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CARES 2018–2019 Evaluation Summary
A Brief Review of the First Year of Implementation

Introduction

Purpose of CARES Evaluation

The purpose of the 2018–2019 CARES evaluation was to (a) help program staff conceptualize the CARES implementation work and goals; (b) define measurable indicators of implementation, outputs, and outcomes; and (c) provide summative data on the first year of program implementation. The CARES program is intended to help the district adhere to Core Belief Two of the *AISD Strategic Plan 2015–2020*.

Program Goals

The goal of AISD CARES is to create a culture of exceptional customer experiences for AISD students, families, community members, and staff. Essential to the program is the belief that reaching the goal will lead to longer-term positive outcomes, such as improvements in district and campus culture and increases in student enrollment and staff retention. The work, goal, and desired outcomes of AISD CARES are outlined in the theory of change (ToC) graphic in Figure 1. The ToC graphic, along with a vision statement, issue statement, and ToC statement were developed in collaboration with the CARES team as a means to help conceptualize and create greater visibility for the CARES program.

Figure 1.

The AISD CARES Theory of Change
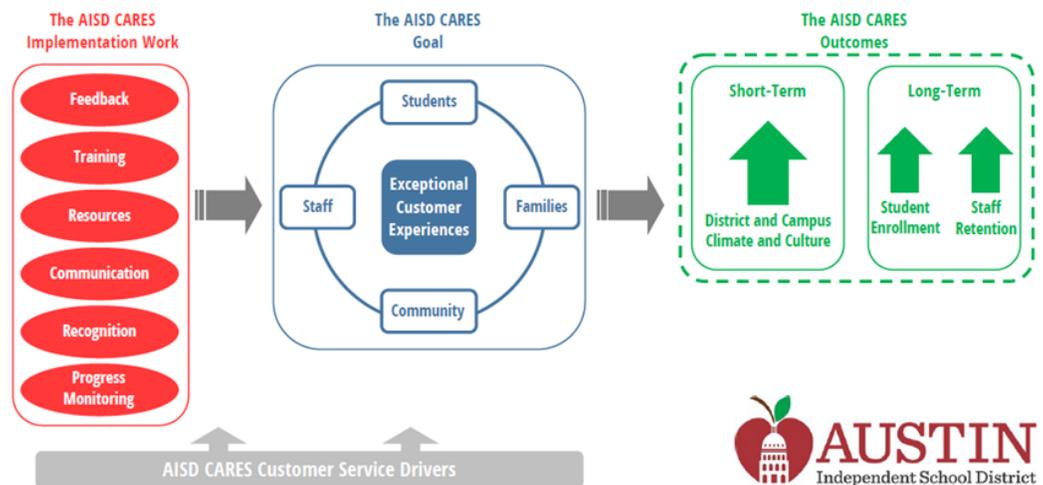
Source. AISD CARES Theory of Change, version 11.3, last revised on December 19, 2018.

Results of Program Evaluation Activities

Results of the 2018–2019 CARES program evaluation activities were organized into four reporting areas: conceptualization of CARES, evaluation of implementation activities, baseline measurement of customer experiences, and exploratory correlation analyses. For the purposes of this report and in alignment with the bulk of the 2018–2019 CARES work, the results emphasize the implementation of CARES activities and the overall baseline customer experience scores.

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Evaluation of Implementation Activities

The evaluation of implementation activities helped to discern which pieces and parts of AISD CARES were in place and operating effectively. Thorough analyses of the CARES implementation work identified six primary areas of focus: (a) feedback, (b) training, (c) resources, (d) communication, (e) recognition, and (f) progress monitoring. Specifically, five customer experience feedback tools were created and launched under CARES in 2018–2019. These five feedback tools required collaborating with vendors and other AISD departments, creating and using rubrics, disseminating information to campuses, and making campus visits to complete audits. Seven trainings also were developed and made available for staff, through the Human Capital Platform (HCP) for online or face-to-face delivery. Implementing the feedback and training work were major successes of year 1 of AISD CARES and will continue to provide value in year 2 and beyond.

Feedback Implementation Work of AISD CARES

Table 1.

The feedback implementation work of CARES in 2018–2019 involved customer service walkthroughs, customer service audits, mystery calls, Let's Talk!, and principal dashboards.

CARES feedback implementation work	Summary of implementation
Customer service walkthroughs	• **Checklist developed and offered to 121 campuses** • **36 campuses participated in one walkthrough, 7 participated in two walkthroughs, and 78 did not participate**
Customer service audits	• **Rubric developed, and 121 campuses received an in-person fall and spring audit** • **Average fall score was 76.4 out of 100** • **Average spring score was 75.4 out of 100** • **On average, campuses earned 38 points out of 50 possible**
Mystery calls	• **All 121 participating campuses received three mystery calls** • **Average scores on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd calls were 56.9%, 65.7%, and 65.3%, respectively** • **On average, campuses earned 18.8 points out of 30 possible**
Let's Talk! (LT!)	• **1,330 dialogues submitted** • **Average dialogue age was 1/2 of a day** • **Average satisfaction score was 9.1 out of 10** • **86% (n = 1,149) of the dialogues were questions, 9% were concerns (n = 118), and 5% were miscellaneous (n = 63)**
eCST Principal dashboard	• **Provides principals with access to customer service audit data; HR Exit Survey data; Family Leaver Survey data; staff completion of AISD CARES training; and select items from the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Survey, Family Survey, and Student Climate Survey**

Training Implementation Work of AISD CARES

Table 2.

