



## Division of Accountability & Research

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### **Student Climate Survey Executive Summary (2009-2010)**

Perceptions of school climate and safety can have a distinct impact on how well students learn. Research indicates that improved school climate can contribute to higher student achievement, higher moral among students and teachers, fewer student dropouts and reduced violence. While school reforms typically focus on student achievement due to external accountability systems, these reforms can be limited when school climate is a negative factor. In order to evaluate Aurora Public Schools students' perceptions of schools safety and climate, a survey was administered to middle and high school students in January of 2010. Note that students' perceptions are just that, perceptions, and do not reflect with certainty what is happening in APS schools.

#### **Survey Development**

The Student Climate survey was first administered during the spring of 2007. The items were developed with input from principals, students, the Division of Instruction, and the Division of Accountability and Research. The initial items were designed to reflect attitudes related to general climate, trust and respect, academics, safety and bullying, harassment, and self-concept. In 2010, items were substantially revised to provide question clarity, reduce redundancy, and to support district needs. In effect, only 21 items from the previous year were retained between years. Future analysis will reassign items to obtained scales based on statistical item groupings. It should be noted, individual item scales are reverse-coded at times with disagreement indicating a favorable outcome.

#### **Survey Participants**

The Student Climate survey was administered to all secondary students in January 2010. A total of 11,604 surveys were completed. The overall percentage of student responses approximated 75% (MS: 86.5%; HS: 66.1%). The total percentage of students responding to the survey since its inception in 2007 can be found in table 1.

**Table 1. Student Climate Survey: Historical Percent Response Rates**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>4 Yr Ch.</b>
Overall	11,604	76.5%	78.5%	73.9%	75.0%	-1.5%
Middle Schools	5,834	82.4%	89.3%	86.9%	86.5%	+3.1%
High Schools	5,770	71.1%	69.5%	64.0%	66.1%	-5.0%

**Note.** Total reflects number of survey responses in 2010. Pickens Technical College surveys aren't reflected in the presented counts/percentages.

The number of students responding to the survey has approximated 74.5% the past two years and was at 78.5% during 2008. The response rate for middle school students has increased by 3% since survey inception with a decline of 5% for high schools. In 2010, the distribution of the students reported ethnicity and gender reflected percentages that were very similar to the district population.

## **Survey Results**

The survey results have been examined based on item specific responses. A large number of items were altered or replaced between years preventing us from conducting a longitudinal examination of results. The 2010 survey results will serve as baseline data during future survey administrations.

Overall, 15 of 40 items (37.5%) exceeded 60% agreement rate indicating high satisfaction concerning overall climate (see table 4). The most favorable rates were associated with items concerning bullying and harassment ( $\geq 60\%$  agreement) which indicates that most students don't feel as if they are bullied or harassed. In addition, 75% report that they strongly disagree with the statement, "At school, I feel afraid". Also, 73% of students agreed with the statement, "My teachers expect me to graduate from high school". Less favorable responses were associated with items concerning interest in class work (Ag/SA: 37.8%), making choices regarding about what's studied at school (Ag/SA: 37.9%), consistent enforcement of school rules outside of the classroom (Ag/SA: 36.2%), and belief that belongings are safe at school (Ag/SA: 27.2%).

For middle and high school students, 45% of middle school items exceeded 60% agreement while 25% of items for high school were at or exceeded 60% agreement. For most items, agreement rates were higher for middle school students with responses indicating a larger degree of satisfaction concerning overall school climate and teacher expectations/support.

## **Conclusions**

- The Student Climate Survey had a 75% response rate in 2010. The demographics of respondents reflected percentages that were very similar to the district population.
- Most survey items had moderate agreement rates. Overall, 37.5% of items exceeded 60% favorable responses. For middle schools, 45% of items exceeded 60% agreement while for high schools 25% of items reached this level. A total of 68.4% of students reported that they intended to continue on to college or beyond.
- Areas of strength are related to perceptions of safety and low harassment/bullying while areas of concern are related to interest in academic work and general school climate. For most items, middle schools students reported more favorable outcomes than those reported by high school students.

