

2019–2020 AISD Student Climate Survey

Executive Summary, Spring 2020

COVID-19 Impact

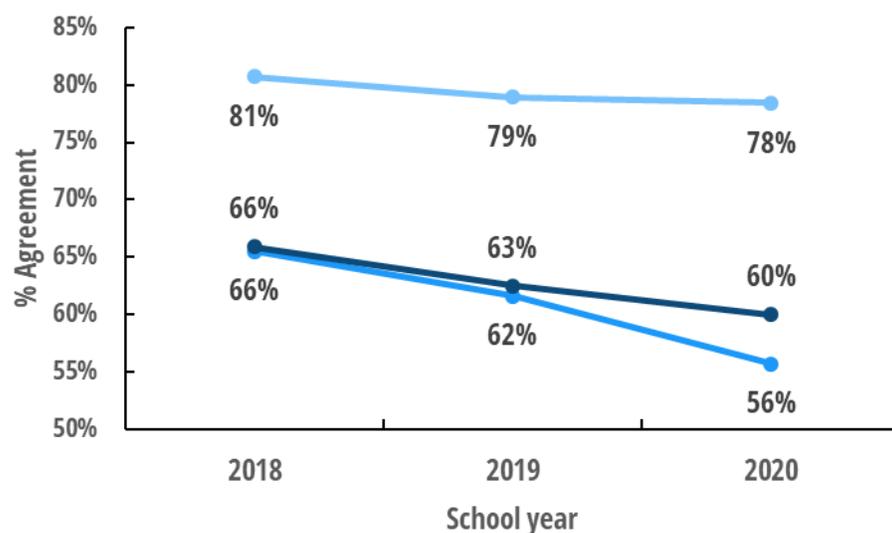
Following the temporary closure of AISD campuses in response to COVID-19, a limited number of schools were unable to administer the 2019–2020 Student Climate Survey. Given the different circumstances under which students would have responded to the survey after schools had closed (and the potential influence on their perceptions of school climate), the AISD Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE) decided to close the survey without their participation in order to maintain the integrity of existing data. Consequently, total responses declined by 15% year-over-year and representation of certain student groups was slightly different from previous years. However, the overall sample was comparable to samples obtained in recent years.

Middle School Students Reported Lower Engagement, Less favorable perceptions of School Staff

Students' perceptions of school climate in 2019–2020 were largely unchanged from the previous year, with the exception of middle school students, who reported significantly lower levels of engagement (Figure 1) and significantly less favorable perceptions of school staff (Figure 2). To confirm whether these declines were attributable to changes in the underlying sample of students, responses were isolated to only those students who (a) took the survey in 2018–2019 and 2019–2020, (b) answered all relevant survey items, and (c) did not change schools. Subgroup analyses confirmed that middle school students' perceptions of engagement and adult interactions were significantly lower than in the previous year ($p < .0001$), with effect sizes (d) of .26 for engagement (a small effect) and .32 for interactions with adults at school (a medium effect). Please refer to the sidebar on page 2 for a list of survey items for each subscale.

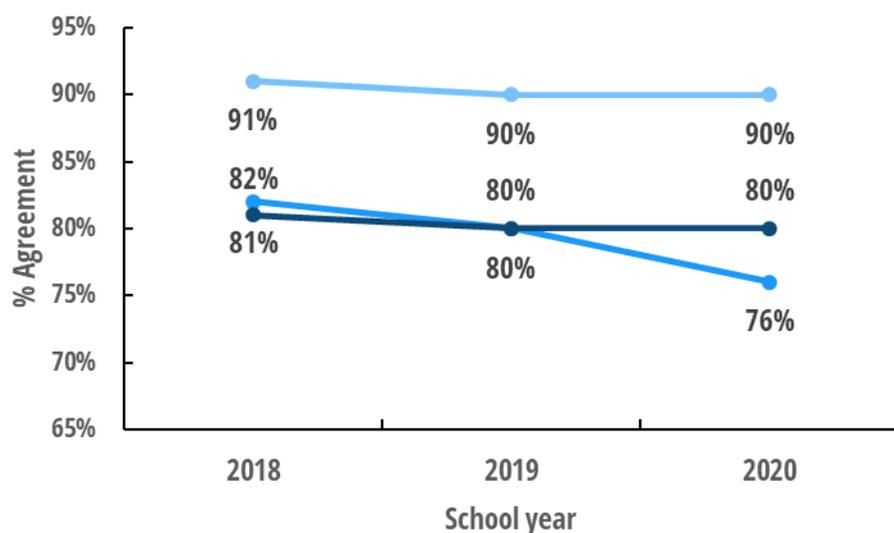
Figure 1

Elementary, Middle, and High School Students' Perceptions of School Engagement



Note. Percentages represent students who responded *sometimes* or *a lot of the time* to student engagement items listed in the sidebar on page 2. Responses of *don't know* were excluded from calculations.

