

Texas Regional  
Education Service Centers  
Survey Summary

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## Overview

Since 2005, the Texas Regional Education Service Centers have contracted with the Institute for Organizational Excellence at The University of Texas at Austin to conduct a survey that is sent to representatives of all school districts and charter schools in Texas. This is the ninth, 2013 iteration of the survey. As in the past eight iterations, the survey was sent during the fall. The overall results continue to be very positive and illustrate a high level of satisfaction from both the school districts and the charter schools. Given that this is the ninth iteration of the survey, additional overtime comparisons can be made.

This year's survey respondents again provided numerous comments, suggestions, and compliments for the work conducted by the various regional Education Service Centers (ESCs). Variability in the responses between regions and slightly lower scores from charter school administrators are again present.

The survey was conducted electronically in the fall of 2013 and was sent to 1,288 potential respondents; 945 people responded. Therefore, the survey obtained a 73% response rate. The instrument included both quantitative and qualitative items. Three sections of quantitative items asked respondents to assess their level of satisfaction with the services provided by the ESCs in the areas of regular education programs; programs for special populations; and other specific areas such as PEIMS, shared services, state and federal regulations, child nutrition, student performance, NCLB, AYP, PBM and board training. A qualitative item asked for additional comments and program suggestions.

The survey was not conducted anonymously and did ask respondents to identify their district or charter school name. Furthermore, respondents were asked to identify the years of service they have had as a district superintendent or charter school administrator. The survey reports include a section with each superintendent's or administrator's responses.

Various tabulations of verbatim responses and quantitative data were returned to all ESC Directors and to the Texas Education Agency in December of 2013. Survey results were summarized by combining all ESC regions. Additionally, two reports

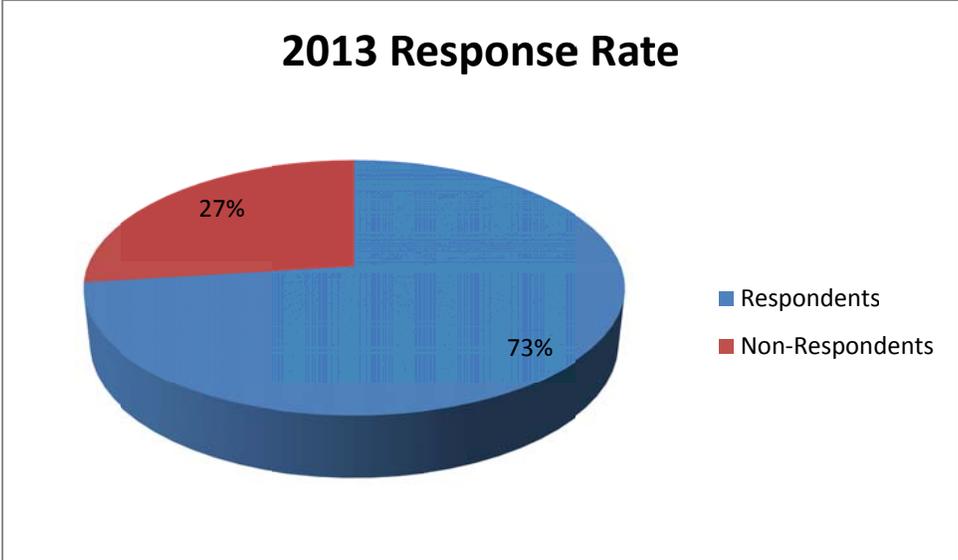
provided the combined responses from all charter schools and all school districts. In the overall combined report, the decision was made to return all comments with the proper names and district identifying information removed from the comments. The remaining portions of the comments were returned as entered by the respondents. All quantitative items on the combined overall reports received scores between a 4.73 and 4.83 on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from a 1 of “Very Dissatisfied” to a 5 of “Very Satisfied.” These scores suggest overall improvement from previous years thus following the trend of improvement each year.

This report contains a summary of results including participation information, quantitative item results, and qualitative thematic areas. A brief discussion of survey methodology, instrumentation, and administration is provided. Finally, a set of additional future areas of study are outlined. This report was produced by the Institute for Organizational Excellence at the Center for Social Work Research at The University of Texas at Austin. The Institute for Organizational Excellence provides survey research and organizational development support primarily for governmental entities in Texas.

