

Promoting Healthy and Positive School Climates

2017-18 Pilot

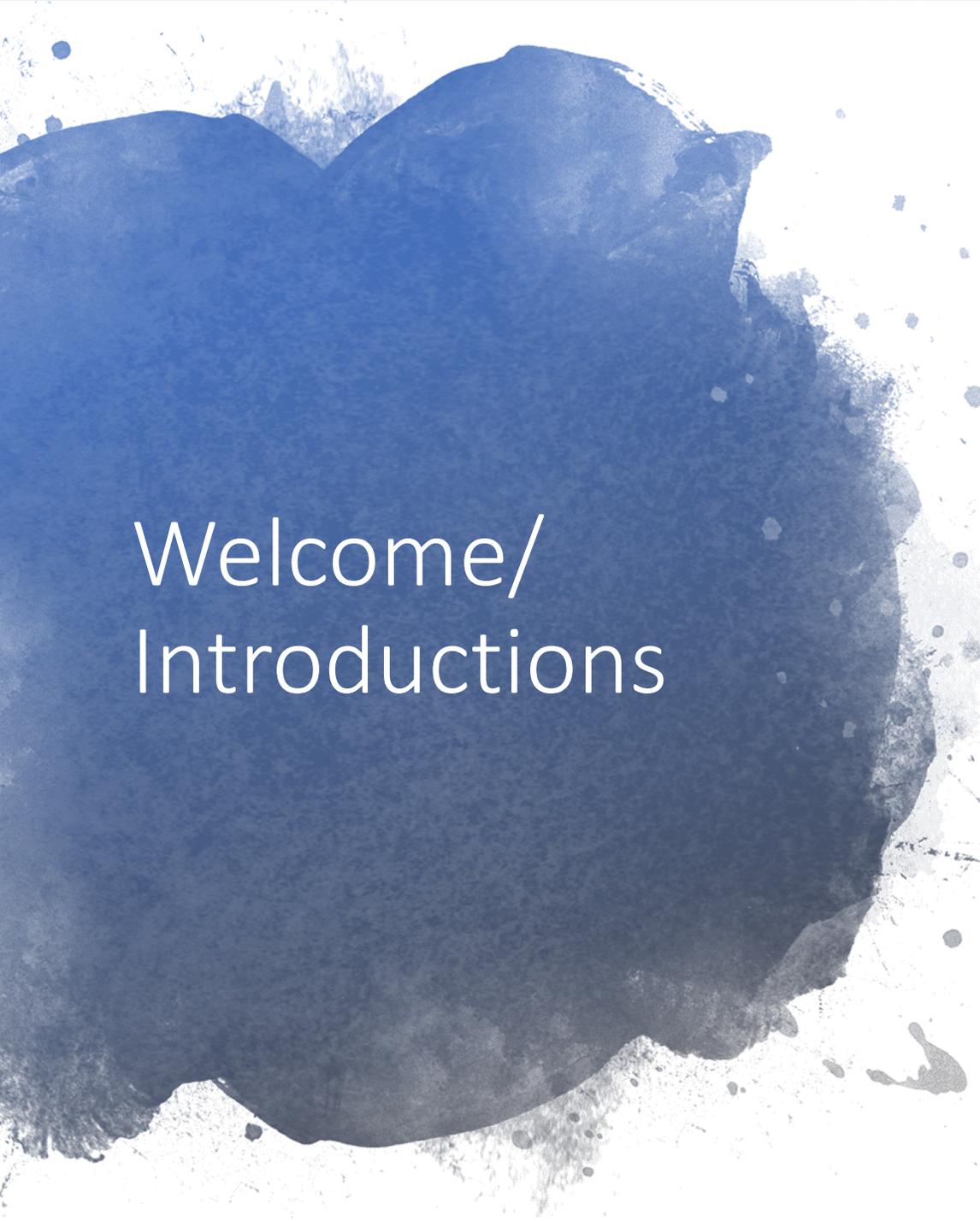
NYS Education Department

Kickoff Meeting

December 7, 2017

10:30 am

- Date/Time:
Thursday, December 7, 2017, 10:30 AM
- URL:
 - <https://meetnydirect.webex.com/meet/michele.shahen>
 - Meeting number: 804 331 037
- Audio:
 - US Toll Free: 1-844-633-8697
 - Access code: 804 331 037



