

## Using Pulse to support and engage our staff

**Satchel Pulse is designed specifically for school districts.** Pulse provides school and district leaders with powerful insights regarding the culture and climate of their schools. Real-time feedback is gathered and reported in a user-friendly manner. Pulse solutions and services are designed to give leaders the information, tools, and resources to make meaningful improvements to their culture and climate.

### Background

The Dawson County School District is a school district in Dawson County, Georgia, United States. We work with 3 of the schools serving 2,000 students and 170 Staff. The district has been using Pulse for 9 months, since May 2020, and have found the research-backed survey questions beneficial. We spoke with Janice Darnell, the Executive Director of Instructional Support and Student Services.



Janice Darnell,  
Executive Director of Instructional  
Support and Student Services.  
The Dawson County School District

### What was the main challenge that led you to speak to Pulse?

We have one school identified as a targeted support school. The schools in our district perform very well, as does this school but the reason this school identified for targeted support is because of the economically disadvantaged subgroup scores. This subgroup did not meet their performance goal, which meant the school was then placed on the TSI. We then began looking for ways to provide additional support to this school and as a result came across Pulse. We thought it could help us gather perceptive data not just from our staff along the way but eventually bringing in the parents and students. We liked that we could gather feedback frequently in smaller intervals.

We also conduct longer surveys assessments during the year but this way we could do shorter ones all throughout the year and keep a beat on the perception throughout the year.

We did bring in the school that feeds into the improvement school and also the transitioning school because we felt like it was important to see that perceptive data coming in and going out to see if there were any disparities that we did not identify before.

### Was there anything specific you were looking for that you found in Pulse rather than other vendors?

We've used survey instruments before, the primary platform that we used was Survey Monkey. We were completely satisfied with the use of that product but we had to create everything that goes into it and data disaggregation was an issue; it's quite lengthy and it does take a long time to break it down. Pulse allowed us to utilize a platform that already has the research-supported questions and with the education-focused format that we needed. Pulse also disaggregates the data automatically for us.

**“We liked that we could gather feedback frequently in smaller intervals.”**

## From your perspective how different is Pulse from other vendors?

Pulse offered ease of use. We previewed a couple of different options, they all had unique ideologies of how they operate but we loved the simplicity of Pulse.

## What were the main goals that you wanted to achieve with Pulse?

Our main goal was that we wanted our schools to utilize real-time data. We already gather perceptive data during the year but because they are not concrete numbers sometimes it is not taken quite as seriously. So hopefully by having a continual flow of perceptive data they will utilize this with a level of importance similar to the other data that we have.

## How was your onboarding process?

It's been a slow start for us because of COVID-19 and for our students who are participating online. But given the situation that the schools are having to navigate they have not mentioned any complaints about getting into the platform, heard nothing like this apart from the fact that there is a new platform for them.

## What are the highlights from working with Pulse?

I think your availability and patience with us have been very important when we are having our moments of slowness in terms of using the product.

You have been very patient with us, to meet us where we are and I appreciate that a lot. When we were ready to take off and start running with Pulse the availability of the entire team has been very helpful.

## In the time that you've been using Pulse what have been your results?

Our results may have been inflated positively because we did a great push with staff to participate, they understand this is important and the district is reviewing the results. Our markings have been very high with every school and even though we're not at the level of participation that we want yet we are getting there.

## What would you tell other districts about Pulse?

I would say your flexibility, patience, attentiveness, and helpfulness have been great for us. I would also share that your company had an openness to really listen to our needs so that we didn't overextend ourselves budget-wise to buy more features that we really did not need yet. Pulse was customized appropriately for us.

I liked that you were willing for us to phase in staff first then bring in other subgroups later. Many companies want you to start all across the board straight away which we didn't want to do, so the slower implementation is working well for us. The Pulse survey questions have all been vetted so we don't have to sort through and vet these ourselves, this saved us so much time.

**“You had an openness to really listen to our needs.”**