Westport Public Schools CSCI Community Presentation

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NSCC

School Climate: What is it?

- School Climate refers to the **quality of school life as experienced by members of the school community: Students, School Personnel & Parents**

- It includes:

  - **Norms, goals and values** (e.g. mutual respect)

  - **Relationships, Teaching & Learning and Leadership practices**

  - & Organizational **structures and processes –** rules, regulations, and enforcement

Why is School Climate Important?

More than 30 years of research shows that a healthy school climate supports:

- Positive Youth Development
- Academic Achievement & Student Learning
- Effective Risk Prevention/Health Promotion
- Higher Graduation Rates
- Increased Teacher Retention

(For recent school climate research summaries, see Cohen, et. al. 2009; Cohen & Geier, 2010)

School Climate & Performance Index Score

(2006-07, Ohio Department of Education (2008) and the NSCC/CSEE)
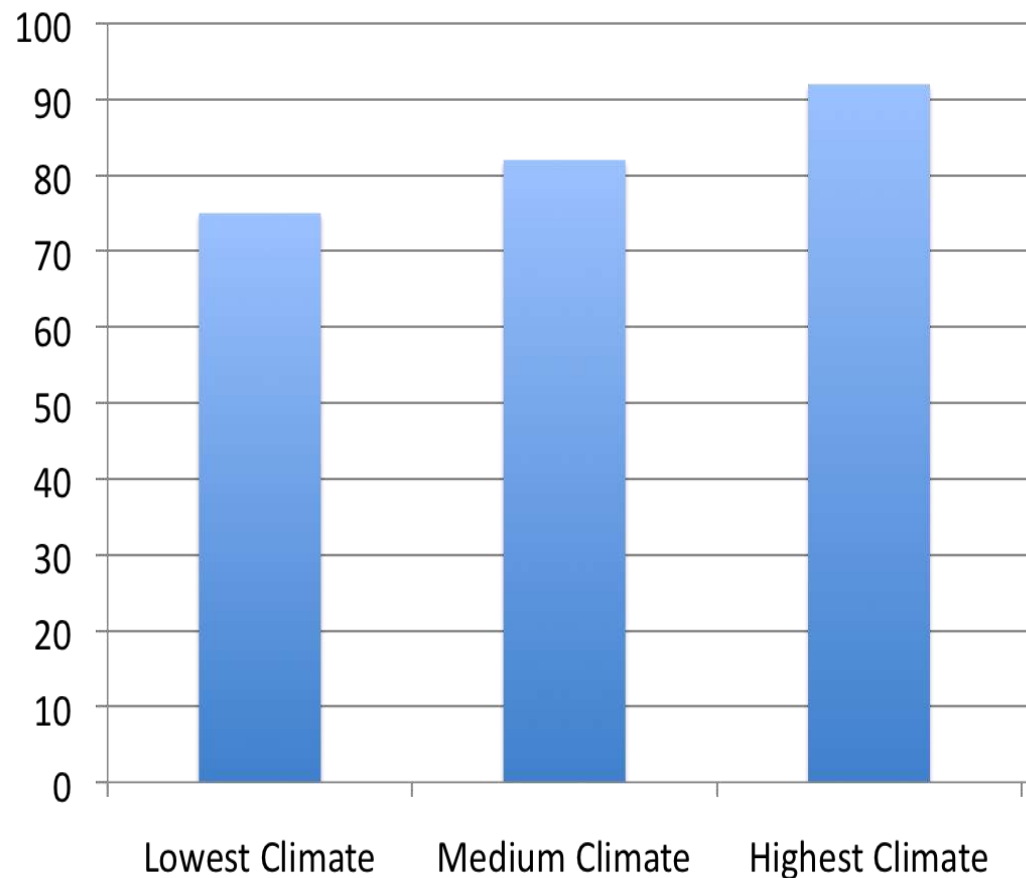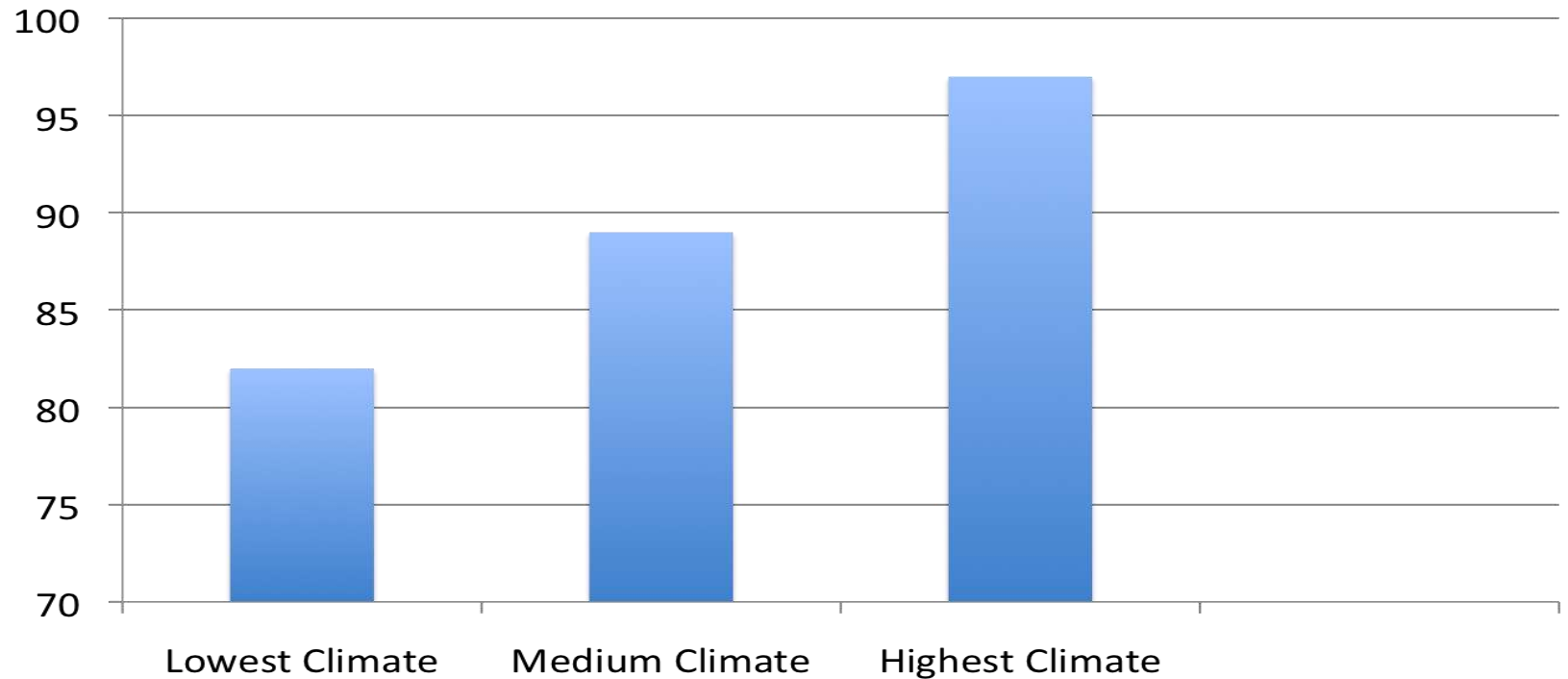

Our own research shows:

- Strong correlation btwn school climate and academics

- Holds for both low and high poverty schools

- Applies to MS and HS

- Even stronger for graduation rates . . .

