



## Division of Accountability & Research

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### Classified Staff Climate Survey Executive Summary April 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 tenth annual classified staff survey was administered in February of 2016.

#### 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.

The only changes to the classified staff survey this year were two small revisions related to the school name question. First, the new Edna and John Mosely P-8 school was added to the list of school names. Second, additional explanatory text for this question (which has been optional since it was added in 2015) was provided (see below) as follows: *“If you are comfortable listing your site it will help your administrators better understand the culture in your building. This is optional.”*

#### Survey Participants

The Classified staff climate survey was provided to all staff via the use of an on-line survey tool or by hard copy in February of 2016. A total of 887 surveys were completed with 77% submitted on-line. The percentage of responses to the survey represented 46% of the district’s classified staff. This response rate was 3% more than the survey response rate from the previous year. The total percentage of staff responding to the survey can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1. Classified Survey: Historical Percent Response Rates**

Job Classification	Total	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	5-Yr Ch.
Overall	787	59%	51%	46%	43%	46%	-13%

**Note.** Total reflects number of survey responses in 2016.

The number of staff responding to the survey has ranged from 43% to 59% over the past five years. Of the staff who responded to questions about job location and job classification, 85%

indicated they worked at a school site, and 34% selected para-educator/educational assistant as their job classification.

### Survey Results: Overall

The survey items have been examined based on overall and item specific responses. The majority of items have remained relatively consistent between years allowing us to perform a simple longitudinal examination of overall results. All items were worded in such a way that agreement indicates favorable outcomes. Table 2 illustrates the overall agreement rates for the past two years.

**Table 2. Overall Survey Agreement Rates**

% Disagree/Strongly Disagree			Neutral %			% Agree/Strongly Agree		
2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
13.6%	12.9%	-0.7%	19.0%	18.4%	-0.7%	67.4%	68.7%	1.3%

The data indicate that overall district agreement rates increased slightly from the prior year. Additionally, there was a decrease of 0.7% for the overall district disagreement rate. These changes are not considered significant.

### Survey Results: Individual Items

Overall, 27 of 43 items (63%) met or exceeded a 65% agreement rate and only eight items had agreement rates below 55%. Classified staff in APS consistently express strong agreement with items concerning morale. Staff responses met or exceeded 75% agreement rates on questions about enjoyment of work, satisfaction with job, belief that their job is important, taking pride in the work that they do, and feeling that they are treated with respect by their supervisor and co-workers. The majority of classified staff agreed with questions about the clarity of the district’s vision, as all items in this category exceeded 55% agreement.

Staff responses to survey items related to perceptions of program support (other than emergency preparedness) indicate lesser agreement than other survey categories with 3 of the 6 items having agreement rates less than 55%. Like last year, the item with the lowest agreement rate was “I am given opportunities to influence decisions at the district”. Also unchanged from last year is that the questions about the Classified Employees Council had the second and third lowest agreement rate, and both had slight decreases since last year. The largest increase in agreement rates this year is in staff perceptions that there is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation, although this increase is not considered substantive. Table 3 presents agreement and change rates by item and category.

### Conclusions

- The response rate for the 2016 Classified Staff survey increased by 3 percentage points this year (43% to 46%). 85% of the respondents indicated that they worked at school sites.

- The overall aggregate agreement rate increased very slightly this year (67.4% to 68.7%), indicating continued moderately high satisfaction among classified staff with the overall climate in APS.
- Most survey items continue to show moderate agreement rates and remain higher than agreement rates within the Administrative/Professional-Technical staff survey. Individual item agreement rates experienced very limited change between years with most changing by less than 3%.
- Areas of strength are related to understanding work responsibilities, feeling enjoyment, satisfaction, and pride in work, seeing one's work as valuable and feeling respected by supervisors and co-workers. Areas of concern continue to be the perception of trust in district decision-makers and around the Classified Employees Council.