Welcome/ Introductions

- Renée Rider, Associate Commissioner, Office of School Operations and Management Services, NYSED
- Michele Shahan, Coordinator of School Climate Initiatives, Office of Student Support Services, NYSED
- Tina Tierney, NYS Center for School Safety

Agenda

1. Background
2. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
3. School Climate Index (SCI)
4. US Department of Education School Climate Surveys
5. Promoting Healthy and Positive School Climates
NYS Education Department
2017-18 Pilot
6. Survey Outcomes
7. Next Steps
8. Resources

Background

Vision:

Safe Schools Task Force Re-established in 2013

***Jan. 2013:** Board of Regents directed SED to re-establish the NYS Safe Schools Task Force after the Newtown, CT tragedy, to advise on ways to improve school safety in NYS*

***Co-chairs:** Vice Chancellor of the Board of Regents and Commissioner of the NYS Education Department*

***Task Force Members:** School district officials; school personnel; parents; education advocates and union representatives; community health, mental health, social services and law enforcement personnel; Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services; Division of State Police; Division of Criminal Justice Services and SED staff*

NYS Safe Schools Task Force Vision

“School environments in New York State will effectively promote and protect the well-being of ALL students and personnel each day and into the future.”

Two Themes Evident Throughout the NYS Safe Schools Task Force 36 Recommendations* to Improve School Safety

- 1. **Promote and measure school climate** rather than focus exclusively on measuring school violence, and*
- 2. **Focus on Social Emotional Learning** to help students learn the essential skills that affect every area of our lives, including how to understand and manage emotions, and how to establish and maintain positive relationships.*

* <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/914p12d6.pdf>

What is School Climate?

School climate is –

“the way school culture affects a child’s sense of safety and acceptance, and consequently is a critical determinant of their ability to focus on the task of learning”.

Why Measure School Climate?

Research suggests that:

*The **quality of the school climate** may be the **single most predictive factor in any school's capacity to promote student achievement**;*

If we want achievement gains, we need to begin by improving the school climate.



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

*School Conditions (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(C)):
Describe how the SEA agency will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A to **improve school conditions for student learning**, including through reducing: (i) incidences of bullying and harassment; (ii) the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom; and (iii) the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and safety.*

New York State's Draft ESSA Plan

*“It is a priority of the Board of Regents that New York State schools **foster a culture and climate that makes school a safe haven where every student feels welcome and free from bias; harassment; discrimination; and bullying, especially for traditionally marginalized youth, including, but not limited to youth of color; LGBTQ youth; and youth with disabilities.**”*

New York State's Draft ESSA Plan

“Respect is a learned behavior, and it has never been more important than today that schools take proactive steps to keep students safe from bullying and harassment. Prevention starts before an incident occurs, and, to be successful, schools must:

- Send a unified message against bullying, harassment, intimidation, and discrimination to students, staff, and parents*
- Ensure supportive and positive classroom environments*
- Practice de-escalation techniques*
- Communicate with students, staff and parents about their roles in prevention and intervention*
- Take student complaints seriously and ensure that they are addressed quickly and competently*
- Ensure that student discipline practices are equitable and proportionate to the incident*
- Reduce the overuse of punitive and exclusionary responses to student misbehavior”*

New York State's Draft ESSA Plan

“...the Department will support districts in **creating conditions that maximize all students' learning**, especially for traditionally marginalized youth...through activities, policies, and strategies that reduce bullying, harassment, and the overuse of punitive and exclusionary responses to student misbehavior...will also **promote** the understanding of diverse cultural characteristics, positive disciplinary practices, **improving school climate, and providing students with social-emotional support**. The Department continues to develop and build upon existing guidance and resources to combat harassment, bullying, and discrimination, and to **enhance efforts to build and maintain positive and healthy school climates**. Efforts will be expanded to provide capacity-building guidance; strategies; best-practice resources; and professional development for school administrators, instructional staff, and non-instructional staff in the following areas to advance these initiatives:

..Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)

..Social-Emotional Wellness and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

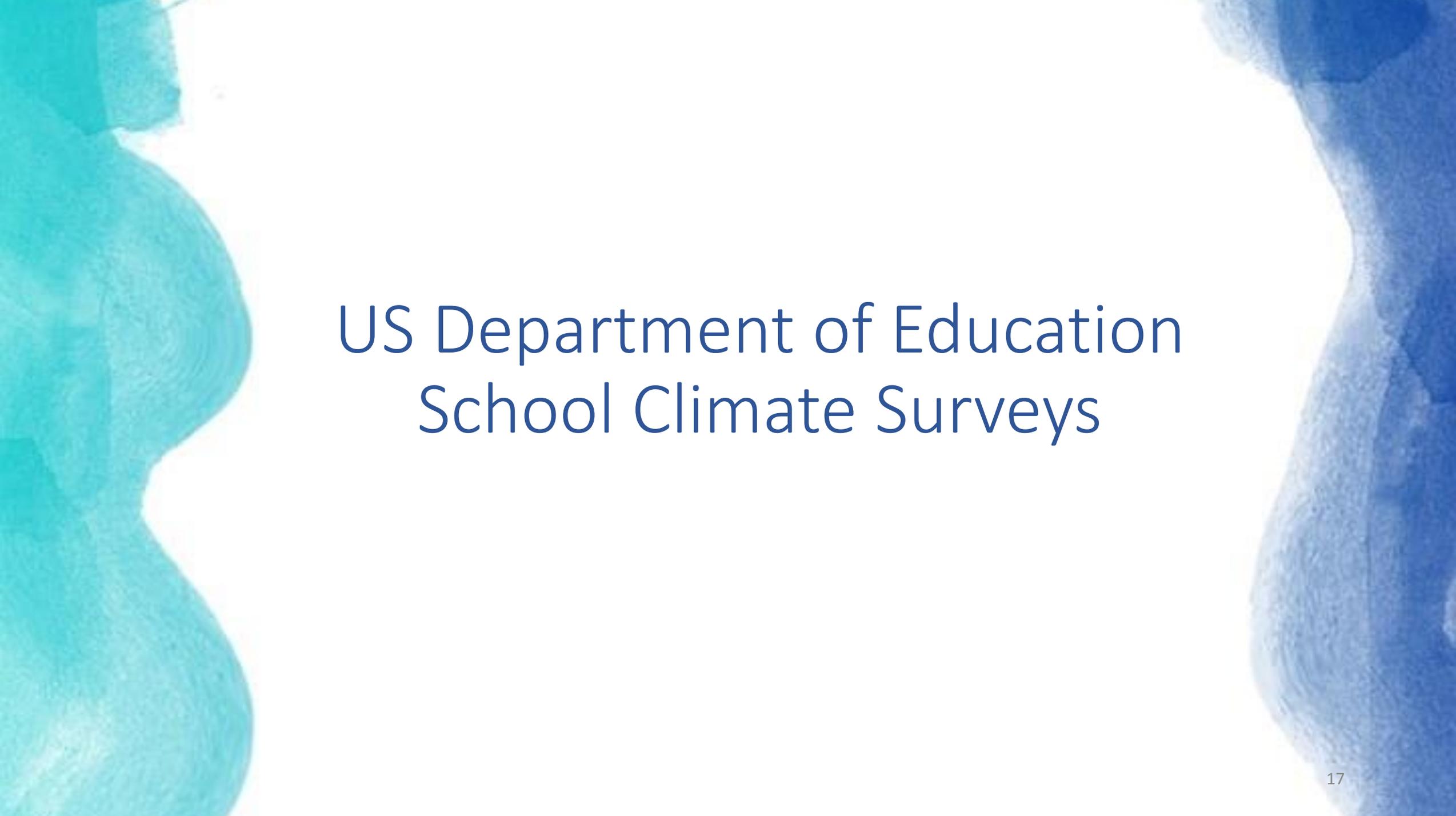
..Reduce Exclusionary Discipline and Implement Restorative Practices

