

# Students Continue to Report a Positive School Climate

## Student Climate Survey Results: Spring 2014 Through Spring 2017

### What is the purpose of the Student Climate Survey?

Students' perceptions of student engagement, behavioral environment, academic self-confidence, adult fairness and respect, teacher expectations, school connectedness, culture and language, and social and emotional learning (SEL) skills are assessed with the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) Student Climate Survey. This report summarizes results at the district level from Spring 2015 through Spring 2017. Campus reports are available on the Department of Research and Evaluation's (DRE) [website](#).

### How did students rate school climate in 2017?

Elementary school students' responses continued to be more favorable than middle and high school students' responses. Tables 1 through 8 display the percentages of students responding *a lot of the time* or *sometimes* to each item. An upcoming report will display results for ethnicity, gender, English language learner status, socioeconomic status, and special education status.

### Student Engagement

Table 1

**Most students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported feeling engaged in their schoolwork.**

Students reported that they received recognition for doing good work.

Student engagement	Elementary			Middle			High		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
I like to come to school.	83%	83%	83% <sup>a,b</sup>	69%	68%	72% <sup>a,c</sup>	69%	69%	74% <sup>b,c</sup>
I enjoy doing my schoolwork.	81%	81%	80% <sup>a,b</sup>	60%	59%	63% <sup>a</sup>	58%	60%	63% <sup>b</sup>
My homework helps me learn the things I need to know.	88%	87%	86% <sup>a,b</sup>	74%	70%	70% <sup>a,c</sup>	72%	73%	73% <sup>b,c</sup>
My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.	84%	84%	85% <sup>a,b</sup>	71%	69%	75% <sup>a</sup>	68%	70%	75% <sup>b</sup>
I have fun learning in my classes.	88%	88%	88% <sup>a,b</sup>	71%	69%	76% <sup>a,c</sup>	69%	71%	78% <sup>b,c</sup>
My teachers connect what I am doing to my life outside the classroom.	80%	79%	80% <sup>a,b</sup>	60%	58%	62% <sup>a,c</sup>	59%	61%	66% <sup>b,c</sup>
I receive recognition or praise for doing good work.	88%	88%	91% <sup>a,b</sup>	75%	75%	83% <sup>a,c</sup> ↑	73%	74%	82% <sup>b,c</sup>

Source. Spring 2015 through Spring 2017 Student Climate Surveys

Note. Response options ranged from 1 = *never* to 4 = *a lot of the time*. Percentages reflect students who selected 3 = *sometimes* or 4 = *a lot of the time*. Percentages sharing the same superscript across level, within item are significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) using the z test for proportions. ↑ indicates significant change from prior year within level Percentages in tables are rounded; calculations were computed using unrounded percentages.

91% of students said they felt safe at their school.



## Behavioral Environment

Table 2

Students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported feeling safe at school, and respected by teachers and classmates.

Behavioral environment	Elementary			Middle			High		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
My classmates show respect to each other.	88%	87%	88% <sup>a,b</sup>	81%	80%	83% <sup>a</sup>	86%	88%	89% <sup>b</sup>
My classmates show respect to other students who are different.	84%	85%	85% <sup>a,b</sup>	79%	79%	81% <sup>a</sup>	83%	86%	89% <sup>b</sup>
I am happy with the way my classmates treat me.	85%	85%	85% <sup>a,b</sup>	87%	86%	88% <sup>a</sup>	90%	91%	93% <sup>b</sup>
Students at my school follow the school rules.	82%	80%	83% <sup>a,b</sup>	63%	63%	67% <sup>a</sup>	70%	73%	79% <sup>b</sup>
I feel safe at my school.	91%	92%	92% <sup>a,b</sup>	84%	86%	88% <sup>a</sup>	86%	89%	93% <sup>b</sup>
Students at this school treat teachers with respect.	89%	88%	89% <sup>a,b</sup>	73%	74%	76% <sup>a</sup>	79%	81%	87% <sup>b</sup>
My classmates behave the way my teachers want them to.	77%	74%	76% <sup>a,b</sup>	64%	62%	66% <sup>a</sup>	72%	74%	80% <sup>b</sup>
Our classes stay busy and do not waste time.	83%	82%	84% <sup>a,b</sup>	74%	74%	80% <sup>a</sup>	78%	82%	88% <sup>b</sup>
Students at my school are bullied (teased, taunted, threatened by other students).	54%	48%	50% <sup>a,b</sup>	62%	61%	61% <sup>a</sup>	55%	51%	45% <sup>b</sup>

## Academic Self-Confidence

Table 3

Students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported favorable ratings of their academic self-confidence.

