



Division of Accountability & Research

Classified 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 fourth annual classified staff survey was administered in January of 2010.

Survey Development

The Classified staff survey was first administered during the spring of 2007. The items were developed with input from the Classified Employees Council, 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 again reviewed and no new items were recommended and/or deleted. Revisions were limited to the alteration of the job classification categories (i.e. to increase specificity). Also, the item, "I believe the mentoring program was beneficial to my mentee" was changed to "I believe the *student* mentoring program was beneficial for my mentee" to clarify item meaning.

Survey Participants

The Classified staff climate survey was provided to all staff via the use of an on-line survey tool and by hard copy in January 2010. A total of 1,174 surveys were completed with 81% being submitted on-line. The percentage of staff responses approximated 67%. The total percentage of staff responding to the survey since its inception in 2007 can be found in table 1.

Table 1. Classified Survey: Historical Percent Response Rates

Job Classification	Total	2007	2008	2009	2010	4-Yr Ch.
Overall	1,174	39%	41%	70%	67%	+28%

Note. Total reflects number of survey responses in 2010.

The number of staff responding to the survey has ranged from 67% to 70% the past two years. These rates are significantly greater than those of the first two years of implementation (approximately 30% greater). However, current year rates were three percent lower than in 2009. In 2010, 50.4% of respondents reported that they had been employed by the district from 1 to 6 years (see table 2), 79% were female, and 74% worked at a school site.

Table 2. Length of Service within APS

Length of Service	Percent	Count
1-3 years	29.2%	337
4-6 years	21.2%	245
7-10 years	18.3%	212
11-20 years	19.0%	220
20+ years	12.3%	142

Note. 18 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 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
14.4%	14.5%	+0.1%	19.4%	18.1%	66.2%	67.4%	+1.2%

The data indicate that overall district agreement rates increased slightly between years. In effect, a 1.2% increase in agreement was noted between 2009 and 2010 with an increase of 0.1% in disagreement rates. This change is not considered significant using a 5% change criteria (i.e. $\geq 5\%$ is meaningful). It should be noted that since initial survey implementation in 2007 agreement rates have increased by 6.2% which meets the meaningful growth criterion.

Survey Results: Individual Items

In total, 19 of 33 items (58%) exceeded a 60% agreement rate. In contrast, the Admin/PT survey had 82% of its items with greater than 60% agreement. In addition, four items had agreement rates below 50%. Table 4 presents agreement and change rates by item and category.

The highest agreement rates were associated with items concerning morale which indicates that most staff enjoy their work, believe it's important, and they're proud of the work that they do. The clarity of vision category had the best results of all categories with all items exceeding 65% agreement. The program support category items tended to be the worst, albeit, with a high degree of item variability (i.e. Agreement rates: 46% to 67%). Only one survey item, "Administrators/Supervisors share information regularly with employees", experienced meaningful improvement between-years. No items experienced significant declines between-years.

Conclusions

- The Classified Staff survey had a response rate of 67% which is a reduction of 3% from last year. Fifty percent of survey participants have been employed within APS from one to six years; most were female and worked at school sites.
- The overall aggregate agreement rates were largely stable between years with a current year agreement rate of 67% indicating high satisfaction concerning staff climate.
- Most survey items continue to show moderate agreement rates. Overall, item agreement rates are lower than that identified within the Administrative/Professional-Technical survey. Individual items agreement rates experienced very limited change between-years with most changing by less than 3%.
- Areas of strength are related to understanding work responsibilities, feel pride in work, enjoyment of work, and seeing ones work as valuable. Areas of concern are related to trust and communication. Specifically, lack of trust in the people who make district decisions along with the view that decisions made in APS aren't always based on communicated data and information.

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

Item	Ag./SA	Change
<u>Clarity of Vision</u>		
1. APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement	73.5%	-0.3%
2. I understand my roles and responsibilities as an employee of APS	91.4%	2.6%
3. I know how my work relates to the district's goals as stated in the VISTA 2010*	77.0%	3.8%
4. My work is important and contributes to the success of the VISTA 2010 plan	81.2%	1.5%
5. The district sets high and realistic expectations for students	65.6%	-1.5%
6. Everyone in the school is accountable for the academic success of students*	80.2%	1.2%
<u>Communication</u>		
<i>7. Administrators/supervisors share information regularly with employees</i>	55.8%	5.5%
8. Clear goals and objectives have been defined for my job	73.0%	0.2%
9. I am encouraged to provide suggestions on ways to improve programs/services*	59.4%	0.4%
10. Decisions made in APS are based on communicated data and information	49.3%	1.8%
14. I feel free to express my professional opinions at work	58.3%	1.2%
18. My ideas and suggestions are respected	56.6%	0.5%
<u>Trust & Morale</u>		
11. I trust the people who make decisions that affect me in the district	43.9%	-1.0%
12. I trust the people who make decisions that affect me in my school/department	54.9%	0.5%
15. I feel valued as an employee of APS	59.1%	0.3%
17. I am treated with respect	66.6%	-0.6%
26. I like the kind of work I do	93.3%	0.1%
27. My job is important	94.3%	1.3%
28. I am proud of the work I do	97.6%	1.5%
29. I feel appreciated for the work I do	67.2%	-0.6%
30. I am satisfied with my job	80.1%	-0.1%
<u>Work Conditions</u>		
13. There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation	58.9%	1.0%
16. There is a professional atmosphere for staff working in APS	62.6%	-0.8%
22. My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of my skills and abilities	69.8%	1.6%
23. My performance evaluations are fair	75.8%	1.6%
24. Employees are treated fairly and consistently at my site	55.4%	2.6%
25. I feel safe in the workplace	81.6%	1.0%
<u>Program Support</u>		
19. I receive the necessary training to do high quality work	65.3%	2.2%
20. My supervisor supports/encourages my desire to participate in committees*	54.4%	3.6%
21. I have the necessary tools I need to do high quality work efficiently	67.2%	0.4%
31. I am satisfied with the PD opportunities provided to me by the district*	54.3%	3.4%
32. Based on my experiences, there's a positive relation between the CEC/district*	46.9%	2.5%
33. I am familiar with the functions of the Classified Employees Council	45.8%	2.0%

Note. All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. *: question abbreviated for report. 2009: n=1203. 2010: n=1174. Italicized/bolded Items indicate meaningful positive change.