

SCHOOL CLIMATE 101

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What is **your** role in establishing a positive school climate?



THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

The school system also develops and implements a continuous school improvement process to promote quality learning for all students. This process includes procedures and strategies to address quality learning, equity, and accountability. In all school systems, the continuous school improvement process includes the following activities at least once every five years:

- Review and update of mission and vision statements.
- Collect and analyze data about student performance, demographics, learning climate, and former high school students.
- Select improvement goals. At least one goal is directed toward improving student academic achievement.
- Develop and implement an improvement plan which includes procedures, strategies, actions to achieve goals, and an aligned professional development plan.
- Evaluate progress toward improvement goals.

If states select the right indicator, the changes could provide scbc

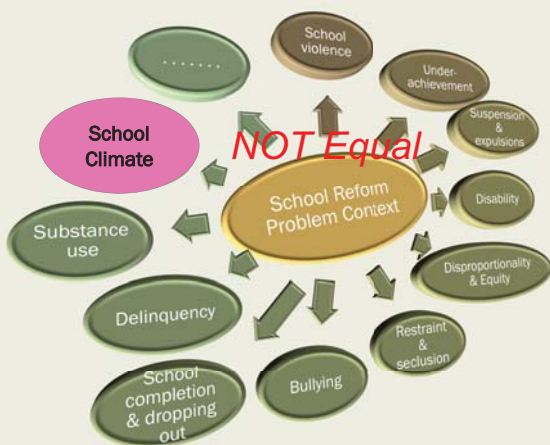
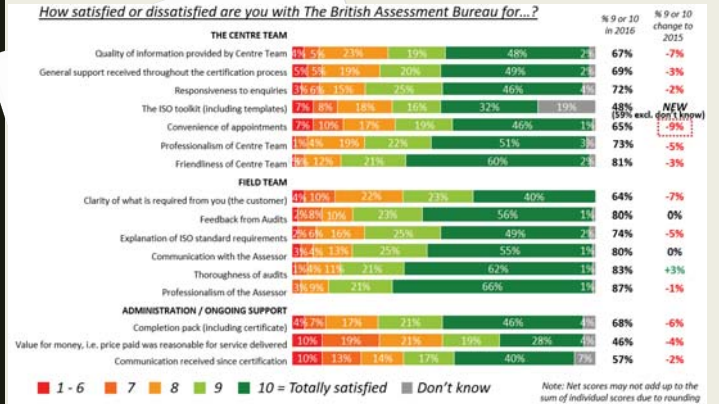


ESSA: SCHOOL CLIMATE AS AN INDICATOR

Conditions for learning?
Conditions for teaching?

- Engaging students *only* academically (time on work completion) and behaviorally (attendance) is not enough
- Must also consider students' level of personal investment in learning (*I can, I want to*) and degree of belonging and social connectedness (*I belong, peer and teacher support, I feel safe*)
- ESSA highlights school and classroom climate
 - Academic achievement within a positive school climate is essential for school success

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED?



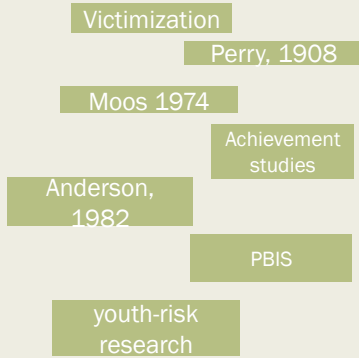
SCHOOL CLIMATE

- What characteristics of a school create a positive school climate?
- What characteristics of a school create a negative school climate?

DEFINING SCHOOL CLIMATE



The Albatross
The Unicorn
THE PHOENIX



Research



- "Multilevel analyses and hierarchical linear modeling indicated that student-level variables accounted for the majority of variation in perceptions of school climate (La Salle, Zabek, & Meyers, 2016)
- "It has been found that student perceptions of school climate are positively correlated with academic achievement (Brookover et al., 1978), and negatively correlated with risky behaviors (White, La Salle, Ashby, & Meyers, 2014)"
- "students who experienced more frequent rates of victimization reported lower feelings of school connectedness. This relationship was moderated by gender and age, with male and middle school students reporting a stronger relationship between the two variables. Results indicated that moderation existed among multiracial and Native American students, but the same patterns were not significant among other participating groups (La Salle, Parris, & Moring, 2015."
- Students with disabilities report lower perceptions of school climate, higher rates of peer victimization, and higher rates of mental health problems (La Salle, George, McCoach, & Evanovich, 2018)

Defining School Climate (contd.)

