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Dothan City  
Schools wins  
'What Parents  
Want' award

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Although the Dothan City Schools system has been embroiled in controversies about school consolidation and employee layoffs in recent months, the system is apparently getting some things right.

The city schools recently received a "What Parents Want" award from SchoolMatch.

Dothan City Schools Superintendent Sam Nichols said he feels the award vindicates the work he said the system is doing to improve education.

"We feel good about it," he said.

The award is given based on how well schools meet needs identified by SchoolMatch as important to parents. The needs are identified by 95,000 questionnaires the company sends out and include:

- competitiveness in academic test scores and academic strength.
- accreditation
- recognition for excellence by a national foundation or by the U.S. Department of Education
- competitiveness in teacher salaries
- being above average in instructional expenditures on a national percentile basis
- being above average in expenditures for library/media services on a national percentile basis
- being known for small class size

Twenty-five Alabama school systems, including Dothan, won the award.

Only 2,407 of the nation's 15,571 schools won the award this year. Dothan has won the award for the last 13 years.

SchoolMatch is an organization that helps employees of big corporations find good schools for their children when they make employment-related moves.