

Boston Public Schools

District Results from the 2009-2010 Teacher School Climate Survey

In May of 2010, the Office of Research, Assessment & Evaluation administered the second annual Teacher School Climate Survey to teachers across the district. The survey was administered mostly via paper & pencil, but an online version of the survey was also piloted. A total of 4,401 teacher surveys were administered, and of these, 2,248 (53.3%) surveys were returned. Table 1 displays response rates by school level.

Table 1. Response rates for 2009-2010 Teacher School Climate Survey by school level

	Surveys returned	Surveys sent	Response rate
Elementary Schools	850	1552	54.8%
K-8 Schools	438	847	51.7%
Middle Schools	299	482	62.0%
High Schools	658	1520	43.3%
Unidentified Schools	3		
TOTAL	2248	4401	53.3%

Teacher response rates varied substantially from school to school. In some schools, 100% of teachers responded to the climate survey, while in other schools, no teachers responded. High response rates are critical to understanding school climate, so Boston Public Schools will continue to reach out to schools to encourage teachers to respond. Table 2 lists response rates by school.

Table 2. Response rates for 2009-2010 Teacher School Climate Survey by school

School Name	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Adams Elementary	18	90%
Agassiz Elementary	25	60%
Alighieri Elementary	6	86%
Another Course College	0	0%
Baldwin ELC	2	20%
Bates Elementary	13	68%
Beethoven	5	26%
Blackstone Elementary	11	24%
Boston Adult Tech Acad	11	69%
Boston Arts Academy	0	0%
Boston Comm Lead Acad	21	58%
Boston Day Academy	0	0%
Boston International HS	0	0%
Boston Latin Academy	44	58%
Boston Latin School	78	72%
Bradley Elementary	14	70%
Brighton High	62	81%
Brook Farm Academy	0	0%
BTU Pilot	8	80%
Burke High	0	0%
Carter Center	5	100%
Channing Elementary	3	14%
Charlestown High	0	0%
Chittick Elementary	14	67%
Clap Elementary	11	100%
Comm Acad Sci Health	55	100%
Community Academy	0	0%
Condon Elementary	35	67%
Conley Elementary	11	65%
Curley K8	41	56%
Dearborn Middle	30	100%
Dever Elementary	24	63%
Dorchester Academy	13	46%

School Name	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
East Boston EEC	16	94%
East Boston High	34	38%
East Zone ELC	8	73%
Edison K8	45	80%
Edwards Middle	16	44%
Eliot K-8	0	0%
Ellis Elementary	25	93%
Ellison/Parks EES	0	0%
Emerson Elementary	8	44%
Engineering School	18	78%
English High	0	0%
Everett Elementary	12	67%
Excel High	18	72%
Farragut Elementary	24	100%
Fenway High	19	100%
Fifield Elementary	12	63%
Frederick Pilot Middle	28	53%
Gardner Pilot Academy	0	0%
Gavin Middle	40	100%
Greater Egleston High	0	0%
Greenwood, Elihu Elem	19	79%
Greenwood, Sarah K8	23	85%
Grew Elementary	4	27%
Guild Elementary	19	95%
Hale Elementary	12	100%
Haley Elementary	12	63%
Harbor School	0	0%
Harvard/Kent Elementary	27	60%
Haynes EEC	8	50%
Henderson Elementary	14	58%
Hennigan Elementary	2	5%
Hernandez K-8	0	0%
Higginson/Lewis K-8	0	0%

School Name	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Holland Elementary	0	0%
Holmes Elementary	3	12%
Horace Mann	33	75%
Hurley K8	11	48%
Irving Middle	42	88%
Jackson/Mann K8	20	29%
Kennedy Health Careers	20	100%
Kennedy, John F Elemen	14	52%
Kennedy, Patrick Elem	3	17%
Kenny Elementary	21	100%
Kilmer K8	11	44%
King K8	32	91%
Lee Academy	25	100%
Lee Elementary	30	88%
Lyndon K8	29	69%
Lyon 9to12	4	100%
Lyon K8	12	75%
Madison Park High	113	84%
Manning Elementary	8	62%
Marshall Elementary	41	75%
Mason Elementary	13	72%
Mather Elementary	16	40%
Mattahunt Elementary	0	0%
McCormack Middle	25	54%
McKay K8	34	76%
McKinnley Schools	37	70%
Media Comm Tech High	0	0%
Mendell Elementary	0	0%
Middle School Academy	7	100%
Mildred Avenue K8	42	72%
Mission Hill K8	6	50%
Monument High	11	48%
Mozart Elementary	11	100%
Murphy K8	31	46%
New Mission High	14	70%

