SUMMARY OF 2005-2006 THROUGH 2007-2008
AISD STAFF CLIMATE SURVEY RESULTS

WALNUT CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A healthy school climate is characterized by positive relationships among students, all campus staff, and the community. School climate is a key factor in several important outcomes such as student achievement, reduced violence, higher morale, and faculty trust (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002). More specifically, research in Austin ISD indicates that staff climate survey results are related to student TAKS performance in both math and reading (Schmitt, 2006; Bush-Richards, Cornetto, & Schmitt, 2008). The AISD Staff Climate Survey was developed from the research-based Organizational Climate Inventory (OCI), which measures four sub-dimensions of climate (Hoy et al., 2002) called *External Influences, Collegial Leadership, Professional Teacher Behavior,* and *Achievement Press.* In addition to the published OCI items, the staff climate survey includes a series of climate items and safety items designed for relevance to all campus staff. Related items are grouped together in *subscales*, and the average across the items is computed as a *subscale score*. Subscale scores have been averaged to provide an overall climate score.

While changes between years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 were not statistically significant, some patterns in the data were noted. Compared to last year, responses across all elementary schools were more favorable in 2007-08 for *Positive Behavior Supports*. However, elementary schools staff perceptions of *Overall Climate, Collegial Leadership, Professional Teacher Behavior, Achievement Press*, *General Climate,* and *Safety* remained unchanged. Your campus results for the OCI climate areas and for additional climate and safety items are summarized in the following report. Longitudinal results may indicate trends in staff perceptions of school climate over time. Scores flagged with up or down arrows indicate that a change from the previous year was statistically meaningful.[1] Also, some improvements were made to the campus staff climate survey instrument for 2006-2007; thus, data are not available for 2005-06 for some items as indicated in the tables with an asterisk (*).

Table 1. Survey Respondents

	2005-2006 # of Walnut Creek EL Respondents	2006-2007 # of Walnut Creek EL Respondents	2007-2008 # of Walnut Creek EL Respondents	2007-2008 # of All EL Respondents
Teacher	52	40	57	2786
Administrator or Other Non-Teaching Professional	4	3	0	373
Classified/Support Staff	3	5	8	773
Unspecified	1	2	6	288
Total	**60**	**50**	**71**	**4,220**

[1] Effect sizes (Cohen's d) were calculated using the means from 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. Effect sizes are a measure of the magnitude of the difference between two means. Mean differences were flagged as meaningful where d≥ .18.

WALNUT CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF CLIMATE SURVEY RESULTS

Table 2. Subscale Scores for OCI and Additional Subscales

	Overall Climate	External Influences	Collegial Leadership	Professional Teacher Behavior	Achievement Press	General Climate	Positive Behavior Support	Safety
Walnut Creek EL 2005-06	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Walnut Creek EL 2006-07	2.89	2.92	2.43	**3.11**	2.56	**3.00**	**3.19**	**3.19**
Walnut Creek EL 2007-08	2.94	2.61↓	2.87↑	**3.18**	2.66	**3.17↑**	**3.08**	**3.10**
All Elementary 2007-08	**3.08**	2.70	**3.05**	**3.25**	2.87	**3.17**	**3.19**	**3.17**

Note: Overall Climate and individual subscale scores may be interpreted as follows: >3.0 is positive; 2.5 to 3.0 is fair; <2.5 is not positive. ↑↓indicate increases and decreases from the previous year.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE INDEX AND OTHER SUBSCALE RESULTS

Each item was rated on a scale from **1** (*Rarely Occurs*) to **4** (*Very Frequently Occurs*)[1]. Average scores for each item and a subscale score for your school are reflected in the tables below.

External Influences. This subscale consists of 5 items that describe the extent to which the school is affected by outside influences such as parents or citizen groups. High vulnerability suggests that both teachers and principals are unprotected from external demands.

