

# Parents seek more school input

By Tribune Staff Report

October 05, 2008

Parents of Chicago public school students living on the West Side overwhelmingly want to have more of a say on school decisions and want better communication from the district when it comes to school-restructuring efforts, according to the findings of a five-month survey released Friday.

The survey conducted by the Parents & Residents Invested in School & Education Reform (PRISE Reform), queried 504 households of students in the 6th through 12th grades in the Humboldt Park, Garfield Park and Austin neighborhoods.

The survey found, among other things, that 98 percent of parents and other caretakers of the children said they wanted to be included or consulted in decisions about school changes. The survey also found that 84 percent want to be able to share their opinions with district officials. According to the findings, of the 75 percent of parents who had been summoned to their children's school to discuss their progress, only 25 percent were told that their children's school was performing poorly.

The group, made up of a coalition of several organizations, used a \$225,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to pay for the survey, which began in November 2007 and ended in March, according to Rev. Patricia Watkins, founder of PRISE.