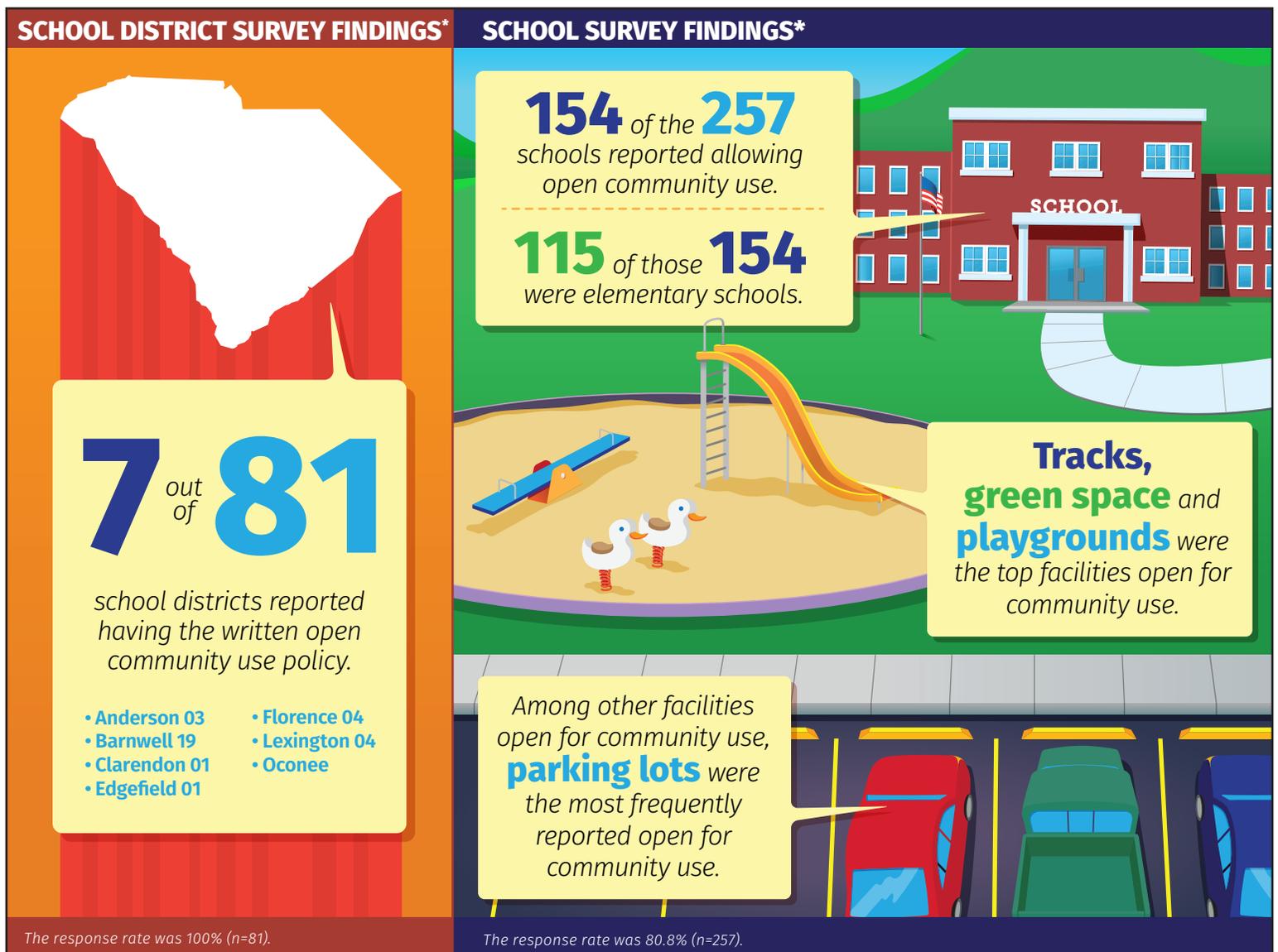


# THE STATUS OF OPEN COMMUNITY USE IN SOUTH CAROLINA 2015

Open community use, allowing free community access to schools' outdoor recreational facilities, is an effective and affordable strategy to combating obesity and increasing physical activity<sup>1</sup>. In 2014, the South Carolina School Boards Association published the Open Community Use of School Recreational Areas model policy. School districts are encouraged to adopt the model policy and schools are encouraged to practice and promote open community use. In addition, increasing the number of school districts that have a written open community use policy is one of the SC Obesity Action Plan's objectives for increasing physical activity. Visit [http://eatsmartmovemore.org/pdf/2015\\_OCU\\_Playbook.pdf](http://eatsmartmovemore.org/pdf/2015_OCU_Playbook.pdf) for more information on open community use.

To better understand current policies and practices of open community use, surveys were disseminated to all 81 school districts and 318 schools were sampled in South Carolina. The initial surveys were sent via email by the South Carolina Department of Education. As a follow-up, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control collected the remaining surveys via phone call or in-person visits. The survey results will help partners better understand the policy and practice of open community use in South Carolina. The open community use surveys will help track the number of school districts with an open community use model policy.



\* Data based on the 2015 SC Open Community Use Surveys.

1. Promoting Physical Activity through the Shared Use of School and Community Recreational Resources: A Research Brief. Active Living Research, a National Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, April 2012. <[www.activelivingresearch.org](http://www.activelivingresearch.org)>.  
 2. Liability Risks for After-Hours Use of Public School Property to Reduce Obesity: South Carolina. National Policy & Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity, a National Program of ChangeLabSolutions, March 2009. <<http://changelabsolutions.org>>.