

CRC

AISD Survey Scale Definitions

These survey scales were developed with data from a survey of 47 department chairs and Lead Teachers in six DL-PLC schools and a survey of 21 other high school department chairs in Austin Independent School District (AISD). Principal components analysis was used to identify survey items that loaded on a common factor; the alpha coefficient indicates internal consistency of the scale. A follow-up survey data 2008 from 50 teachers involved in DL professional development confirmed the reliability of the scales.

CONTEXT

- ***Instructional Improvement Culture* (5-point frequency scale, 6 items. Alphas = .88 in 2007 and .84 in 2008)**

How well does each of the following statements describe your school's instructional climate?

Teachers in my school ...	2007	2008
Have a clear vision of instruction linked to standards for student learning and growth	3a	3a
Openly examine and acknowledge progress towards an instructional vision	3b	3b
Have made changes designed to better meet the needs of the school's diverse student body	3c	3c
Are engaged in systematic analysis of student performance data	3d	3d
Have well-defined plans for instructional improvement	3e	3e
Review student learning and understanding in order to adjust their practices	3f	3f

- ***Principal Leadership* (5-point frequency scale, 8 items. Alphas = .92 & .94)**

This question concerns the professional climate of your school. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

The principal ...	2007	2008
Inspires the very best in the job performance of all teachers	7a	7a
Supports regular use of student assessment data	7b	7b
Supports our school's redesign effort	7c	7c
Promotes teachers' ongoing professional development	7d	7d
Ensures that student learning is the "bottom line" in our school	7e	7e
Is increasing support for teaching and learning	7f	7f
Supports the development of teacher professional learning communities in our school	7g	7g
Provides time and money for teachers to collaborate and plan together	7h	7h

➤ **District Culture and Support (5-point frequency scale, 5 items. Alphas = .92 & .89)**

This question concerns the professional climate of your district’s central office. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

The central office ...	2007	2008
Helps my school focus on teaching and learning	8a	8a
Inspires the very best in the job performance of its teachers	8d	8d
Promotes the professional development of teachers	8g	8g
Provides support for teaching and learning	8i	8i
Seeks input from teachers and listens to their ideas and concerns	8l	8l

➤ **District Reform Support (5-point frequency scale, 6 items. Alphas = .89 & .86)**

This question concerns the professional climate of your district’s central office. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

The central office ...	2007	2008
Is committed to high standards for every student	8b	8b
Supports school innovation	8c	8c
Supports my school’s redesign effort	8f	8f
Ensures that student learning is the “bottom line” in our school	8h	8h
Supports the development of teacher professional learning communities in our school	8j	8j
Allows high schools the flexibility to choose and adapt new programs and practices	8k	8k

SCHOOL DL-PLC SUPPORT

➤ **Principal DL-PLC Support (5-point frequency scale, 5 items. Alphas = .91 & .88)**

To what extent does your principal support your work as a DL Lead Teacher?

My principal ...	2007	2008
Is informed about the content and process of the DL-PLC model	14a	14a
Works in a collaborative partnership with me	14b	14b
Provides time for teachers in my PLC to work together	14c	14c
Follows up with me to see how the DL lessons are working for teachers and students	14d	14d
Encourages teachers to implement DL lessons and practices	14e	14e

➤ **Reform Coherence (5-point frequency scale, 4 items. Alphas = .74 & .70)**

Now consider how the district-wide high school redesign work (SLCs) and the DL-PLC work together in your school.

AISD's high school redesign and DL-PLC....	2007	2008
Support each other in theory	15a	21a
Support each in practice	15b	21b
Compete for teachers' limited time available for PD (reverse-scored)	15c	21c
Compete for teachers' limited time to meet together (reverse-scored)	15d	21d

PROFESSIONAL OUTCOMES

➤ **Preparedness: DL-PLC Teacher Leadership Practices (5-point frequency scale, 6 items. Alphas = .91 & .84)**

*Various DL-PLC teacher leadership practices are listed below. For each, please a) indicate how prepared you felt to work with teachers in the following ways **before** beginning DL Professional Development last summer, and b) how prepared you feel **now** to do this. (The scale was based on the ratings of preparedness now.)*

NOW, I feel prepared to ...	2007	2008
Facilitate instructionally focused group meetings	18a	15a
Conference with individuals	18b	15b
Look closely at student work	18c	15c
Plan instruction together	18d	15d
Examine instructional practices to make sure they promote academic rigor and student learning	18e	15e
Develop more rigorous questions for class discussion	18f	15f