**Table 4. Item Agreement Rates: Overall Results**

Item	%Dis/SD	%Ag/SA
1. I have an adult at school I trust.	21.0%	59.5%
2. At school, I feel safe.	16.8%	47.7%
3. At school, I have had someone try to hurt me (e.g. hit, shoved, kicked).	58.0%	28.0%
<b>4. I have at least one adult in school I can go to when I need help.</b>	19.9%	<b>61.2%</b>
5. I believe our school rules are consistently enforced by teachers.	20.5%	46.8%
<b>6. I am put down and harassed at school because I look different*</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	21.8%
<b>7. At school, I feel afraid.</b>	<b>74.6%</b>	10.6%
8. My belongings are safe at school.	46.5%	27.2%
<b>9. Other students don't like me because I am a good student.</b>	<b>65.3%</b>	13.3%
10. In my classes there are rules against name calling/put downs.	21.1%	53.7%
11. I have seen students of different cultural, racial/ethnic backgrounds harassed*	37.6%	41.1%
<b>12. At school, I have been bullied or harassed for racial reasons.</b>	<b>68.2%</b>	18.2%
13. Boys and girls have the same opportunities at this school.	18.3%	58.0%
<b>14. My teachers expect me to graduate from high school.</b>	10.5%	<b>72.5%</b>
<b>15. Classes at this school are preparing me for my future.</b>	14.3%	<b>63.0%</b>
16. Adults help if they see someone being bullied or harassed.	18.3%	55.0%
17. I feel safe going to and from school.	17.2%	55.8%
<b>18. I have been threatened/harassed through internet or text messages*</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	14.1%
19. If I was harassed through internet or text I would discuss it with an adult*	35.5%	38.6%
<b>20. I am bullied during the school day at least once per month.</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	16.4%
21. I believe our school rules are consistently enforced outside of my classroom.	25.0%	36.2%
23. I feel supported and respected by my teachers.	18.8%	54.2%
24. I feel supported and respected by counselors.	15.4%	56.2%
25. I feel supported and respected by the principal and assistant/vice principal	20.0%	50.3%
26. I feel supported and respected by secretaries/administrative assistants.	20.9%	44.9%
27. I feel supported and respected by other students.	20.4%	44.5%
28. I get to make choices about what I will study at school.	35.4%	37.9%
29. I have many opportunities to ask teachers questions about my work.	16.5%	<b>60.2%</b>
30. I am challenged to do my best work at school.	14.1%	<b>61.4%</b>
31. I feel I can go to my teachers with the things that I need to talk about.	29.6%	39.6%
32. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	16.9%	53.9%
33. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	8.7%	<b>77.6%</b>
34. Students who are not of my race generally do better in school than I do.	51.2%	15.4%
<b>35. I treat my teacher with respect.</b>	9.1%	<b>69.7%</b>
36. I follow the rules at school	13.7%	55.9%
37. I am interested in the work I get to do in my classes.	23.6%	37.8%
38. I learn a lot from my classes.	13.8%	56.7%
39. My teachers expect me to go to college.	11.8%	<b>63.1%</b>
40. I have not ditched any classes this year.	28.9%	<b>60.0%</b>
41. I get academic/career planning help from my counselor when I need it.*	27.0%	38.6%

**Note.** All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. 2009: n=10,790. 2010: n=11,604. Item #22, How far do you think you will go in school?" is not displayed due to scale differences. Italicized/bolded Items indicate meaningful positive change. \*: question abbreviated for report.

**Table 5. Item Agreement Rates: Middle School Results**

Item	%Dis/SD	%Ag/SA
<b>2. I have an adult at school I trust.</b>	18.9%	<b>63.3%</b>
2. At school, I feel safe.	16.2%	50.9%
3. At school, I have had someone try to hurt me (e.g. hit, shoved, kicked).	53.9%	32.7%
<b>4. I have at least one adult in school I can go to when I need help.</b>	19.3%	<b>64.3%</b>
5. I believe our school rules are consistently enforced by teachers.	18.6%	51.0%
6. I am put down and harassed at school because I look different*	57.7%	26.3%
<b>7. At school, I feel afraid.</b>	<b>75.0%</b>	10.9%
8. My belongings are safe at school.	40.2%	33.6%
<b>9. Other students don't like me because I am a good student.</b>	<b>68.1%</b>	13.1%
10. In my classes there are rules against name calling/put downs.	19.8%	58.5%
11. I have seen students of different cultural, racial/ethnic backgrounds harassed*	35.5%	44.8%
<b>12. At school, I have been bullied or harassed for racial reasons.</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	20.9%
13. Boys and girls have the same opportunities at this school.	20.3%	56.7%
<b>14. My teachers expect me to graduate from high school.</b>	9.5%	<b>73.5%</b>
<b>15. Classes at this school are preparing me for my future.</b>	12.6%	<b>67.5%</b>
<b>16. Adults help if they see someone being bullied or harassed.</b>	17.3%	<b>60.4%</b>
<b>17. I feel safe going to and from school.</b>	16.2%	<b>61.2%</b>
<b>18. I have been threatened/harassed through internet or text messages*</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	13.4%
19. If I was harassed through internet or text I would discuss it with an adult*	30.9%	46.2%
<b>20. I am bullied during the school day at least once per month.</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	19.7%
21. I believe our school rules are consistently enforced outside of my classroom.	23.8%	39.2%
23. I feel supported and respected by my teachers.	19.6%	55.0%
24. I feel supported and respected by counselors.	14.9%	57.6%
25. I feel supported and respected by the principal and assistant/vice principal	17.9%	57.9%
26. I feel supported and respected by secretaries/administrative assistants.	17.9%	51.3%
27. I feel supported and respected by other students.	21.2%	45.1%
28. I get to make choices about what I will study at school.	45.3%	29.9%
<b>29. I have many opportunities to ask teachers questions about my work.</b>	16.1%	<b>62.7%</b>
<b>30. I am challenged to do my best work at school.</b>	12.8%	<b>66.8%</b>
31. I feel I can go to my teachers with the things that I need to talk about.	30.7%	41.0%
32. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	15.7%	58.0%
<b>33. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.</b>	7.1%	<b>82.0%</b>
34. Students who are not of my race generally do better in school than I do.	53.6%	15.3%
<b>35. I treat my teacher with respect.</b>	8.8%	<b>69.7%</b>
36. I follow the rules at school	12.8%	57.0%
37. I am interested in the work I get to do in my classes.	22.9%	39.9%
<b>38. I learn a lot from my classes.</b>	11.9%	<b>62.9%</b>
<b>39. My teachers expect me to go to college.</b>	10.3%	<b>67.4%</b>
<b>40. I have not ditched any classes this year.</b>	18.4%	<b>74.1%</b>
41. I get academic/career planning help from my counselor when I need it.*	29.9%	35.0%

