

Using School Climate Data to Promote Mental Health

Frank Rider, AIR – NCSSLE (October 2018)



What Is School Climate?



Healthy schools require a positive school climate that supports the social and emotional development of students and adults.

***Pennsylvania State University
and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
(2018)***

What Is School Climate?



School climate describes school conditions that influence student learning. Positive school climate involves:

-Engagement. Strong relationships between students, teachers, families, and schools, and strong connections between schools and the broader community.

-Safety. Schools and school-related activities where students are safe from violence, bullying, harassment, and substance use.

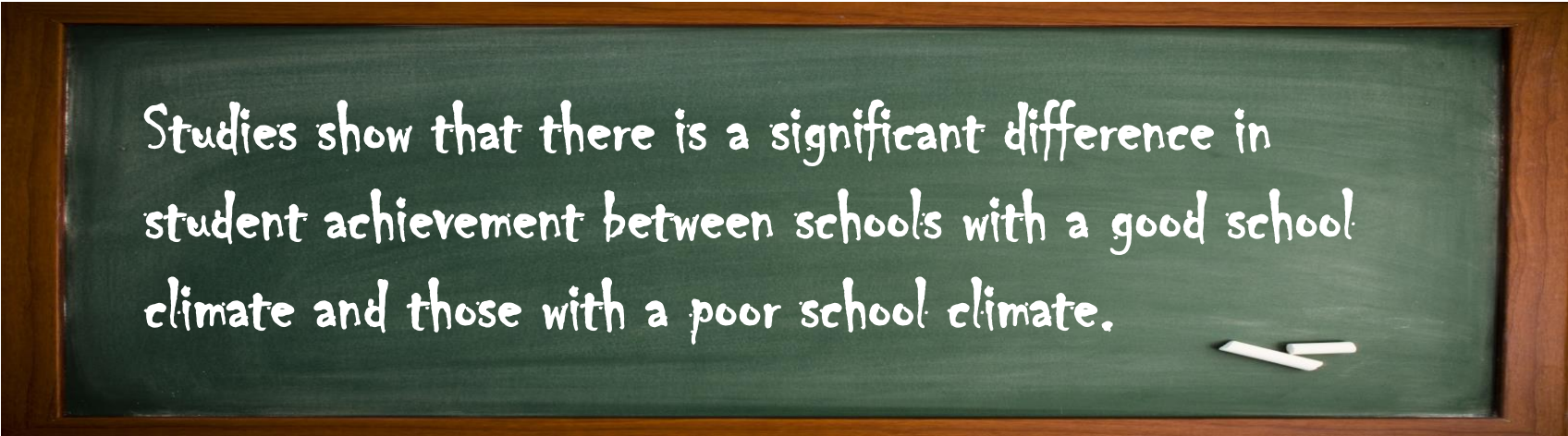
-Environment. Appropriate facilities, well-managed classrooms, available school-based health supports, and a clear, fair disciplinary policy.

Why Is School Climate Important?



Research has demonstrated that a **positive school climate** is associated with:

- **Academic achievement**
- **Student engagement in school**
- **Positive social skills development**



Studies show that there is a significant difference in student achievement between schools with a good school climate and those with a poor school climate.

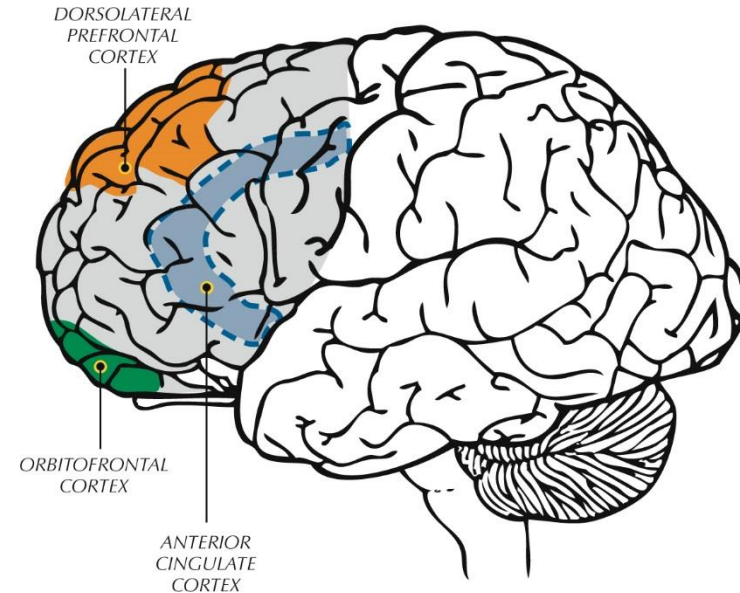


Why Is School Climate Important?