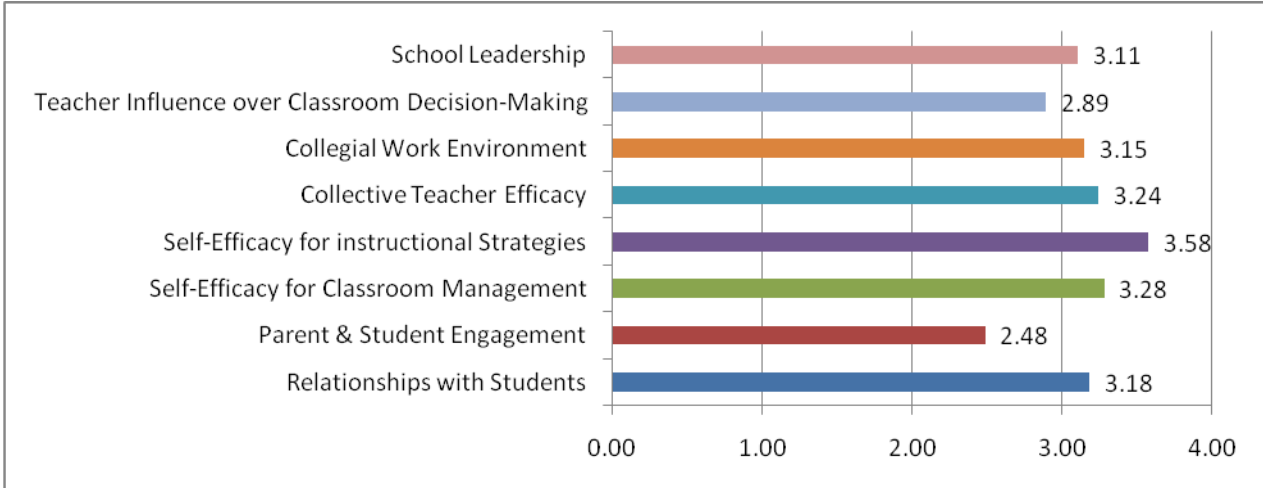
School Name	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Newcomers Academy	0	0%
OBryant Math & Sci.	29	45%
ODonnell Elementary	10	67%
Odyssey High	14	67%
Ohrenberger	27	63%
Orchard Gardens K8	19	35%
Otis Elementary	24	92%
Parkway Tech & Health	9	47%
Perkins Elementary	7	50%
Perry K8	1	6%
Philbrick Elementary	7	88%
Quincy Elementary	39	72%
Quincy Upper School	16	43%
Rogers Middle	0	0%
Roland Hayes	0	0%
Roosevelt K8	20	71%
Russell Elementary	18	62%
Snowden International	0	0%
Social Justice Academy	8	35%
Sumner Elementary	1	3%
Taylor Elementary	18	51%
TechBoston Acad 6to9	47	90%
TechBoston Acad 10-12	0	0%
Timilty Middle	37	74%
Tobin K8	14	45%
Trotter Elementary	17	63%
Tynan Elementary	11	44%
Umana Middle	32	74%
Urban Science Academy	0	0%
Warren/Prescott K8	26	79%
West Zone ELC	8	100%
Winship Elementary	13	72%
Winthrop Elementary	18	75%
Young Achievers K8	13	31%

Using Principal Component Analysis, we determined that teacher responses clustered into eight component variables that summarize perceptions about the following areas of school climate¹:

- 1) School leadership
- 2) Teacher influence over classroom decision-making
- 3) Collegial work environment
- 4) Collective teacher efficacy
- 5) Self-efficacy for instructional strategies
- 6) Self-efficacy for classroom management
- 7) Parent & student engagement
- 8) Relationships with students

Responses to questions comprising each variable range from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating a negative response to the item (e.g. strongly disagree in response to a positive statement) and 4 indicating a positive response (e.g. strongly agree in response to a positive statement). Figure 1 presents district averages for the 8 component variables.

