

**Wheaton/Warrenville District 200  
Community Survey  
June 2005**

<b>Overview of Data</b>
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In May 2005, UNICOM•ARC completed fieldwork in a survey on behalf of District 200. The purpose of the survey was to better understand area residents' perceptions of and priorities for the District.

Five hundred (500) interviews were completed from a random telephone sample of registered voters in District 200. A sample of this size yields an overall error margin of  $\pm 4.4\%$ .

This overview of data provides overall results of each question asked in the survey. Exact wording of each question is provided, and questions are presented in the order in which they were asked. Subsequent reports will provide additional interpretive context to these results.

	%	
01. Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and Fail to denote the quality of their work. What grade would you give to public schools in your community - A, B, C, D, or Fail?	A	29.2%
	B	51.2%
	C	11.2%
	D	2.0%
	Fail	.6%
	Other/dk	5.8%

	%	
02. During the past five years or so, would you say that District 200 schools have improved, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?	Improved	25.2%
	Stayed the same	54.6%
	Gotten worse	8.2%
	Other/dk	12.0%

		%
03. (IF IMPROVED) In what area would you say the District has most improved?	Teachers	14.3%
	Curriculum	18.3%
	Principals/administrators	5.6%
	School board	4.0%
	Financial condition	6.3%
	Academic standards	12.7%
	Test scores	4.8%
	Other	31.0%
	don't know	3.2%

		%
04. (IF GOTTEN WORSE) In what area would you say the District has worsened?	Teachers	14.6%
	Curriculum	4.9%
	Principals/administrators	14.6%
	School board	7.3%
	Financial condition	14.6%
	Academic standards	7.3%
	Test scores	2.4%
	Other	29.3%
	don't know	4.9%

I'm going to read some statements that people might make about their local community. For each, tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree. The first is:

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total agree</b>	<b>Total disagree</b>	<b>Other/dk</b>
	%	%	%	%
05. People in my area expect the quality of their public schools to be better than in surrounding communities.	60.0%	93.8%	5.4%	.8%
06. People like me can't afford to pay higher property taxes - no matter how good the cause.	26.4%	52.4%	44.0%	3.6%
07. The quality education provided by District 200 is the most important factor that affects property values.	27.0%	71.8%	25.8%	2.4%
08. District 200 spends tax dollars cost effectively.	14.2%	56.6%	32.8%	10.6%
09. I'm optimistic about the overall direction of my school district.	30.6%	75.8%	19.4%	4.8%
10. I'm willing to invest in education by paying higher taxes, provided that the schools are being operated efficiently and offering a high quality of education.	33.0%	72.0%	26.6%	1.4%
11. Property values in my area will remain strong regardless of the quality of the public schools.	12.0%	38.8%	58.4%	2.8%
12. I trust the District 200 Board of Education to make the right decisions about the overall direction of our school district.	20.2%	67.6%	27.0%	5.4%
13. I'm opposed to higher taxes for schools because teachers and administrators are already paid too much.	13.4%	31.4%	64.8%	3.8%
14. I'm willing to support an increase in taxes to make sure we have a high quality of education in our school district.	22.4%	64.0%	33.8%	2.2%
15. The high quality of education provided by District 200 is one of the primary reasons I live in this community.	28.6%	59.4%	37.4%	3.2%

		%
17. How important would you say it is that District 200 maintains current class sizes? Would you say it is very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?	Very important	49.2%
	Somewhat important	36.2%
	Not very important	5.4%
	Not at all important	2.6%
	Other/dk	6.6%

		%
18. How important would you say it is that teacher salaries offered by District 200 remain competitive with those of other area districts?	Very important	56.8%
	Somewhat important	34.8%
	Not very important	4.2%
	Not at all important	2.8%
	Other/dk	1.4%

		%
19. How well does District 200 do communicating with area residents? Would you say the District does an excellent, good, not so good or poor job?	Excellent	14.8%
	Good	51.4%
	Not so good	19.6%
	Poor	11.0%
	Other/dk	3.2%

		%
20. How well does District 200 do asking for public input?	Excellent	9.6%
	Good	40.6%
	Not so good	30.4%
	Poor	11.6%
	Other/dk	7.8%

		%
21. And how well does District 200 do responding to public input?	Excellent	6.8%
	Good	40.2%
	Not so good	26.2%
	Poor	11.0%
	Other/dk	15.8%

