2016-17 Student Experience Survey

Namrita Chawla, M.P.P. EA17-542-4

At-a-Glance

As a component of the Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI), the Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) conducted a student experience survey in grades 3-12. The survey asked questions about students' experiences in the classroom with specific teachers. The district conducted this survey to 1) better understand the experiences and instructional needs of its students and 2) evaluate and improve teacher effectiveness in the District.

Background and Goals

The student perception survey was developed by Panorama Education under the leadership of Dr. Hunter Gehlbach, Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dallas ISD has administered the survey since 2014-15. The survey includes questions related to five topics: Expectations and Rigor, Student Engagement, Classroom Environment, Supportive Relationships, Pedagogical Effectiveness.

To assist teachers in improving their survey results, teachers had access to a peer-to-peer learning platform called Playbook. Playbook was designed by Panorama and works in conjunction with the survey.

Sampling

The sampling process randomly assigned surveys to students to maximize the number of surveys each teacher received until all eligible students on each campus were assigned two surveys. Surveys were first maximized for teachers with low enrollments, and then for remaining teachers. If a student had only one eligible teacher, the student received one survey. On average, 27 elementary students and 32 secondary students survey were assigned to take surveys per teacher.

Survey Administration

The survey for secondary students (grades 6-12) had 26 questions, and the elementary survey (grades 3-5) had 21 questions. Both were available to all students in English and Spanish. Students in schools with a large Burmese population were also provided Burmese surveys.

All campuses were required to administer the survey on paper between April 10 and April 21. The week of April 17 was the regular survey administration window, however, campuses could administer surveys early, during the week of April 10, if they had already received their materials. Survey results were available on School Net the week of May 22.

Training for Test Coordinators

District test coordinators were responsible for managing survey administration at their campuses and received training on protocols in early April.

After the training, test coordinators were asked to complete a survey about the quality of the training and the effectiveness of the trainers. Over 95 percent responded positively to most of the questions on the survey. They indicated that the training was relevant to their work and that they were prepared to implement the survey. They also indicated that the training was well-structured with useful materials. About 15 percent of test coordinators said they would not attend the training again next year, if given the choice, which may be due to the fact that this was the second or third year many of them had received this training.

Eligibility Criteria for Participants

Most teachers with rostered classrooms in grades 3-12 who were listed as the Teacher of Record in the district database were eligible to participate. Students had to meet criteria based on attendance, special education status, and language proficiency. They must have attended class with the teacher for a sufficient period of time and have been able to understand and take the survey in English or Spanish (or Burmese, for select campuses).

For more information on survey administration, please see the Student Experience Survey Fact Sheet available at http://tei.dallasisd.org/download/5438/.

Irregularity Reports

There were four elementary campuses that reported irregularities related to the administration of the student survey. Three were reports of teachers influencing student responses and one was a report of a teacher who questioned students about how they responded after the survey was administered.

Per the recommendation of principals and test coordinators at the campuses, survey results for teachers involved in two of these cases were suppressed.

Scoring

Survey forms with fewer than 30% of items answered were classified as incomplete and excluded. For every question on the survey, the percentage of "favorable" responses were calculated. For questions with five possible responses, the top two answers were considered favorable. For questions with seven possible responses, the top three answers were considered favorable. Non-responses, or "blanks," were not counted.

For every survey topic (e.g., *Classroom Environment*), a *topic score* and *overall score* was calculated. The *topic score* was the average of favorable-response percentages across all topic items. The *overall score* was the average of the favorable-response percentages across all survey items.

Point Assignment

Teachers were only eligible to receive student survey results if at least ten students took surveys about their classroom. For eligible teachers, points were assigned based on their overall scores ranked by group. There were four groups of teachers: elementary with core courses, elementary with non-core courses, middle, and high.

Table 1: Target Distribution Points

Point value	0	3	6	9	12	15
Percentage of teachers	3%	12%	25%	40%	12%	8%

Teachers' percentile ranks within their group determined the number of points earned. Points for the student survey score were assigned based on the target distribution as defined in Table 1. For teachers with data from more than one group, an average of points from each group, weighted by the number of students in the group, was used to calculate the total number of points assigned.

Outcomes

As shown in Table 2, 180,318 surveys were administered, and 6,276 teachers in grades 3-12 received survey scores as a component of their evaluation.

Table 2: Frequencies by Survey Type

Survey Category	Surveys Administered	Eligible Teachers
Elementary	66,397	2,469
Secondary	115,044	3,835
Total	180,318	6,304*

**28 teachers taught courses in both elementary and secondary.*

Results by Topic

In 2017, survey categories Pedagogical Effectiveness and Expectations and Rigor received the most positive feedback in elementary schools (see Figure 1), while Classroom Environment and Expectations and Rigor received the most positive feedback in secondary schools (see Figure 2). In elementary school, Supportive Relationships received the lowest score, while Student Engagement received the lowest score in secondary schools. This is consistent with the previous year's results.

