The Dallas ISD Districtwide Climate Survey was administered to all campus professional and support staff during December 2014 and April-May 2015. The Climate Survey had three purposes:

- To contribute to consistent organizational improvement;
- To gain integral feedback from school based employees;
- To align systems to student outcomes.

While overall results provide a broad picture of district change, the Climate Survey was primarily intended to provide individual campuses with feedback that could identify areas of success as well as opportunities for improvement. Campus-level results have been distributed to building principals, feeder pattern Executive Directors, and School Leadership management after each administration, and were used to initiate and guide discussions among central and campus administrators and staff.

The Climate Survey contributed to the campus principals’ Mid-Year Review by providing staff feedback that related directly to principal effectiveness, as well as more complex information that helps to identify underlying issues that may contribute to or hinder success.

The 2014-15 school year was the third consecutive year in which the Climate Survey was administered. In 2012-2013, the survey was conducted internally, by the Department of Evaluation and Assessment. In 2013-14, to provide additional assurance of confidentiality, the survey was administered by an external organization, the University of North Texas (UNT) Survey Research Center. The UNT Survey Research Center ceased operations in the fall of 2014, and the survey for 2014-15 was administered by the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University (TAMU).

Dallas ISD provided TAMU with a list of email addresses of all campus-based staff. No employee ID number or staff names were provided to TAMU. TAMU then sent an email to all staff members, asking each of them to use an individualized link to the survey. Once the survey closed, TAMU provided a file of survey results with employee email addresses removed to Dallas ISD. Survey responses from past administrations also remain confidential, and no individual employee information regarding survey participation or responses has been released.

**Participation Rate**

Participation rates by administration for teachers and for all campus-based staff are shown in Figure 1.

![Participation Rate Graph](image)

**Scales**

The initial version of the survey, given in the fall of 2012, contained items grouped into three scales, each describing conditions deemed necessary or desirable for an effective school: School’s Beliefs and Priorities, Positive Culture and Environment, and Culture of Feedback and Support. Survey scales were initially determined through principal components analysis (PCA) of staff responses. Following each administration, items have been added and removed; each time, the analysis has been repeated, and has indicated the same overall structure. New items were included in the scale score calculations after their initial use and validation. In 2012-2013, an additional scale, College-Going Culture, was added.

Item responses ranged from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly Agree”). Scale scores were computed at the individual level and aggregated to the school level. Scale scores at the individual level consisted of the mean of the items on each scale. Percentages of positive (agree/strongly agree) responses were also calculated for each item and scale at the campus, Feeder Pattern, Division, and District levels.

**School’s Beliefs and Priorities:** Positive responses to items on this scale indicate that the school bases its actions on the District’s Core Beliefs, and follows a set of campus Key Actions that are student-focused and understood by school staff. Priorities of school leadership and staff are aligned, and staff believe the school is headed in the right direction. The percent of positive responses across all administrations is shown in Figure 2.
Key results include the following:

- The percentage of positive responses on this scale was similar across all administrations, with slightly more positive responses in 2014-2015.
- In Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, approximately 88 to 90 percent of staff agreed or strongly agreed that the Core Beliefs guided actions on their campus, and that they understood their roles in implementing key actions.
- More than three-quarters felt that the key actions were focused on what is best for students.
- More than 70 percent responded that they had the support from campus leadership to do their job well.
- More than 70 percent responded that their school’s priorities were similar to what they should be, and that their campus was headed in the right direction.

**Culture of Feedback and Support (teachers only):**
Positive responses to the items on this scale indicate that effective campus leadership provides support and feedback to teachers that improves job performance, and helps them to understand recent changes. Leadership provides feedback and support that improves the quality of instruction, and encourages teachers to develop leadership potential. Teachers perceive that professional development and teamwork with colleagues help improve instruction. The percentage of positive responses across all administrations is shown in Figure 3.

Key results include the following:

- Overall responses were more positive in 2014-2015 than in the previous year.
- More than two-thirds of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that campus leadership helped them improve the quality of instruction; that they had opportunities and encouragement to develop leadership potential; and that their campus had an effective leadership team.
- Nearly 75 percent of teachers credited their team experiences in 2014-2015 with helping them improve instruction.
- Sixty (60) percent of teachers in both Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 agreed that PD sessions helped them improve instruction.

**Positive Culture and Environment:** Positive responses to the items on this scale indicate that the school environment is clean and safe, with consistent and effective student discipline. Staff work in an environment of respect, and are satisfied with recognition for doing their jobs well. Staff look forward to their work each day, would recommend the school as a workplace to others, and would stay with Dallas ISD even if offered a comparable job elsewhere. Morale at the school has improved during the year. The percentage of positive responses across all administrations is shown in Figure 4.
and benefits at another district, they would stay with Dallas ISD.

- Despite the lower scores on other items, nearly three-quarters of staff agreed in Spring 2015 that they looked forward to working each day at their school, and almost 78 percent agreed that their campus was clean and safe.

**College-Going Culture:** Positive responses to the items on this scale indicate that teachers focus instruction on preparing their students for college success, and expect most of their students to attend college. They provide feedback and support to prevent students from giving up when challenged, and in turn, expect students to give their full effort. The percentage of positive responses across all administrations is shown in Figure 5.

![Figure 4](image-url)

**Figure 4.** Percentage of positive responses, College Readiness scale, Fall 2013 –Spring 2015

Key results include the following:

- Positive responses were highest on this scale, above 80 percent overall for both 2014-2015 administrations. Item responses ranged from 76 to 88 percent positive.
- Responses of elementary school staff were slightly less positive than those of secondary staff.

### Morale

Each respondent was asked to select up to three items that most influenced morale at work. In 2012-2013, this question accepted open-ended responses. These were analyzed and a final list of factors was created for the 2013-2014 survey (Table 1).

More than half of respondents named “Workplace environment and school culture” and “Feeling appreciated” as important to their morale. Results were generally consistent across all administrations.

#### Table 1: Factors Influencing Staff Morale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Spring 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace environment and school culture</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>62.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling appreciated and respected</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student progress and success</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student behavior or discipline</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your relationship with colleagues</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload, working hours and schedule</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your relationship with your immediate supervisor</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree to which you feel successful</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary and money issues</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recommendations

The Districtwide Climate Survey has provided useful and actionable information to School Leadership since its introduction, and will continue to be administered twice a year. School Leadership should review the survey annually to ensure that all items are up-to-date with current district initiatives and practices, and are providing actionable information to campuses and feeder patterns.