

Using Survey Data to Improve the School's System of Support

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Use Survey Data to Make Decisions

Staff members, students, and parents can provide valuable information about school settings, situations, policies, and procedures through surveys.

Some advantages of surveys:

- Surveys are a relatively easy way to get information from many people.
- Surveys are confidential.
- Online surveys are available 24/7 and results are available almost immediately.
- Reports allow you to view responses by grade, race/ethnicity, and gender.

Some limitations of surveys:

- They measure people's perceptions, not objective facts.
- Results must be considered cautiously to avoid inaccurate conclusions.
- They can be time-consuming and logistically challenging to administer, especially for large schools.
- Most good online surveys are not free—they must be purchased.

Initial Decisions

- Who will take the surveys?
- What surveys will we use?
- When will we administer the surveys?
- How will we administer the surveys?

Who will take the surveys?

- All Staff—certified, uncertified, itinerant, part-time
- All Students—Grades 3 and above
- Parents—if practical to do so

What surveys will we use?

Look for reliable, validated surveys.

- TRENDS® Climate & Safety Surveys
<https://pacificnwpublish.com/products/Climate-&-Safety-Surveys.html>

- California Healthy Kids Survey, California School Climate Survey, and California School Parent Survey
<http://chks.wested.org/>
- PRIDE Surveys
<http://www.pridesurveys.com/>
- SurveyMonkey
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/education-surveys/>

If you are interested in what makes a survey reliable and valid, check out the information at: <http://www.statpac.com/survey-design-guidelines.htm>

When will we administer the surveys?

Best times:

- Midfall
- Midwinter

Avoid:

- Very early and very late in the school year
- Testing periods.

How will we administer the surveys?

The more consistent the administration, the more reliable the results.

- Give consistent instructions to all survey takers.
- Have surveys available for a relatively short time (two weeks maximum).
- Consider the availability of computers.

Staff

- Schedule surveys into a staff meeting or inservice day.
- Staff can take web-based surveys on their personal computers.
- Provide computers in school.

Students

Schedule each class for a half hour or so in the computer lab.

Parents

- Schedule surveys into PTA meetings or parent-teacher conferences.
- Have computers available in school.
- Send informational letters home.



Parents/Guardians of Pine Middle School—we need your opinion!

Our school is committed to providing a safe and encouraging place for your child. You can help us continue to make improvements to our school by completing a short online survey.

Students in grades 3–12 and all staff at every school in the district are participating in the TRENDS® Climate and Safety Survey. We want to know what *you* think, too. All responses are anonymous. The resulting data will allow us to see if the three groups—parents/guardians, students, and staff—agree or disagree about important issues. We will be able to identify what we are doing well and what we need to work on, such as safety in a particular location of the school, students' understanding of the expectations for behavior, or communication with families.

It's quick and easy!

- The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.
- It's available online, 24 hours a day for two weeks—Oct. 15 through Oct. 29.
- You can complete it on any computer with Internet access—at home, work, the public library, or our school. We will have computers available in the front office and in the school library.
- Just one parent or guardian from each household should take it.
- You can choose to read the survey in English or Spanish.
- Examples of questions:
 - Are staff members supportive of students?
 - Are families informed about the rules and expectations for student behavior?
 - Are student cliques a problem at this school?

Here's how!

Go online to <http://www.NotARealURL/PineSchool/>
(Use Internet Explorer or Safari browser)

Enter the User ID: PineMSXX

Enter the Password: parent

Be sure you complete every page of the survey until you reach the final page that says "Survey Complete." Then click Close.

The survey is available from Monday, Oct. 15, through Friday, Oct. 29.

Thank you! If you have any questions about the survey, please feel free to call the school office.