Figure 1. District averages of 8 component variables from the 2009-2010 Teacher School Climate Survey

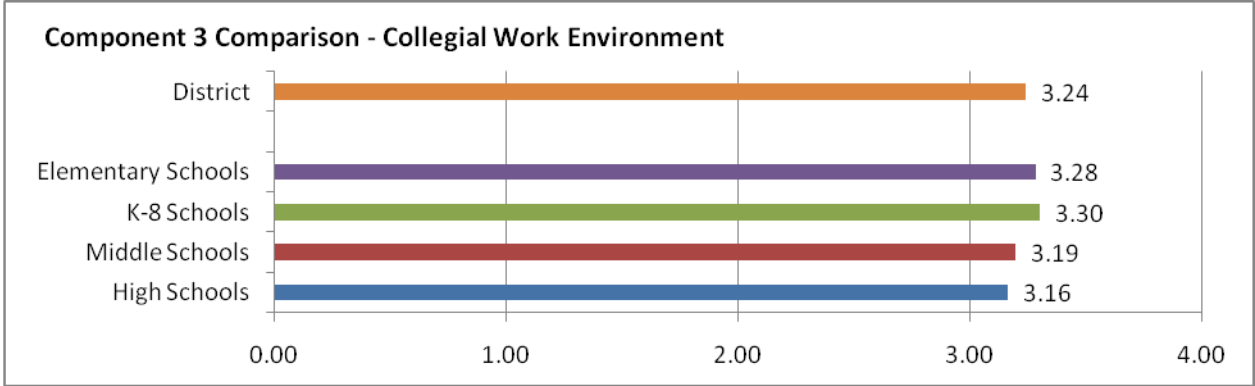
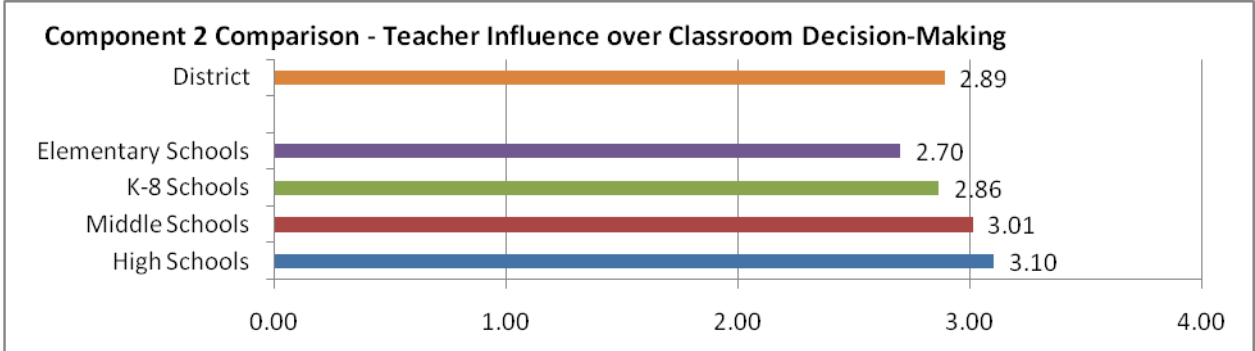
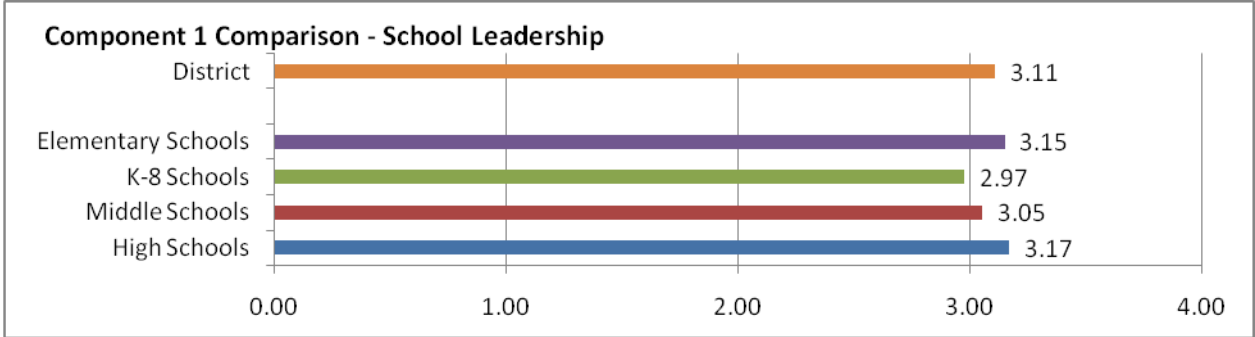