"School Climate is based on patterns of students, parents, and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures"
(National School Climate Centers, 2007).



Or, more simply put...

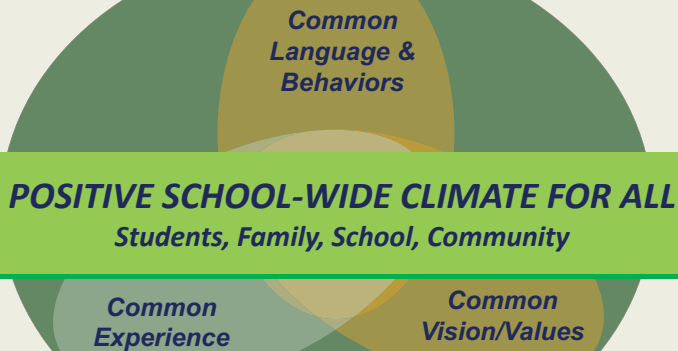
School climate is the "feeling" of the school.

What Have We Learned from the Business World?



SCHOOL CLIMATE

- PBIS is a **Framework** NOT an **Intervention**
- School Climate is NOT an **Intervention**
- School Climate, like ODRS, attendance, and achievement, IS an **indicator** of perceptions of the school environment at the **individual**, **group**, and school level



- Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence (2001)
- Coordinated Social Emotional & Learning (Greenberg et al., 2003)
- Center for Study & Prevention of Violence
- White House Conference on Children

PBIS in our School
A Refreshable Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Program

The CSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports suggests the following application of the three-tiered approach to prevent school failure:

They agree that PBIS takes a multi-tiered approach to addressing the following application of the three-tiered approach to prevent school failure:

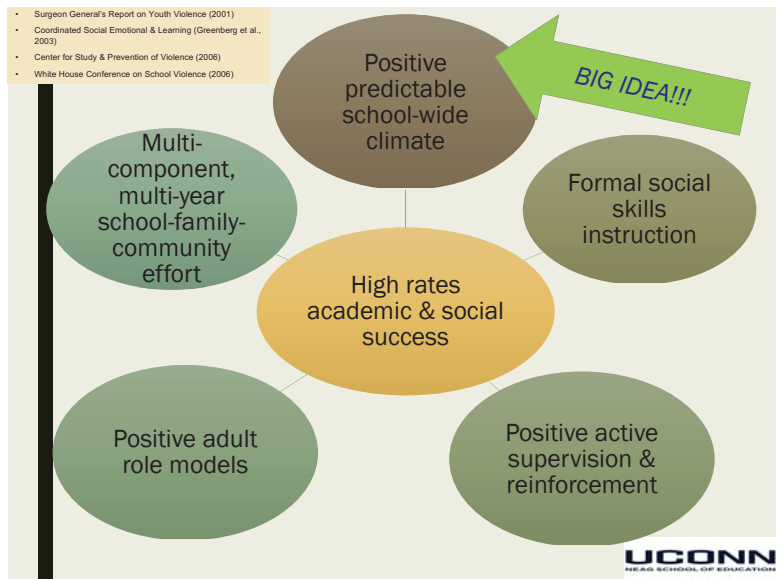
- At Tier 1, all students and staff are taught clearly and uniformly about how to behave in safe, respectful and responsible ways, and how to solve common classroom problems. If implemented well, each student will benefit and be successful.
- At Tier 2, students whose behaviors do not respond to Tier 1 supports and interventions receive preventive and corrective services. All using universal social skills training, or targeted social skills training, and other individualized social and behavioral supports, if necessary, if necessary.
- At Tier 3, students whose behaviors do not respond to Tier 1 and 2 supports and interventions receive intensive, individualized, and targeted social and behavioral supports, including individualized social and behavioral supports, if necessary, if necessary.