School Climate & Graduation Rates

## (2006-07, Ohio DOE (2008) and the NSCC/CSEE)

Assessment & Improvement Process

1. **Planning for Change**
   - Form a representative team/ establishing ground rules
   - Leadership Commitment/ Fostering "Buy in"
   - Establishing a "no fault" framework/ culture of trust
   - Community Engagement/Outreach
2. **School Climate Assessment/Evaluation**
   - **Measurement Process**
   - **Interpretation of Results**
3. **Action Planning**
   - **Drill down to key priorities**
   - **Research best practices/ evidence-based programs**
   - **Define action plans**
   - **Establish benchmarks and clear timelines**
4. **Program/Project Implementation**
5. **Re-assessment/Re-evaluation**

What is the CSCI?
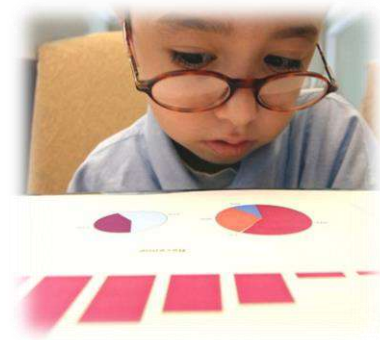
- Developed in 2002, **The Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI)** measures how critical groups – **students, school personnel** and **parents/ guardians –** perceive the school's climate for learning.

- The CSCI was evaluated by three independent survey development experts in 2006 who **confirmed the tool was reliable and valid**.

- **Two recent studies confirm the CSCI's strength**:
  1) A 2010 study of 102 school climate surveys, found the CSCI to be one of only three measures to meet *American Psychological Association* criteria for reliability and validity. (Gangi).
  2) A 2011 study of 73 middle school measures, recommended ten as being reliable, valid and aligned with SEL research. Of those, the CSCI was the only school climate measure recommended. (*Social Development Research Group*).

Assessment and CSCI Report Benefits

- **Engages the community** by giving stakeholders a voice in a protected manner-anonymous and protected down to the reporting level

- **Gain school-wide perspectives** of key stakeholders: student, staff, and/or parents
  - Establishes a shared definition of school climate for discussion
  - Representation of variability between and across populations
  - Representation of data by sub-group (grade, gender, race, etc.)

- **Recognizes school strengths** to celebrate and leverage

- **Identifies school needs** to allocate resources and prioritize action steps

- **Establishes benchmarks** for improvement

CSCI:
Comprehensive School Climate Inventory

- **Safety**
  - Rules & Norms
  - Physical
  - Social-Emotional
- **Teaching & Learning**
  - Support for Learning
  - Social & Civic Learning
  - Professional Relationships (school personnel only)
  - Leadership (school personnel only)
- **Relationships**
  - Respect for Diversity
  - Social Support – Adults & Students
- **Environment**
  - Connectedness/ Engagement
  - Physical Surroundings

| Dimensions	Major Indicators
Safety	
1 Rules and Norms	Clearly communicated rules about physical violence; clearly communicated rules about verbal abuse, harassment, and teasing; clear and consistent enforcement and norms for adult intervention.
2 Sense of Physical Security	Sense that students and adults feel safe from physical harm in the school.
3 Sense of Social-Emotional Security	Sense that students feel safe from verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion.
Teaching and Learning	
4 Support for Learning	Use of supportive teaching practices, such as: encouragement and constructive feedback; varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills; support for risk-taking and independent thinking; atmosphere conducive to dialog and questioning; academic challenge; and individual attention.
5 Social and Civic Learning	Support for the development of social and civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions including: effective listening, conflict resolution, self-reflection and emotional regulation, empathy, personal responsibility, and ethical decision making.
Interpersonal Relationships	
6 Respect for Diversity	Mutual respect for individual differences (e.g. gender, race, culture, etc.) at all levels of the school—student-student; adult-student; adult-adult and overall norms for tolerance.
7 Social Support—Adults	Pattern of supportive and caring adult relationships for students, including high expectations for students' success, willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals, and personal concern for students' problems.
8 Social Support—Students	Pattern of supportive peer relationships for students, including: friendships for socializing, for problems, for academic help, and for new students.
Institutional Environment	
9 School Connectedness/Engagement	Positive identification with the school and norms for broad participation in school life for students, staff, and families.
10 Physical Surroundings	Cleanliness, order, and appeal of facilities and adequate resources and materials.
Staff Only	
11 Leadership	Administration that creates and communicates a clear vision, and is accessible to and supportive of school staff and staff development.
12 Professional Relationships	Positive attitudes and relationships among school staff that support effectively working and learning together.