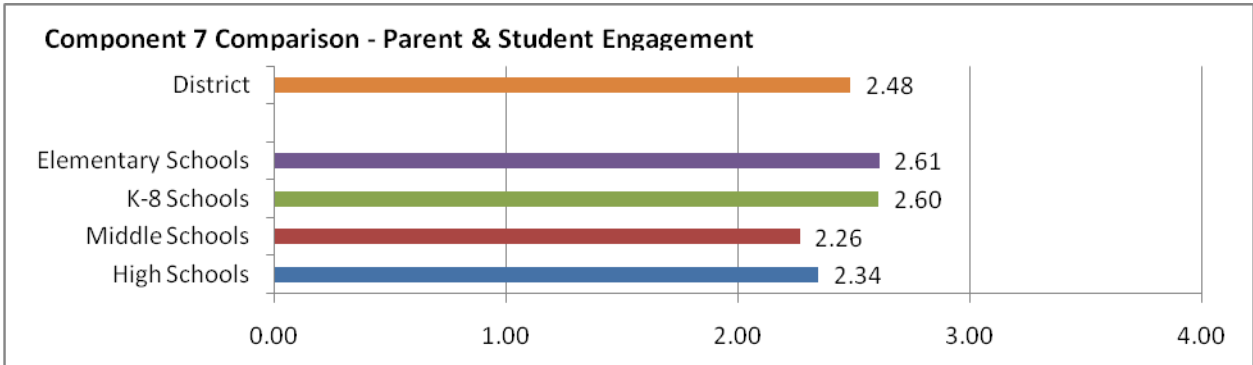
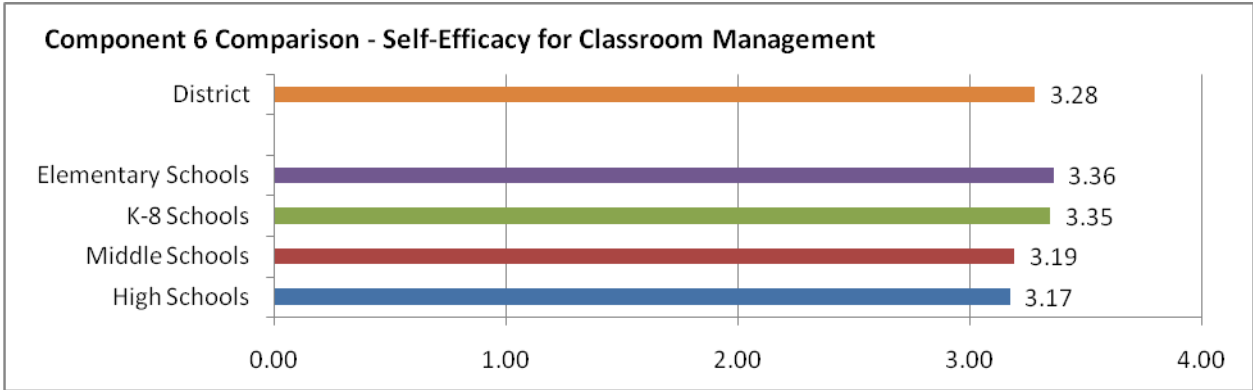
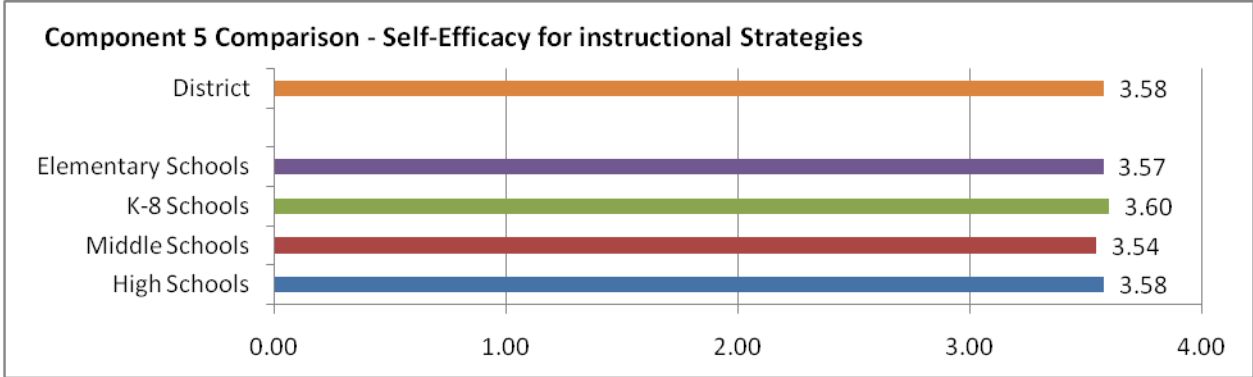
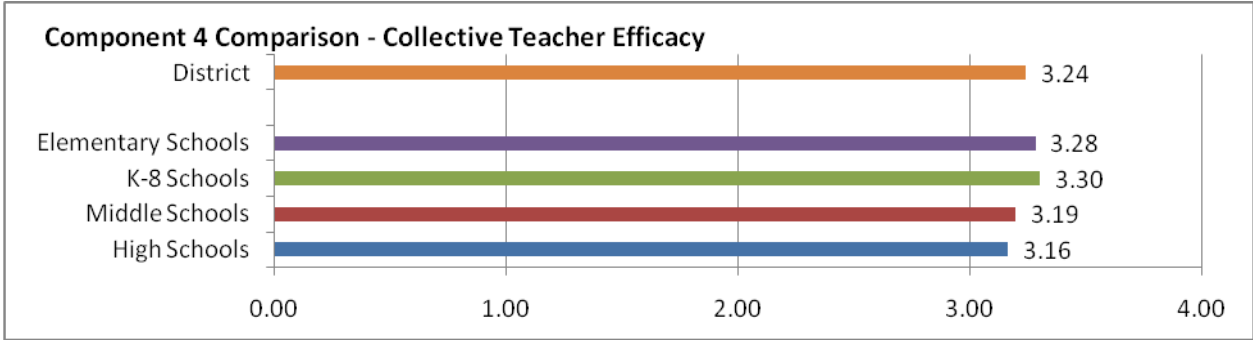
In general, teachers responded very positively to statements that measured their self-efficacy for instructional strategies, their self-efficacy for classroom management, and their perspective of collective teacher efficacy in their school. On a scale of 1-4, these components averaged between 3.24 and 3.58 for teachers across the district. Teachers rated their influence over classroom decision-making and parent & student engagement as the lowest component variables across the district. Each of these component variables average less than 2.8 for teachers across the district.