..Measure School Climate by Using School Climate Surveys “

School Climate Index (SCI)

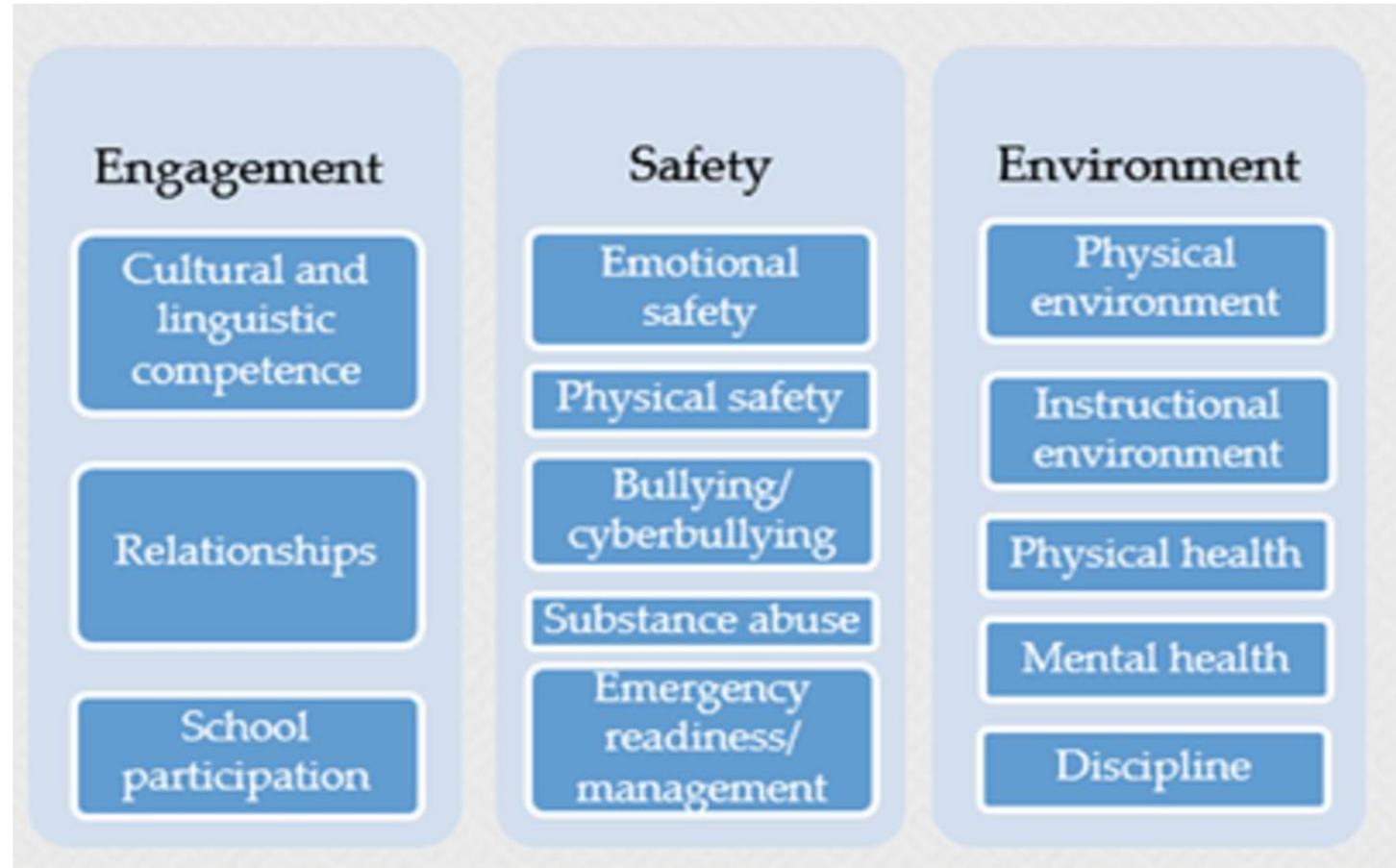
New York State's School Climate Index (SCI)

1. **School Climate Surveys:** implement evidenced-based, valid and reliable surveys to:
 - Students
 - Parents/Guardians
 - School Personnel
2. **School Violence Index:** Based on revised VADIR/DASA categories
3. **Chronic Absenteeism** – Calculate percentage of students who miss 10% or more of instructional days.