The training implementation work of CARES in 2018–2019 involved developing online and face-to-face training, offering individualized trainings to departments upon request, developing customer service introductory information for onboarding, delivering CARES audit training, and delivering Let's Talk! training to points of contact.

| CARES training implementation work	Summary of implementation
Online and face-to-face CARES training development	• Two online trainings developed and accessible in HCP • Five face-to-face trainings developed and available to be delivered by request • 1,948 AISD staff completed at least one training

Individualized, requested face-to-face training delivery	• Six requests for individualized training in 2018–2019
	  • Two abbreviated, individualized trainings delivered to two departments covering 842 AISD staff
	  • Four full individualized trainings delivered to four departments covering 58 AISD staff

Onboarding	• CARES customer service introductory information developed for employee onboarding process
Let's Talk! training for points of contact	• Let's Talk! points of contact participated in pilot training on use of the system

Baseline Customer Service Measures

Perceptions of Customer Service

Customer service-related items from the Family Survey, TELL Survey, and the Student Climate Survey were used as proxies for measuring multiple perspectives of the customer experience within AISD. While 22 items in total were used from surveys to assess customer experience, Figure 2 provides the average response to an item from the Family Survey that represents the more general customer experience for families in the district.

Figure 2.

2018-2019 marked the first year of full implementation of AISD CARES. Families of students at elementary, middle, and high schools on average rated the item "I consistently receive good customer service" relatively high, between 3.0 and 3.5 implying that family respondents on average agreed they received good customer service.
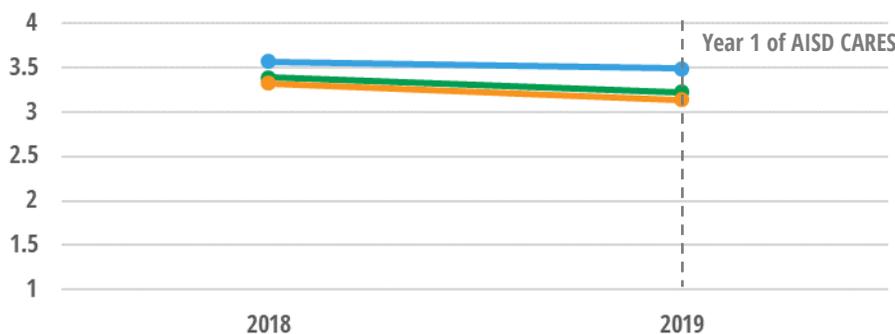
*Source.* AISD Family Survey, 2017–2018 and 2018–2019.
Note. Items rated on a 1–4 Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree.

Customer Service Scores

All campuses received an overall customer service score out of 100 possible points based on a rubric that weighted walkthrough scores 20%, audit scores 50%, and mystery call scores 30%. A score of 75 points was considered passing. Figure 3 displays more details of the customer service scores for each level and for the district overall.

Figure 3.

High schools had the highest customer experience scores, followed by **elementary schools** and **middle schools**. The **district** had an overall customer experience score of 60.83.
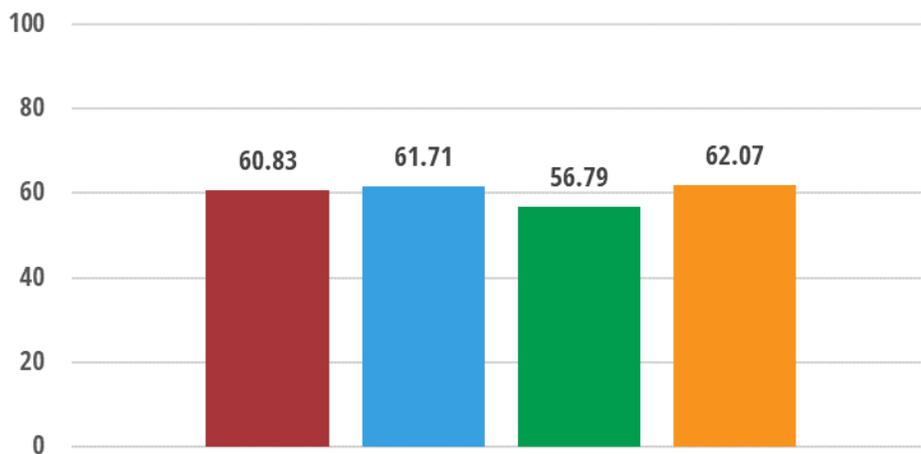
Recommendations and Next Steps

In 2019–2020, implementation activities and evaluation activities will be closely aligned with the 2019–2020 Superintendent's Initiative regarding building a culture of respect. The AISD CARES customer service model will be expanded in 2019–2020, with actions focusing on (a) executing a strategic communication plan to create greater awareness of CARES initiatives and recognition of high-performing employees and campuses; (b) providing more formative feedback to principals; (c) implementing LT! and mystery calls in customer-facing central office departments; and (d) developing additional trainings for both new hires and incumbents that embed components of cultural proficiency, equity, and AISD customer service standards. It is recommended that stakeholders continue to be educated on the purposes and goals of the CARES program, as well as be afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on their perceptions of the program. In addition to having the opportunity to provide feedback, in 2019–2020 principals will also receive feedback about customer experience in real time through QR code surveys made available to campus visitors. Additionally, the district should consider if CARES trainings can be made mandatory to increase the customer service efficacy of AISD staff. Lastly, more information regarding the importance of cultivating a culture focused on high-quality customer service as a means to achieve positive organizational and student outcomes should be provided to stakeholders to increase clarity and buy-in.