Example of a letter about surveys to parents

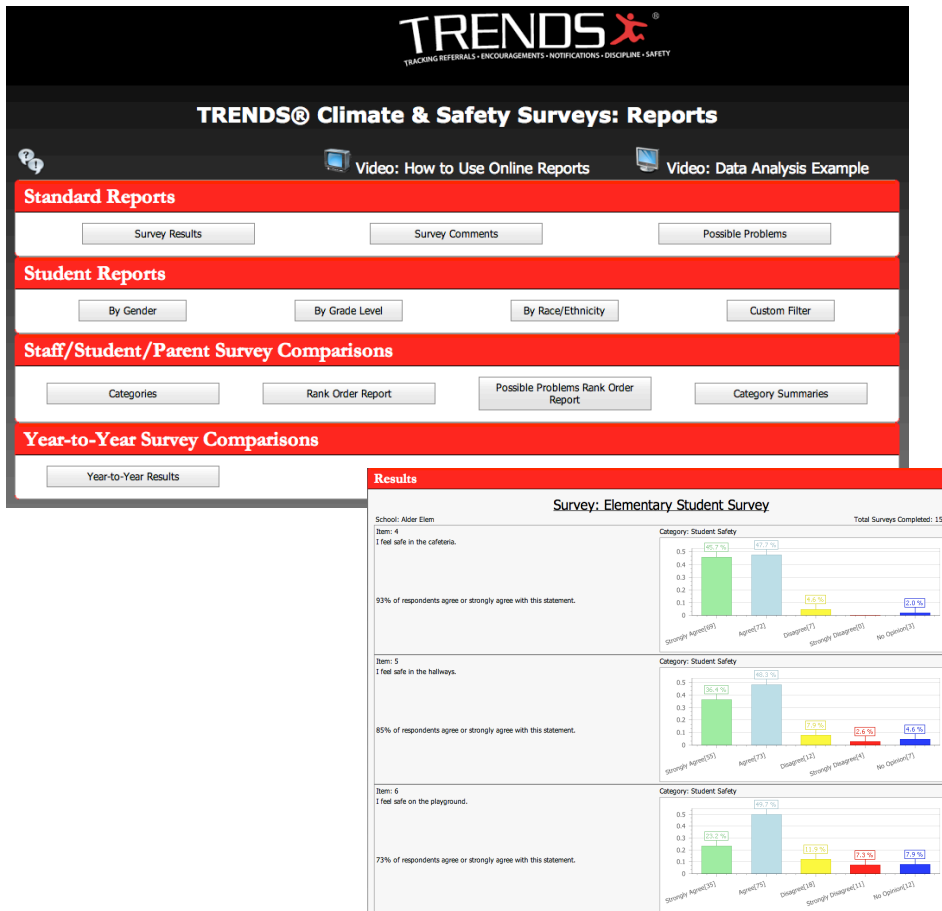
Interpret Survey Results

Examples from TRENDS® Climate & Safety Surveys

Available reports:

- by individual questions
- grouped by gender, grade, or race/ethnicity
- compare staff, students, and parent responses
- compare data from different years
- grouped by broad categories of issues, including:
 - bullying
 - bus and transport to/from school
 - harassment
 - location (separately by cafeteria, classroom, hallways, playground, etc.)
 - parent/family perceptions of school
 - possible problems
 - respectful interactions
 - rules, expectations, and procedures (for classroom and schoolwide)
 - staff interactions and perceptions
 - staff–student interactions

- student safety
- student/parent comfort communicating with staff
- students' feelings about school
- student-student interactions



TRENDS® Climate & Safety Surveys reports home page and an example of a report

Examples of questions that you should try to answer as you look at your data set are, for example:

- Are there any safety concerns that need to be addressed?
- What concerns are most urgent for staff?
- What are the biggest strengths and weaknesses in the school as perceived by parents?
- What category of concern is most significant to students?
- What locations are students concerned about? What subgroup of students is most concerned?
- What are the biggest discrepancies in perceptions between staff, students, and parents?

Plan for analyzing survey responses:

1. Analyze the responses from each major group (staff, students, parents) separately.
2. Identify specific items (and/or categories) for which the responses of one or more of the subgroups indicate a cause for concern. Compare the responses of the various subgroups to determine whether items (or categories) of concern represent a problem for all or just some members of the major group.

Example: The Student Report by Race/Ethnicity indicates that 53% of Black/African American students agree with the statement “Staff members treat students fairly,” while 74% of Hispanic students and 81% of White students agree with the statement.

Example: The Student Report by Gender indicates that 66% of girls agree with the statement “I feel safe in the hallways,” while 94% of boys agree with the statement.

3. Compare the responses of the major groups with each other and identify locations or issues to target as improvement priorities.

Example: The Category Summaries Report indicates that 98% of staff responded positively to items in the category Parent/Family Perceptions of School, while only 58% of parents responded positively.

Example: The Possible Problems Rank Order Report indicates large discrepancies between staff, student, and parent responses to the question “Is drug/alcohol/tobacco use by students a problem at this school?”

