

## Teacher Reflections on Student Perception Surveys Results

The Colorado Education Initiative asked teachers in our partner districts about their experiences using survey results to reflect on their practice. Below are some excerpts from these interviews.

### ***Using teacher-level results to improve my practice***

“The Student Perception Survey has turned out to be a really purposeful tool. It is exciting feedback because our perception of what we are doing may be different than what our students perceive. The only thing that it compares to is an observation from an administrator, and I know that my principal can’t be in my room all the time like my students are. Overall I think that my results were a good reflection of how I teach. It is important to think about areas of strength and areas that need improvement, but it is easy for your mind to automatically focus on the areas in which you scored low.

The question I scored lowest on was: “My teacher knows what my life is like outside of school.” At first I thought to myself, *of course I do that!* I tried to justify to myself all of the ways that I had interacted with my students outside of class, all of the things I knew about their personal lives, and how much time I had spent working with students and families to learn about them. Then I paused and started looking at all of the questions in that category as a whole. A related statement that I scored pretty high on was: “My teacher respects my cultural background.” Even though I initially saw these two statements as very similar, I began to think about what the difference was in how my students perceived my actions for each one. I was then able to look at the bigger picture and ask myself where the disconnect lay between what I think I am doing and how my students perceive it. That led me to think about strategies for improving my result on that statement next year. Maybe my students don’t know how much I know about their lives outside of school. Maybe I don’t know as much as I think I do. Maybe I only know a lot about certain students or certain groups of students and I know very little about others.

I think the starting point for me to improve on this statement will be a conversation with students. I want to engage them in creating our classroom community by building a common understanding of what it should look like. Without the results from the student survey, I would not have even known that this was a conversation that we needed to have.”

### ***Using school-level results to put my own practice in context***

“School-level Student Perception Survey results helped me put my own practice into perspective in relation to the other teachers in my school. Teachers are often isolated and don’t get to experience what other teachers are doing. Even though student survey results don’t replace actual interaction and observation in colleagues’ classrooms, it is an opportunity to get a big picture view of what is going on in terms of school culture.

There were some areas of the survey where I scored higher than my school average, and it made me wonder what I was doing to cause students to perceive my classroom differently than the school as a whole. Likewise, other teachers may be doing something amazing to engage students in a certain way, and I might never know that until I see that my building overall is scoring higher on something that I am struggling in.”

***Using school-level results to set goals for our building***

"I hope that we can use the results to facilitate some meaningful partnering and feedback from peers. A teacher could use their results to identify areas that need improvement and work with their principal to pair them with another teacher that is doing really well in that area. It would be great to learn from peers that are excelling in areas that may be hard for others.

I also help design professional development for my school, and it was really great to see our school-wide trends so that we can make sure to focus building-wide goals on those areas. There were areas where we scored low as a school that were directly related to initiatives that we had implemented throughout the past year. For instance, our school scored low on the statement "All of the kids in my class know what they are supposed to be doing and learning." This was concerning to me because one of the things we had been focusing on as a staff was having learning objectives posted clearly in every classroom. Our low score on this question made me wonder whether teachers are actually posting learning objectives or not, or if they are but it is not being used as an effective tool the way it was intended. It is a really great way to get a big-picture view of what is going on and open up conversations with the staff about how we can grow and improve together."