



SUMMARY OF 2005-2006 AISD STUDENT CLIMATE SURVEY

DISTRICT REPORT

OVERVIEW

Research indicates that school climate can be either a positive influence on the learning environment or a significant barrier to learning. Positive school climate has been associated with fewer behavioral problems for students and increased achievement levels for students (Marshall, 2003). Specifically, Brian Perkins of the National School Boards Association (2006) states that improved school climate contributes to a variety of positive outcomes including higher student achievement, higher morale among students and teachers, fewer student dropouts, reduced violence, better community relations, and increased institutional pride. For these reasons, it is important to examine student climate survey results to identify areas in which AISD student climate is strong and areas in need of improvement.

The AISD Student Climate Survey was administered for the third consecutive year to students in grades 3 through 11¹ across the district. The survey is designed to measure student perceptions regarding three broad dimensions: Behavioral Environment, Adult/Student Interactions, and Academic Environment. Each of these dimensions is made up of multiple concepts that are measured with groups of survey items, or subscales.

Behavioral Environment represents the social and physical school environment, which includes students' peer interactions, their expectations about school rules and their enforcement, and school safety and cleanliness. Behavioral Environment is comprised of three subscales, labeled *Peer Behavior*, *Behavior Expectations*, and *School Safety & Cleanliness*.

Adult/Student Interactions represents the relationships between students and adults on campus, both inside and outside the classroom. The Adult/Student Interactions dimension is comprised of two subscales, labeled *Teacher Support & Engagement* and *Adult Fairness & Respect*.

Academic Environment describes the rigor of academic expectations and students' sense of academic efficacy. Academic Environment is comprised of two subscales, labeled *Academic Standards* and *Academic Self-Confidence*.

Almost three quarters of the district's students in grades 3-11 participated in the survey. The large sample size for each level indicates that results may be interpreted with confidence.² Response rates by level are presented below.

Response Rates by School Level

	# of Respondents	Response Rate
Elementary School	16,212	86.9%
Middle School	11,137	71.0%
High School	9,429	59.4%
Total Grades 3-11	36,778	73.3%

Source: Response rates are based on Fall 2005 PEIMS enrollment data submitted to TEA for students in grades 3-11 at all regular campuses, ALC, and ACES.

¹ Students in 12th grade completed a smaller climate survey as part of the annual AISD High School Exit Survey, results of which will be available in June 2006.

² Based on the sample size and a 99% Confidence Interval, response proportions for the entire population of AISD students are likely to fall within +/- .37 percentage points at Elementary School level, +/- .66 percentage points at Middle School level, and +/- .85 percentage points at High School level.

Average response scores for each of the three dimensions and for each subscale are presented below for the past three years. Scores may range from 1 (the least desirable response) to 4 (the most desirable response). Year-to-year changes were examined for statistical effect size using Cohen's *d*.³ Changes in the same direction over the three-year period suggest a trend, but do not represent statistically meaningful differences, according to conventional standards for effect size.⁴

Average Dimension and Subscale Response, by Year and School Level

	Elementary School			Middle School			High School		
	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06
Behavioral Environment	3.03	3.04	3.04	2.51	2.51	2.55	2.50	2.51	2.52
<i>Peer Behavior</i>	2.76	2.77	2.79	2.29	2.28	2.31	2.39	2.39	2.42
<i>Behavioral Expectations</i>	3.12	3.13	3.13	2.70	2.73	2.76	2.55	2.57	2.60
<i>School Safety & Cleanliness</i>	3.27	3.27	3.27	2.62	2.61	2.66	2.58	2.60	2.60
Adult/Student Interactions	3.38	3.39	3.41	2.65	2.67	2.71	2.53	2.54	2.53
<i>Teacher Support & Engagement</i>	3.37	3.37	3.39	2.64	2.65	2.70	2.52	2.54	2.53
<i>Adult Fairness & Respect</i>	3.39	3.40	3.41	2.65	2.68	2.72	2.54	2.54	2.54
Academic Environment	3.42	3.44	3.46	2.92	2.94	2.98	2.83	2.84	2.84
<i>Academic Standards</i>	3.67	3.69	3.70	3.21	3.24	3.26	3.06	3.05	3.03
<i>Academic Self-Confidence</i>	3.34	3.36	3.39	2.83	2.85	2.90	2.76	2.77	2.79