Recent research has associated a **positive school climate** with healthy brain physiology:

- **Executive function**
- **Cortical thickness and surface area**



What Does This Mean?



Students:

Are most likely to meet their potential and develop appropriate social and emotional skills when they **feel safe** at school, **feel welcomed** at school, are **treated with respect**, and are given **opportunities to learn, mature and grow**.

Schools:

If the school climate is *not* positive, students will **underperform**, student **attendance** and student **discipline** are not likely to improve, **school safety** could be compromised, and **teacher retention** may be negatively affected.

Need to *Measure* What You Want to Improve



- ***Measuring* school climate is critical for *improving* school climate! High quality school climate data allow you to:**
 - Understand perceptions of students, staff, and parents
 - Monitor progress
 - Make data-driven decisions
 - Involve stakeholders
 - Adapt to shifting needs related to school climate.
- **To facilitate school climate measurement, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) developed a high-quality, adaptable ED School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS) and associated web-based platform.**
- **The surveys can be downloaded free of charge and provide user-friendly school climate reports back to users.**



Domain: Engagement

Topics:

Cultural and linguistic
competence

Relationships

School participation

Domain: Safety

Topics:

Emotional safety

Physical safety

Bullying/
cyberbullying

Substance abuse

Emergency readiness/
management

Domain: Environment

Topics:

Physical environment

Instructional
environment

Physical health

Mental health

Discipline



EDSCLS Respondents



- **Middle grade (5-8) students**
- **High school students**
- **Parents / Guardians**
- **Teachers**
- **Non-instructional staff (including principals)**

Administering EDSCLS



- **Can administer at school, district, or state level.**
- **Allows for the local storage of data, accessible only to authorized users.**
- **Multiple surveys (i.e., students, instructional staff, non-instructional staff, and parents/guardians) can be open at the same time**
- **During data collection, administrators can see how many respondents have finished the survey using the “survey status reports” feature**
- **Users are anonymous; no registration with download**

EDSCLS Dashboard



SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

INFORMED CONSENT

LOG OUT



EDUCATION AGENCY

Edit information about your education agency and survey administrator.

Edit



DATA COLLECTION

Create, edit, and delete data collections.

Edit



RESPONDENT USERNAMES

Generate, export, and disseminate respondent usernames for data collections that have not closed yet. Exporting usernames, importing respondent e-mail addresses, and disseminating usernames via e-mail are optional features.

DATA COLLECTION [Ⓜ]	STATUS	GENERATED	EXPORTED	DISSEMINATED
02/17/2015-02/27/2015:Students	Started	✓	✗	✗
02/17/2015-02/27/2015:Teachers/Instructional Staff	Started	✓	✗	✗

Generate

Export

Disseminate >



REPORTS

Produce real-time survey status reports and survey results reports immediately after each data collection.

Survey Status Reports >

Survey Results Reports >



SURVEY RESULTS

Export and import survey results immediately after each data collection.

Export

Import



User-Generated Questions



SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

LOG OUT

NEW SURVEY ITEM

SURVEY ITEM	ANSWER OPTIONS	RESPONDENT GROUP
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 150px;"></div>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> +	<input type="text" value=""/> ✕
<p>Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 40px;"></div>	<input type="text" value="Strongly Agree"/> <input type="text" value="Agree"/> <input type="text" value="Disagree"/> <input type="text" value="Strongly Disagree"/> +	<input type="text" value="Parents"/> ✕
<p>Staff at this school give students opportunities to get involved in service projects or activities.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 40px;"></div>	<input type="text" value="Strongly Agree"/> <input type="text" value="Agree"/> <input type="text" value="Disagree"/> <input type="text" value="Strongly Disagree"/> +	<input type="text" value="Non-instructional Staff"/> ✕