Figure 1: Elementary Results by Topic

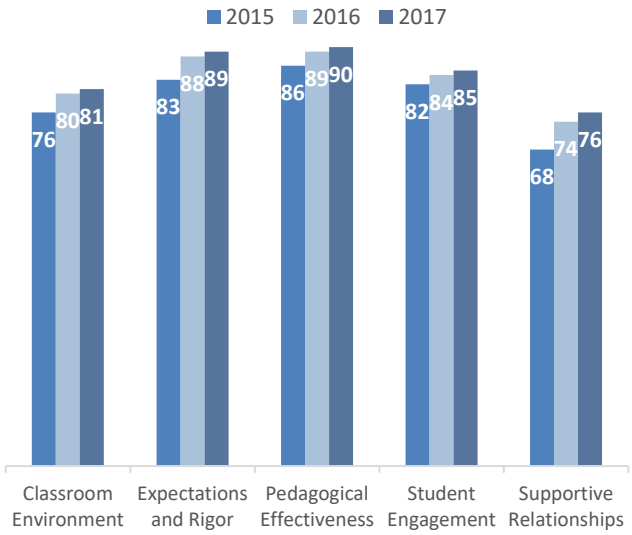
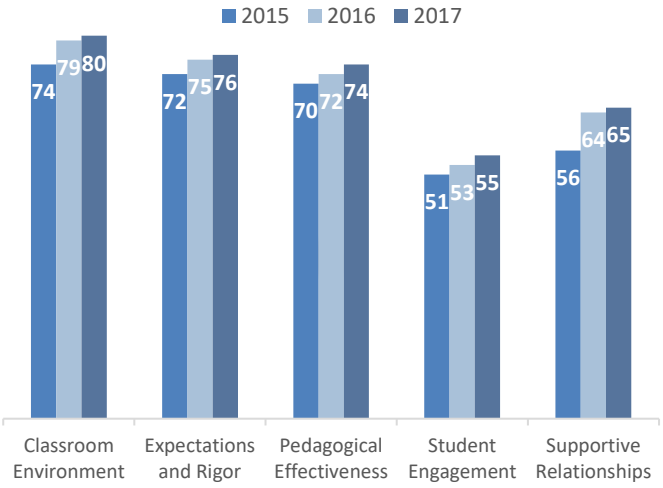


Figure 2: Secondary Results by Topic



As was the case in previous years, elementary school teachers had more favorable student feedback for all topics compared to secondary teachers. In 2017, Student Engagement showed the widest gap between the two groups (30 percent), followed by Pedagogical Effectiveness (16 percent).

Compared to 2016, there was a small (1 to 2 percentage points) increase in the percentage of teachers scoring favorably in all five topics at both elementary and secondary schools.

Point Assignment

Teachers' overall survey scores were ranked by group to assign the points earned for the TEI Student Experience Component. As has been discussed, percentile rank was calculated for each teacher (see Table 1), which determined the number of points earned. Table 3 displays the average survey score by group, as well as the range of survey scores and points earned by group.

Elementary school teachers of core subjects had the highest average survey scores, 86 percent, while high school teachers had the lowest scores at 68 percent. This is reflected in the range of scores that correspond to points for each group. For example, an elementary core teacher with a score of 83 percent favorable would earn 6 points, while an elementary non-core or high teacher would earn 9 points and a middle teacher would earn 12 points.

Table 3: Average Score and Points Assigned by Group

	Elem (Core)	Elem (Non-Core)	Middle	High
Average	86	79	71	68
Points				
0	0-65	0-54	0-39	0-39
3	66-76	55-67	40-53	40-55
6	77-85	68-76	54-66	56-69
9	86-95	77-87	67-80	70-84
12	96-98	88-92	81-85	85-89
15	99-100	93-100	86-100	90-100

Professional Development

Playbook is an online learning platform that has been available to teachers since the district began administering surveys in 2014-15. It is utilized by approximately 200 school districts across the country and based on a peer-to-peer model that allows teachers to share strategies with one another to improve their students' experiences in their classrooms.

Table 4: Playbook Participation for Teachers

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Users	584	1,029	1,598
Active users*	71	171	915
Total	655	1,200	2,513

** The number of users with multiple sessions.*

As shown in Table 4, teacher participation in Playbook has been low in previous years. In an effort to improve participation rates this school year, executive directors were trained on how to use student survey reports and Playbook. Additionally, an online module was available through the 2017 Personalize Professional Learning & Development Summer as of June 26, 2017.

Summary and Recommendations

Overall, scores for elementary and secondary teachers increased this year across all topics. Like last year, elementary teachers scored highest in Pedagogical Effectiveness and lowest in Supportive Relationships. Secondary teachers scored highest in Classroom Effectiveness and lowest in Student Engagement.

The following recommendations are based on the district's experience administering the survey:

- **Provide additional training to prevent testing irregularities.** Provide additional guidelines and materials for test coordinators and teachers related to having appropriate conversations with students about the survey. This should be done to prevent teachers from influencing student responses.
- **Continue to provide professional development opportunities.** Provide information about reports and Playbook to administrators and teachers through training opportunities in the summer and as requested or needed throughout the year.

For more information, please contact the Office of Institutional Research at studentsurvey@dallasisd.org.

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Dallas ISD
Department of Evaluation and Assessment
H. B. Bell School Support Service Center
2909 N. Buckner Blvd.
Box 10
Dallas, TX 75228