**Note.** All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. 2009: n=5,466. 2010: n=5,834. Item #22, How far do you think you will go in school?" is not displayed due to scale differences. Italicized/bolded Items indicate meaningful positive change. \*: question abbreviated for report.

**Table 6. Item Agreement Rates: High School Results**

Item	%Dis/SD	%Ag/SA
3. I have an adult at school I trust.	23.2%	55.6%
2. At school, I feel safe.	17.4%	44.5%
<b>3. At school, I have had someone try to hurt me (e.g. hit, shoved, kicked).</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	23.1%
4. I have at least one adult in school I can go to when I need help.	20.5%	58.1%
5. I believe our school rules are consistently enforced by teachers.	22.5%	42.4%
<b>6. I am put down and harassed at school because I look different*</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	17.2%
<b>7. At school, I feel afraid.</b>	<b>74.2%</b>	10.3%
8. My belongings are safe at school.	53.0%	20.5%
<b>9. Other students don't like me because I am a good student.</b>	<b>62.3%</b>	13.5%
10. In my classes there are rules against name calling/put downs.	22.6%	48.7%
11. I have seen students of different cultural, racial/ethnic backgrounds harassed*	39.7%	37.2%
<b>12. At school, I have been bullied or harassed for racial reasons.</b>	<b>70.1%</b>	15.3%
13. Boys and girls have the same opportunities at this school.	16.2%	59.3%
<b>14. My teachers expect me to graduate from high school.</b>	11.4%	<b>71.4%</b>
15. Classes at this school are preparing me for my future.	16.0%	58.2%
16. Adults help if they see someone being bullied or harassed.	19.3%	49.4%
17. I feel safe going to and from school.	18.2%	50.1%
<b>18. I have been threatened/harassed through internet or text messages*</b>	<b>72.5%</b>	14.9%
19. If I was harassed through internet or text I would discuss it with an adult*	40.2%	30.6%
<b>20. I am bullied during the school day at least once per month.</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	12.9%
21. I believe our school rules are consistently enforced outside of my classroom.	26.3%	33.2%
23. I feel supported and respected by my teachers.	17.9%	53.3%
24. I feel supported and respected by counselors.	15.9%	54.7%
25. I feel supported and respected by the principal and assistant/vice principal	22.1%	42.4%
26. I feel supported and respected by secretaries/administrative assistants.	23.9%	38.3%
27. I feel supported and respected by other students.	19.6%	43.9%
28. I get to make choices about what I will study at school.	25.2%	46.3%
29. I have many opportunities to ask teachers questions about my work.	16.9%	57.5%
30. I am challenged to do my best work at school.	15.5%	55.8%
31. I feel I can go to my teachers with the things that I need to talk about.	28.5%	38.1%
32. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	18.1%	49.6%
<b>33. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.</b>	10.3%	<b>73.0%</b>
34. Students who are not of my race generally do better in school than I do.	48.8%	15.4%
<b>35. I treat my teacher with respect.</b>	9.5%	<b>69.8%</b>
36. I follow the rules at school	14.6%	54.7%
37. I am interested in the work I get to do in my classes.	24.2%	35.6%
38. I learn a lot from my classes.	15.8%	50.2%
39. My teachers expect me to go to college.	13.3%	58.5%
40. I have not ditched any classes this year.	39.9%	45.3%
41. I get academic/career planning help from my counselor when I need it.*	23.9%	42.3%

**Note.** All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. 2009: n=5,324. 2010: n=5,770. Item #22, How far do you think you will go in school?" is not displayed due to scale differences. Italicized/bolded Items indicate meaningful positive change. \*: question abbreviated for report.

**Table 7. Response Rates for Item: How far do you think you will go in school?**

Response	Overall		Middle School		High School	
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Will not finish High School	4.4%	488	4.1%	231	4.7%	257
GED	3.3%	372	3.0%	170	3.7%	202
High School Diploma	21.2%	2361	19.2%	1092	23.2%	1269
Bachelor's degree	28.6%	3190	26.8%	1527	30.5%	1663
Master's degree, PhD or other*	42.5%	4745	47.0%	2677	37.9%	2068

**Note.** Reflects responses to Item #22 (overall); responses aren't reported in table four due to different response scale.