Web-Based Survey Administration



WELCOME TO THE SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY (SCLS)

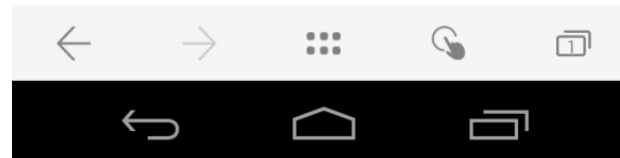
English | [Español](#)

The School Climate Survey (SCLS) is being administered by SCLS - AIR. Your responses are important to help in understanding the environment of this school and the conditions for teaching and learning.

To start the survey, please enter your username below.

Username:

LOG IN



EDSCLS Reporting



- **Includes reporting tool for providing**
 - item-level frequencies
 - domain-level scores and topic-level sub-scores.
- **Reporting tool can compare scores at the school-, district-, or state-level and by the following demographic characteristics.**
 - **Student Survey:** grade level, race/ethnicity, and gender
 - **Instructional Staff Survey:** race/ethnicity and gender
 - **Non-instructional Staff Survey:** race/ethnicity and gender
 - **Parent Survey** (no demographics for this one)
- **Quick turn-around**
 - Reports available within 24 hours for data collected through the platform
 - Reports available immediately for data that are imported into the platform.

