



## **Division of Accountability & Research**

### **Licensed Staff Climate Survey Executive Summary February 2014**

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 eighth annual licensed staff climate survey was administered in January of 2014.

#### **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 during the 2012-13 school year.

There were no changes made to the survey items themselves in 2013-14, though questions related to technology and custodial services were moved from the school section to the district section, as they are services that are truly provided by the district.

#### **Survey Participants**

The Licensed staff climate survey was provided to all staff via the use of an on-line survey tool. A total of 1,603 surveys were taken. The percentage of responses based on the overall number of licensed staff was approximately 70%. 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**

<b>Job Classification</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>7-Yr Ch.</b>
Overall	1,603	60%	90%	87%	88%	92%	93%	72%	70%	10%

**Note.** Total reflects number of survey responses in 2014.

The percent of staff responding to the survey has ranged from 93% to 70% during the past three years. These rates are significantly greater than those of the first year of implementation (i.e. 10% greater).

Of the 1,603 respondents, 1,495 indicated their position in the district and of those respondents, 11.6% identified themselves as an educational professional other than a teacher (school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, etc.). A little less than half of the respondents (48.8%) 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	15.6%	207
2-3 Years	17.3%	229
4-6 Years	16.0%	212
7-10 Years	22.2%	295
11-20 Years	20.6%	274
20+ Years	8.3%	110

**Note.** 276 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		
2013	2014	Change	2013	2014	Change	2013	2014	Change
24.8%	25.1%	0.3%	17.4%	18.7%	1.3%	57.8%	56.2%	-1.6%

The data indicate that overall district agreement rates were somewhat stable between years. Overall, a slight decrease in agreement was noted between 2013 and 2014 with an increase of 0.3% in disagreement rates. This change is not considered significant using an effect size change model.

## Survey Results: Individual Items

Overall, 22 of 52 items (42%) exceeded 60% agreement rates indicating moderate satisfaction concerning overall climate. The 42% rate is lower than that observed for administrative/professional-technical staff (55%). 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 “clarity of vision” and “communication” categories with more than a third of the items in each category items having agreement rates below 50%. Importantly, within the clarity of vision category all four of the items decreased both from the prior year survey and from the original baseline survey, indicating that licensed staff members do not perceive a clear vision and direction for the district. 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 6.2 percentage points from 47.5% in 2013 to 53.7% in 2014. Table four presents agreement and change rates by item and category.