Figure 2

Elementary, Middle, and High School Students' Perceptions of School Staff

Note. Percentages represent students who responded *sometimes* or *a lot of the time* to adult relationships items listed in the sidebar on page 2. Responses of *don't know* were excluded from calculations.

Consistent with previous research highlighting significant racial differences in perceptions of school climate (Clark, 2017), Black and Hispanic middle school students reported significantly lower perceptions of school climate than did their peers in 2019–2020. Black middle schoolers reported significantly lower ratings than did their non-Black peers on the following items about teachers and other school staff: (a) teachers at this school care about their students ($d = .26, p < .0001$), (b) my teachers are fair to everyone ($d = .25, p = .0004$), and (c) adults at this school treat all students fairly ($d = .19, p = .0023$). Black and Hispanic middle schoolers also felt significantly less confident than their peers when resolving conflict ($d = .27, p < .0001$). These students also reported significantly worse perceptions related to safety and respect than did their White peers (Black vs. White: $d = .35, p < .0001$; Hispanic vs. White: $d = .16, p < .0001$). Such large disparities in fundamental aspects of the school experience warrant further analysis to determine the extent to which gaps were present at the campus level.

Superintendent's Scorecard

The superintendent's scorecard includes an index of three items from the Student Climate Survey: (a) my classmates treat me with respect, (b) my classmates show respect to each other, and (c) my classmates show respect to others who are different. As displayed in Figure 3, elementary and high school students reported more positive perceptions of respectful behavior than they did in the previous year. Consistent with broader trends, middle school students reported significantly lower perceptions of respectful behavior ($p < .0001$), though the small effect size ($d = .13$) indicates significant year-over-year variance in students' responses.

Additional Information

For additional information on the Student Climate Survey, please visit the AISD DRE [website](#) and navigate to Interactive Reports. This report allows users to filter results for the past 3 years by school, grade, sex, race, and other characteristics of interest.

Selected items from the 2019–2020 Student Climate Survey

Student Engagement

- I like to come to school.
- I enjoy doing my schoolwork.
- My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.
- My teachers connect what I am doing to my life outside the classroom.
- My homework helps me learn the things I need to know.
- I have fun learning in my classes.

Adult Relationships

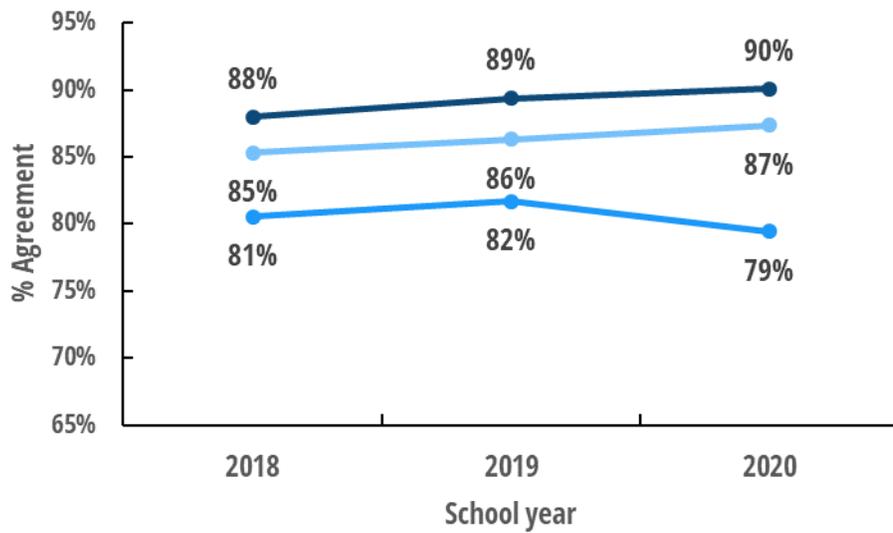
- Teachers at this school care about their students.
- Adults at this school listen to student ideas and opinions.
- Adults at this school treat all students fairly.
- My teachers are fair to everyone.
- The staff in the front office show respect to students.
- My teachers know what I am good at.
- It is easy for me to talk about my problems with the adults at my school.
- I receive recognition or praise for doing good work.

Safety & Respect

- I feel safe at my school.
- My classmates show respect to others who are different.
- At my school, there is respect for different cultures.
- At my school, there is respect for students who speak languages other than English.
- At my school, some students are treated unfairly because of who they are.
- Students at my school are bullied.

Figure 3

Elementary, Middle, and High School Students’ Perceptions of Respectful Classmate Behavior



Note. Percentages represent mean agreement (i.e., *sometimes or a lot of the time*; excludes *don’t know*) to the following items: (a) My classmates treat me with respect, (b) My classmates show respect to each other, and (c) My classmates show respect to others who are different. The Student Climate Survey did not include item (a) in 2018.

References

Clark, C. (2017). *Student Climate Survey Results: Spring 2017, comparisons of student groups*. Austin Independent School District.