EDSCLS Reporting

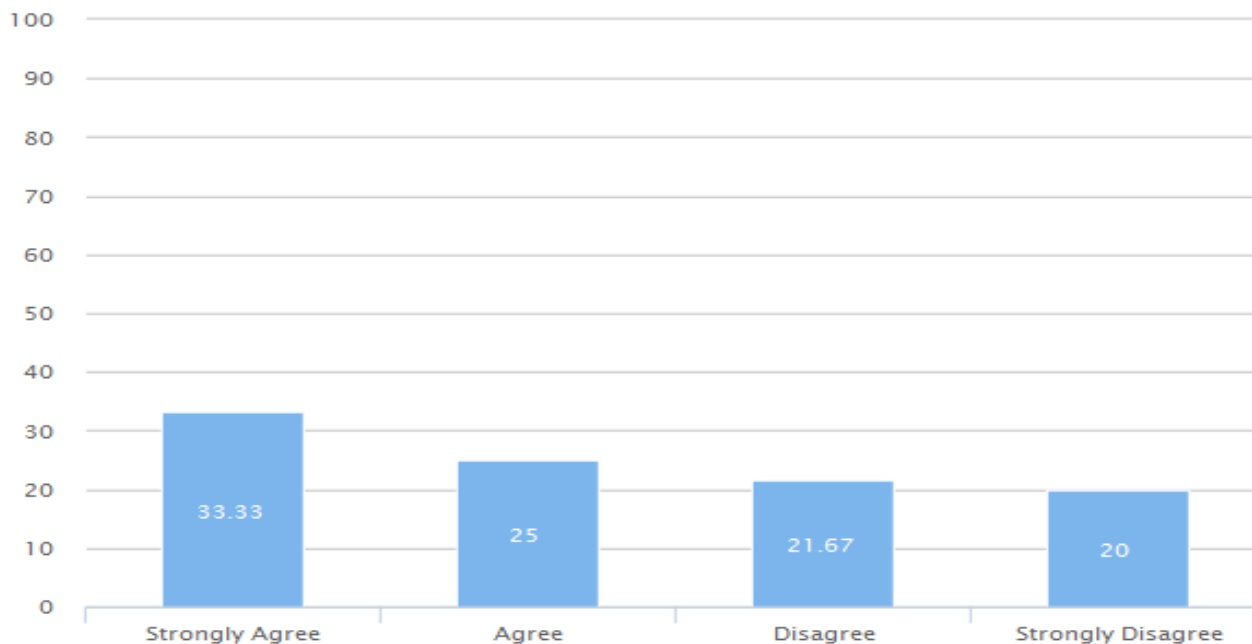
ITEM FREQUENCY REPORTING



Engagement

Cultural and Linguistic Competence

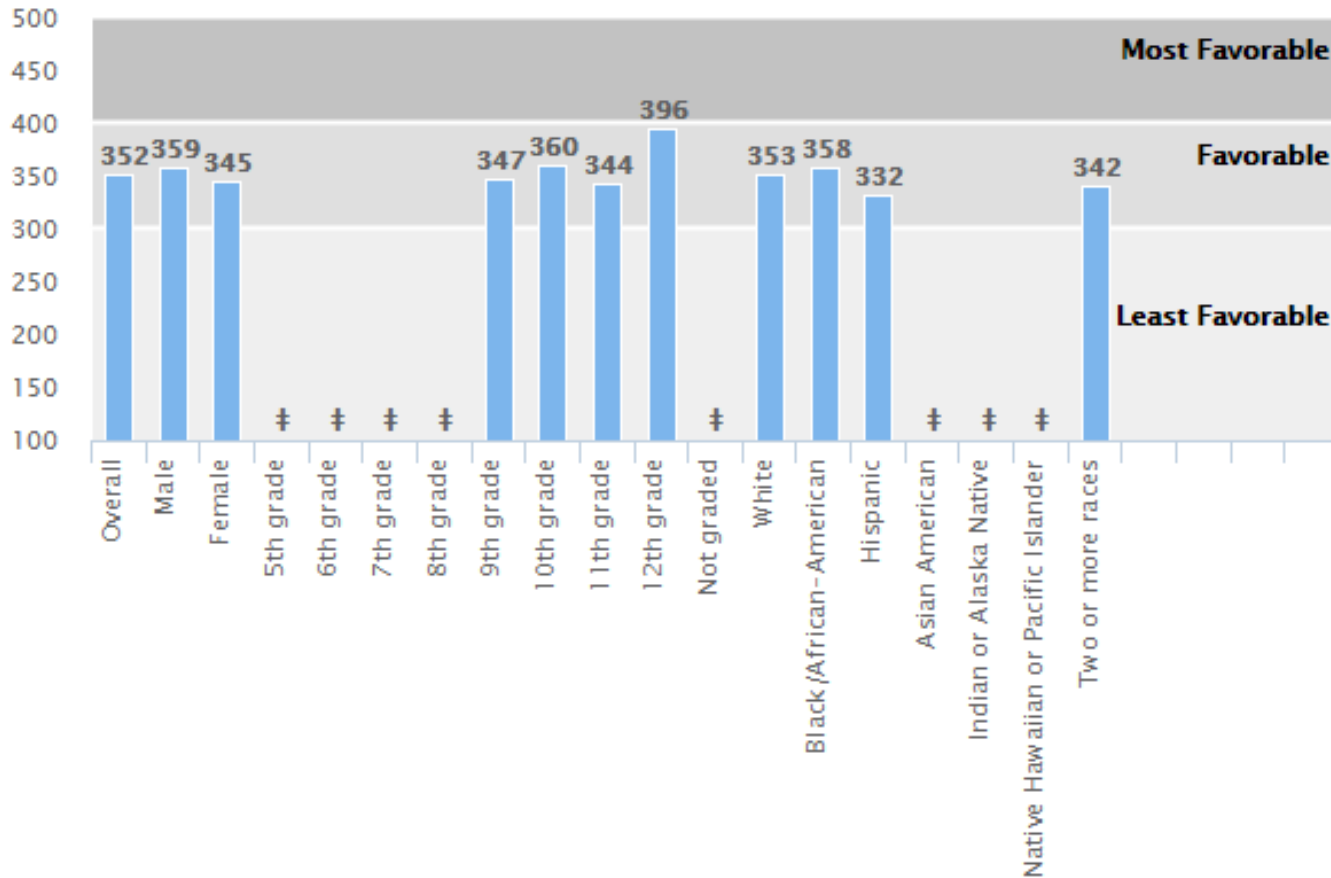
+	SURVEY ITEM	PERCENT				MEAN
		STRONGLY AGREE (4)	AGREE (3)	DISAGREE (2)	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	
-	All students are treated the same, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor.	33.33	25	21.67	20	2.72



EDSCLS Reporting BENCHMARKED SCALE SCORES



AVERAGE ENGAGEMENT BY GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, GRADE, AND BENCHMARK LEVEL



EDSCLS Reporting

THREE BENCHMARK LEVELS



■ **Level 3: Most Favorable**

- *Most favorable* perception of this school climate domain/topic area.
- The score is more than 400.