Note: Green font indicates an increase and red font indicates a decrease in the average item response from the previous year.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Student climate is gradually improving to approach meaningful effect sizes across all levels in AISD, particularly at Middle School.
- Middle school scores increased for every dimension and subscale compared to last year, and Elementary scores increased or remained the same in all areas. Elementary climate remains higher than that for Middle and High School. Scores for two subscales, Peer Behavior and Academic Self-Confidence, increased at all three levels compared to last year.
- Compared to 2003-2004, dimension and subscale scores across all levels increased in 29 of 30 instances.
- The largest increases at Elementary and Middle School occurred in the area called Academic Self-Confidence. High School scores increased the most for Behavioral Expectations.
- The only subscale to decline since 2003-2004 is the Academic Standards subscale at the High School level.

³ See Appendix for actual effect size calculations.

⁴ Effect sizes are used to describe the statistical magnitude and direction of a change. In general, effect sizes are considered small at $d=.20$, medium at $d=.50$, and large at $d=.80$ (Coe, 2000; Valentine & Cooper, 2003). However, research indicates that these benchmarks may not adequately address the magnitude of effects in all areas because some areas, like education, are likely to have smaller effect sizes than others (Valentine & Cooper, 2003).

BEHAVIORAL ENVIRONMENT

A total of ten items on the survey assess the dimension called Behavioral Environment, the social and physical school environment, including students' peer interactions, their expectations about school rules and their enforcement, and school safety and cleanliness. Behavioral Environment is comprised of three subscales, labeled *Peer Behavior*, *Behavioral Expectations*, and *School Safety & Cleanliness*. These items may be used to assess the district's Positive Behavior Support initiative. Results for the three subscales and the individual items composing each subscale are presented below. Item numbers in each table correspond to the numbers on the survey.

Peer Behavior: This subscale contains four items that describe the respect and caring among students and the extent to which students obey the school rules.

Peer Behavior Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
1. Students in my school respect each other.
2. Students at my school respect other students who are different than they are.
3. I am happy with the way students treat me at school.
14. Students at my school obey the school rules.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1.	2.72	2.71	2.74	2.24	2.18	2.21	2.36	2.36	2.38
2.	2.82	2.86	2.87	2.18	2.19	2.22	2.30	2.27	2.28
3.	2.98	2.97	2.98	2.78	2.76	2.81	2.89	2.90	2.92
14.	2.49	2.53	2.54	1.88	1.88	1.91	1.97	1.98	2.04
All	2.76	2.77	2.79	2.29	2.28	2.31	2.39	2.39	2.42

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

Behavioral Expectations: Three items comprise this subscale, which measures the clarity and enforcement of school rules and of the consequences for rule violations.

Behavioral Expectations Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
9. Everyone knows what the school rules are.
12. The school rules are strictly enforced.
13. If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
9.	3.12	3.13	3.11	2.57	2.60	2.63	2.54	2.56	2.60
12.	3.18	3.22	3.24	2.87	2.89	2.92	2.60	2.64	2.66
13.	3.08	3.08	3.08	2.68	2.70	2.75	2.53	2.53	2.55
All	3.12	3.13	3.13	2.70	2.73	2.76	2.55	2.57	2.60

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

School Safety & Cleanliness: The three items on this subscale indicate the degree to which students feel safe at school and perceive the school as clean.

School Safety & Cleanliness Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
15. I feel safe at my school.
16. This school is clean.
17. I feel safe on the school property.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
15.	3.38	3.38	3.38	2.67	2.65	2.71	2.68	2.71	2.70
16.	3.15	3.16	3.13	2.54	2.53	2.58	2.44	2.44	2.48
17.	3.32	3.34	3.35	2.69	2.69	2.73	2.67	2.71	2.70
All	3.27	3.27	3.27	2.62	2.61	2.66	2.58	2.60	2.60

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

ADULT/STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Sixteen items on the survey assess the relationships between students and adults on campus, both inside and outside the classroom. These items may be used to monitor the district's Positive Behavior Support initiative. The Adult/Student Interactions dimension contains two subscales, labeled *Teacher Support & Engagement* and *Adult Fairness & Respect*. Results for these subscales and the individual items composing each subscale are presented below. Item numbers in each table correspond to the numbers on the survey.