➤ **Preparedness: Teacher Skills and Knowledge (5-point frequency scale, 7 items. Alphas = .95 & .88)**

*How has the DL-PLC program **enhanced your own skills and knowledge as a classroom teacher**? For each, please indicate a) how well prepared you felt to do this **before** beginning DL Professional Development last summer, and b) how prepared you feel **now**. (The scale was based on the ratings of preparedness now.)*

NOW I feel prepared to ...	2007	2008
Teach DL lessons	20a	17a
Engage students in classroom discussion	20b	17b
Challenge students to think deeply about content	20c	17c
Develop or select my own rigorous lessons	20d	17d
Link lessons to assessments	20e	17e
Organize students to work in pairs or groups	20f	17f
Apply DL principles to classroom instruction	20g	17g

DL-PLC OUTCOMES

- **Professional Learning Community in Content Area (5-point frequency scale, 10 items. Alphas = .92 & .96)**

This question concerns how teachers in your content area regularly interact with one another. How many teachers do each of the following?

Teachers in my content area ...	2007	2008
Share ideas on teaching	4a	4a
Discuss what you/they learned at a workshop or conference	4b	4b
Share and discuss student work	4c	4c
Discuss particular lessons that were not very successful	4d	4d
Discuss beliefs about teaching and learning	4e	4e
Share and discuss research on effective teaching methods	4f	4f
Share and discuss research on effective instructional practices for English language learners	4g	4g
Explore new teaching approaches to increase student engagement and understanding	4h	4h
Observe each other's classroom instruction	4i	4i
Plan lessons and units together	4j	4j

DL Instructional Practices (5-point frequency scale, 6 items. Alphas = .87 & .92)

Now consider instruction in your content area. To what extent does each statement describe teaching practices?

Teachers in my content area ...	2007	2008
Communicate clear expectations to students	5a	5a
Create learning environments in which efforts pays off	5b	5b
Recognize student accomplishments that meet standards or benchmarks for progress	5c	5c
Provide an academically rigorous curriculum	5d	5d
Promote accountable talk in their classroom	5e	5e
Help students self-manage and self-monitor their learning	5f	5f

➤ ***DL Student Practices*** (5-point frequency scale, 8 items. Alphas = .90 & .94)

Considering all teachers' classes in your content area, in your estimation, in about how many classes do students do each of the following?

Students in the class...	2007	2008
Learn core concepts and habits of thinking	6a	6a
Learn by “doing” the discipline, i.e., doing tasks that mirror the work of the discipline	6b	6b
Can explain how and why their class activities help them understand a concept	6c	6c
Ask questions and insist on understanding the answers	6d	6d
Learn from one another through classroom discussion	6e	6e
Persist in working on challenging tasks	6f	6f
Work in pairs or groups during most class periods	6g	6g
Engage in self-assessment that develops their ability to effectively manage their own learning	6h	6h

What Is a Survey Scale?

What is a survey scale? A scale combines a teacher's responses to a number of survey items into one score. For example, the "Instructional Reform Culture" scale combines teachers' responses to six separate survey questions in one measure.

Why create a scale? Some questions in a survey are designed to get at a bigger idea or phenomenon than any particular question can tap – like "Principal Leadership." If we asked just one question, we wouldn't capture varied meanings of the idea nor would we be sure that it had been the right question to ask of a particular teacher. Therefore, we ask a number of questions related to the idea in order to get a more valid and a more reliable measure of the phenomenon.

How is a scale created? A scale includes only those survey items that hang together when teachers' responses are taken into account. Any item that does not cohere with others is excluded from the scale.

Technically, this is done through factor analysis, using statistical criteria to determine how many "factors" or separate scales are produced by the pattern of individuals' responses to a number of survey items. The results let us identify which items form a factor and can be used together in a scale. The scale label captures the common meaning among the items. We then compute an Alpha coefficient, which indicates the "internal consistency" of the scale.

What items make up survey scales? Items included in the survey scales – for example, District Professionalism and District Reform Support – are listed in the definitions. Alpha coefficients for these scales are .92 and .89 respectively in 2007.

What is a scale score? An individual teacher's scale score is the mean rating he or she gave to all items included in a particular scale. A school score is the average of teachers' scale scores. The district score is the average of the schools means.