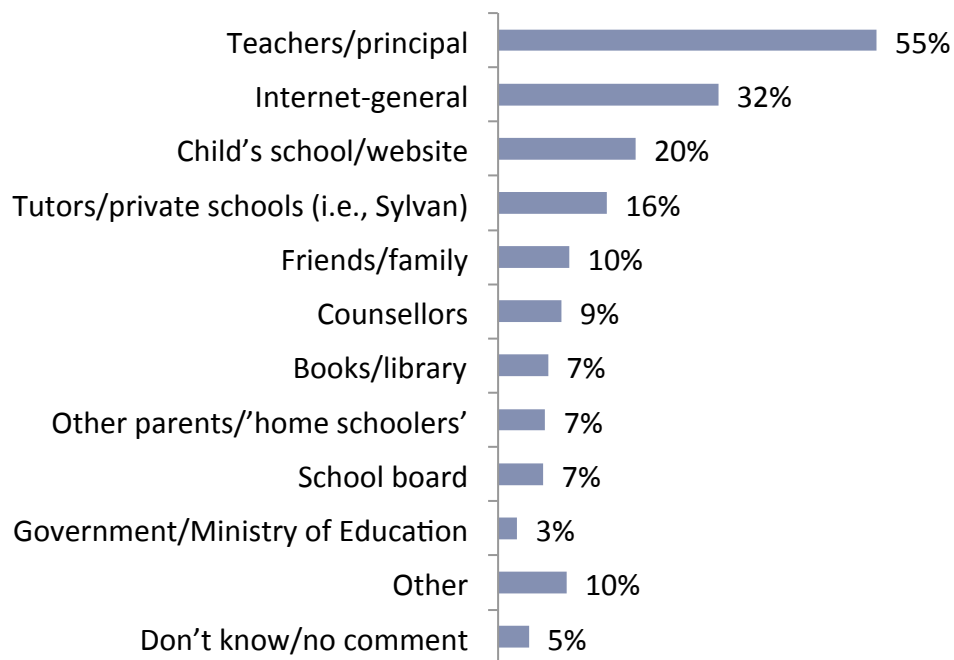
Females are significantly more likely than males to suggest assessments should begin in grade three or lower (69% vs. 58%). In addition, those residents with one or more child are more likely than those without children to suggest assessments should begin in younger grades (69% vs. 60%).

9. At what level do you believe this assessment of students should begin? Base: All respondents, n=828.

More than one-half of respondents state they would turn to the teacher or principal if they needed more information to help their child succeed in school.

Turning to the internet and contacting the child's school are also common answers among respondents.

If my child needed help in school, I would turn to...

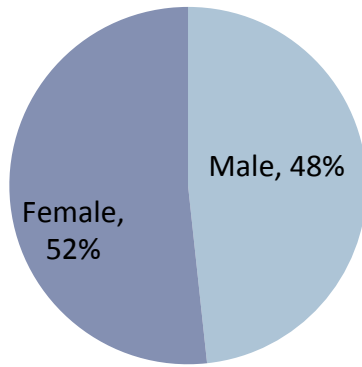


10. Where would you turn to if you were looking for more information on how to help your child do better in school? (Multiple response). Base: Those respondents with children under the age of 18 living in the household, n=289.

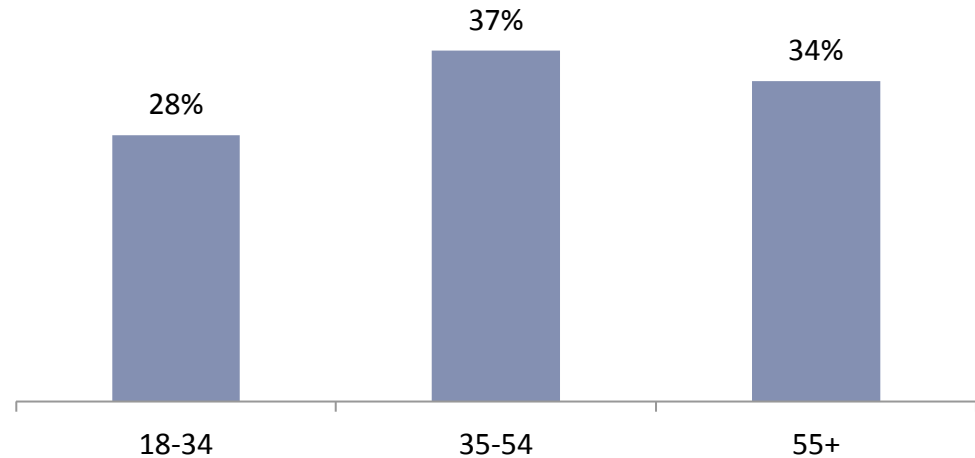
DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender and Age

