



Division of Accountability & Research

Licensed 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 Licensed staff climate survey was administered in January of 2010.

Survey Development

The Licensed staff climate survey was first administered during the spring of 2007. The items were developed with input from the Aurora Education Association, 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 by AEA, principals, and the Division of Accountability and Research. Two items were added, “I am given opportunities to influence the decisions that are made by the district” and “I am given opportunities to influence the decisions that are made by my school/site”, one item was deleted, “I support the educational direction of APS”, and four items were revised (i.e. items related to the level of support for Physical Education, Art, Library/media programs, and Music),

Survey Participants

The Licensed 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 1,844 surveys were completed in 2010. The percentage of staff responses approximated 88%. The total percentage of staff responding to the survey since its inception in 2007 can be found in table 1.

Table 1. Licensed Survey: Historical Percent Response Rates

Job Classification	Total	2007	2008	2009	2010	4-Yr Ch.
Overall	1844	60%	90%	87%	88%	+28%

Note. Total reflects number of survey responses in 2010. In 2010, only 21 submitted surveys were hard copies; 6% were submitted by other educational professionals (counselor, psychologist, social workers, etc.).

The number of staff responding to the survey has ranged from 87% to 90% the past three years. These rates are significantly greater than those of the first year of implementation (i.e. 28% greater). In 2010, 57.3% of respondents reported that they had been employed by the district from 1 to 6 years (see table 2),

Table 2. Length of Service within APS

Length of Service	Percent	Count
First Year	12.5%	218
2-3 Years	19.7%	344
4-6 Years	25.1%	438
7-10 Years	16.0%	279
11-20 Years	16.3%	284
20+ Years	10.5%	183

Note. 98 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
22.3%	22.9%	+0.6%	19.1%	17.1%	58.6%	60.1%	+1.5%

The data indicate that overall district agreement rates increased slightly between years. In effect, a 1.5% increase in agreement was noted between 2009 and 2010 with an increase of 0.6% in disagreement rates. This change is not considered significant using a 5% change criteria (i.e. $\geq 5\%$ is considered meaningful). It should be noted that since initial survey implementation in 2007 agreement rates have increased by 15.5% which meets the meaningful growth criterion.

Survey Results: Individual Items

In total, 26 of 49 items (53%) exceeded 60% agreement rates indicating moderate satisfaction concerning overall climate. The 53% rate is lower than that observed for classified staff (58%) and administrative/professional-technical staff (82%). Table four presents agreement and change rates by item and category. The highest agreement rates were associated with items concerning clarity of vision, program support and work conditions (school) which indicates that staff understands the vision and direction of APS and believe they work in safe, professional, and cooperative work-sites. The lowest rates were associated with communication with half of the items having agreement rates below 36%. Additional analysis indicates that two items, "My school has effective plans in place to assist ELL students" and "I believe the district is becoming more effective in meeting the needs of ELL students", experienced meaningful improvement between-years. In addition, two items experienced significant declines between-years, "I

understand the long-term vision of APS” and “I know how my work relates to the district’s goals/priorities as stated in VISTA 2010”.

Conclusions

- The Licensed Staff survey had a response rate of 88% which is a 1% increase from last year. Fifty-seven percent of survey participants have been employed within APS from one to six years.
- The overall aggregate agreement rates were largely stable between years with a current year agreement rate of 60% indicating moderate satisfaction concerning staff climate. Four items that were revised between-years had high agreement rates that skew the calculated overall improvement between-years. The removal of these items leads to an overall agreement rate that is nearly identical with last year’s observed rate.
- Most survey items continue to show moderate agreement rates. Overall, item agreement rates are lower than that identified within the Administrative/Professional-Technical and Classified staff surveys. Individual items agreement rates experienced very limited change between-years with most changing by less than 3%.
- Areas of strength are related to understanding the long-term vision of APS, trust and mutual respect among teachers in buildings, and a belief that facilities are safe and well-maintained. Areas of concern are related to trust and communication. Specifically, low agreement rates were noted for items related to trust in district decision makers and a belief that they are able to influence the decisions made by the district. Furthermore, a low percentage of staff report that they are comfortable expressing their opinions about district issues and programs (<35%).

