



AUGENBLICK,
PALAICH AND
ASSOCIATES

MEMO TO: Lisa Medler, Executive Director Improvement Planning, Colorado Department of Education

FROM: Robert Reichardt and Kathryn Rooney, APA Consulting

CC: Emily Love and Sarah Forbes, Colorado Education Initiative

RE: Development of the Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey Colorado (TLC-CO)

DATE: November 13, 2017

This memo accompanies the final Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey Colorado (TLC-CO) that was provided to the Colorado Department of Education in the file *Final Questions.xlsx*. This memo describes the process used to develop this survey instrument, prior to delivery of the survey to CDE. Subsequent to the delivery, CDE revised the survey slightly based on feedback from the TLC-CO Working Group and the Educational Data Advisory Committee (EDAC).

This memo is intended to describe the process used to create and revise the TLC survey. The TLC-CO survey is substantially different from the TELL CO survey. The TLC-CO survey is considerably shorter: the 2015 TELL survey had 212 possible responses; the newly-created TLC-CO survey has 86 possible responses. The question stems are also completely different between the TLC-CO and the 2015 TELL CO. In addition, questions around the development and support of student social-emotional health were added. While some of the response options are similar between the two surveys, these response options reflect commonly-used Likert scales that are not unique to either survey research or educational surveys specifically.

The Project

The TLC-CO survey is intended to replace the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL CO) Survey. In 2016, CDE did not award the contract for a teacher survey to the New Teacher Center, the owner of the TELL CO survey. As the result of selecting a new vendor, CDE needed to create a new survey that would serve the same purposes as the TELL CO Survey without infringing on the New Teacher Center's copyrighted TELL CO Survey.

Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) was hired on April 19, 2017 to assist CDE with the process of developing a new statewide teacher and administrator survey. The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) also participated in the creation of the new survey. To support the survey revision, CDE developed the TLC-CO Working Group of education leaders from the state that included representatives from universities, districts, schools, and organizations that provide support to schools

The survey creation process was led by CDE. CDE staff approved the processes used for developing the TLC-CO survey, provided guidance on the types of questions and the survey structure, and provided feedback on draft questions during the survey creation process. APA's role was to gather and analyze information, propose survey questions, conduct think-alouds, conduct pilots (with the assistance of CEI), and maintain an ongoing record of the questions during survey development. CEI provided input from

their work around the state on necessary constructs for the new survey, provided input on questions, assisted with the pilots at the CEI Showcase, and assisted with recruitment and compensation of educators for the think-alouds.

The main priorities for this work as identified by CDE were to:

1. Develop a statewide teacher and principal survey to replace the TELL CO survey.
2. This TLC-CO survey should retain all of the primary constructs in the original TELL CO survey, but all questions should be substantially different from the TELL CO survey as to not infringe on the New Teacher Center's copyrighted material.
3. The new survey (TLC) should not be burdensome in terms of the number of questions or time needed to complete the survey.

Purpose Of The Survey

A key issue in developing the TLC-CO was to be clear about the purpose of the survey. Historically, the TELL CO survey was developed as a tool for school improvement. The results of the survey were intended to support discussions within the school as school staff worked on their school improvement plans. A key step in the development of the TLC-CO survey was to verify that this should continue to be the purpose of the survey. Through discussions with CDE, CEI, and using feedback from the TLC-CO Working Group during our first meeting it was agreed that this new survey would also primarily serve the purpose of supporting schools with their school improvement process.

Steps in The Process Of Creating The TLC-CO Survey

This section describes the main steps in creating the TLC survey.

Step 1:

- CEI and CDE worked collaboratively to hold meetings around the state to get input on constructs and structure of the survey.
- APA conducted a crosswalk of 2015 TELL CO questions with four other educator surveys.

Step 2:

- CDE used an online survey to collect feedback on the name of the new survey and the most important constructs to include.

Step 3:

- CEI, CDE, and APA facilitated a TLC-CO working group meeting to discuss the purpose of the survey and get input on TLC-CO survey constructs and survey structure. The group determined that the purpose of the survey should be to support the school improvement process. The group also established that survey questions with higher variance in response are more useful. Questions with low variance, when most respondents give the same answer, are not as useful to educators as they work to identify school challenges and successes as part of the school improvement process.

Step 4:

- Using the feedback collected by CEI, feedback from the TLC-CO working group, and the crosswalk, APA designed new survey questions.

Step 5:

- APA received feedback from CEI and CDE on these new survey items.

Step 6:

- APA created and administered two pilot surveys with a combination of 2013 TELL CO survey questions and the draft TLC-CO survey questions. The results of these pilots were used primarily to determine the response variance for each survey question.

Step 7:

- APA conducted think-alouds with teachers to help ensure the TLC-CO survey was addressing the constructs from the TELL CO survey, and to validate the wording of some of the new TLC-CO questions. CEI helped identify six educators to participate in the think-alouds and provided teacher incentives to encourage participation. During these think-alouds, APA asked educators to literally 'think aloud', verbally describing their thoughts, as they read the questions. APA presented the participating educators with the draft TLC-CO survey questions with the most variance as determined in the pilot surveys (Step 6) along with TELL CO survey questions falling under the same constructs. Feedback from the think-alouds was used to revise and improve the questions.

Step 8:

- The revised questions were again reviewed by CDE and CEI and APA made further changes.

Step 9:

- During preparation for a second TLC-CO working group meeting, APA conducted an online survey of TLC-CO working group members to determine which of the revised questions were the most important to discuss.

Step 10:

- APA, in collaboration with CDE and CEI conducted the second TLC-CO working group meeting by teleconference to review those survey items designated as the most important (in Step 9). APA collected data on suggested changes.

Step 11:

- APA made revisions as the result of this group teleconference.
- APA mapped the constructs of the 2015 TELL CO survey questions to the constructs of the TLC-CO survey