

## About Us

Our goal at Community Investment Corporation (CIC) is to promote economic inclusion for all members of Southern Arizona, regardless of socioeconomic status. We believe that education is one of the most powerful instruments for reducing poverty and inequality. To better understand the needs of families, and to learn what features and characteristics parents prioritize when choosing a school for their child(ren), our team designed and administered a survey targeted toward parents with school-aged children.

## Our Survey

- Fall 2022
- Survey Sample Size: 1162 Arizona Parents surveyed.
- 42% of sample coming from Southern Arizona Counties (Pima, Yuma, Pinal, Cochise, Santa Cruz)

## Our Solution

After evaluating survey data, CIC built MySchoolsTucson, a Tucson-centric, family-focused resource and online school locator. It offers a simple, understandable, and unbiased opportunity to find and learn about ALL Tucson schools. MySchoolsTucson is a centralized, "one-stop-shop" for families seeking to explore their options.



# Survey Findings



## Knowledge of the AZ Landscape

Low-income families are considerably less likely to be familiar with the AZ Educational landscape.

- 52% of low-income families are familiar with AZ Tax Credit programs to help afford private education.
- 23% of low-income families are not familiar with "open enrollment" policies in AZ - compared to only 2% of high-income families
- 30% of low-income families are unfamiliar with AZ school accountability grades compared to 2% of high income families.



## Access to Information and School Exploration

Low-income families face more difficulties in accessing information about schools.

- Only 27% of low-income families believe there are many resources to help parents find the right school for their children. In contrast.... 65% of high-income families believe there are resources available.

Low-income families begin the process of researching schools significantly later.

- Low-income families are 4.5x's more likely to do NO research at all on schools prior to enrolling their child.
- High-income families start researching schools earlier than low-income families. They are 2x's more likely to start researching 6 months in advance of enrolling.

Low-income families 12x's more likely than high-income families to report that they did NOT know there were multiple elementary schools to choose from.

## Parent Voice and Family Engagement

Low-income families engage with their schools differently than do high-income parents.

- Low-income families are 2x's more likely to not join a parent organization.
- Low-income families are more likely to feel their input/feedback is not valued by school leaders.
- 42% of Low-income families are uncertain or do not feel their input is valued by their elementary schools. Compared to only 17% of high-income families.

## Important Factors to Parents When Considering a School

Families vary in what they prioritize in a school - income and race serve as important determinants.

- Families of color earning less than \$50k per year are more likely to prioritize diversity and safety than wealthier white families.
- Low-income families' top three factors when considering a school are: **Safety, Diversity & Academics**
- High-income families' top three factors when considering a school are: **Reputation, Safety & Academics.**