

COLORADO'S STUDENT PERCEPTION SURVEY



THE COLORADO EDUCATION INITIATIVE

"Students seemed genuinely pleased that we valued their opinions of their teachers. I believe this will be a good tool and a great way to hear from those who see teachers the most."

- Educator



WHY A STUDENT PERCEPTION SURVEY?

We know that teachers care about improving their instructional practice, and we know that they care about their students. Historically, direct feedback from students has not been included in the data available to improve instructional practice. However, research shows that student perception data is in many cases more valuable than classroom observations and student growth measures on standardized tests. In fact, the combination of student perception, classroom observation and student growth provides the most clear and comprehensive picture of teacher performance. Furthermore, when students are formally asked to evaluate their classroom experience, studies show that they are more engaged and take more ownership of their learning environment.

In an effort to create an effective and reliable tool that makes it safe for teachers to experience relevant and actionable feedback from students, The Colorado Education Initiative created the Colorado Student Perception Survey (SPS). The survey was developed with input from over 1400 teachers throughout Colorado and is grounded in best practices for fair and equitable evaluation.

Colorado's Student Perception Survey is a 34-question instrument that asks students about their classroom experience. The questions measure elements of student experience that most closely correlate to the professional practices that are demonstrated to improve student outcomes.¹ In addition, the survey maps to Colorado's Teacher Quality Standards; the results yield information about a teacher's performance in standards 1-3. The survey has the flexibility to be used as a formative tool or as a summative measure of teacher evaluation under Colorado's education effectiveness law.

¹ A number of items on the Colorado SPS were adapted from items made available for non-commercial use through the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

The largest and most recent inquiry into the use of student feedback in assessing teacher practice is the [Measures of Effective Teaching \(MET\) Project](#). The MET project was a research partnership funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that engaged 3,000 teacher volunteers and dozens of independent research teams. The project's goal was to build and test measures of effective teaching to find out how evaluation methods could best be used to tell teachers more about the skills that make them most effective and to help districts identify and develop great teaching.

The MET study tested several measures that can be used to evaluate multiple aspects of a teacher's contribution to student learning. One of these measures was a student perception survey, in which students responded to questions about teacher actions. The MET study had two significant findings around student perception surveys:

- When student surveys are combined with observation and student growth data, these three measures tell us more and are able to predict future effectiveness better than any of them alone.
- Student perception survey results are correlated to student achievement gains.

On a broader scale, the use of student feedback more generally has been shown to impact both teachers and students positively. The positive impacts are twofold. Teachers can learn about patterns in their teaching that they may not have been aware of and how those approaches impact student learning. Likewise, students are given a forum in which they can be heard, and this emphasis on student voice promotes both reflection and responsibility on the part of the students.

LEARN MORE

For more information, visit www.coloradoedinitiative.org/our-work/educator-effectiveness/data-use/studentssurvey or email Sarah Duran at sduran@coloradoedinitiative.org.