Gender



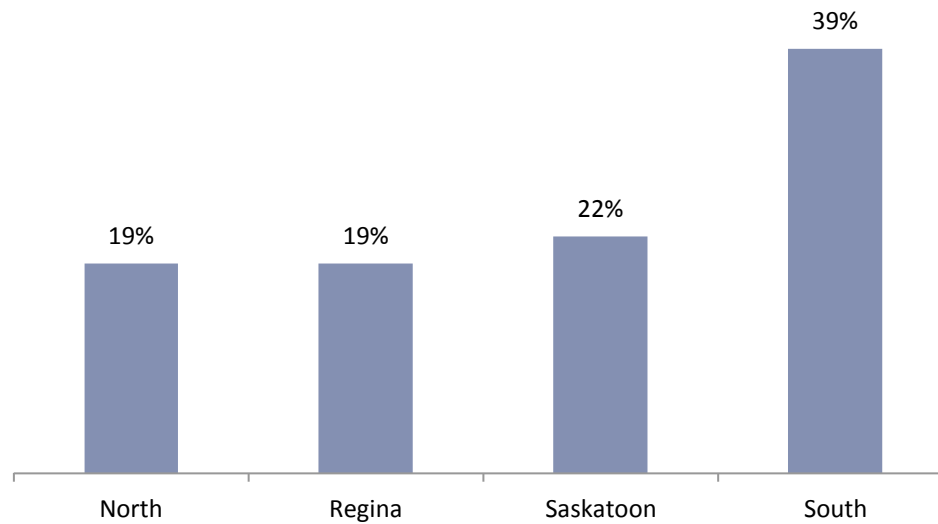
Age Range



2. Please indicate your gender. Base: All respondents, n=828.

Into which age range do you fall? Base: All respondents, n=828.

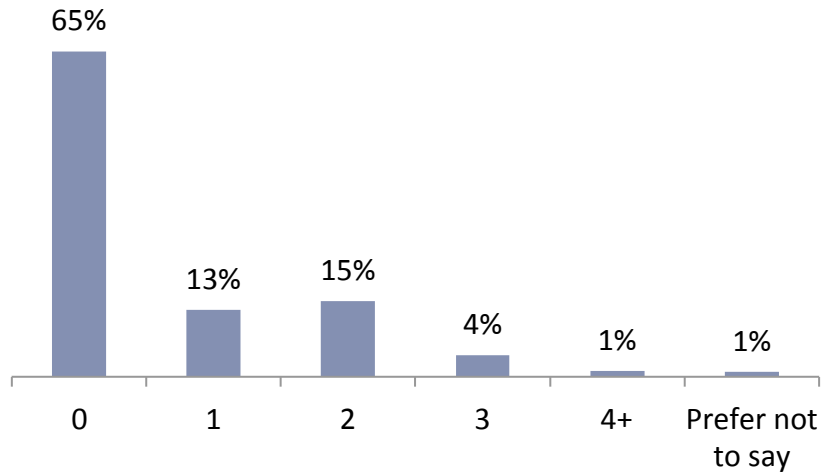
Region



Indicate your region. Base: All respondents, n=828.

