STUDENT TRUST IN TEACHERS SURVEY

The Student Trust in Faculty Scale (Adams & Forsyth, 2009) measures the level of trust students have for their teachers. It is based upon the five-facet model of trust described in this book. Adams and Forsyth developed this measure to "capture student perceptions and recollections of teacher behavior, which allow for judgments to be made about their relative openness, benevolence, reliability, competence, and honesty" (p. 264).

It is critical that ethical standards are adhered to in administering the survey. The survey should be administered anonymously so that there is no way for the results to be traced to the individual who completed the survey. Participants should be told that their participation is voluntary and that they will suffer no penalty for refusing to complete the survey. They should also be told that they may skip any items they are uncomfortable answering.

Scoring directions are provided for the survey, as well as evidence on the reliability and validity of the scales. Directions for calculating a standardized score are included so that schools can compare their results with other schools. The standardized score is presented on a scale with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100, much like an SAT or GRE score. For example, a school with a score of 600 on is one standard deviation above the average score of all schools in the sample. That means that the school has higher student trust in teachers than 84% of the schools in the sample.

The range of the standardized scores is presented below:

- If the score is 200, it is lower than 99% of the schools.
- If the score is 300, it is lower than 97% of the schools.
- If the score is 400, it is lower than 84% of the schools.
- If the score is 500, it is average.
- If the score is 600, it is higher than 84% of the schools.
- If the score is 700, it is higher than 97% of the schools.
- If the score is 800, it is higher than 99% of the schools.

Scoring Directions for Student Survey

Step 1: Calculate the average score for each survey participant by taking the mean of all 10 items of the Student Trust in Faculty survey.

Step 2: Calculate the Grand mean score of Student Trust in Faculty for your school by taking an average of all of the participants' individual scores.

Step 3: Compute the Standardized Scores for the Student Trust in Faculty:

In this step you will convert your school score to a standardized score with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100, making comparison with other schools possible. First compute the difference between your school score on student trust in the school (STF) and the mean for the normative sample. For a high school, this would mean (STF – 3.059). Then multiply the difference by one hundred [100(STF – 3.059)]. Next divide the product by the standard deviation of the normative sample (.728). Then add 500 to the result. You have computed a standardized score **Standard Score for Student Trust in Teachers.** For middle school or elementary schools, use the appropriate formula below. Remember that the student trust survey has a five point response scale.

For High Schools, calculate standardized trust scores using the following formulas:
Standard Score for Student Trust in Faculty (STF) = 100(STP – 3.059)/.728 + 500

For Middle Schools, calculate standardized trust scores using the following formulas:
Standard Score for Student Trust in Faculty (STF) = 100(STP – 3.142)/.861 + 500

For Elementary Schools, calculate standardized trust scores using the following formulas:
Standard Score for Student Trust in Faculty (STF) = 100(STP – 4.107)/.781 + 500

Reliability and Validity of the Student Trust Scale

To establish the content validity of the Student Trust Scale, Adams and Forsyth, (2009) submitted the items to a panel of eight professional educators who were asked to assess the clarity of items, to examine the relevance of items to teacher-student interactions, and to identify the conceptual indicator (i.e. facet) measured by each item. Next, a field test was conducted in which exploratory factor analysis demonstrated construct validity in that all of the items loaded on a single factor with factor coefficients that ranged from .62 to .85. In addition, scores on the Student Trust Scale were strongly associated with affective conditions that underlie student behavior, such as student perceptions of academic press and student identification with school (Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, Bankole, Mitchell, & Moore, 2013). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha of Internal Consistency, which ranged between .90 - .93 in previous studies (Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, Bankole, Mitchell, & Moore, 2013). These tests

indicated that the Student Trust in Faculty Scale appears to be a reasonably valid and reliable measure of the concept.

The comparison sample used to develop the standardized scores was based on the responses of 7,982 students in grades 3-12 sampled from 49 schools in an urban district. These included 35 elementary schools, nine middle schools, and five high schools. Specifically, the student responses included 4,702 elementary students in grades 3-5, 1,978 middle school students in grades 6 – 8, and 1,301 high school students in grades 9 – 12. Comparison made to students in other contexts should be made with caution.

Guide for Presenting Results of the Trust Surveys to Your Faculty

The study of trust has been likened to the study of the roots of a delicate plant. Without great care, the examination can damage or even destroy the very thing about which greater understanding is sought. Consequently, I urge caution in the use of these trust scales. Although they can be powerful tools in helping to reveal the underlying dynamics of trust in the relationships with students and parents in your school, they can do more harm than good if the information is not handled with sensitivity and care. If these data reveal that there are problems in the patterns of trust within your building, there is no better time to begin to exercise trustworthy behavior than in the presentation of these results.

While these tools hold the possibility of improving the productivity and effectiveness of your school by identifying areas in need of improved trust, the revelation of distrust or even less than optimal trust can be hard to take. It is important not to lash out in reaction to this perceived insult. It is important to seek to understand the perceptions and feelings that are revealed on the surveys. If you don't want to know the truth, don't administer the surveys in the first place. You can be glad for the opportunity to get a window into others' thinking that might not otherwise be available to you. Suppressing negative results will only lead to greater distrust, so do not administer the surveys if you do not intend to share the results with those who offered their opinions.

In presenting the results of the surveys to the faculty or other stakeholders, it is important to avoid blaming or looking for scapegoats. This is the time for openness, vulnerability, and authenticity. It is time for open-minded curiosity about how things got to be the way they are, followed by a conversation about how participants would like for them to be and about how to make that happen. Compelling evidence on the importance of trust to high performing schools has been presented in my book, *Trust Matters*, published by Jossey-Bass. If your scores indicate there is a problem with trust in your building, you have the opportunity to make it a priority to address these concerns.