Teacher Support & Engagement: This subscale consists of seven items that assess the extent to which teachers support students with academic issues and personal problems, and the level of enthusiasm that teachers display regarding their teaching.

Teacher Support & Engagement Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
18. Teachers give rewards or praise for good behavior.
31. Teachers give rewards or praise for good work.
27. My teachers are excited about what they teach.
28. My teachers seem to enjoy teaching.
36. Teachers give me the help I need with assignments.
37. My teachers are understanding when I have personal problems.
38. Teachers help students with personal problems.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
18.	3.37	3.36	3.37	2.62	2.60	2.62	2.34	2.37	2.34
31.	3.33	3.31	3.33	2.62	2.59	2.64	2.42	2.44	2.43
27.	3.36	3.38	3.41	2.66	2.70	2.76	2.61	2.59	2.60
28.	3.50	3.52	3.54	2.79	2.79	2.85	2.72	2.73	2.72
36.	3.46	3.47	3.50	2.81	2.84	2.88	2.76	2.75	2.75
37.	3.31	3.31	3.35	2.49	2.53	2.60	2.43	2.47	2.49
38.	3.33	3.35	3.38	2.48	2.50	2.56	2.38	2.41	2.43
All	3.37	3.37	3.39	2.64	2.65	2.70	2.52	2.54	2.53

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

Adult Fairness & Respect: The nine items on this subscale assess the treatment of students by teachers and other adults on campus in areas such as classroom grading, punishment for breaking the rules, and listening to ideas and opinions.

Adult Fairness & Respect Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
4. Teachers at this school care about their students.
5. Adults at this school listen to student ideas and opinions.
6. Adults at this school treat all students fairly.
7. The staff in the front office respect students.
10. The school rules are fair.
11. The punishment for breaking the rules is the same no matter who you are.
39. I get the grades that I deserve on my class work.
40. My teachers are fair with students.
41. My teachers apply classroom rules fairly to all students.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
4.	3.68	3.70	3.71	2.95	2.95	3.02	2.86	2.85	2.83
5.	3.30	3.31	3.31	2.62	2.62	2.65	2.48	2.49	2.48
6.	3.24	3.28	3.28	2.45	2.46	2.53	2.26	2.26	2.28
7.	3.58	3.60	3.60	3.04	3.02	3.04	2.70	2.75	2.74
10.	3.25	3.25	3.30	2.21	2.29	2.35	2.30	2.27	2.30
11.	3.28	3.30	3.29	2.72	2.75	2.77	2.51	2.48	2.47
39.	3.42	3.43	3.45	2.81	2.83	2.87	2.74	2.75	2.74
40.	3.36	3.38	3.40	2.53	2.57	2.63	2.51	2.53	2.53
41.	3.44	3.48	3.49	2.65	2.68	2.74	2.56	2.57	2.56
All	3.39	3.40	3.41	2.65	2.68	2.72	2.54	2.54	2.54

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

A total of fourteen items on the survey measure the rigor of academic expectations for students and students' sense of academic efficacy and progress. Two subscales, labeled *Academic Standards* and *Academic Self-Confidence*, comprise the dimension called Academic Environment. These items are designed to assess students' perceptions of AISD Board Results Policies related to academic achievement in reading, writing, speaking, and listening; identification and accomplishment of personal goals; and cooperation. In addition, items are designed to assess various Principles of Learning as defined by the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning. Results for the two subscales and the individual items composing each subscale are presented below. Item numbers in each table correspond to the numbers on the survey.

Academic Standards: Three items comprise this subscale, which measures teachers' expectations for students and their work.

Academic Standards Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
19. My teachers expect me to do my best work.
20. My teachers challenge me to do better.
21. My teachers expect me to get my homework assignments done on time.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
19.	3.77	3.79	3.80	3.31	3.33	3.36	3.13	3.12	3.09
20.	3.52	3.55	3.56	3.01	3.06	3.10	2.89	2.90	2.88
21.	3.73	3.74	3.75	3.36	3.38	3.39	3.19	3.18	3.16
All	3.67	3.69	3.70	3.21	3.24	3.26	3.06	3.05	3.03

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

Academic Self-Confidence: This subscale is comprised of eleven items that assess students' motivation, self-efficacy, and acquisition of skills in communication and self-evaluation.