Table 3. Results for External Influences

	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
[a]4. The principal responds to pressure from parents.	*	2.36	2.49	2.23
[a]8. The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.	2.78	2.77	2.75	2.71
[a]19. Teachers feel pressure from the community.	**3.02**	**3.23**	2.90↓	2.88
[a]25. Select citizen groups are influential with the board.	2.96	2.97	2.48↓	2.79
[a]30. A few vocal parents can change school policy.	**3.36**	2.95	2.69↓	**3.02**
External Influences Subscale	*	2.92	2.61↓	2.70

[1] Respondents also had the option of marking "N/A."

Note: It is desirable to have an average response of at least 3.0, indicated in **bold** type. [a]Item was reverse-scored such that a response of "Rarely Occurs" was scored as a 4. ↑↓indicate increases and decreases from the previous year.

Collegial Leadership. This subscale consists of 7 items that address the degree to which the principal meets the social needs of the faculty as well as works toward achieving the goals of the school. Collegial leadership involves treating teachers and staff as professional colleagues, with openness, egalitarianism, and friendliness, but at the same time setting clear expectations and standards for performance.

Table 4. Results for Collegial Leadership

	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
1. The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.	2.64	2.16	2.90↑	**3.00**
9. The principal puts suggestions made by faculty into operation.	*	2.04	2.52↑	2.70
10. The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.	2.37	1.81	2.50↑	2.93
15. The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.	**3.38**	**3.26**	**3.43↑**	**3.25**
17. The principal is willing to make changes.	*	2.38	2.57↑	2.93
21. The principal maintains definite standards for performance.	*	**3.12**	**3.32↑**	**3.22**
34. The principal is friendly and approachable.	2.55	2.10	2.79↑	**3.21**
Collegial Leadership Subscale	*	2.43	2.87↑	**3.05**

Professional Teacher Behavior. This subscale consists of 8 items that address the degree to which there is respect for colleagues' competence, commitment to students, autonomous judgment, and mutual cooperation and support among the faculty.

Table 5. Results for Professional Teacher Behavior

	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
3. Teachers help and support each other.	*	**3.08**	**3.18**	**3.28**
11. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	*	2.94	**3.02**	**3.15**
13. The interactions between faculty members are cooperative.	*	2.98	**3.08**	**3.15**
16. Teachers in this school exercise professional judgment.	*	**3.24**	**3.06↓**	**3.25**
20. Teachers "go the extra mile" with their students.	*	**3.65**	**3.45↓**	**3.39**
22. Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.	*	2.79	**3.06↑**	**3.09**
32. Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	2.78	2.61	**3.03↑**	**3.06**
35. Teachers show commitment to their students.	**3.48**	**3.52**	**3.44**	**3.47**
Professional Teacher Behavior Subscale	*	**3.11**	**3.18**	**3.25**

Note: It is desirable to have an average response of at least 3.0, indicated in **bold** type. [a]Item was reverse-scored such that a response of "Rarely Occurs" was scored as a 4. ↑↓indicate increases and decreases from the previous year.

Achievement Press. This subscale consists of 8 items that describe the extent to which the school has set high but achievable academic standards and goals. Achievement press is marked by students who persist, strive to achieve, and are respected by each other and teachers for their academic successes. In addition, this subscale measures the extent to which parents, teachers, and principals exert pressure for high standards and school improvement.

Table 6. Results for Achievement Press

	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	*	**3.44**	**3.46**	**3.47**
5. Teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	*	**3.21**	**3.28**	**3.40**
6. Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards.	*	1.87	1.90	2.38
7. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	*	2.50	2.58	**3.26**
12. Parents press for school improvement.	*	1.73	1.79	2.24
14. Students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	*	2.71	**3.06↑**	**3.11**
18. Students respect others who get good grades.	**3.04**	2.81	2.81	2.96
24. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	1.95	1.89	2.05↑	2.13
31. Students try hard to improve on previous work.	2.61	2.35	2.71↑	2.67
33. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	**3.05**	2.96	**3.15↑**	**3.08**
Achievement Press Subscale	*	2.56	2.66	2.87

General Climate. In addition to the OCI items, the survey also included 7 climate items that measure the extent to which all campus staff are friendly towards each other and work towards clear, common goals.

