



Division of Accountability & Research

Licensed Staff Climate Survey Executive Summary February 2013

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 seventh annual licensed staff climate survey was administered in January of 2013.

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. Items were again reviewed by AEA, principals, and the Division of Accountability and Research.

For 2013, the item revisions made were the rewording of the question stem for items 42 and 43 from “There is a” to “I experience a” and the following:

Added

- *My administrator gives me specific feedback on how to improve my instruction.*
- *Staff at my site respect people from different backgrounds and cultures.*

Survey Participants

The Licensed staff climate survey was provided to all staff via the use of an on-line survey tool. A total of 1,575 surveys were completed. The percentage of responses based on the overall number of licensed staff was approximately 72%. 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	2011	2012	2013	7-Yr Ch.
Overall	1,575	60%	90%	87%	88%	92%	93%	72%	+12%

Note. Total reflects number of survey responses in 2012.

The number of staff responding to the survey has ranged from 92% to 72% the past three years. These rates are significantly greater than those of the first year of implementation (i.e. 12% greater).

Of the 1,575 respondents, 1,505 indicated their position in the district and of those respondents, 11.1% identified themselves as an educational professional other than a teacher (school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, etc.). A little more than half of the respondents (50.5%) 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	13.2%	176
2-3 Years	16.1%	215
4-6 Years	21.2%	283
7-10 Years	21.6%	289
11-20 Years	19.6%	262
20+ Years	8.3%	111

Note. 239 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		
2012	2013	Change	2012	2013	2012	2013	Change
24.1%	24.8%	+0.7%	18.1%	17.4%	57.8%	57.8%	0%

The data indicate that overall district agreement rates were somewhat stable between years. Overall, no decrease in agreement was noted between 2012 and 2013 with an increase of 0.7% in disagreement rates. This change is not considered significant using an effect size change model.

Survey Results: Individual Items

Overall, 25 of 52 items (48%) exceeded 60% agreement rates indicating moderate satisfaction concerning overall climate. The 48% rate is lower than that observed for classified staff (68%) and administrative/professional-technical staff (63%). The highest agreement rates were associated with items concerning program support and school work conditions which indicates that staff believes they work in safe, professional, and cooperative work-sites. In addition, they believe that ELL, art, music, physical education,

and library/media programs are supported within their school. The lowest reported agreement rates were associated with the “trust” and “communication” categories with more than a third of the items in each category items having agreement rates below 50%. A little more than half of the respondents disagreed with the statement that they are given opportunities to influence decisions made by the district (52.5%). Additionally, the percentage of licensed staff who agreed that there is a positive relationship between the AEA and district increased by 4.9 percentage points from 42.5% in 2012 to 47.5% in 2013. Table four presents agreement and change rates by item and category.

Conclusions

- The Licensed Staff survey had a response rate of 72% which is a 21% decrease from last year. Just over half 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 overall year agreement rate of 57.8%.
- 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. There was limited positive change in item agreement between years with only two items increasing by more than five percent.
- Areas of strength are related to school work conditions and support of programs. Areas of concern are related to trust and communication. Few respondents agreed that they are given opportunities to influence the decisions made by the district and that they feel safe stating their opinions about APS programs.