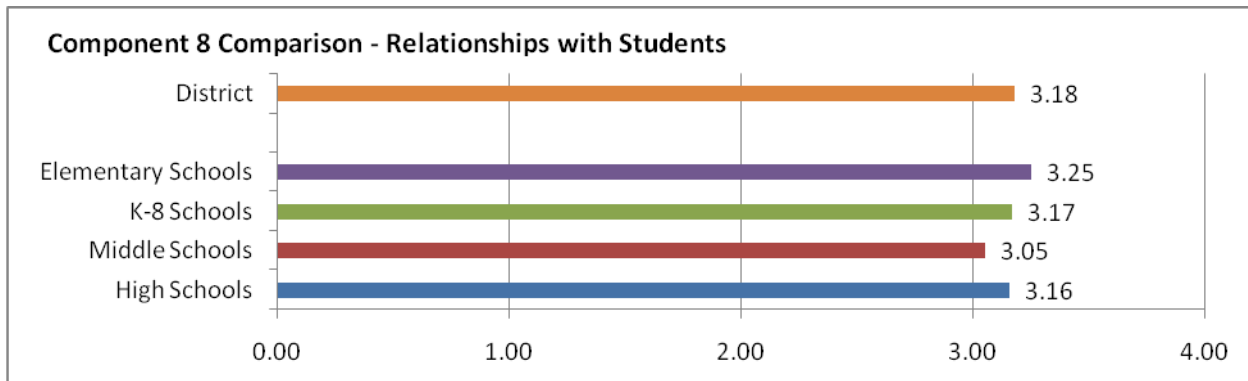
¹ See Appendix A for a description of the items that comprise each component variable