Formal social skills instruction

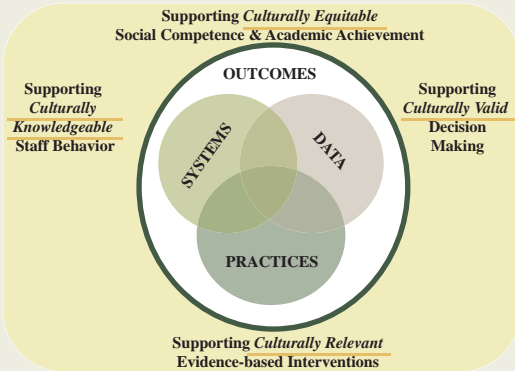
High rates academic & social success

SKILL of the WEEK!

Ready-to-Use SOCIAL SKILLS LESSONS & ACTIVITIES for Grades 1-3
BY STEPHEN BROWN, Editor
The Society for Professional Education

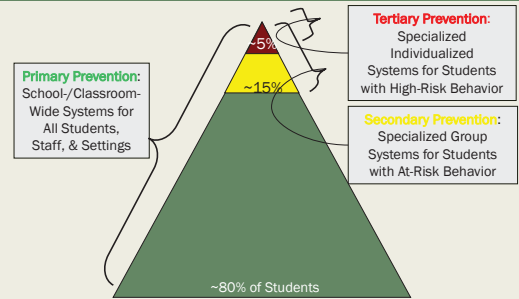


Critical Features of PBIS



(Vincent, Randal, Cartledge, Tobin, & Swain-Bradway, 2011; Sugai, O'Keefe, & Fallon 2012 ab)

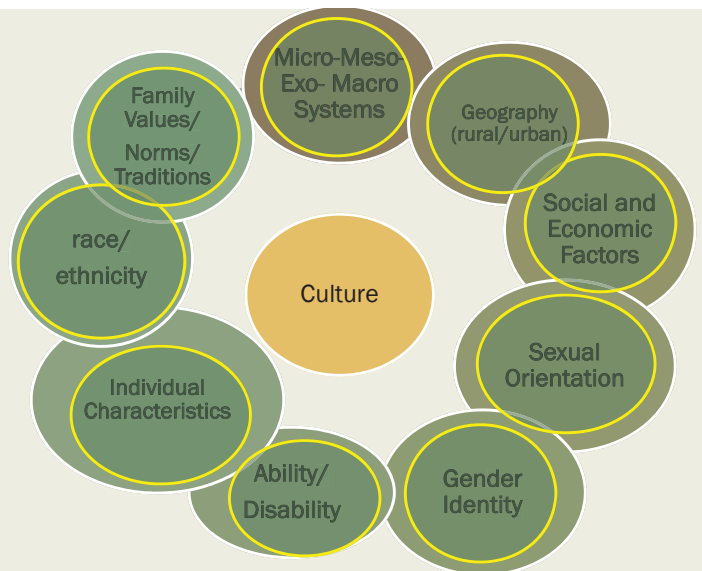
Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support

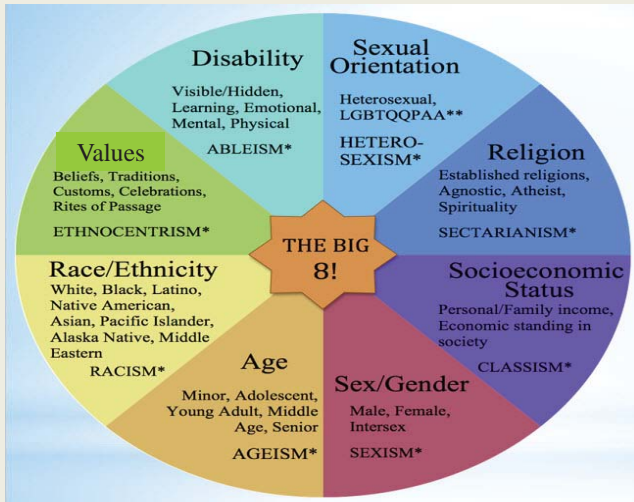


CULTURE



Culture is set of values, beliefs, or behaviors shared by a group of people based on race, geography, social and economic factors, experiences, or other unifying denominators. Culture permeates throughout contexts and guides the ways that individuals assign meaning to, interact with, and adapt to their environments. Culture is ever evolving and results from intra-and interpersonal experiences, development, and growth





WE ARE ALL CULTURAL BEINGS



SCHOOL PRACTICES

- What are some of the cultural influences in your school that affect student learning in a + or - way
- What does your school do to show that they value student diversity

In School, Culture is...