Academic self-confidence	Elementary			Middle			High		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
I can do even the hardest schoolwork if I try.	92%	91%	91% <sup>a,b</sup>	86%	85%	88% <sup>a</sup>	85%	86%	90% <sup>b</sup>
I try hard to do my best work.	97%	97%	98% <sup>a</sup>	92%	92%	94% <sup>a</sup>	89%	90%	94%
I feel successful in my schoolwork.	92%	92%	93% <sup>a,b</sup>	87%	87%	89% <sup>a</sup>	84%	85%	88% <sup>b</sup>
I can reach the goals I set for myself.	93%	92%	93% <sup>a</sup>	90%	89%	91%	88%	90%	93% <sup>a</sup>

## Statistical and Meaningful Differences

We used a *z* test for proportions to determine whether the observed differences between students' responses based on school levels, were likely due to chance or were real differences. Significant differences are noted with superscripts in this report.

We used Cohen's *f* measure of effect size to determine whether the magnitude of a change from year to year was meaningful. Effect sizes greater than or equal to .20 are considered meaningful in educational research and are noted with up or down arrows in this report.

## About This Survey

AISD students in grades 3 through 11 have participated in the annual Student Climate Survey since 2004. To ensure students are asked the most critical questions concerning their perceptions of school environment, the survey has been revised over the years. Cells with an asterisk (\*) indicate that the item was reworded.

In 2017, we added items to assess students' perceptions of their school's openness to student culture and language.

In 2017, all but four schools administered the survey online.

## Adult Fairness and Respect

Table 4

Students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported that their teachers were fair, and that they treated students with respect.

Adult fairness and respect	Elementary			Middle			High		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Teachers at this school care about their students.	97%	97%	97% <sup>a,b</sup>	89%	89%	90% <sup>a,c</sup>	88%	89%	92% <sup>b,c</sup>
Adults at this school listen to student ideas and opinions.	92%	93%	92% <sup>a,b</sup>	80%	80%	81% <sup>a,c</sup>	80%	82%	83% <sup>b,c</sup>
Adults at this school treat all students fairly.	94%	94%	94% <sup>a,b</sup>	82%	82%	85% <sup>a,c</sup>	80%	84%	87% <sup>b,c</sup>
The staff in the front office show respect to students.	97%	97%	97% <sup>a,b</sup>	90%	91%	93% <sup>a,c</sup>	85%	87%	89% <sup>b,c</sup>
My teachers are fair to everyone.	94%	94%	94% <sup>a,b</sup>	81%	82%	85% <sup>a,c</sup>	81%	84%	89% <sup>b,c</sup>
Teachers at this school know who I am.	92%	92%	95% <sup>a,b</sup>	87%	87%	92% <sup>a,c</sup>	82%	84%	90% <sup>b,c</sup>
My teachers know what I am good at.	94%	94%	96% <sup>a,b</sup>	84%	82%	89% <sup>a,c</sup>	81%	81%	86% <sup>b,c</sup>

## Teacher Expectations

Table 5

Students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported that teachers expected students to work hard and give their best effort.

Teacher expectations	Elementary			Middle			High		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
My teachers believe I can learn.	98%	98%	98% <sup>a,b</sup>	93%	93%	94% <sup>a</sup>	92%	92%	95% <sup>b</sup>
My teachers believe I can do well in school.	98%	98%	98% <sup>a,b</sup>	93%	93%	95% <sup>a,c</sup>	91%	93%	96% <sup>b,c</sup>
My teachers expect me to think hard about the things we read.	97%	96%	96% <sup>a,b</sup>	90%	90%	93% <sup>a,c</sup>	89%	90%	94% <sup>b,c</sup>
My teachers expect everybody to work hard.	98%	98%	98% <sup>a,b</sup>	93%	94%	96% <sup>a</sup>	91%	93%	96% <sup>b</sup>
My teachers expect my best effort.	98%	98%	98% <sup>a,b</sup>	94%	94%	96% <sup>a,c</sup>	91%	94%	96% <sup>b,c</sup>

## School Connectedness

Table 6

Students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported feeling connected to school, and liked coming to school.

