Division of Accountability & Research

Administrative & Professional Technical Staff Climate Survey
Executive Summary
March 2016

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 ninth annual Administrative & Professional-Technical staff survey was administered in February of 2016.

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. There were a few changes made to the survey for the 2016 administration.   First, reference to the new strategic plan (i.e., APS 2020: Shaping the Future) was added in two places—one in a question which previously referred generically to the district's goals and priorities (Question 2) and another in a new question (Question 4; see below) which was added to the survey. A second new question was also added regarding District meetings and professional learning (Question 26; see below), and was embedded into the section of the survey where it fit most appropriately. Third, the question about the student mentoring program was removed.

> Q4. I feel my work is aligned to the work of the district's goals within the strategic plan APS 2020: Shaping the Future.

> Q26. Required District meetings and professional learning are differentiated enough to meet my needs.

Survey Participants

The Administrative & Professional-Technical staff climate survey was distributed to all staff via the use of an on-line survey tool in February of 2016. A total of 284 surveys were completed, which represented 81% of the 350 administrative & professional-technical staff in the district. 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	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Overall	284	96%	75%	75%	65%	81%

Note. Total reflects number of survey responses in 2016.

The percentage of staff responding to the survey for 2016 was much higher than the percentage responding in 2015. Of those who indicated their position, the majority of the respondents (56%) selected "Professional/Technical" as their job classification, and 17% selected "Principal". Administrators (not principals) made up 16% of the respondents and Assistant Principals made up 11% of the respondents. There were 38 participants who did not select a specific job classification.

The category for years of APS service with the largest number of respondents was the 11 to 20 year range (27%), followed by the 2-3 year range (24%)(see Table 2). Overall there was an increase in the percentage employed fewer than four years from 24% of respondents in 2015 to 34% of respondents in 2016; this increase in response from newer employees may have helped boost the overall response rate.

Table 2. Length of Service within APS

Length of Service	Percent	Count
First Year	10.7%	25
2-3 Years	23.6%	55
4-6 Years	13.3%	31
7-10 Years	13.3%	31
11-20 Years	26.6%	62
20+ Years	12.5%	29

Note. 51 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		
2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
19.7%	22.3%	2.7%	19.3%	21.2%	1.9%	61.0%	56.5%	-4.6%

The table above indicates that overall district agreement rates decreased slightly between 2015 and 2016 (-4.6%). This change is not considered significant using an effect size model.

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Survey Results: Individual Items

Overall, 14 of 38 items (37%) exceeded a 60% agreement rate, which is a decrease over the previous year's percentage of 51%. Of the 15 items with agreement rates less than 50%, six of the items were in the program support category, four of the items were in the trust category, two items were in the morale category, and one item each was from the communication, clarity of vision, and work conditions categories.

Areas of strength were suggested by high agreement with items associated with work conditions, emergency preparedness, and clarity of vision. Five of the six items in the work conditions category had high agreement rates (65% or higher). Agreement rates were highest (75% or higher) for two of these work conditions items (working in a safe environment and staff respect for people of diverse backgrounds and cultures) and for all three of the emergency preparedness questions within the program support category. Another area of relative strength is clarity of vision, with three of four items at or above the 65% agreement rate, and particularly for the item concerning understanding the APS vision and mission (77%).

All agreement and change rates by item and category for the 2016 survey are presented in Table 4.

Conclusions

●The response rate for this year's survey (81%) is strikingly higher than the rate for the 2015 survey (65%). The Administrative & Professional-Technical Staff survey continues to have the highest response rate of the two staff surveys administered by the district. Approximately 66% of the respondents have been employed within APS for four or more years.

●The majority of Administrative and Professional staff continue to express a relatively high level of satisfaction concerning staff climate, with the current year overall agreement rate at 57% and the overall disagreement rate of 22%.

●Areas of strength include working in a safe environment and general work conditions such as teamwork and professionalism as well as emergency preparedness. Clarity of vision, such as understanding the APS mission and vision and how one's work relates to it, as well as feeling one's work is aligned to district goals, is also an area of relative strength.