Table 7. Results for General Climate

	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
23. Campus staff are friendly to each other.	**3.10**	**3.16**	**3.29**
26. Campus staff exhibit pride in their affiliation with the school.	2.73	**3.13↑**	**3.14**
27. Campus staff are willing to go out of their way to help.	**3.00**	**3.20↑**	**3.20**
28. Campus staff accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	2.60	**3.02↑**	**3.06**
29. Campus staff are committed to their jobs.	**3.31**	**3.25**	**3.31**
36. The goals of my school are made clear.	**3.32**	**3.37**	**3.27**
37. AISD works toward common goals.	2.92	2.79	2.84
General Climate Subscale	**3.00**	**3.17↑**	**3.17**

Note: It is desirable to have an average response of at least 3.0, indicated in **bold** type. [a]Item was reverse-scored such that a response of "Rarely Occurs" was scored as a 4. ↑↓indicate increases and decreases from the previous year.

Frequency of Selected Student Behaviors. This subscale measures the frequency of selected undesirable student behaviors. The items were rated on a scale of 0 (*Never Happens*) to 4 (*Happens Daily*). Average scores for each item are shown in the table that follows.

Table 8. Results for Frequency of Undesirable Student Behaviors

To the best of your knowledge, how often do the following events occur at your school?	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
38. Student racial tension	**1.07**	**1.12**	**1.03**	**0.88**
39. Student bullying	**1.90**	2.20	**1.77↓**	**1.66**
40. Widespread disorder in classrooms	**0.81**	**1.02**	**0.87↓**	**0.95**
41. Student acts of disrespect for Teachers	**1.41**	**1.82**	**1.38↓**	**1.54**
42. Student acts of disrespect for Nonteaching Professional or Administrative Staff	**1.48**	**1.86**	**1.51↓**	**1.41**
43. Student acts of disrespect for Classified or Support Staff	**1.42**	**1.84**	**1.54↓**	**1.37**
44. Gang activities	**0.49**	**0.56**	**0.69**	**0.41**

Prevalence of Selected Student Behaviors. This subscale measures the prevalence of selected undesirable student behaviors. Items were rated on a scale of 0 (*None*) to 5 (*All*). Average scores for each item are shown in the table that follows.

Table 9. Results for Prevalence of Undesirable Student Behaviors

To the best of your knowledge, how many students at your school display behaviors that contribute to the following events?	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
47. Student racial tension	**1.09**	**1.18**	**1.03↓**	**0.88**
48. Student bullying	**1.59**	**1.59**	**1.54**	**1.37**
49. Widespread disorder in classrooms	**1.02**	**1.10**	**1.13**	**1.05**
50. Student acts of disrespect for Teachers	**1.29**	**1.41**	**1.37**	**1.33**
51. Student acts of disrespect for Nonteaching Professional or Administrative Staff	**1.23**	**1.41**	**1.32**	**1.24**
52. Student acts of disrespect for Classified or Support Staff	**1.36**	**1.39**	**1.37**	**1.22**
53. Gang activities	**0.60**	**0.63**	**0.71**	**0.46**

Note: It is desirable to have an average response of *less than 2.0*, indicated in **bold** type. ↑↓ Indicate increases and decrease in the frequency of each behavior from the previous year.

Safety. The frequency and prevalence of undesirable student behaviors have been combined to form a score that indicates the overall staff perception of student behaviors. Scores have been converted to range from 1 (least desirable) to 4 (most desirable).

Table 10. Results for Safety Subscale Score

	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07	Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08	All EL Average 2007-08
Safety Subscale Score	*	**3.19**	**3.10**	**3.17**

Positive Student Behaviors and Staff Reinforcement of Positive Student Behaviors.
This subscale measures the frequency and prevalence of positive student behavior and staff reinforcement of positive behaviors. Average scores for each item are shown in the table that follows.