US Department of Education School Climate Surveys

US Department of Education (USDE) School Climate Surveys



US Department of Education (USDE) Sample Questions Student School Climate Survey

9. Adults at this school treat all students respectfully.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. People of different cultural backgrounds, races, or ethnicities get along well at this school.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

US Department of Education (USDE) Sample Questions Parent School Climate Survey

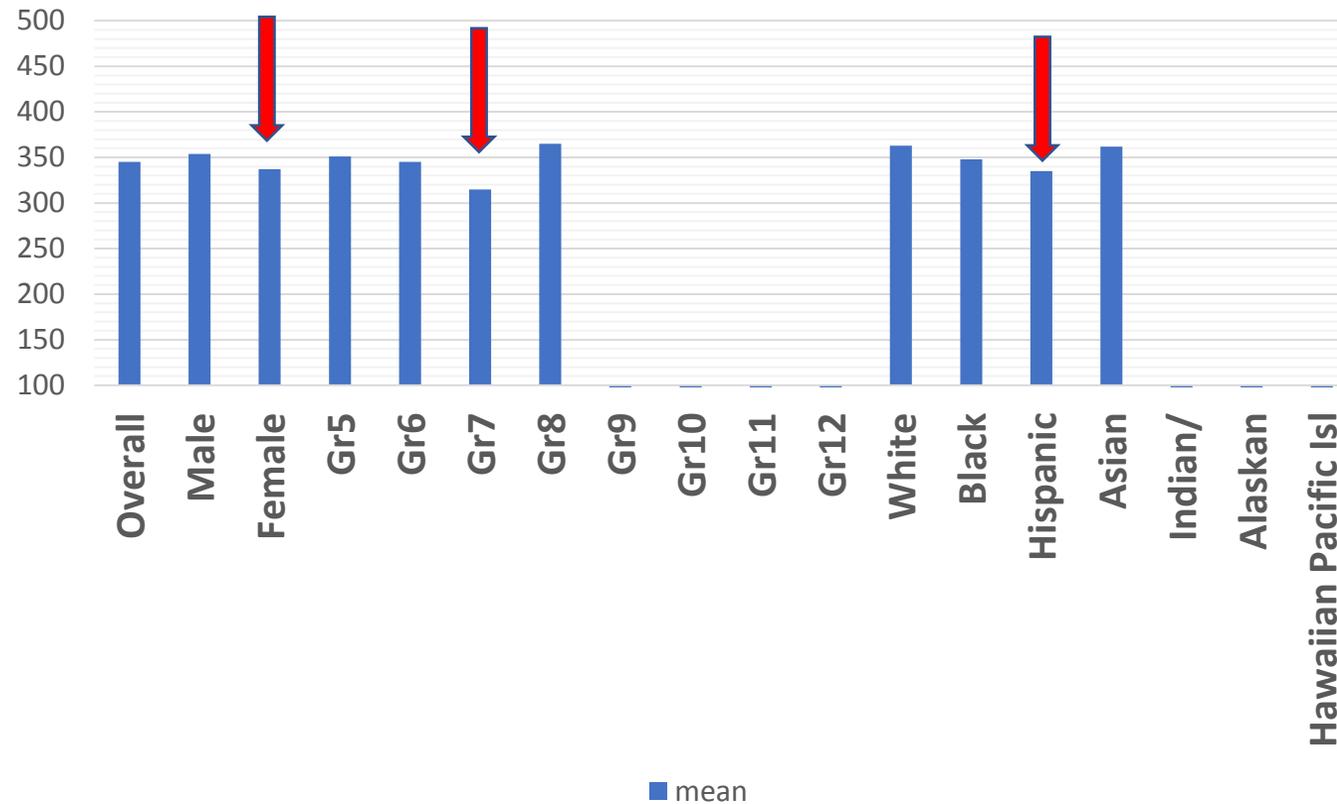
18. My child is safe at this school.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