District Response Rates

School	Student Response #/Total (%)	Staff Response #/Total (%)	Parent Response #/Total (%)
Bedford Middle School	779*/860 (90.58%)	96*/108 (88.89%)	180*/744 (24.19%)
Coleytown Elementary School	250*/263 (95.06%)	67*/78 (85.90%)	87*/328 (26.52%)
Coleytown Middle School	503*/535 (94.02%)	61*/89 (68.54%)	93*/468 (19.87%)
Greens Farms School	214*/230 (93.04%)	56*/87 (64.37%)	111*/305 (36.39%)
Kings Highway Elementary School	253*/266 (95.11%)	59*/89 (66.29%)	89*/347 (25.65%)
Long Lots Elementary School	300*/320 (93.75%)	69*/91 (75.82%)	195*/457 (42.67%)
Saugatuck Elementary School	255*/271 (94.10%)	63*/84 (75.00%)	72*/359 (20.06%)
Staples High School	1280*/1880 (68.09%)	176*/275 (64.00%)	338*/1509 (22.40%)

*Figures received from school to represent potential number of respondents.

- Parent response rates above average for some schools
- Engagement levels may be impacted by:

    - timing of administration
    - family perception of current climate (positive)
    - family involvement in follow-up action planning and awareness meetings

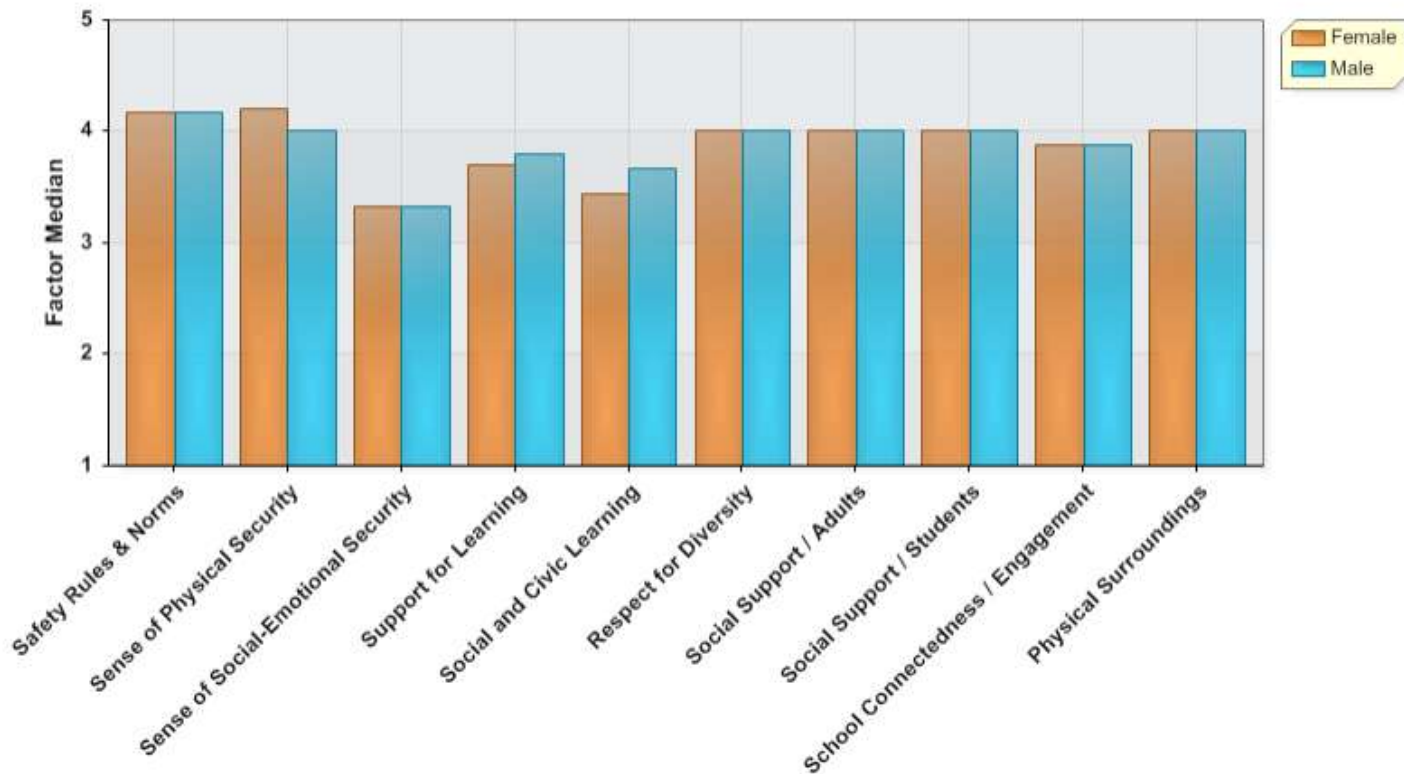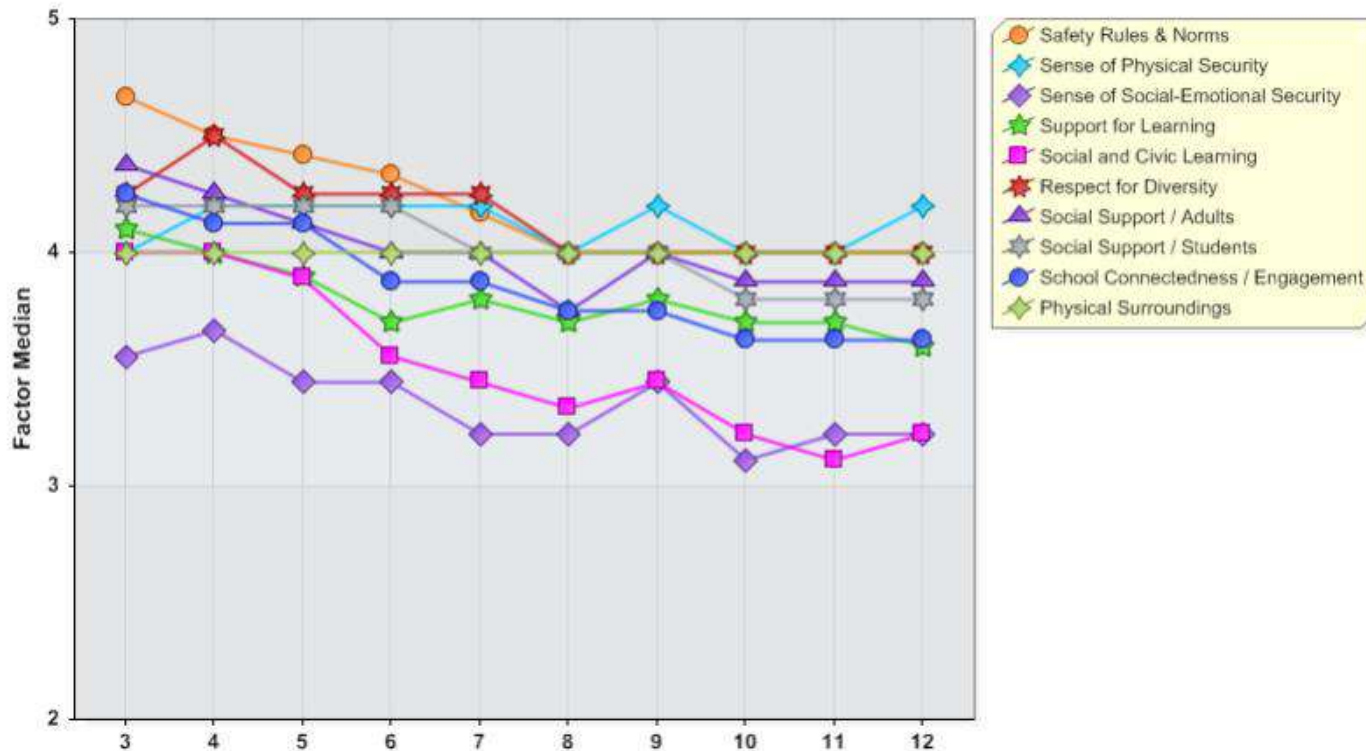# District Results By Population