School connectedness	Elementary			Middle			High		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
I am happy with the way my classmates treat me.	85%	85%	85% <sup>a,b</sup>	87%	86%	88% <sup>a,c</sup>	90%	91%	93% <sup>b,c</sup>
Adults at this school treat all students fairly.	94%	94%	94% <sup>a,b</sup>	82%	82%	85% <sup>a,c</sup>	80%	84%	87% <sup>b,c</sup>
It is easy for me to talk about my problems with the adults at my school.	*	73%	76% <sup>a,b</sup>	*	59%	63% <sup>a,c</sup>	*	60%	65% <sup>b,c</sup>
I like to come to school.	83%	83%	83% <sup>a,b</sup>	69%	68%	72% <sup>a,c</sup>	69%	69%	74% <sup>b,c</sup>
I feel safe at school.	91%	92%	92% <sup>a,b</sup>	84%	86%	88% <sup>a,c</sup>	86%	89%	93% <sup>b,c</sup>
Teachers at this school know who I am.	92%	92%	95% <sup>a,b</sup>	87%	87%	92% <sup>a,c</sup>	82%	84%	90% <sup>b,c</sup>

## SEL Skills

Table 7

Students surveyed in Spring 2017 reported using SEL skills at least some of the time.

Students reported that they got along with classmates and said no to those who wanted them to break the rules.

SEL skills	Elementary		Middle		High	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
I use ways to calm myself down.	83%	88% <sup>a,b</sup>	75%	83% <sup>a,c</sup>	80%	88% <sup>b,c</sup> ↑
I don't give up even when I feel frustrated.	89%	93% <sup>a,b</sup>	82%	88% <sup>a,c</sup>	82%	87% <sup>b,c</sup>
I know what people may be feeling by the look in their face.	90%	93% <sup>a,b</sup>	87%	92% <sup>a,c</sup>	87%	93% <sup>b,c</sup> ↑
I get along with my classmates.	90%	92% <sup>a</sup>	88%	92% <sup>a,b</sup>	90%	95% <sup>b</sup>
I say no to friends who want me to break the rules.	91%	95% <sup>a,b</sup>	86%	91% <sup>a,c</sup>	87%	93% <sup>b,c</sup>
It is easy for me to talk about my problems with the adults at my school.	73%	76% <sup>a,b</sup>	59%	63% <sup>a,c</sup>	60%	65% <sup>b,c</sup>

## Culture and Language

Table 8

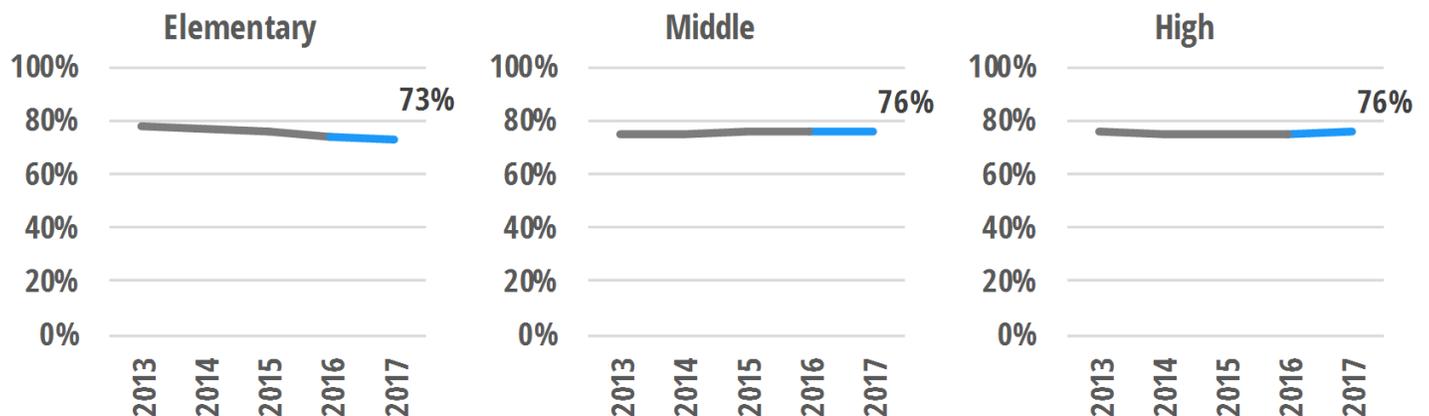
Students surveyed in Spring 2017 agreed that different cultures and languages were appreciated at their school.