●Areas of challenge include trust and mutual respect within APS. In the area of program support, administrative and professional technical staff would like to see improved support from district divisions as they work to implement the district strategic plan and from the District Leadership Team.

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

Item	Ag./SA	1-Yr Change	5-Yr Change
Clarity of Vision			
1. I understand the vision and mission of APS.*	77.3%	3.7%	-12.1%**
2. I know how my work relates to the district's goals.*	71.7%	-7.0%	-15.4%**
3. I believe APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement.	44.3%	-11.5%	-27.9%**
4. I feel my work is aligned to the work of the district's goals within the strategic plan.*	66.3%	----	----
Communication			
5. Administrators/supervisors share the information I need to perform my job.	58.9%	1.2%	-17.1%**
6. I am encouraged to provide suggestions on ways to improve programs*	56.6%	-2.2%	-11.8%
7. I feel have an avenue for providing suggestions on ways to improve programs or services.*	50.2%	+4.9%	+1.2%
8. I feel safe in stating my opinions about issues facing APS*	40.2%	-3.2%	-8.0%
Trust			
9. I trust the people who make district decisions that affect me.	37.4%	-0.4%	-17.5%**
10. I am given the opportunities to influence the decisions made by the district.	34.6%	-8.6%	-16.2%**
11. I am able to influence the decisions that are made by the district.	27.4%	-3.6%	-5.4%
12. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within APS	36.7%	-6.9%	-6.4%
Morale			
13. District professional development has provided me with strategies for my work*	43.0%	-8.5%	-11.7%
14. I believe decisions made in APS are based on student data and information.	54.4%	-4.1%	-9.3%
15. I would encourage someone to work for APS	56.1%	-3.9%	-18.0%**
16. There is a positive relationship between SEA and the district*	48.9%	-0.9%	-17.6%**
17. I understand the roles and responsibilities of the APS Board of Education	64.2%	-5.3%	-18.2%**
18. I feel empowered to help solve problems.	59.7%	-1.4%	-2.5%
22. I feel appreciated for the work that I do.	58.8%	-3.3%	-9.4%
38. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect between principals in APS*	68.4%	-13.6%**	-3.0%

Continued

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Table 4 (continued)

Item	Ag./SA	1-Yr Change	5-Yr Change
Work Conditions			
19. My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of the challenges I face.	63.0%	-1.0%	-13.0%**
20. Staff work in a site environment that is safe.	81.2%	-5.6%	-6.9%
21. Staff respect people from different backgrounds/cultures.*	81.2%	-2.4%	----
23. There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at my site.	66.1%	-9.8%	-10.6%
24. There is a professional atmosphere for staff working at my site.	70.5%	-7.8%	-14.4%**
25. The performance evaluation process is fair at my site.	69.1%	-1.3%	-14.0%**
Program Support			
27. The DLT has an adequate awareness of issues at my site	36.9%	-4.3%	-12.2%
28. The DLT effectively supports building administrators*	41.6%	-6.4%	-16.9%**
29. Division of Equity in Learning effectively supports building administrators*	40.1%	-7.9%	-26.9%**
30. Division of Accountability/Research effectively supports building administrators *	51.6%	-14.3%**	-21.1%**
31. Division of Support Services effectively supports building administrators*	54.7%	-11.3%	-14.0%**
32. Division of Finance effectively supports building administrators*	48.1%	-12.6%**	-23.0%**
33. Division of Human Resources effectively supports building administrators*	42.9%	-6.7%	-18.4%**
34. Division of the Superintendent effectively supports building administrators*	42.7%	-6.9%	-19.3%**
35a. I feel prepared to deal with the following emergency situation: Lockdown*	88.5%	-4.3%	------
35b. I feel prepared to deal with the following emergency situation: tornado*	87.7%	+0.1%	------
35c. I feel prepared to deal with the following emergency situation: Fire Drill*	92.4%	-1.4%	------

Note. All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. DLT: district leadership team.
*: question abbreviated for report. 2011 n=257. 2015 n=216. 2016 n=284
** These changes reflect an effect size, a measure of change in the Agree/Strongly Agree percentage between years, of .25 or higher and are generally considered substantive.

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