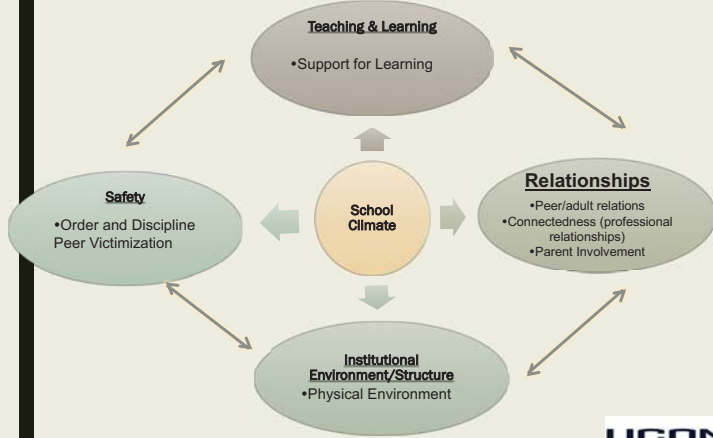
The Way We Plan Instruction
How We Make Sense Of Information
Apart of Everyone, All the Time

How We Perceive Environment
The Way We Learn How We Think

Values Acknowledged
Expressed Through Behaviors

The Basis for Behavioral Expectations
What We Think is Important
Not Static
The Way We Teach

DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE



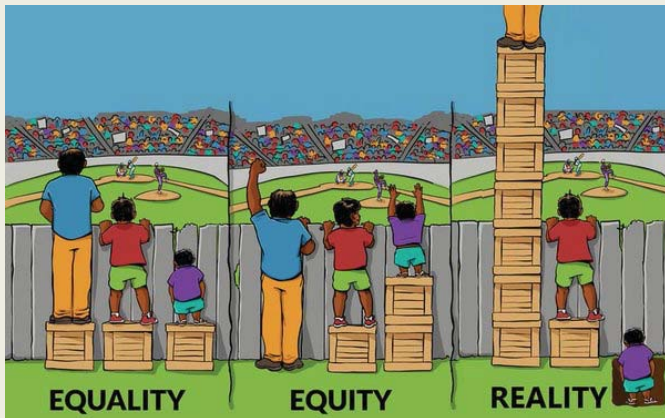
TEACHING AND LEARNING

■ Primary Characteristics

- Optimal environment: Teachers *can* teach and students *can* learn
- High expectations/ academic challenge
- Equitable access
- Engaging and relative content
- Support for learning
- Cultural Acceptance

"I feel successful at school"

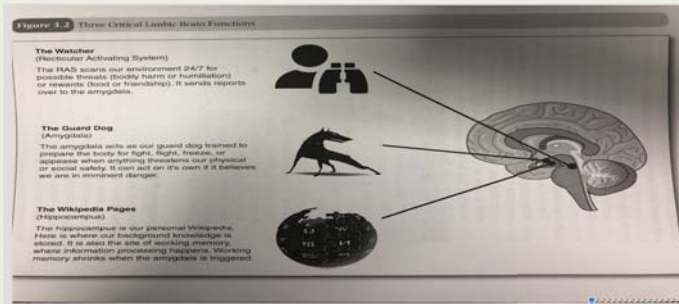
"Teachers at my school have high standards for achievement"



TEACHING AND LEARNING



TEACHING AND LEARNING: FROM A CULTURAL/BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



Teaching and Learning: From a Cultural/Biological Perspective

■ The Brain

- *Actually has to feel part of a caring social community to maximize students' sense of well-being*

■ Examine definitions/conditions of safety

- *They may vary between you and your students*
- *Familiarize yourself with actions or conditions that make students feel **unsafe**, even if they can not articulate it*
 - E.g., forcing timed responses during whole-class instruction or labeling students

□ "I feel safe in my school"

PHYSICAL SAFETY

"I have been bullied or threatened by other students"

- Socially, Emotionally, Intellectually and Physically
- Up to 25% of US students are bullied each year
- 1 out of 3 adolescents report being seriously threatened online, and 60% say they have participated in online bullying
- Growing evidence that educators also feel unsafe at school
- Consistent enforcement of school discipline and availability of caring adults increases students' and adults feelings of safety