There is considerable variation in many component averages across school level. Of particular note, elementary school teachers report having significantly less influence over classroom decision-making than other teachers, and elementary & K-8 teachers report higher self-efficacy for classroom management and higher parent-student engagement than middle and high schools. Also of note, self-efficacy for instructional strategies is very high among teachers at all levels. Figures 2-7 show this variation for each component variable.

Figures 2-7. Comparison of 6 component variables by school level

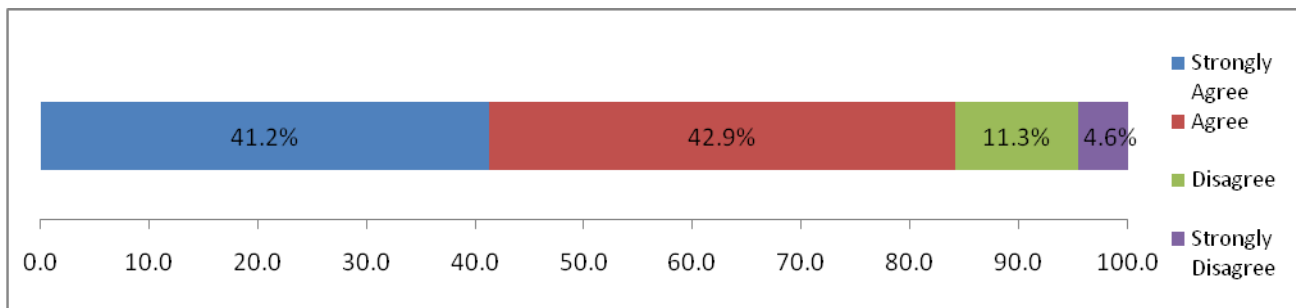






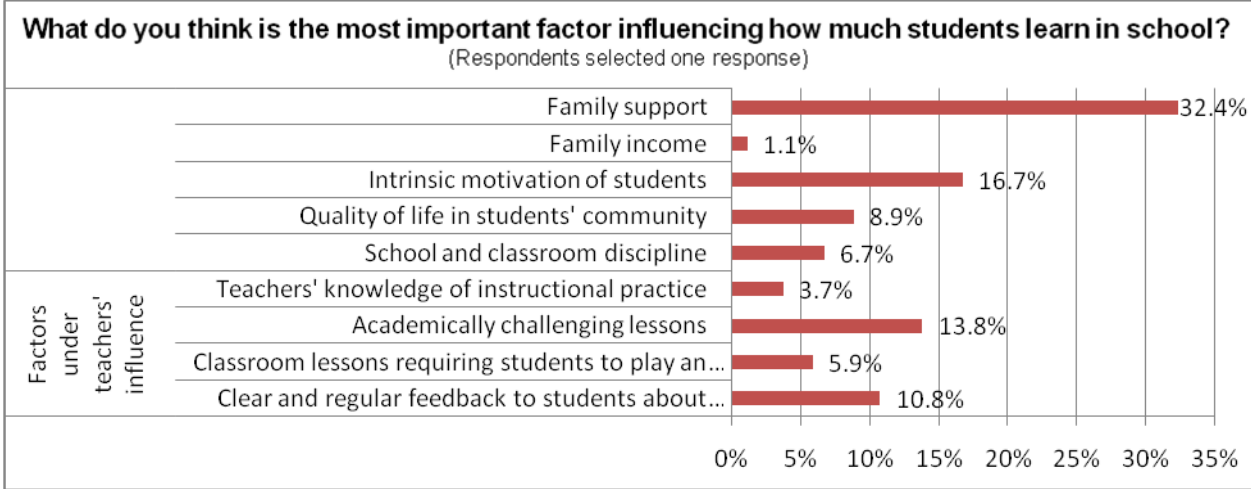
One statement from the teacher climate survey was intentionally omitted from any of the components and reported separately, as it is a broad summary of teachers’ feelings about their school: “You would recommend this school as a good place to teach”. Examining this statement alone, over 84% of responding teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that their school was a good place to teach. Conversely, about 16% of teachers felt that their school was not a good place to teach.