**Table 3. Item Agreement Rates with Between-Year Change by Category**

Item	Ag./SA	1-year Change	5-year Change
<b><u>Clarity of Vision</u></b>			
1. APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement.	63.0%	-4.0%	-11.8%**
2. I understand my role and responsibilities as an employee of APS.	91.4%	+0.1%	+1.6%
3. I know how my work relates to the district's goals and priorities.	83.0%	+0.5%	+11.0%**
4. My work is important and contributes to the success of the district.	91.4%	+0.5%	+15.0%**
5. The district sets high and realistic expectations for students.	56.3%	-5.7%	-9.5%
6. Everyone in the school community is accountable for the academic success of students.	74.7%	-1.8%	-5.1%
<b><u>Communication</u></b>			
7. Department administrators/supervisors share information regularly with employees.	55.1%	+3.9%	-2.5%
8. Clear goals and objectives have been defined for my job.	74.7%	+3.7%	+3.0%
9. My supervisor encourages me to provide suggestions on ways to improve programs or services at my work site.	66.9%	+5.6%	+2.1%
10. Decisions made in APS are based on communicated data and information.	48.8%	-3.7%	-2.6%
14. I feel free to express my professional opinions at work.	62.8%	+5.9%	+2.3%
19. My ideas and suggestions are respected by my supervisor.	67.6%	+2.1%	+0.1%
20. My ideas and suggestions are respected by my co-workers.	71.5%	-1.4%	-3.2%
<b><u>Trust &amp; Morale</u></b>			
11. I trust the people who make decisions that affect me in the district.	43.7%	-1.9%	0.7%
12. I trust the people who make decisions that affect me in my school/department.	56.6%	+2.4%	-2.3%
15. I feel valued as an employee of APS.	60.8%	+4.1%	+2.8%
17. I am treated with respect by my supervisor.	76.8%	+2.6%	-0.5%
18. I am treated with respect by my co-workers.	77.7%	+0.7%	-2.4%
24. I am given opportunities to influence decisions at my school/department.	53.6%	+4.0%	--
25. I am given opportunities to influence decisions at the district.	29.3%	-1.3%	--
33. I like the kind of work I do.	92.6%	+1.5%	+2.0%
34. My job is important.	96.1%	+1.4%	+2.5%
35. I am proud of the work I do.	95.9%	-1.0%	-0.1%
36. I feel appreciated for the work I do.	69.2%	+2.8%	-1.2%
37. I am satisfied with my job.	79.3%	+1.8%	+1.2%

**Note.** All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. 2011: n=997. 2015: n=787. 2016: n=887.

\*\*Based on estimates of effect size, these changes from 5-year ago were substantial. (None of the changes from last year are substantial.)

(continued)

**Table 3 (continued)**

Item	Ag./SA	1-year Change	5-year Change
<b>Work Conditions</b>			
13. There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at my work site.	65.0%	+6.7%	+2.9%
16. There is a professional atmosphere for staff working in APS.	62.9%	+2.5%	-1.0%
26. My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of my skills and abilities.	69.5%	+2.4%	-1.3%
27. My performance evaluations are fair.	75.5%	+6.1%	+0.8%
28. The process for Performance evaluations is clear.	68.3%	+1.6%	--
29. The process for performance evaluations is being followed.	66.0%	+1.7%	--
30. Employees are treated fairly and consistently at my site.	55.7%	+1.3%	-2.7%
31. Staff at my site respect people from different backgrounds and cultures.	79.5%	-1.2%	--
32. I feel safe in the workplace.	77.6%	+0.6%	-2.2%
<b>Program Support</b>			
21. I receive the necessary training to do high quality work.	66.1%	+3.0%	-0.7%
22. My supervisor supports and encourages my desire to participate in district committees (including strategic planning and/or the Classified Employee Council).	52.5%	+2.5%	-0.6%
23. I have the necessary tools I need to do high quality work efficiently.	69.0%	+2.4%	+1.4%
38. I am satisfied with the professional development opportunities provided to me by the district.	52.7%	+2.7%	-0.4%
39a. I feel prepared to deal with each of the following emergency situations: Lockdown	87.8%	+1.2%	--
39b. I feel prepared to deal with each of the following emergency situations: Tornado	86.2%	+1.1%	--
39c. I feel prepared to deal with each of the following emergency situations: Fire Drill	91.7%	+1.3%	--
40. Based on my experience there's a positive relationship between the Classified Employee Council and the district.	41.0%	-3.1%	-5.9%
41. I am familiar with the functions of the Classified Employees Council.	37.3%	-3.8%	-12.3%**

**Note.** All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis. 2011: n=997. 2015: n=787. 2016: n=887.

\*\*Based on estimates of effect size, these changes from 5-year ago were substantial. (None of the changes from last year are substantial.)