"I Have worried about other students hurting me"

EMOTIONAL SAFETY

MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Students will not seek to connect with adults (or peers) if they perceive threats to their social or psychological well-being
- Microaggression
 - *The subtle, everyday verbal and nonverbal slights, snubs, or insults which communicate derogatory or hostile messages to people based on their marginalized group membership*
 - "They won't be able to do that assignment"
 - "They aren't going to actually do their homework"
 - "Their parents aren't going to help them"
 - The nonverbal response to a wrong answer or when a student shows up for class

Institutional Environment

- Physical environment
- Resources/Supplies
- School Size
- Schedules/ Classroom Layout
- School size
- Schedules, classroom layout

?

"Instructional materials are up to date and in good condition"

"Students in my school take pride in keeping the school building clean"

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RELATIONSHIPS

- Fairness/ Consistency
- Clear Rules/Expectations
- Student –Teacher, Student –Student, Teacher-Teacher Relationships
- Adult Support
- School Connectedness
- Degree of competition and social comparison
- Degree to which students, teachers, and staff contribute to decision-making at the school

"I feel successful at school"

■ "I know an adult I can talk to if I need help"

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RELATIONSHIPS

Get to know each student in your classroom (formally/informally)

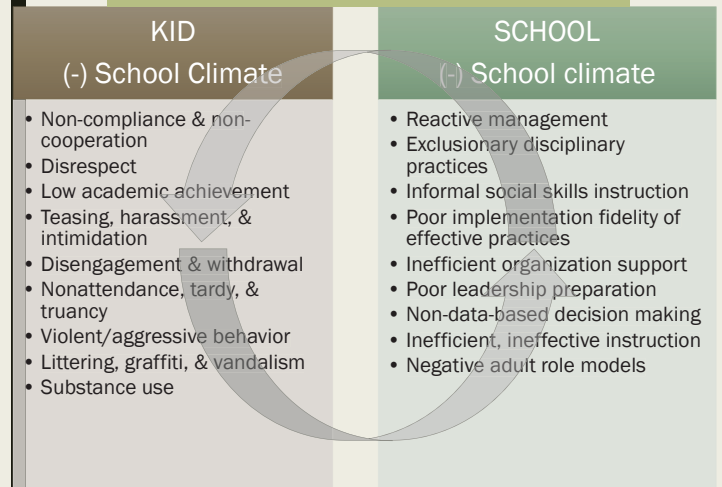
*Call students by their name- the one they prefer