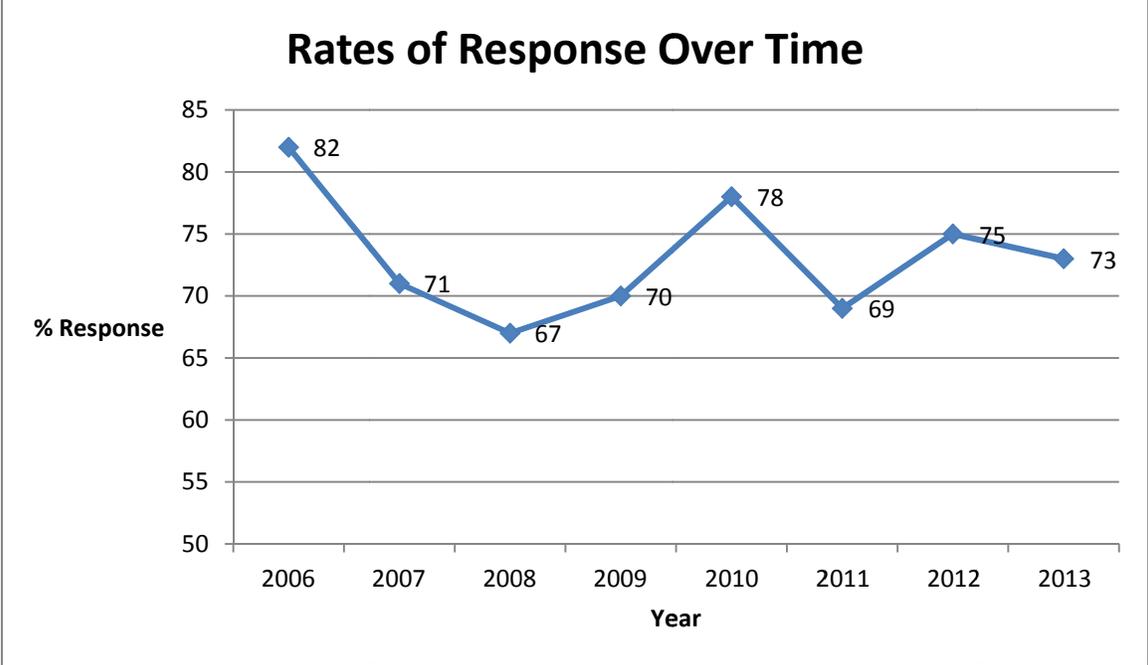
## Summary of Results

### Participation Information

The survey was distributed via email to 1,288 school district and charter school district representatives. Most representatives were the district superintendents or the charter school administrator. There were 945 responses, resulting in a 73% rate of response.



Of all respondents, 87.80% of the responses came from district superintendents and the remaining 12.09% of respondents were from charter school administrators. The response rate of 73% level of participation exceeds an adequate and acceptable level of response from an assessment with voluntary participation. The average response rate over the previous eight years is 73%.



## Quantitative Results

As stated in the overview, the responses overall were very positive with all quantitative items receiving scores between a 4.73 and 4.83 on a 5-point Likert scale. As in the last six iterations, the lowest scoring items were “Advanced Academics Education (e.g., gifted and talented and AP)” and “Migrant Education”. Overall, these items scored 4.73 and 4.74, respectively. The highest scoring overall items were “Services and support for PEIMS,” “Services to assist the district/charter school in complying with federal and state regulations and guidelines (e.g. NCLB, AYP, PBM, Child Nutrition),” and “Special Education.” The respective scores were 4.83, 4.82, and 4.82. These scores did increase over time, suggesting that any targeting improvement could be denoted in these higher scores. For most items, 96% of all respondents expressed that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the various services assessed. This level of agreement held all standard deviations below the value of 0.54.

## Qualitative Responses

Again a qualitative item provided respondents the opportunity to make comments about services, suggest new services, and make comments on services not mentioned in the quantitative section of the survey. As was the case last year, the vast majority of the comments were very positive. Often the respondents expressed appreciation for the degree of support received from and money saved by utilizing their ESC region and corresponding staff people. In some cases respondents have spoken of their region as an invaluable resource that provides an exceptional level of service. Small and medium size and rural districts express additional appreciation of the support, resources and professionalism provided by the regional ESCs. Very few comments were critical of services or programs.

## Survey Methodology

### Instrument

The survey instrument was provided to the Institute for Organizational Excellence from the directors of the Texas Regional Education Service Centers. The online

assessment contained a link to a letter from Michael L. Williams, Commissioner of Education, thanking and encouraging the participants to respond to the assessment. The instrument contained 14 items scaled on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from a 1 of “Very Dissatisfied” to a 5 of “Very Satisfied.” Each item provided the option to mark Service Not Utilized. One qualitative item provided the opportunity for respondents to give open-ended responses. The last section of the instrument was used for additional information, such as indicating if the respondent was from a district or charter school, the respondent’s corresponding region, years of experience, and years within the current region.

### Administration

The instrument was prepared as an online assessment and was not available in hardcopy. An invitation email was sent to all potential respondents in October. Within the email invitation was a hyperlink to the survey website. Each hyperlink was unique and included an embedded code relating the responses back to the intended participant. Three reminder email invitations were sent out, each one week following the previous invitation. The survey remained open until the middle of November.

### Conclusion

The reporting of the results provides an adequate description of the respondents’ level of satisfaction with services and provides additional qualitative data for the various regions. Overall the scores are very positive in the participant’s perceptions of the Regional Education Service Centers. Scores do vary by district and charter school respondents. As in the previous year, charter school respondents did report slightly lower levels of satisfaction. However, given the difference in population sizes and variability, these differences on the quantitative items may or may not be statistically significant. As mentioned in the summary of results, the strong positive scores tend to suggest that targeted interventions on existing programmatic areas - and not on system wide or the revamping of overall service delivery areas - may adequately address any concerns that have surfaced.