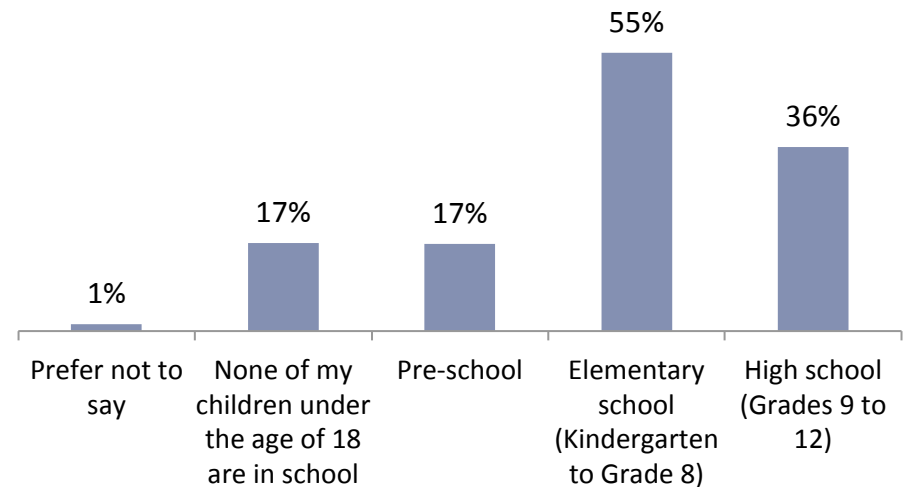
Children in Household

Children under the age of 18 in household



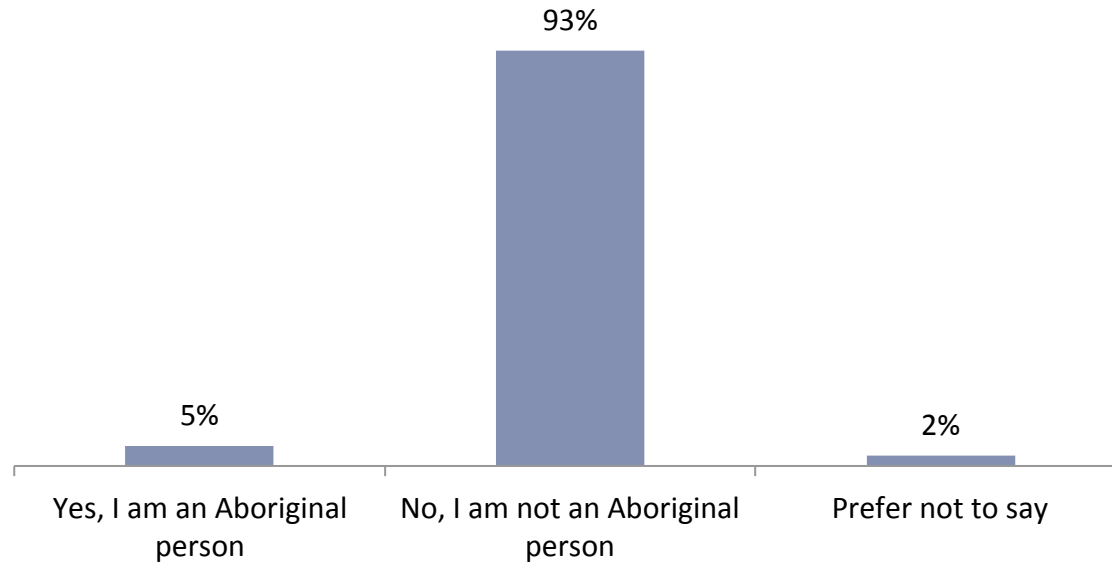
3. How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? Base: All respondents, n=828.

Are any of your children under the age of 18 currently in...?



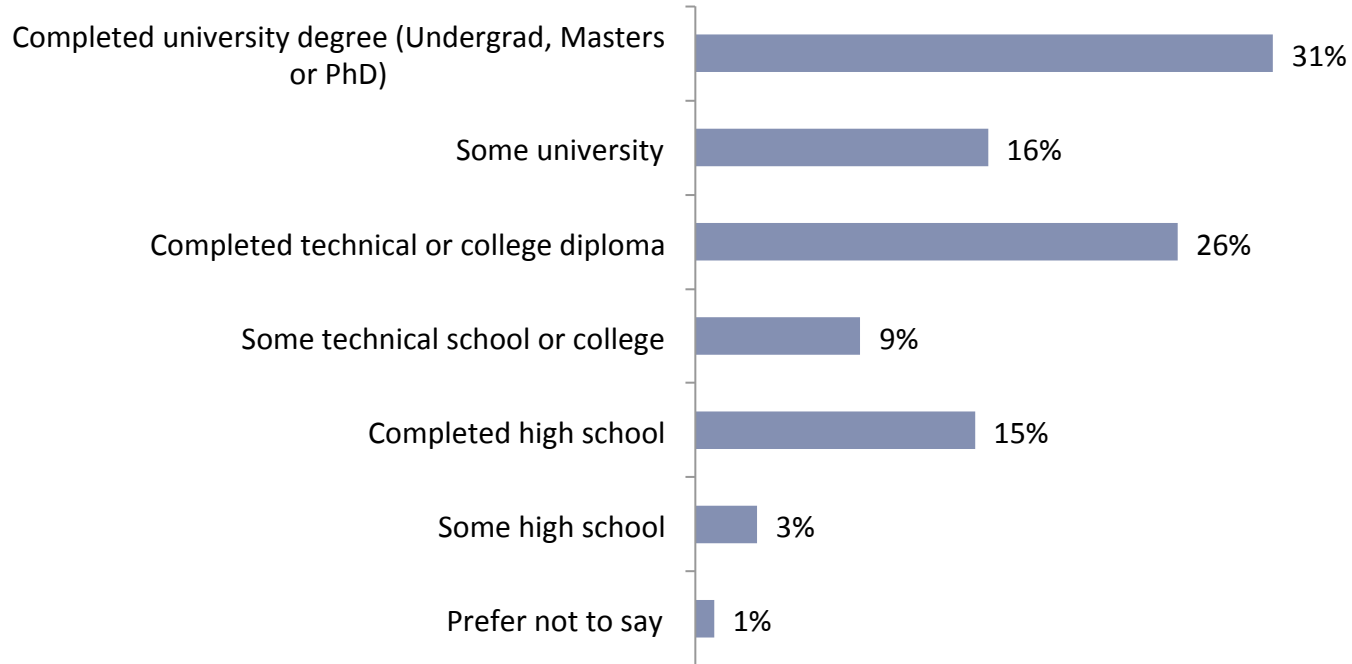
11. Are any of your children under the age of 18 currently in...? Base: Those respondents with children under the age of 18 living in the household, n=281.