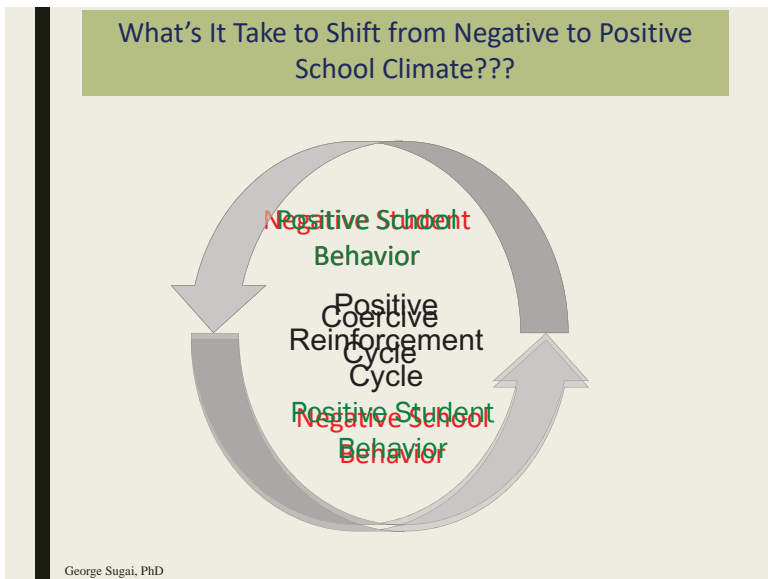
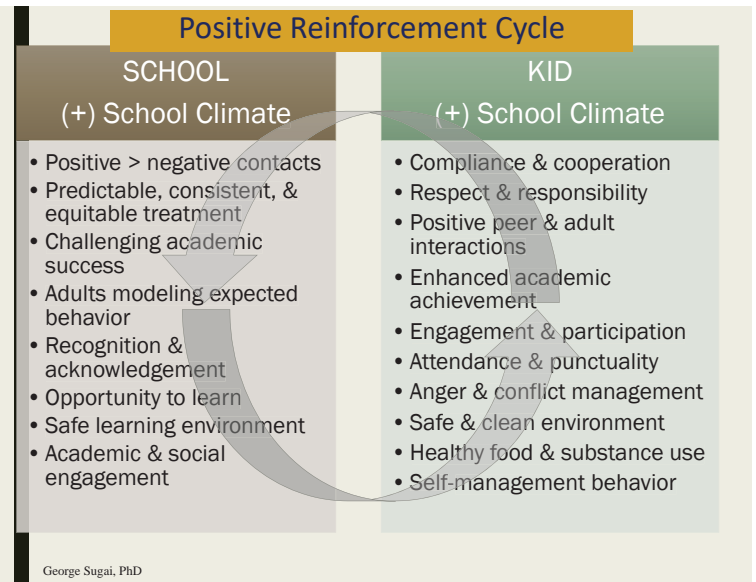
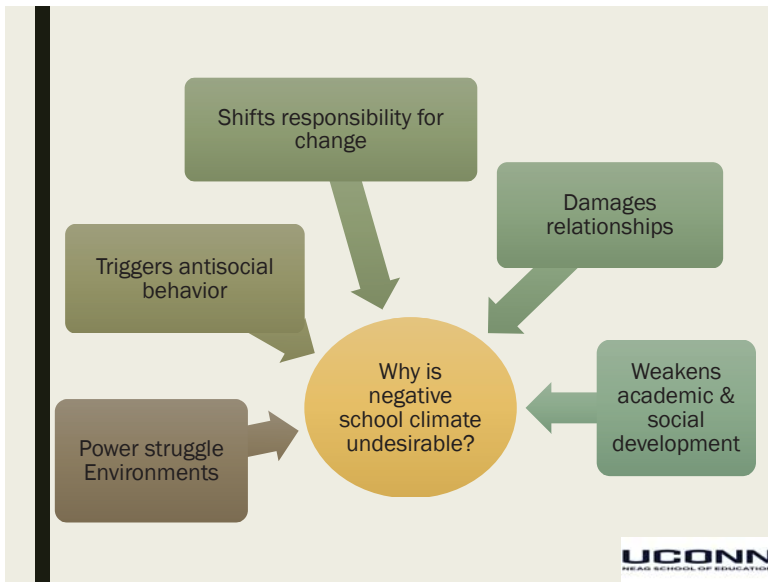
Make an effort to understand what student's need to succeed in school

Spend time individually with each student, especially those who are difficult or shy- give them some time (don't give up).

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Coercive Cycle





- ## SCHOOL CLIMATE MEASUREMENT
- How do you measure it?
 - School Climate Surveys
 - Who should we ask?
 - Students
 - School Personnel (teachers, support staff, administrators)
 - Parents/Family
- UCONN
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SCHOOL CLIMATE MEASUREMENT

- How often?
- What do I do with the data?
 - *School Climate Measurement Session*
 - *SHARE IT*

IMPROVING SCHOOL CLIMATE

- A guiding PBIs Framework
 - Implemented strategically and with fidelity
- Integrated within the curriculum and developed holistically with the school community



Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of educational research*, 83(3), 357-385.

Improving School Climate

- Systems that should be in place that support
 - Professional capacity building
 - Order, safety, and norms
 - Parent-school partnership
 - Instructional support and modeling

Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of educational research*, 83(3), 357-385.

IMPROVING SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Increase parent, family and community involvement
- Share data/ be transparent
- Implement a core, school-wide curriculum emphasizing school values and social skills
- Take bullying seriously and work to prevent it
- Ensure all students and staff are treated fairly and equitably.
- Take measures to ensure safety/ prioritize prevention
- Personalize the school experience

School Climate In Review

- School climate is an essential component of school success
- Student (parent and teacher) perceptions matter
- School Climate is malleable and should be part of school improvement plans
- PBIS, when implemented with fidelity, is a viable way to address school climate

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Thank you & Questions?

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