■ **Level 2: Favorable**

- *Favorable* perception of this school climate domain/topic area.
- The score is 300- 400.

■ **Level 1: Least Favorable**

- *Least favorable* perception of this school climate domain/topic area.
- The score is less than 300.

EDSCLS Reporting: BENCHMARKED SCALE SCORES



■ Release of benchmarked scale scores

- Benchmarked scale scores available in EDSCLS VM/platform 3.0 and later versions.

■ Calculations for the benchmarked scale scores

- Were created using item parameters based on a Rasch model.
- Based on data from about 100 US schools that administered the EDSCLS and voluntarily shared their data with US Dept. of Education.
- Data comes from completed student, instructional staff, and non-instructional staff surveys (not parent).

■ Impact of benchmarked scale scores

- Users can compare scale scores across domains and topics.
- Users **can not** compare the scale scores that were produced by earlier versions of the EDSCLS (aka “legacy” scale scores).



■ Capacity

- Works best for 500 or fewer *concurrent* respondents
- Dual servers can support up to 500 *additional* concurrent respondents

■ Monthly Security Updates

- VM/platform is scanned monthly
- Security patches are applied
- Updated versions are released and notice is emailed to all known users
- New version 4.0 in October 2018!

EDSCLS Help Desk



- **Help desk staff available from 9 AM – 5 PM Eastern Time**
- **Submit and receive responses to questions via phone or email**
- **Help desk staff can address questions about:**
 - Downloading and installing the platform
 - Setting up the platform
 - Administering the survey and survey logistics
 - Reporting
- **Contact Us at edscls@air.org or (866) 730-6735**
- **EDSLCS User Guide available online:**

https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/EDSCLS_UserGuide.pdf

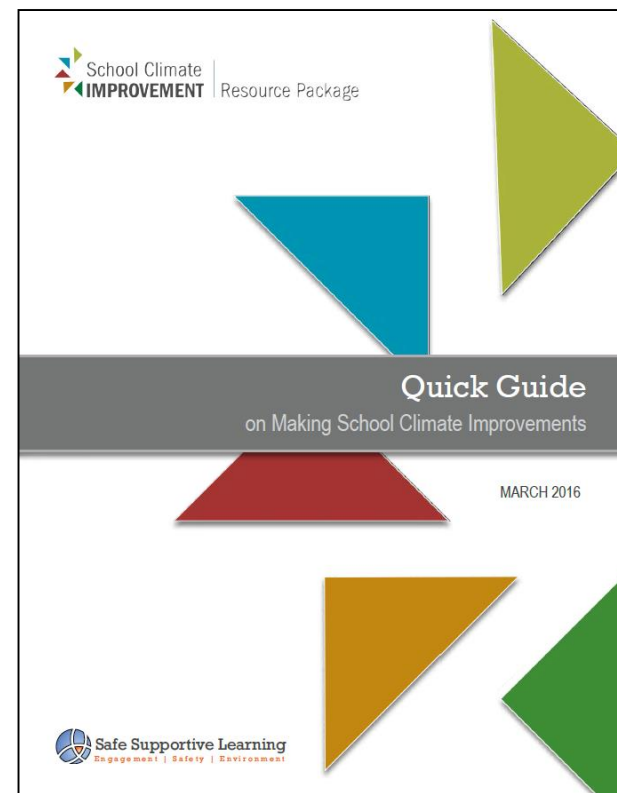
School Climate Improvement Resource Package



School Climate Improvement Resource Package (SCIRP)



ED's National Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE) has a suite of resources to help school district and school leaders analyze and understand local school climate survey data, as well as practical advice and information to support the implementation and sustainability of local school climate improvement efforts.



National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments





School Climate **IMPROVEMENT** | Resource Package



<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/scirp/about>





SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY COMPENDIA



NCSSLE maintains compendium of valid, reliable school climate surveys.

Any included survey can be legitimately used, in whole or in part. All have been tested for validity and reliability



Questions?



Contact Information



Website: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls>

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National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments



Safe Supportive Learning

Engagement | Safety | Environment