

Charleston Teacher Alliance 2011-2012 Survey of School Climate And Administrative Leadership

Fast Facts

- This survey was developed and reviewed by CTA Leadership.
- The survey was conducted between March 11th and April 8th.
- 1,400+ teachers participated in this survey.
- This is the seventh survey conducted by the CTA addressing administrative leadership.

Survey Overview

This survey has five separate sections. The first section focused on current issues in the CCSD. The second section addressed school climate and working conditions. The next three sections focused on the administrative leadership of principals, area superintendents, and the district superintendent.

Current Issues

56% of the teachers surveyed this year stated that the reduced substitute funding has had a negative impact on instruction. Our previous survey revealed that the substitute funds are not being used in a consistent manner from school to school. Thirteen schools had over 80% of the teachers surveyed indicate that the limited funds were hurting instruction. These schools were Angel Oak, Baptist Hill, Cario, Hunley Park, James B Edwards, Ladson, Lambs, Memminger, Military Magnet, North Charleston Elementary, Pepperhill, and West Ashley High. Three schools had 100% of those surveyed indicate the limited funds for substitutes was hurting instruction. These schools were St. Andrews Middle, Mt. Zion, and Haut Gap.

Nearly three fourths of the teachers surveyed indicated that they either receive a duty free lunch, or have no lunch duty at all. 364 teachers indicated that they have not been given duty free lunch this year. A significant percentage of these 364 teachers come from Angel Oak, Chicora, Corcoran, Hursey, Ladson, North Charleston Elementary, Laurel Hill, Oakland, Pepper Hill, Stono Park and Pinehurst.

Most teachers do not work at a school that is considering an extended school year or school day. Of the 290 plus teachers who do work at these schools, a majority of them had not been given a clear explanation of what the plan would consist of, or how they would be compensated. Almost 60% of the teachers surveyed were not in favor of extending the school day or year. Less than one quarter of those surveyed would be interested in working at a school with an extended day or year.

School Climate

Nearly 74% of the teachers surveyed believed that their school had a positive climate and a good working environment. Exceptions to this positive view came from Corcoran, North Charleston

Elementary, St. Andrews Middle, Springfield, North Charleston High, and West Ashley Middle. At these schools, less than 40% of the teachers surveyed believed their school to have a positive climate and working environment.

71 teachers have been denied the use of personal days this year. Over 70% of these denials came from the following nine schools Baptist Hill(4), Corcoran(7), Haut Gap(4), Hunley Park(4), North Charleston Elementary(4), North Charleston High(9), Springfield(3), Wando(5), and West Ashley High(6).

Planning time remains inconsistent throughout the district with 15% of teachers surveyed having less than one hour of planning time per week while 52% of teachers reported having three or more hours per week. 33% of the teachers surveyed believed that the planning time provided was sufficient. This has decreased from last year when 38% of the teachers surveyed thought they were given enough planning time.

The amount of hours teachers are working continues to be a major concern. 63% of the teachers reported working over fifty hours per week. 22% of the teachers thought that the hours required were reasonable and only 6% believe that the district could not do more to help reduce these work hours without compromising student achievement. Statistics concerning teacher work hours have gotten slightly worse compared to last year. This would indicate that the district has taken no actions to help reduce their teachers' work load.

Recommendations

Last year I worked on a committee that included teachers, administrations, and district personnel to help reduce the amount of hours teachers are spending on the job. Our recommendations included limiting the numbers of meetings that can be held during planning times or after hours. We also recommended limiting the length of after/before school meeting. Dr. McGinley has failed to implement these suggestions. I recommend that the district revisits this committees recommendations and implement a majority of them in order to help ease teachers' work load.

Principals

Principals received positive scores from teachers on most survey questions. The highest marks came in the areas of teacher evaluations (86% positive), conducting productive meetings (82% positive), addressing teacher concerns (77% positive), and overall principal effectiveness (77% positive). The above mentioned percentages all dropped by two or more percentage points compared to last year. The lowest scores came in areas of protecting teacher planning time (57% positive), principals offering helpful teaching suggestions (63% positive) and teachers not having to worry about administrative retaliation (63% positive).

While 77% of the teachers surveyed indicated that they had an effective principal, several administrators had at least a 90% approval rating. This included the principals from Academic Magnet, Angel Oak, Clark, Drayton Hall, Harbor View, James B Edwards, Mary Ford, Midland Park, Military Magnet, Mitchell, Northwoods, Oakland, Sanders-Clyde, Pinehurst, and Zucker. Belle Hall,

James Simmons, Lambs, Memminger, Pepper Hill, and Pinckney all received 100% approval for principal effectiveness.

Though most schools showed positive results, some schools had more concerning results. Eight schools had over half of their respondents indicate that they worried about principal retaliation if they were to report a concern or disagree with administration (Haut Gap, James Island Charter, Laing, North Charleston Elementary, North Charleston High, St. Andrews Middle, Spring Field, and West Ashley Middle). Six schools had 60% or more of their respondents disagree with the effectiveness of school leadership (James Island Charter, North Charleston Elementary, North Charleston High, St. Andrews Middle, Spring Field, and West Ashley Middle).

Area Superintendents

Results for the Area Superintendents regressed in most areas when compared to last year's results. 55% of teachers reported having never seen their Area Superintendent in the school. 39% of the teachers felt that the Area Superintendent shared his/her roles and responsibilities with teachers. This decreased 9% last year. Overall, 36% of the teachers surveyed believed their Area Superintendent was an effective leader. This dropped 3% from last year. 40% of those surveyed were not sure about the effectiveness of their Area Superintendent.

District Superintendent

Overall, the District Superintendent's ratings improved in all areas. 75% of teachers surveyed ranked the Superintendent as an effective leader, and 79% considered her an effective communicator. These are notably good scores in general, but more so in the context of our current budget situation and the cuts that have come with it. Scores were lower in the area of eliminating non-essential spending (48% positive) and seeking teacher input (61%) positive. However, both areas receiving lower percentages of approval have improved when compared with last year's results.

District Superintendent

(Percentage of respondents who reported positively)

	2009	2010	2011	2012
-Visible and accessible to teacher	68%	64%	63%	66%
-Effectively communicate with teachers	77%	72%	74%	79%
-Seeks teacher input	48%	46%	58%	61%
-Eliminated nonessential spending	45%	35%	41%	48%
-An effective leader	73%	72%	70%	75%