Table 11. Results for Positive Student Behavior and Behavior Support

To the best of your knowledge, how often do the following events occur at your school?	**Walnut Creek EL Avg 2005-06**	**Walnut Creek EL Avg 2006-07**	**Walnut Creek EL Avg 2007-08**	**All EL Average 2007-08**
45.[a] Commendable student behavior	**3.51**	**3.42**	**3.18**↓	**3.25**
46.[a] Staff reinforcement of commendable student behavior	**3.39**	**3.18**	**3.12**	**3.27**
To the best of your knowledge, how many students or staff exhibit the following behaviors?				
54.[b] Commendable student behavior	**3.36**	**3.19**	2.99↓	**3.16**
55.[b] Staff reinforcement of commendable student behaviors	**3.71**	**3.65**	**3.62**	**3.79**
Positive Behavior Support Subscale Score*	*	**3.19**	**3.08**	**3.19**

Note: It is desirable to have an average response of *greater than 3.0*, indicated in **bold** type. ↑↓ Indicate increases and decrease in the frequency of each behavior from the previous year.[a] Items were rated on a scale of 0 (*Never Happens*) to 4 (*Happens Daily*). [b] Items were rated on a scale of 0 (*None*) to 5 (*All*). *Subscale scores represent a combination of items and have been converted to range from 1 (least desirable) to 4 (most desirable).

UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE RESULTS OF YOUR STAFF CLIMATE SURVEY

Campuses with higher Overall Climate scores, as represented by the table shown at the top of page 2, are characterized by more positive relationships among the administrators, staff, teachers, and students. Campuses with a strong climate are also better able to direct their energy toward the mission of setting high, achievable standards for students than campuses with lower climate scores. If your school's Overall Climate score is over 3.0, it means that according to self-report by campus staff, your campus has a relatively positive school environment. Although this is a commendable position, campus administrators and leaders should be challenged to continue to improve the climate at their schools to create an even better environment for teaching and learning. If your school's Overall Climate percentile is below 2.5, it means that your campus does not have a positive school climate. Scores between 2.5 and 3.0 indicate a fair school climate.

The first step in improving campus climate is to look at your school's score for each of the climate subscales (shown in Table 2 on page 2). These will help you to identify areas where staff ratings are high or low compared to desired subscale scores. To most efficiently improve campus climate, it is beneficial to focus on those dimensions with the lowest scores. Once you have identified the dimensions with the lowest scores, the individual items contributing to those subscale scores should be studied. By looking at these individual items and their average responses, you can determine possible areas for campus improvement. (Subscale items with the lowest average responses should be considered first for improvement.) Often, improving climate in one dimension will have a positive effect on other dimensions.

Be sure to examine your school's average responses to the general climate and safety items. These items assess climate information that all campus staff can rate. Because the survey is a measure of the opinions and perceptions of all campus staff, it is suggested that representatives of all staff positions be included in planning and improvement processes.

Unlike the items in the OCI where the goal is to increase item average responses, for the Safety Related items those with *high* average responses for your school should be targeted for improvement. Focus should be on those undesirable student behaviors that are both most frequent and most widespread (high average responses for both frequency and prevalence). For Positive Student Behaviors and Staff Reinforcement of Positive Student Behaviors items, improvement efforts should be focused on items with the *lowest* average response scores.

Each principal will be provided with a step-by-step guide to interpreting survey results within the campus context, along with a slide presentation template that can be populated with highlights from campus survey results. The presentation should be shared with campus staff and Campus Advisory Councils to inform campus improvement planning.

References

Bush-Richards, A., Cornetto, K., & Schmitt, L (2008). Summary of 2005-2006 through 2007-2008 AISD Staff Climate Survey Results (DPE Publication No. 07.23). Austin, TX. Austin Independent School District Department of Program Evaluation.

Hoy, W. K., Smith, P. A., & Sweetland, S. R. (2002). The development of the organizational climate index for high schools: Its measure and relationship to faculty trust. *The High School Journal, 86,* 38-49.

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