Item	Question	Category	Staff % Agree	Student % Agree Δ	Staff-Student Discrepancy
14	Students treat each other respectfully in the hallways. [Staff]	Student-Student Interactions	50.0	48.4	1.6
28	If students have a problem they can't solve on their own, they know they can go to a staff member (e.g., teacher, counselor, principal) for help. [Staff]	Staff-Student Interactions	91.7	48.4	43.3
13	Students treat each other respectfully in the cafeteria. [Staff]	Student-Student Interactions	66.7	51.6	15.1
21	Staff members are kind to students. [Staff]	Staff-Student Interactions	91.7	51.6	40.1
19	Students treat each other respectfully in their classrooms. [Staff]	Student-Student Interactions	58.3	54.8	3.5
24	Staff members treat students fairly. [Staff]	Staff-Student Interactions	91.7	54.8	36.8
42	Students are proud to be part of this school. [Staff]	Students' Feelings About School	8.3	54.8	46.5
17	Students treat each other respectfully in the bus loading/unloading areas. [Staff]	Student-Student Interactions	66.7	58.1	8.6
20	Students treat staff members respectfully. [Staff]	Staff-Student Interactions	58.3	58.1	0.3
27	Staff members let students know when they do things right. [Staff]	Staff-Student Interactions	83.3	58.1	25.3
39	For most classes, teachers do a good job of making sure students know how they can get help if they fall behind. [Staff]	Rules, Expectations, and Procedures	100.0	58.1	41.9

TRENDS Climate & Safety Surveys Rank Order Report (partial) from an urban high school, sorted by *Student % Agree*

- Large staff-student discrepancy—see items 28, 21, 24, 42, 27, and 39
- Staff need to rethink how they interact with students and make an effort to establish an overall more respectful and positive schoolwide climate.
- Item 42— School pride should be an improvement priority in this school. Staff need to know that over half of students are proud of their school.

Item Δ	Question	Staff % Mod/Ser	Student % Mod/Ser	Staff-Student Discrepancy
54	Does student misbehavior in classrooms (such as disruptions) make it difficult for students to learn at this school? [Staff]	20.6	42.7	22.1
55	Is inappropriate student language a problem at this school? [Staff]	8.8	47.2	38.4
56	Is inappropriate student dress a problem at this school? [Staff]	5.9		
57	Is inappropriate sexual contact between students a problem at this school? [Staff]	0.0		
58	Does this school have a problem with students having weapons? [Staff]	0.0	12.9	12.9
59	Is drug/alcohol/tobacco use by students a problem at this school? [Staff]	0.0	10.1	12.9
60	Is theft or damage of personal property by students a problem at this school? [Staff]	0.0	20.2	12.9
61	Is theft or damage of school property by students a problem at this school? [Staff]	0.0		
62	Are student cliques (i.e., students excluding other students) a problem at this school? [Staff]	11.8	34.3	22.5
63	Does this school have a problem with students physically hurting (e.g., hitting, pushing, grabbing, kicking) other students? [Staff]	11.8	33.7	21.9
64	Does this school have a problem with students bullying other students? [Staff]	11.8	43.3	31.5
65	Does this school have a problem with students picking on (or teasing in a mean way) other students? [Staff]	23.5	42.1	18.6

Sample TRENDS Surveys data from a suburban elementary school (Possible Problems Rank Order Report)

- Range of student responses shows that elementary students can thoughtfully answer survey questions.
- Items 62–65—staff view bullying and aggression problems quite differently than students do.
 - Analyze for trends by grade, gender, or race/ethnicity.
 - Focus group

Filters

Genders

Male
 Female

Grades

6th
 7th
 8th
 9th
 10th
 11th
 12th

Ethnicities

American Indian or Alaska Native
 Asian
 Black/African American
 Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 White
 Other
 I choose not to provide this information

Group By

Gender
 Grade
 Ethnicity

Chart Type

Survey Results

School: Survey Interval:

