



Division of Accountability & Research

Administrative & Professional Technical Staff Climate Survey Executive Summary (2009-2010)

Research has shown that the professional climate of an organization influences its outcomes. Climate can be defined as behaviors within a workplace or learning environment that can influence whether an individual feels personally safe, listened to, valued, treated fairly, and with respect. In order to evaluate the professional climate in the Aurora Public Schools as perceived by employees, the third annual Administrative & Professional-Technical staff survey was administered in January of 2010.

Survey Development

The Administrative & Professional-Technical staff survey was first administered during the spring of 2008. The items were developed with input from the School Executives Association (SEA), staff focus groups, district leadership, and the Division of Accountability and Research. The items were designed to reflect attitudes related to clarity of vision, communication, morale, program support, trust, and work conditions.

In 2010, items were revised to provide question clarity, reduce redundancy, and to support district needs. For the current year, seven items were included that ask how effectively the different district divisions support building administrators. In addition, principals and assistant principals were asked if they believe that there's an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect between principals in APS. Also, the item, "I am given opportunities to influence the decisions made by the district", was added to the survey. In addition, two items were removed, "I support the educational direction of APS" and "The District Leadership team effectively addresses issues brought forth from building administrators".

Survey Participants

The Administrative & Professional-Technical staff climate survey was provided to all staff via the use of an on-line survey tool in January 2010. A total of 267 surveys were completed. The percentage of staff responses exceeded 100%. This is likely due to position self-misidentification with licensed or classified staff incorrectly responding to the survey and/or submitting multiple responses to the survey. Similarly, 27 participants failed to select a specific job classification. The survey is anonymous so we are unable to parse out duplicate or misidentified responses. The total percentage of staff responding to the survey since its inception in 2008 can be found in table 1.

Table 1. Admin-PT Survey: Historical Percent Response Rates

Job Classification	Total	2008	2009	2010	3-Yr Ch.
Overall	267	97%	100%	100%	+3.0%

Note. Total reflects number of survey responses in 2010.

The number of staff responding to the survey has approximated 100% the past two years and was at 97% during 2008. The percentages reflect the highest response rate of any of our staff surveys. In 2010, most respondents reported that they had been employed by the district from 11 to 20 years (see table 2).

Table 2. Length of Service within APS

Length of Service	Percent	Count
First Year	8.8%	21
2-3 Years	12.1%	29
4-6 Years	16.7%	40
7-10 Years	19.2%	46
11-20 Years	24.2%	58
20+ Years	19.2%	46

Note. 27 participants failed to identify the number of years they had been employed by the district.

Survey Results: Overall

The survey items have been examined based on overall and item specific responses. The items have remained relatively consistent between years allowing us to perform a simple longitudinal examination of overall results. All items are aligned, so agreement indicates favorable outcomes. Table 3 illustrates the overall agreement rates for the past two-years.

Table 3. Overall Survey Agreement Rates

% Disagree/Strongly Disagree			Neutral %		% Agree/Strongly Agree		
2009	2010	Change	2009	2010	2009	2010	Change
16.4%	14.3%	-2.1%	14.8%	14.4%	68.8%	71.3%	+2.5%

The data indicate that overall district agreement rates increased slightly between years. In effect, a 2.5% increase in agreement was noted between 2009 and 2010 with a reduction of 2.1% in disagreement rates. This change is not considered significant using a 5% change criteria (i.e. $\geq 5\%$ is meaningful). In addition, the observed positive change may be attributed to the additional items that were incorporated into the 2010 survey. Specifically, items 28-32 all had high agreement rates (Ag/SA > 70%) which skew the overall calculated value.

Survey Results: Individual Items

In total, 28 of 34 items (82%) exceeded 60% agreement rate indicating high satisfaction concerning overall climate. Four of the items with rates below 60% composed the trust category with the two additional items being a subset of the communication category. Table four presents agreement and change rates by item and category. The improvement noted for individual items was evenly distributed between survey categories. The highest agreement rates were associated with items concerning clarity of vision and work conditions ($\geq 80\%$ agreement) which indicates that most staff understand the vision and direction of APS and believe they work in safe, professional, and cooperative work-sites. Additional analysis indicates that between years meaningful improvement occurred for 7 of the 34 items with only one item having a significant decline in agreement.

Conclusions

- The Administrative & Professional-Technical Staff survey has the highest response rate of all three staff surveys (approximately 100%). The majority of participants have been employed within APS for more than seven years.
- The overall aggregate agreement rates were stable between years with a current year agreement rate of 71% indicating high satisfaction concerning staff climate.
- Most survey items continue to show high agreement rates (exceeding 60%) indicating high Admin/PT staff satisfaction. Similarly, the “meaningful changes” that were identified for items between-years indicate improvement in staff satisfaction.
- Areas of strength are related to clarity of vision and work conditions while areas of concern are related to trust and communication.

Table 4. Item Agreement Rates with Between-Year Change by Category

Item	Ag./SA	Change
Clarity of Vision		
1. I understand the long-term vision of APS.	87.6%	-2.4%
2. I know how my work relates to the districts goals/priorities as stated in VISTA 2010.	85.8%	--
3. I believe APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement.	80.8%	7.2%
Communication		
4. Administrators/supervisors share the information I need to perform my job.	77.8%	3.7%
5. I am encouraged to provide suggestions on ways to improve programs*	73.1%	7.4%
6. I am comfortable in stating my opinions about APS programs*	51.5%	-1.0%
7. I am comfortable in stating my opinions about issues facing APS*	52.9%	0.6%
Trust		
8. I trust the people who make district decisions that affect me.	56.5%	1.3%
9. I am given the opportunities to influence the decisions made by the district.	57.8%	--
10. I am able to influence the decisions that are made by the district.	45.0%	6.1%
11. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within APS	53.4%	4.5%
Morale		
12. District professional development has provided me with strategies for my work*	63.8%	-0.1%
13. I believe decisions made in APS are based on adequate student data*	71.6%	8.1%
14. I would encourage someone to work for APS	75.8%	2.0%
15. There is a positive relationship between my association and the district*	67.8%	2.6%
16. I understand the roles and responsibilities of the APS Board of Education	73.3%	-6.7%
17. Employees are empowered to help solve problems.	65.3%	3.5%
20. I feel appreciated for the work that I do.	72.7%	4.7%
36. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect between principals in APS*	67.5%	--
Work Conditions		
18. My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of the challenges I face.	80.5%	8.1%
19. Staff work in a site environment that is safe.	90.5%	-1.0%
21. There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at my site.	79.7%	1.2%
22. There is a professional atmosphere for staff working at my site.	84.6%	-0.8%
23. My performance evaluations are fair	81.9%	-4.4%
Program Support		
24. I believe the mentoring program was beneficial for my mentee.	69.6%	15.2%
25. The DLT has an adequate awareness of issues at the building level	63.4%	10.1%
26. The DLT effectively supports building administrators*	69.3%	1.4%
27. Division of Instruction effectively supports building administrators*	71.1%	--
28. Division of Accountability/Research effectively supports building administrators *	83.3%	--
29. Division of Support Services effectively supports building administrators*	78.6%	--
30. Division of Finance effectively supports building administrators*	85.1%	--
31. Division of Human Resources effectively supports building administrators*	72.0%	--
32. Division of School Services effectively supports building administrators*	71.2%	--
33. Division of the Superintendent effectively supports building administrators*	72.7%	--

Note. All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. DLT: district leadership team. *: question abbreviated for report. 2009: n=281. 2010: n=267. --: indicates that the question is new since last year or have been modified thus preventing between-year comparisons. Italicized/bolded Items indicate meaningful positive change.