Climate Scores by Population
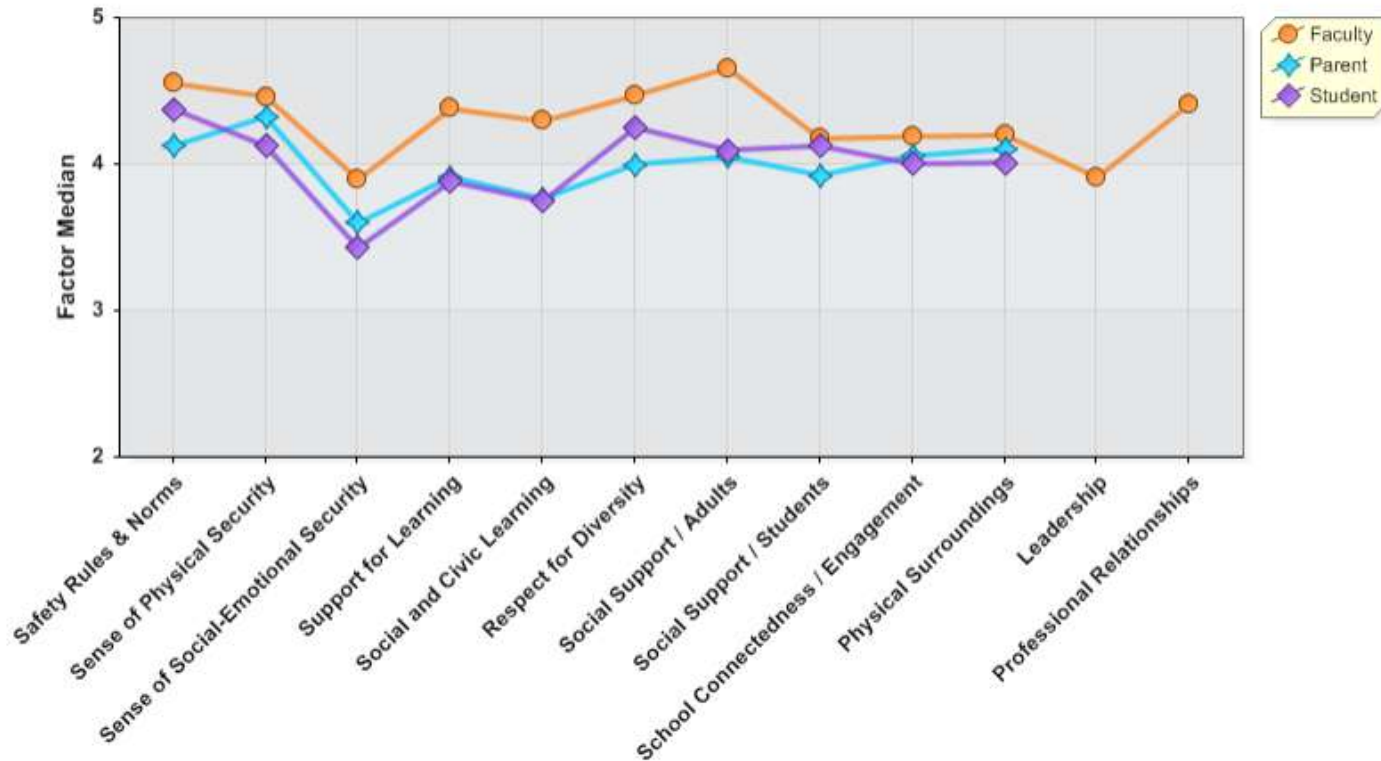