Results

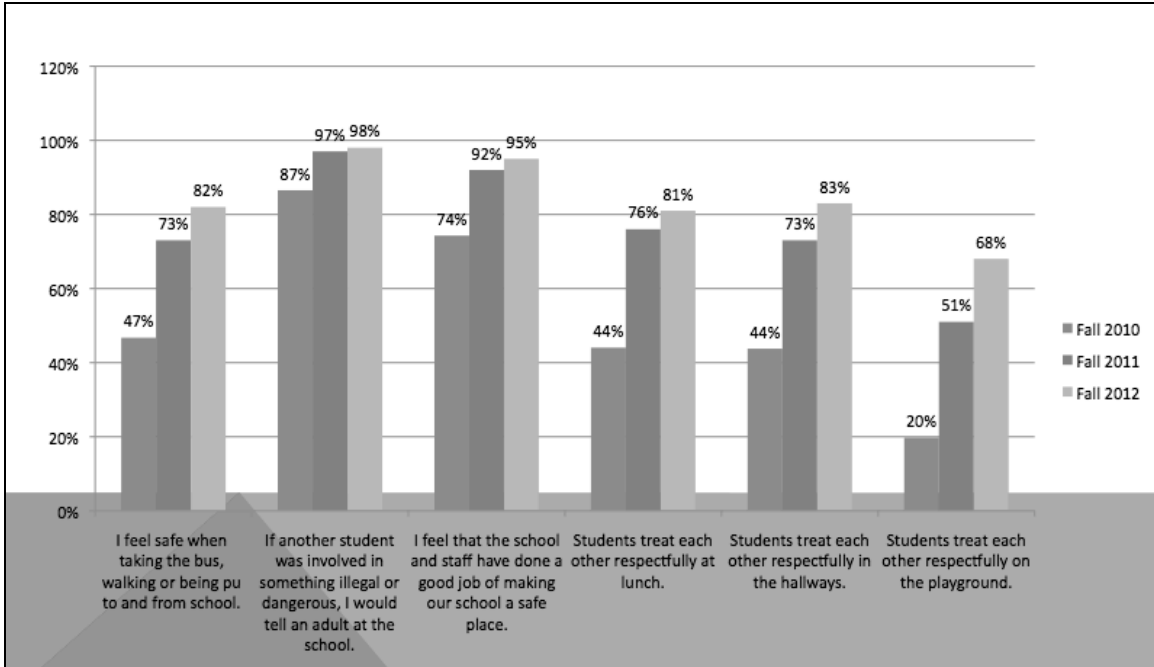
Total Surveys Completed: 688

Note: N/A in the data grid means that the number of respondents for the subgroup is below the required minimum number of 10, so the results are not displayed. Individual respondents may be easily identified in a small subgroup, so the minimum number has been set in an effort to protect their anonymity.

Students are taught the rules and expectations for behavior in the cafeteria.

Number of Responses	Black/African American	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	White
Strongly Agree	4 (27%)	8 (38%)	19 (18%)
Agree	8 (53%)	8 (38%)	67 (62%)
Disagree	1 (7%)	3 (14%)	6 (6%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (7%)	0	5 (5%)
No Opinion	1 (7%)	2 (10%)	11 (10%)
Total:688	15	21	108

Custom Filter Report—filter student responses by grade, gender, race/ethnicity, and any combination of those subgroups. The example shows data filtered for Black, Hispanic, and White boys in Grades 9 and 10.



Student survey data from Knick Elementary School in Mat-Su, Alaska, that shows progress over 3 years

Report survey results to staff and others.

- Print some select reports and distribute to staff. Ensure that you maintain the confidentiality of individual staff members, students, and parents.
- Give students and parents feedback if they have taken surveys.
- Archive the data.

[The examples below are from the Accountability section—just in case they might be useful.]

TRENDS® Climate & Safety Surveys: Category Summaries

Survey Results

School: Magnolia Sec C Survey Interval: Fall 2012

Run Report Exclude No Opinion responses from results.

Results

Survey Name

School: Magnolia Sec C Export Grid

Drag a column header here to group by that column

Fall 2012					
Category	Staff % Agree	Student % Agree	Staff-Student Discrepancy	Parent % Agree	Staff-Parent Discrepancy
Parent/Family Perceptions of School	100.0			100.0	0.0
Rules, Expectations, and Procedures	99.5	91.4	8.0	99.5	0.1
Staff Interactions and Perceptions	85.6	94.0	8.5		
Staff-Student Interactions	96.5	81.2	15.3	98.7	2.2
Student Safety	93.3	89.9	3.4	100.0	6.7
Students' Feelings About School	69.2	80.3	11.1	98.4	29.1
Student-Student Interactions	94.2	83.1	11.1	89.5	4.7

Example of survey result summary



Example of survey result summary



Dear families,

Thank you for taking the TRENDS Climate & Safety Surveys a few weeks ago. We value your opinions. We want to tell you about some of the things we learned from your responses.

- Students are proud to attend Pine Middle School! Most students think that school is important and they are glad to come to school most of the time.
- Pine is a safe school. Almost no one expressed concerns about safety.
- Most parents said they feel welcome at school and are comfortable discussing problems with the staff. We want everyone to feel this way! Please know that you are always welcome here to talk about your children.
- Bullying is a problem, despite our no-bullying policy. We are renewing our efforts to educate students about bullying and to enforce consequences for teasing, harassing, excluding others, and any other bullying-type behavior.
- We learned that we can probably do a better job teaching behavior expectations for some of our common areas. We are going to re-teach all expectations in the coming weeks.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Sheree Washington, Principal

Example of communication to parents about survey results