Aboriginal Ancestry



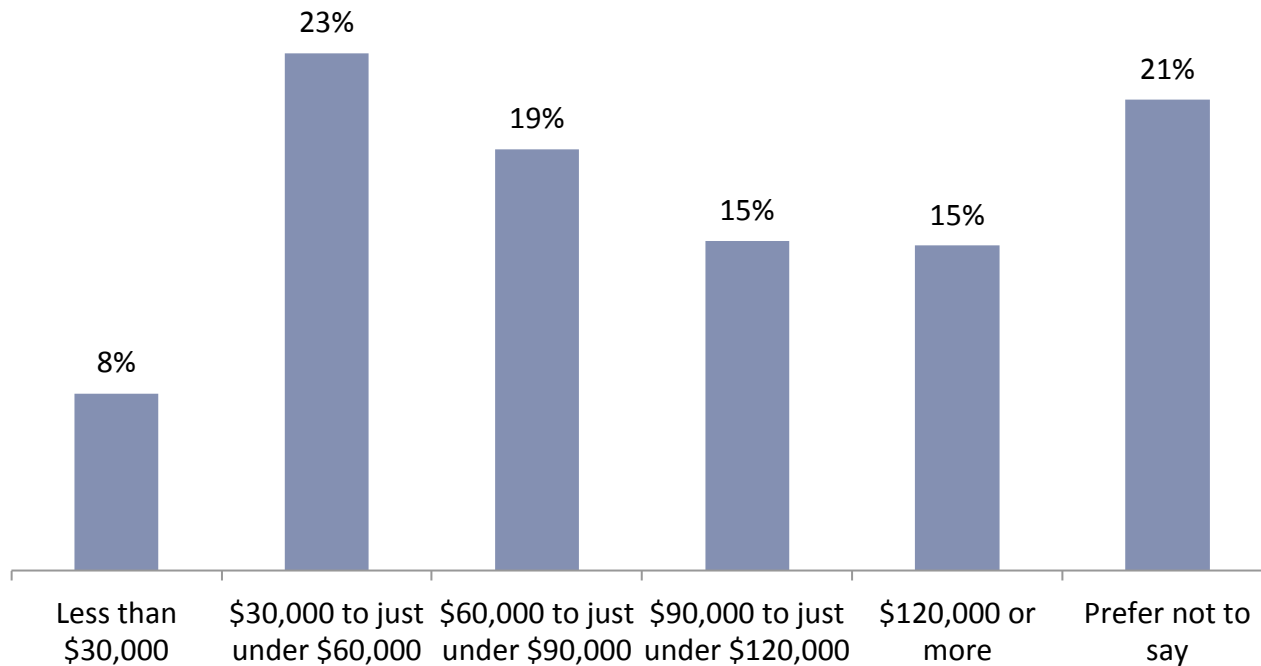
12. Are you an Aboriginal person that is First Nations, Métis, or Inuit? Base: All respondents, n=828.

Education



13. What is the highest level of education you have achieved? Base: All respondents, n=828.

Household Income



14. What is your annual household income before taxes and deductions? Base: All respondents, n=828.