District Results
Students By Gender
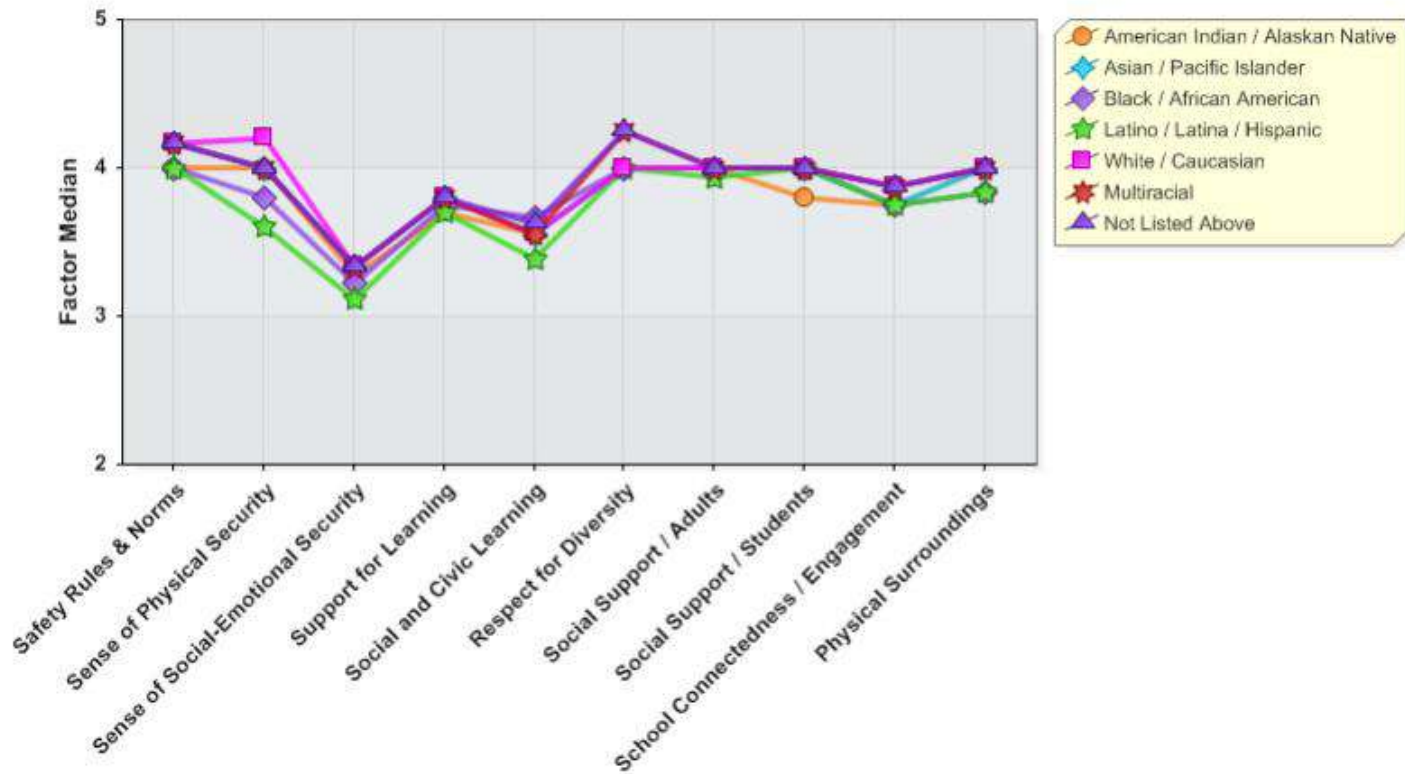