		%
22. In order to balance its budget, some people think that District 200 should cut programs and services rather than increase taxes. Others would be willing to support a property tax increase to avoid cuts and maintain the current level of programs. Which is closer to your view?	Programs should be cut	29.4%
	Both/neither	15.6%
	Taxes should be raised	48.0%
	Other/dk	7.0%

		%
23. (IF TAXES SHOULD BE RAISED) How much more would you be willing to pay in yearly property taxes to maintain the current level of programs and services for District 200? Would you say...	\$100 or less	27.5%
	\$101 to \$300 a year	33.7%
	\$301 to \$500 a year	4.8%
	More than \$500 a year	2.3%
	I trust the Board to ask for the amount they need.	17.3%
	Other/dk	14.4%

		%
24. District 200, like other neighboring districts, has to meet all requirements for No Child Left Behind and other state standards for standardized tests. Do you think the focus on meeting these state standards has strengthened the overall curriculum, weakened it, or has had no effect?	Strengthened curriculum	23.6%
	Weakened curriculum	41.8%
	Has had no effect	23.6%
	Other/dk	11.0%

I'm going to read words and phrases that people might use to describe a school district. For each, I'd like you to rate it on a seven-point scale. If you think the phrase is very descriptive of District 200, rate it a seven. If you think it not at all descriptive, rate it a one. Of course, you can use any number between seven and one. Let's start with . . .

	<b>Very descriptive (7)</b>	<b>Total descriptive (5-7)</b>	<b>Total Not descriptive (1-3)</b>	<b>Other/dk</b>
	%	%	%	%
25. One of the best districts in the collar counties of Chicago	22.0%	81.6%	7.4%	1.8%
26. Up-to-date computers and technology	13.0%	68.2%	6.6%	14.8%
27. Safe learning environment	32.2%	89.8%	4.2%	2.2%
28. Excellent teachers	22.0%	85.6%	4.2%	4.0%
29. Too old fashioned with respect to educational programs	4.0%	22.4%	58.0%	9.8%
30. Experienced recent cutbacks in important programs and services	4.8%	28.2%	36.0%	21.0%
31. Recruits and retains good teachers	16.6%	75.2%	8.6%	7.6%
32. Maintains high academic standards for all students	21.8%	81.4%	7.2%	3.4%
33. Modern and well-maintained buildings and facilities	20.6%	78.6%	7.6%	3.2%
34. Moving to higher levels of greatness in educational quality	13.4%	66.4%	9.2%	7.4%
35. Keeps class sizes at desirable levels	11.4%	66.0%	10.0%	8.0%
36. Addresses individual student needs	11.4%	60.2%	13.4%	10.6%
37. Outstanding student performance on standardized tests	10.0%	74.6%	5.4%	10.8%

		%
38. When you think about a District 200 education compared to that of neighboring school districts, what do you think is the biggest advantage that District 200 has over other area districts?	quality of curriculum/programs	10.2%
	quality of staff/teachers	19.8%
	good parental involvement	16.0%
	preparing students for college/work	5.0%
	variety of programs and services	2.8%
	high test scores	1.6%
	extracurricular programs/sports	3.0%
	adequate funding	9.2%
	modern facilities	1.4%
	small class sizes	1.2%
	excellence in visual and performing arts	1.0%
	nothing positive	2.6%
	other (specify)	12.2%
don't know	14.0%	

		%
39. What do you think is the biggest disadvantage of a District 200 education when it is compared with neighboring school districts?	lack of financial support	9.8%
	low student interest	3.0%
	low parent interest/family support	2.8%
	poor curriculum/low standards	3.0%
	drugs/substance abuse	2.8%
	poor student discipline	4.0%
	quality of staff/teachers	5.2%
	high class sizes	9.8%
	nothing negative	21.6%
	other (specify)	18.8%
	don't know	19.2%

		%
40. Some people think District 200 should work to become a world-class school district, where students would be competitive with leading school systems throughout the world. Others think that the District should focus on remaining competitive with neighboring districts. Which is closer to the way you feel?	world class district	35.8%
	remain competitive with neighboring districts	60.4%
	Other/dk	3.8%

		%
41a. What do you think District 200 needs to do or to have to make the District among the best in the world?	quality curriculum/programs	18.2%
	quality staff/teachers	22.7%
	quality facilities	8.1%
	parental involvement	4.0%
	variety of programs and services	11.1%
	high test scores	2.5%
	graduates going to college	4.5%
	graduates going to work	.5%
	involving the community in decision-making	4.5%
	extracurricular activities/sports	1.5%
	other	10.6%
don't know	11.6%	