Culture and language	Elementary	Middle	High
	2017	2017	2017
At my school, teachers and staff teach me to be proud of my culture.	89% <sup>a,b</sup>	81% <sup>a,c</sup>	79% <sup>b,c</sup>
At my school, there is respect for students speaking languages other than English.	94% <sup>a,b</sup>	90% <sup>a,c</sup>	92% <sup>b,c</sup>

## College intentions

Figure 1

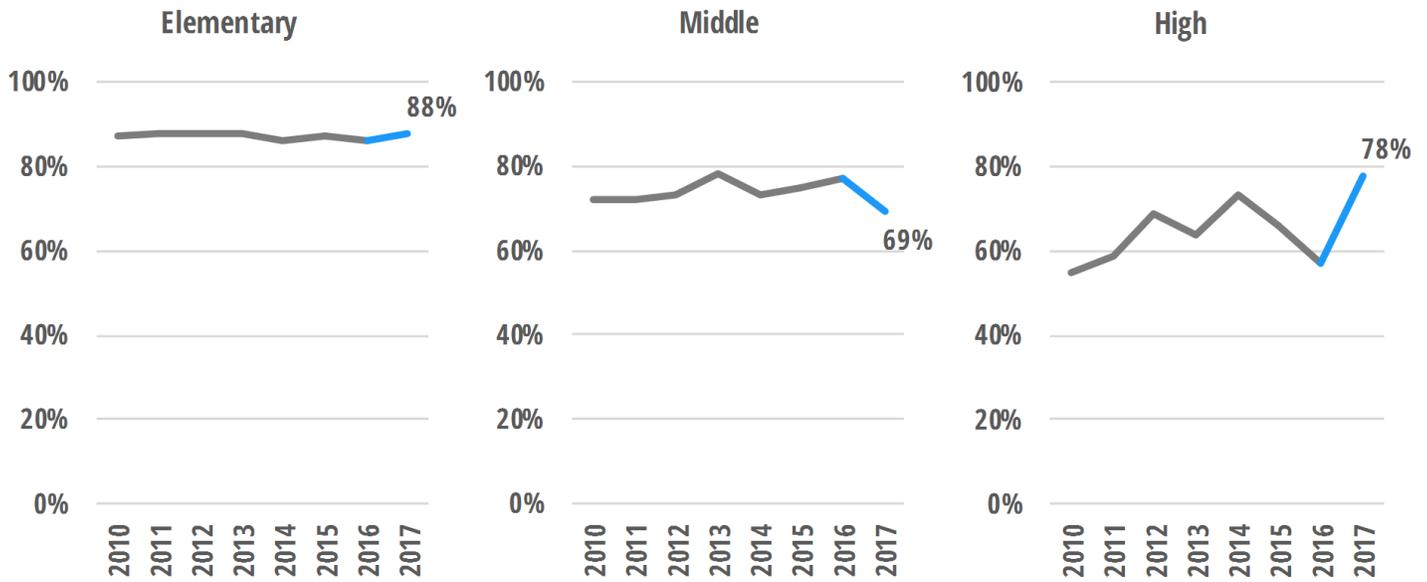
Three quarters of students surveyed in Spring 2017 believed they would go to college after high school.



## Who responded to the survey?

Figure 2

Compared with rates in previous years, **Spring 2017** response rates remained high at elementary schools, declined at middle schools, and improved at high schools.



Number of student responses	Year							
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
School level								
Elementary	17,425	17,641	18,352	17,963	16,960	17,261	16,995	17,678
Middle	11,548	10,939	11,644	12,547	11,752	11,816	12,014	12,002
High	8,675	8,315	11,197	10,279	12,033	11,144	9,688	11,124

Source: Spring 2010 through Spring 2017 Student Climate Surveys.

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