Student Climate Scores by Gender

Student Climate Scores by Grade

Student Climate Scores by Grade

Student Scores By Race/Ethnicity

Student Climate Scores by Race/Ethnicity

Relative Rankings By Population

Relative Factor Rankings by Population

Dimensions	Students	Staff	Parents
Safety Rules & Norms	1	2	2
Sense of Physical Security	3	4	1
Sense of Social-Emotional Security	10	10	10
Support for Learning	8	5	8
Social and Civic Learning	9	6	9
Respect for Diversity	2	3	6
Social Support / Adults	5	1	5
Social Support / Students	3	9	7
School Connectedness / Engagement	7	8	4
Physical Surroundings	6	7	3

Note: If two or more dimensions have the same median score, they are given the same (higher) rank. For example, if two dimensions score a 4.0 and that is the highest score, they will both be ranked "1" and the next highest score will be ranked "3."

District-wide Strengths

- **Safety Rules and Norms**: consistently rated high across all populations

- **Social Support-Students**: 4.0+ student ratings with a majority of student scores showing an increase from 2012

- **Respect for Diversity**: consistent and positive scores for all three populations with some student scores experiencing an increase from 2012

District-wide Challenges

- **Social-Emotional Security** – though 11th grade student score has increased, 10th grade remains a challenge

- **Support for Learning** – score fluctuation from 5th-12th grades – what efforts are happening at higher scoring grades such as 5th, 7th and 9th grades to provide insight about variability?

- **Social and Civic Learning** – disconnect between staff and student scores (must consider the high range of staff scores for context→ extremely high staff scores reaching 4.60)

We Have Data…Next Steps?

- **Additional Training** and Supports needed
  - Training for district expertise & sustainability

- **Engage** the entire community in improvement evaluation and action planning- remember "Buy in" from Stage 1 of 5-Stage Improvement Model

- **Dig deeper** into results and look for **consistent trends across buildings to share findings and common strategies**

- **Revisit** initial school improvement plans and consider the successes and challenges of each effort/strategy

- **Build** on past efforts to integrate results with current efforts

We Have Data…Next Steps? (contd.)

District level

Committee will meet to review district wide results and trends

Elementary and Secondary Schools level

Administrators at each level will meet to share ideas, learn from each other

School-based level

Teams will review individual school data and share with school community

For More Info

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FREE NSCC RESOURCES

- ***BULLYBUST*** – a student-led awareness campaign to reduce bullying in our nation's schools. Sign the STAND UP pledge today at: www.bullybust.org.

- ***National School Climate Standards: Benchmarks to promote effective teaching, learning and comprehensive school improvement*** –(www.schoolclimate.org/climate/standards.php)

- ***NSCC Blog*** – stay updated on the latest news in the field (blog.schoolclimate.org).

- ***School Climate Guide for District Policy Makers and Educational Leaders*** – *(*www.schoolclimate.org/climate/process.php)

- ***School Climate Matters*** – quarterly e-newsletter with key resources, expert articles, and educator tips (www.schoolclimate.org).

Relevant readings

Cohen, J, McCabe, E.M, Michelli, N.M & Pickeral, T. (2009). School Climate: Research, Policy, Teacher Education and Practice. *Teachers College Record,* Volume 111: Issue 1: pp. 180-213.

Cohen, J. & Geier, V. (2010). *School Climate Research Summary: January 2010* (available on: www.schoolclimate.org/climate/research.php)

Cohen, J., Pickeral, T., & Levine, P. (2010). The Foundation for Democracy: Social, emotional, ethical, cognitive skills and dispositions in K-12 schools. *Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy*, Vol. 3. No. 1, pg. 74-97 (http://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/ried/)

Gangi,T.A. (2010). *School climate and faculty relations: Choosing an effective assessment tool* (http://gradworks.umi.com/33/88/3388261.html

Haggerty, K., Elgin, J., & Woolley (2011). *Social-emotional learning and school climate assessment measures for middle school youth*. Social Development Research Group, University of Washington and the Raikes Foundation

National School Climate Council (2007). *The School Climate Challenge: Narrowing the gap between school climate research and school climate policy, practice guidelines and teacher education policy*. On www.schoolclimate.org/climate/policy.php