		%
41b. And what is the second thing you think of?	quality curriculum/programs	13.7%
	quality staff/teachers	14.3%
	quality facilities	10.3%
	parental involvement	9.1%
	variety of programs and services	10.9%
	high test scores	4.6%
	graduates going to college	4.0%
	graduates going to work	1.7%
	involving the community in decision-making	3.4%
	extracurricular activities/sports	2.9%
	other	9.7%
don't know	15.4%	

		%
42. Of the following seven items, which one do you think should be the top priority for District 200?	a highly qualified and well-trained staff	27.8%
	a challenging and balanced curriculum that leads to success	35.2%
	students opportunities for extracurricular programs...	6.4%
	high expectations for students	11.4%
	Decision-making and goal setting that involves the community	4.4%
	character development	7.0%
	up-to-date technology	3.6%
	other/dk	4.2%

Like many school districts in Illinois, District 200 is facing some tough financial choices. Let's assume for a moment that the District does not have enough funds to meet all needs. I'm going to read ways in which available funds could be spent. For each, tell me if you think financial support should be increased, kept about the same, or reduced.

	<b>increased</b>	<b>kept the same</b>	<b>reduced</b>	<b>other/dk</b>
	%	%	%	%
43. Maintaining average class sizes.	19.2%	70.4%	7.6%	2.8%
44. Providing students with up-to-date computers and other educational technology	36.0%	53.4%	7.4%	3.2%
45. Offering foreign language instruction at lower grade levels	39.2%	33.6%	25.0%	2.2%
46. Providing more individualized instruction	41.4%	46.6%	10.2%	1.8%
47. Offering educational programs for gifted students	34.8%	55.0%	8.8%	1.4%
48. Providing all day kindergarten	18.4%	39.4%	37.2%	5.0%
49. Providing professional development programs for teachers	31.6%	52.6%	15.0%	.8%
50. Offering educational programs in the visual and performing arts	27.0%	58.8%	13.2%	1.0%
51. Providing early childhood education	28.8%	47.2%	21.8%	2.2%
52. Making sure teacher salaries remain competitive with other area school districts	35.8%	59.0%	4.6%	.6%
53. Maintaining a quality teaching staff	46.2%	52.4%	1.0%	.4%
54. Continuing sports programs at their current level	12.0%	71.2%	15.8%	1.0%
55. Providing advanced placement classes at the high school	33.8%	59.2%	6.0%	1.0%
56. Offering character development educational programs	34.8%	45.2%	18.2%	1.8%
57. Maintaining and repairing school buildings and facilities	33.4%	60.6%	5.2%	.8%
58. Reducing average class sizes	23.8%	63.4%	9.0%	3.8%
59. Maintaining the current level of extra-curricular activities	13.6%	72.6%	12.0%	1.8%

And now, a few final questions for classification purposes.

		%
60. What was the last grade or year of school you completed?	up to high school	9.6%
	some college	19.0%
	four-year college degree	33.6%
	graduate scfhool	36.2%
	other/dk	1.6%

		%
61. Do you have children who are eighteen years of age or younger that live in your household?	yes	42.2%
	no	56.8%
	other/dk	1.0%

		%
61a. Do these children attend...	District 200 public elementary schools	50.8%
	private or parochial school at any level	12.7%
	District 200 public middle school	29.6%
	District 200 High School	48.1%

		%
62. Did you yourself, or any other adult member of your household, attend a District 200 school?	yes	36.0%
	no	62.6%
	other/dk	1.4%

		%
63. How long have you lived in District 200?	0 - 2 years	4.2%
	3 - 5 years	8.2%
	6 - 10 years	12.4%
	11 - 20 years	33.2%
	more than 20 years	40.8%
	other/dk	1.2%

		%
64. Do you have access to the Internet?	yes	90.8%
	no	7.6%
	other/dk	1.6%

		%
65. In what age group are you? Are you . . .	18 - 34	14.8%
	35 - 49	35.4%
	50 - 64	29.8%
	65+	18.2%
	other/dk	1.8%

		%
66. Of course, I don't need the exact amount, but please tell me which of the following categories best represents your total household income, before taxes, for 2004.	under \$50,000	15.2%
	\$50 to 99,999	30.8%
	\$100 to 149,999	20.8%
	\$150 to 199,999	8.2%
	\$200 or more	5.2%
	other/dk	19.8%

		%
67. GENDER	male	50.0%
	female	50.0%