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

Item	Ag/SA	Change
<u>Clarity of Vision</u>		
1. I understand the long-term vision of APS	80.2%	-6.5%
3. I know how my work relates to the district's goals/priorities as stated in VISTA*	69.9%	-6.1%
4. I believe APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement	59.7%	-4.1%
16. I understand the roles and responsibilities of the APS Board of Education	54.4%	-2.4%
<u>Communication</u>		
2. District administrators share the information I need to perform my job	62.6%	-3.3%
5. I am encouraged to provide district suggestions on ways to improve programs*	35.2%	-3.6%
6. I am comfortable in stating my opinions about APS programs even if I disagree*	31.9%	-1.7%
7. I am comfortable in stating my opinions about issues facing APS if I disagree*	34.0%	0.9%
17. Building Administrators share the information that I need to perform my job	68.4%	1.0%
32. I am kept informed of the school improvement plan (SIP)	73.7%	-2.8%
34. The performance evaluation process is fair in my school	63.7%	-2.0%
<u>Morale</u>		
14. I would encourage someone to work for APS	55.9%	1.2%
40. I feel appreciated for the work I do	60.3%	-1.9%
41. There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at my site	61.9%	-2.1%
42. There is a professional atmosphere for staff working at my school/site	71.8%	-3.2%
<u>Program Support</u>		
43. My school has effective plans in place to assist ELL students	67.2%	14.1%
44. I believe the district is becoming more effective in meeting needs of ELL*	65.0%	14.7%
45. I believe the Art programs are supported at my building	78.1%	--
46. I believe the Music programs are supported at my building	78.9%	--
47. I believe the Physical Education programs are supported at my building	78.9%	--
48. I believe the library/media programs are supported at my building	74.8%	--
<u>Trust</u>		
8. I trust the people who make district decisions that affect me	33.5%	-3.3%
10. I am able to influence decisions that are made by the district	13.2%	-4.5%
11. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within APS	38.2%	-1.3%
15. Based on my experience there's a positive relation between the AEA & district*.	54.1%	-4.3%
18. I trust the people who make school decisions that affect me	56.0%	-0.7%
21. There is an atmosphere of trust/mutual respect between building admin. & staff*	54.0%	-2.8%
22. There is an atmosphere of trust/mutual respect among teachers in our building	69.8%	-1.2%
23. I am trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction	67.1%	-0.4%
<u>Work Conditions (District)</u>		
9. I am given opportunities to influence the decisions that are made by the district	28.0%	--
12. District professional development has provided me with instructional strategies*	58.7%	0.6%
13. I believe decisions made in APS are based on adequate student data/info.*	52.5%	-2.0%
26. Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruption	54.2%	-0.1%

Item	Ag/SA	Change
27. I have sufficient access to instructional materials and resources	73.0%	-1.8%
28. I have sufficient access to instructional technology	75.3%	0.5%
Work Conditions (School)		
19. I am given opportunities to influence decisions that are made by my school/site	60.6%	--
20. I am able to influence the decisions that are made by my school/site.	52.7%	0.0%
24. I believe decisions at my site are based on adequate student data/ information*	64.0%	-0.6%
25. Decisions made at my site are based on the best interests of students	60.0%	-0.4%
29. Faculty has an effective process for group decisions & solving problems*	50.9%	-2.0%
30. Employees are empowered to help solve problems	55.2%	-1.2%
31. I have opportunities to participate in school planning and decision making	68.4%	-2.7%
33. My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of the challenges in my job*	55.7%	-1.9%
35. Building PD has provided me with instructional strategies*	66.3%	2.2%
36. Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is clean/well maintained	85.8%	0.3%
37. Rules for student conduct are consistently enforced by administration	58.8%	1.5%
38. Rules for student conduct are consistently enforced by teaching staff	56.6%	2.3%
39. Staff work in a school environment that is safe	82.9%	-1.8%

Note. All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. *: question abbreviated for report. 2009: n=1775. 2010: n=1844. Italicized/bolded Items indicate meaningful positive change. Items #45-48 were revised in 2010.