Figure 8. Percentage of teachers responding to the item: “You would recommend this school as a good place to teach”.



Finally, there were two questions on the survey that asked teachers to select the most important factor that explains why students succeed or struggle with their learning. In Figure 9, results for one of these two questions, “What do you think is the most important factor influencing how much students learn in school?”, are shown. Overall, the choice that teachers across the district selected most frequently was “Family support”, followed by “Intrinsic motivation of students.” These factors are factors over which teachers likely believe they have little influence. However, four factors that are influenced by teachers were selected by approximately 34% of teachers. These factors included academically challenging lessons, clear and regular feedback to students about performance, classroom lessons requiring students to play an active role, and teachers' knowledge of instructional practice.

Figure 9. Frequencies of teachers selecting the factor they think is most important in influencing student learning.



Appendix A. Teacher survey items included in each component.

Component 1: School Leadership (1= strongly disagree : 4 = strongly agree)

- Your principal/headmaster treats all faculty members fairly
- The school administrations' behavior toward the staff is supportive and encouraging
- Your principal/headmaster makes clear to the staff his/her expectations for meeting instructional goals
- Your principal/headmaster sets high standards for teaching
- Your principal/headmaster involves staff members before he/she makes important decisions
- Staff members are recognized by the school's administration for a job well done
- Your principal/headmaster communicates a clear vision for your school
- Your principal/headmaster sets high standards for student learning
- Your principal/headmaster carefully tracks students' academic progress

Component 2: Teacher Influence Over Classroom Decision-Making (1 = none : 4 = a great deal)

- Selecting textbooks and other instructional materials
- Selecting content, topics and skills to be taught
- Selecting teaching techniques
- Evaluating and grading students
- Establishing curriculum

Component 3: Collegial Work Environment (1 = never : 4 = always)

- Teachers help and support each other
- Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm
- Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues
- There is a great deal of cooperative effort among the staff members
- Teachers at this school exercise good professional judgment
- You are respected by other staff members

Component 4: Collective Teacher Efficacy (1= strongly disagree : 4 = strongly agree)

- Teachers here are confident they can motivate students
- Teachers in my school have what it takes to get the children to learn
- Teachers in my school really believe every child can learn
- Teachers in my school are able to get through to the most difficult students
- Teachers in my school have the skills and knowledge to teach the subjects they are assigned to teach
- If a child does not learn something the first time, teachers here will try another way
- Teachers in my school are skilled in various methods of teaching
- Teachers here take responsibility for improving the school
- Teachers in my school set high standards for themselves
- Teachers here feel responsible for making sure that all student learn
- Teachers in my school are really trying to improve their teaching

Component 5: Self-Efficacy for Instructional Strategies (1= strongly disagree : 4 = strongly agree)

- I can provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused
- I can use a variety of assessment strategies in my classroom
- I can craft good questions for my students

Component 6: Self-Efficacy for Classroom Management (1 = nothing : 4 = a great deal)

- How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
- How much can you do to motivate students who show little interest in schoolwork?
- How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork?
- How much can you do to help your students value learning?
- How much can you do to help assist families in helping their children do well?

Component 7: Parent & Student Engagement (1= strongly disagree : 4 = strongly agree)

- Your students come to school ready to learn
- The parents of most of your students are active in the student's parent organization
- Most of your students' parents/guardians talk with you about their child's grades
- Students are willing to put in the work it takes to get good grades
- Most parents encourage you to maintain high standards
- Students try hard to improve previous work
- Parents advocate for school improvement at this school
- Parents of your students help check their child's homework

Component 8: Relationships with Students & Parents (1= strongly disagree : 4 = strongly agree)

- You feel respected by your students
- You feel respected by your student's parents