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

	Item	Ag/SA	1-Yr Ch.	7-Yr Ch.
Clarity of Vision				
1.	I understand the long-term vision of Aurora Public Schools.	74.8%	-2.8%	-9.5%
3.	I know how my work relates to the district's goals and priorities as stated in the VISTA 2015 Plan.	63.6%	-2.0%	-12.2%*
4.	I believe APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement.	50.6%	-3.8%	-5.0%
15.	I understand the roles and responsibilities of the APS Board of Education.	53.1%	0.8%	-----
Communication				
2.	District administrators share the information that I need to perform my job.	58.6%	-3.1%	7.1%
5.	I am encouraged to provide district level suggestions on ways to improve programs or services.	29.0%	-0.6%	-8.2%
6.	I feel safe in stating my opinions about APS programs even if I disagree with the approach being taken.	28.9%	-0.5%	-0.5%
7.	I feel safe in stating my opinions about issues facing APS even if I disagree with the approach being taken.	30.3%	-0.2%	-0.6%
18.	Building Administrators share the information I need to perform my job.	67.6%	-1.1%	16.1%*
33.	I am kept informed of the school unified improvement plan (UIP).	74.5%	-7.1%	-----
35.	The performance evaluation process is fair in my school.	61.9%	0.3%	11.4%
Morale				
13.	I would encourage someone to work for APS.	47.1%	-1.8%	1.9%
43.	I feel appreciated for the work I do.	57.6%	2.4%	16.2%*
44.	I experience a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at my site.	63.5%	5.2%	20.2%*
45.	I experience a professional atmosphere for staff working at my school/site.	72.4%	3.3%	23.4%*
Program Support				
16.	I believe the district is becoming more effective in meeting the needs of ELL students.	61.7%	-4.4%	-----
47.	I believe my school has effective plans in place to assist ELL students.	68.4%	0.8%	-----
48.	I believe the Art programs are supported at my building.	77.5%	1.5%	-----
49.	I believe the Music programs are supported at my building.	76.6%	0.3%	-----
50.	I believe the Physical Education program is supported at my building.	75.8%	3.6%	-----
51.	I believe the library/media programs are supported at my building.	67.5%	-1.8%	-----
Trust				
8.	I trust the people who make district decisions that affect me.	27.2%	-2.7%	-2.8%
10.	There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within APS.	32.6%	-2.0%	5.6%
14.	Based on my experience there's a positive relationship between the Aurora Education Association and the district.	47.5%	4.9%	-----
19.	I trust the people who make school decisions that affect me.	54.0%	0.9%	15.5%*
22.	There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect between building administrators and staff in our building.	50.4%	0.2%	-----
23.	There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among teachers in our building.	70.3%	1.2%	35.4%*
24.	I am trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.	69.1%	0.9%	19.5%*
Work Conditions (District)				
9.	I am given opportunities to influence the decisions made by the district.	20.6%	-1.7%	-----
11.	District professional development has provided me with strategies that I have incorporated into my instructional delivery methods.	51.9%	-1.8%	-1.7%
12.	I believe decisions made in APS are based on student data and information.	60.9%	-0.5%	17.9%*
27.	Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruption.	49.1%	-4.0%	11.3%
28.	I have sufficient access to instructional materials and resources.	68.3%	-4.3%	8.2%
29.	I have sufficient access to instructional technology.	64.6%	-7.7%	5.0%

	Item	Ag/SA	1-Yr Ch.	7-Yr Ch.
Work Conditions (School)				
20.	I am given opportunities to influence the decisions that are made by my school/site.	59.0%	-0.2%	-----
21.	I am able to influence the decisions made by my school/site.	51.8%	0.4%	16.4%*
25.	I believe decisions made at my school are based on student data and information.	74.9%	3.8%	30.1%*
26.	Decisions made at my school are based on the best interests of students.	58.2%	0.3%	15.8%*
30.	The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions.	49.3%	-0.4%	15.7%*
31.	Employees in this building are empowered to help solve problems.	57.3%	1.7%	24.8%*
32.	I have opportunities to participate in school planning and decision making.	66.1%	0.7%	16.2%*
34.	My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of the challenges I face in my job.	53.8%	-0.7%	4.2%
36.	Building professional development has provided me with strategies that I have incorporated into my instructional delivery methods.	57.6%	-2.4%	6.3%
38.	Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is clean and well maintained.	84.8%	-2.1%	11.5%*
39.	Rules for student conduct are consistently enforced by administration.	51.9%	1.3%	17.1%*
40.	Rules for student conduct are consistently enforced by teaching staff.	51.6%	-0.5%	16.8%*
41.	Staff work in a school environment that is safe.	75.3%	-2.6%	12.5%*

Note. All responses of "not applicable" were omitted from this analysis.

2012: n=1893. 2013:n=1575. --: indicates that item was not part of earlier survey administration.

* 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.