Academic Self-Confidence Items and Average Responses from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Item
22. I have learned how to listen better so I can understand the ideas of other students.
23. I have learned how to explain my ideas more clearly to others in discussions.
24. I have learned how to explain my ideas in writing more clearly.
32.* I have learned to reach the goals I set for myself.
33. I have learned ways of working better in groups.
25. I feel/felt well prepared for TAKS.
30. My teachers show me ways to judge for myself the quality of my work.
34. I know whether or not my work is good without being told.
35. I have learned how to evaluate my work and keep track of my progress.
26. I try hard to do my best on my schoolwork.
29. I feel successful in my schoolwork.

Item	All Elementary			All Middle			All High		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
22.	3.38	3.40	3.41	2.82	2.85	2.89	2.82	2.81	2.83
23.	3.25	3.28	3.29	2.77	2.77	2.81	2.75	2.74	2.76
24.	3.31	3.31	3.34	2.83	2.83	2.90	2.80	2.80	2.80
32.*	n/a	n/a	3.43	n/a	n/a	2.95	n/a	n/a	2.83
33.	3.35	3.35	3.42	2.89	2.89	2.97	2.78	2.77	2.82
25.	3.41	3.46	3.48	2.80	2.79	2.85	2.53	2.69	2.73
30.	3.36	3.37	3.39	2.69	2.72	2.76	2.60	2.60	2.62
34.	3.16	3.17	3.23	2.84	2.85	2.92	2.83	2.85	2.87
35.	3.29	3.31	3.34	2.77	2.80	2.85	2.78	2.75	2.77
26.	3.65	3.67	3.68	3.14	3.18	3.22	3.00	2.97	2.96
29.	3.39	3.41	3.43	2.88	2.93	2.96	2.76	2.78	2.77
All	3.34	3.36	3.39	2.83	2.85	2.90	2.76	2.77	2.79

Note: Students rated each statement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

*This item was added to the survey in 2006.

APPENDIX

Effect Size (Cohen's *d*) for Year-to-Year Changes in Climate Subscales and Dimensions

	Elementary School			Middle School			High School		
	03-04 to 04-05	04-05 to 05-06	03-04 to 05-06	03-04 to 04-05	04-05 to 05-06	03-04 to 05-06	03-04 to 04-05	04-05 to 05-06	03-04 to 05-06
Behavioral Environment	.02	.00	.01	.00	.07	.07	.02	.02	.04
<i>Peer Behavior</i>	.01	.03	.04	-.01	.04	.03	.00	.05	.05
<i>Behavioral Expectations</i>	.01	.00	.01	.04	.04	.08	.03	.04	.07*
<i>School Safety & Cleanliness</i>	.00	.00	.00	-.01	.06	.05	.03	.00	.03
Adult/Student Interactions	.02	.04	.06	.03	.06	.09	.02	-.02	.00
<i>Teacher Support & Engagement</i>	.00	.03	.04	.01	.07	.08	.03	-.02	.01
<i>Adult Fairness & Respect</i>	.02	.02	.04	.04	.06	.10	.00	.00	.00
Academic Environment	.05	.05	.10	.03	.07	.10	.02	.00	.02
<i>Academic Standards</i>	.05	.02	.07	.04	.03	.07	-.02	-.03	-.05
<i>Academic Self-Confidence</i>	.04	.06	.11*	.03	.08	.12*	.02	.04	.06

*The largest effect sizes from 2003-04 to 2005-06 for Elementary, Middle, and High School are indicated with an asterisk.

Note: Effect sizes are used to describe the statistical magnitude and direction of a change. In general, effect sizes are considered small at $d=.20$, medium at $d=.50$, and large at $d=.80$. However, research indicates that these benchmarks may not adequately address the magnitude of effects in all areas because some areas, like education, are likely to have smaller effect sizes than others (Valentine & Cooper, 2003).

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