## Conclusions

- The Licensed Staff survey had a response rate of 70% which is a 2% decrease from last year. Just under half of survey participants have been employed within APS from one to six years.
- Overall, a slight decrease in agreement was noted between 2013 and 2014 with an increase of 0.3% in disagreement rates.
- Most survey items continue to show moderate agreement rates. Overall item agreement rates are lower than that identified within the Administrative/Professional-Technical survey.
- Areas of strength are related to school work conditions and support of programs. Areas of concern are related to clarity of vision 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.
<b>Clarity of Vision</b>				
1.	I understand the long-term vision of Aurora Public Schools.	64.7%	-10.2%	-19.6%
3.	I know how my work relates to the district's goals and priorities as stated in the VISTA 2015 Plan.	56.6%	-6.9%	-19.1%
4.	I believe APS has set a clear direction for improving student achievement.	47.1%	-3.5%	-8.6%
15.	I understand the roles and responsibilities of the APS Board of Education.	48.9%	-4.1%	---
<b>Communication</b>				
2.	District administrators share the information that I need to perform my job.	55.6%	-3.0%	4.1%
5.	I am encouraged to provide district level suggestions on ways to improve programs or services.	27.4%	-1.6%	-9.8%
6.	I feel safe in stating my opinions about APS programs even if I disagree with the approach being taken.	30.3%	1.5%	1.0%
7.	I feel safe in stating my opinions about issues facing APS even if I disagree with the approach being taken.	30.3%	0.0%	-0.6%
18.	Building Administrators share the information I need to perform my job.	66.8%	-8.0%	7.2%
33.	I am kept informed of the school unified improvement plan (UIP).	72.9%	-1.6%	23.0%
35.	The performance evaluation process is fair in my school.	50.7%	-11.2%	1.0%
<b>Morale</b>				
13.	I would encourage someone to work for APS.	48.1%	1.0%	2.9%
42.	Staff at my site respect people from different backgrounds and cultures.	87.4%	-1.7%	---
43.	I feel appreciated for the work I do.	56.5%	-1.1%	15.1%
44.	I experience a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at my site.	64.3%	0.8%	21.0%
45.	I experience a professional atmosphere for staff working at my school/site.	71.6%	-8.0%	22.6%
<b>Program Support</b>				
16.	I believe the district is becoming more effective in meeting the needs of ELL students.	60.6%	-1.1%	---
17.	I believe the district is becoming more effective in meeting the needs of special education students.	30.1%	1.3%	---
47.	I believe my school has effective plans in place to assist ELL students.	66.6%	-1.8%	---
48.	I believe the Art programs are supported at my building.	77.8%	0.3%	---
49.	I believe the Music programs are supported at my building.	79.2%	2.6%	---
50.	I believe the Physical Education program is supported at my building.	77.8%	2.0%	---
51.	I believe the library/media programs are supported at my building.	62.6%	-4.9%	---
52.	I believe the student mentoring program was beneficial for my mentee.	41.7%	-5.0%	---
<b>Trust</b>				
8.	I trust the people who make district decisions that affect me.	25.3%	-2.0%	-4.8%
10.	There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within APS.	33.7%	1.1%	6.7%
14.	Based on my experience there's a positive relationship between the Aurora Education Association and the district.	53.7%	6.2%	---
19.	I trust the people who make school decisions that affect me.	54.6%	0.6%	-18.7%
22.	There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect between building administrators and staff in our building.	51.4%	1.0%	---
23.	There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among teachers in our building.	70.9%	0.6%	35.5%
24.	I am trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.	68.4%	-0.7%	---

	Item	Ag/SA	1-Yr Ch.	7-Yr Ch.
<b>Work Conditions (District)</b>				
9.	I am given opportunities to influence the decisions made by the district.	19.4%	-1.2%	---
11.	District professional development has provided me with strategies that I have incorporated into my instructional delivery methods.	54.5%	2.6%	0.9%
12.	I believe decisions made in APS are based on student data and information.	59.7%	-1.2%	16.7%
27.	Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruption.	48.2%	-0.9%	3.5%
28.	I have sufficient access to instructional materials and resources.	68.0%	-0.3%	25.6%
29.	I have sufficient access to instructional technology.	59.8%	-4.7%	22.0%
46.	I have the support I need to deliver culturally responsive instruction and teaching.	70.5%	-0.2%	---
<b>Work Conditions (School)</b>				
20.	I am given opportunities to influence the decisions that are made by my school/site.	57.6%	-1.4%	6.1%
21.	I am able to influence the decisions made by my school/site.	47.6%	-4.2%	9.1%
25.	I believe decisions made at my school are based on student data and information.	72.9%	-2.0%	38.0%
26.	Decisions made at my school are based on the best interests of students.	60.0%	1.8%	10.4%
30.	The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions.	49.2%	-0.2%	-10.9%
31.	Employees in this building are empowered to help solve problems.	56.1%	-1.2%	22.5%
32.	I have opportunities to participate in school planning and decision making.	64.1%	-1.9%	31.7%
34.	My principal/supervisor has a clear understanding of the challenges I face in my job.	54.4%	0.5%	---
36.	Building professional development has provided me with strategies that I have incorporated into my instructional delivery methods.	58.9%	1.3%	8.5%
37.	My administrator gives me specific feedback on how to improve my instruction.	64.4%	-3.6%	13.1%
38.	Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is clean and well maintained.	79.7%	-5.2%	---
39.	Rules for student conduct are consistently enforced by administration.	43.4%	-8.5%	8.6%
40.	Rules for student conduct are consistently enforced by teaching staff.	47.4%	-4.1%	12.7%
41.	Staff work in a school environment that is safe.	74.2%	-1.1%	11.4%

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

2013:n=1575. 2014: n=1603. . --: indicates that item was not part of earlier survey administration.

Cells highlighted in gray reflect an effect size change, a measure of change in the Agree/Strongly Agree percentage between years, of .25 or higher and are generally considered substantive.