19. Racial/ethnic conflict among students is a problem at this school.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

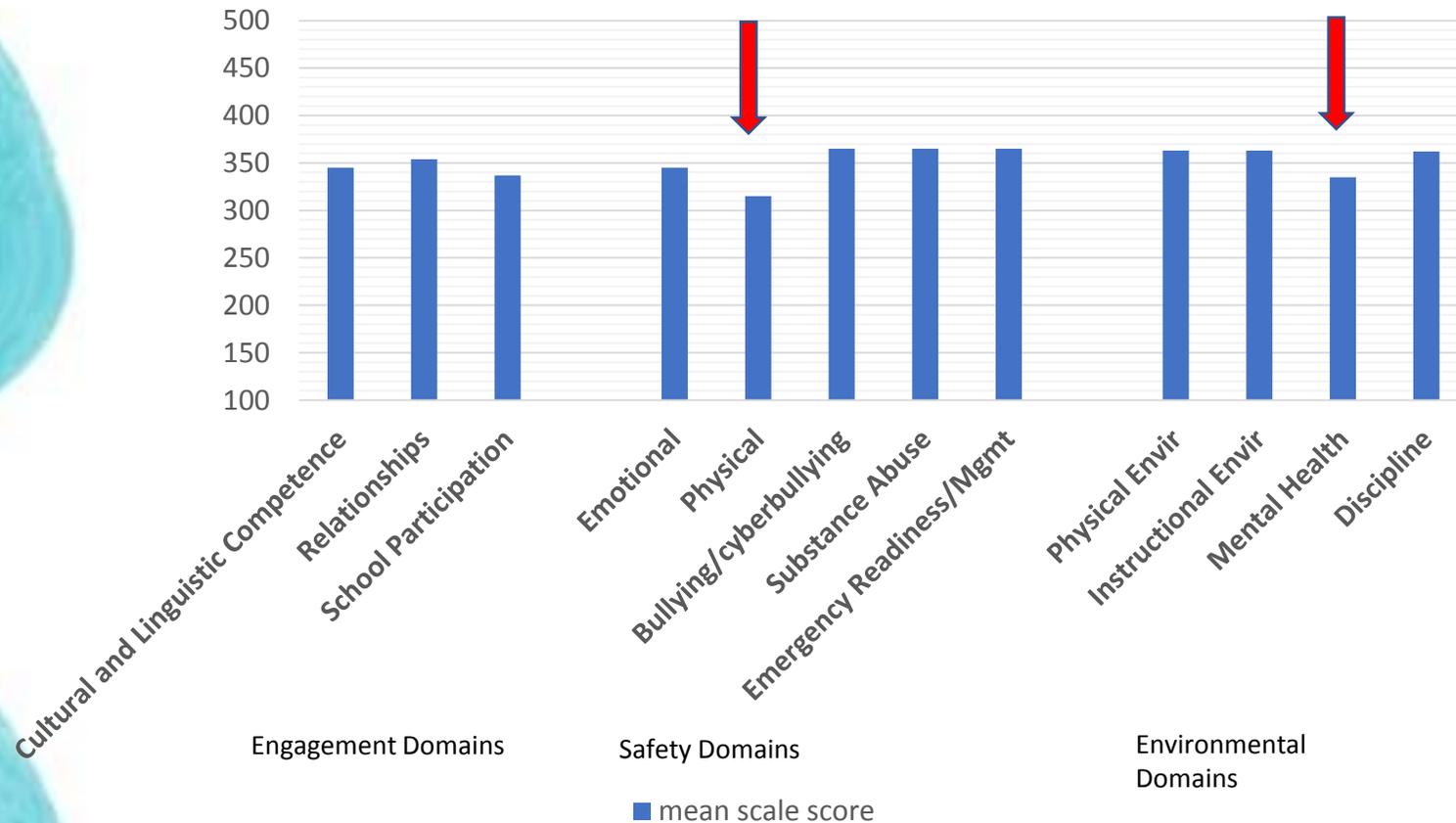
Student Survey Results from a Buffalo Middle School Environment/Mental Health Subdomain



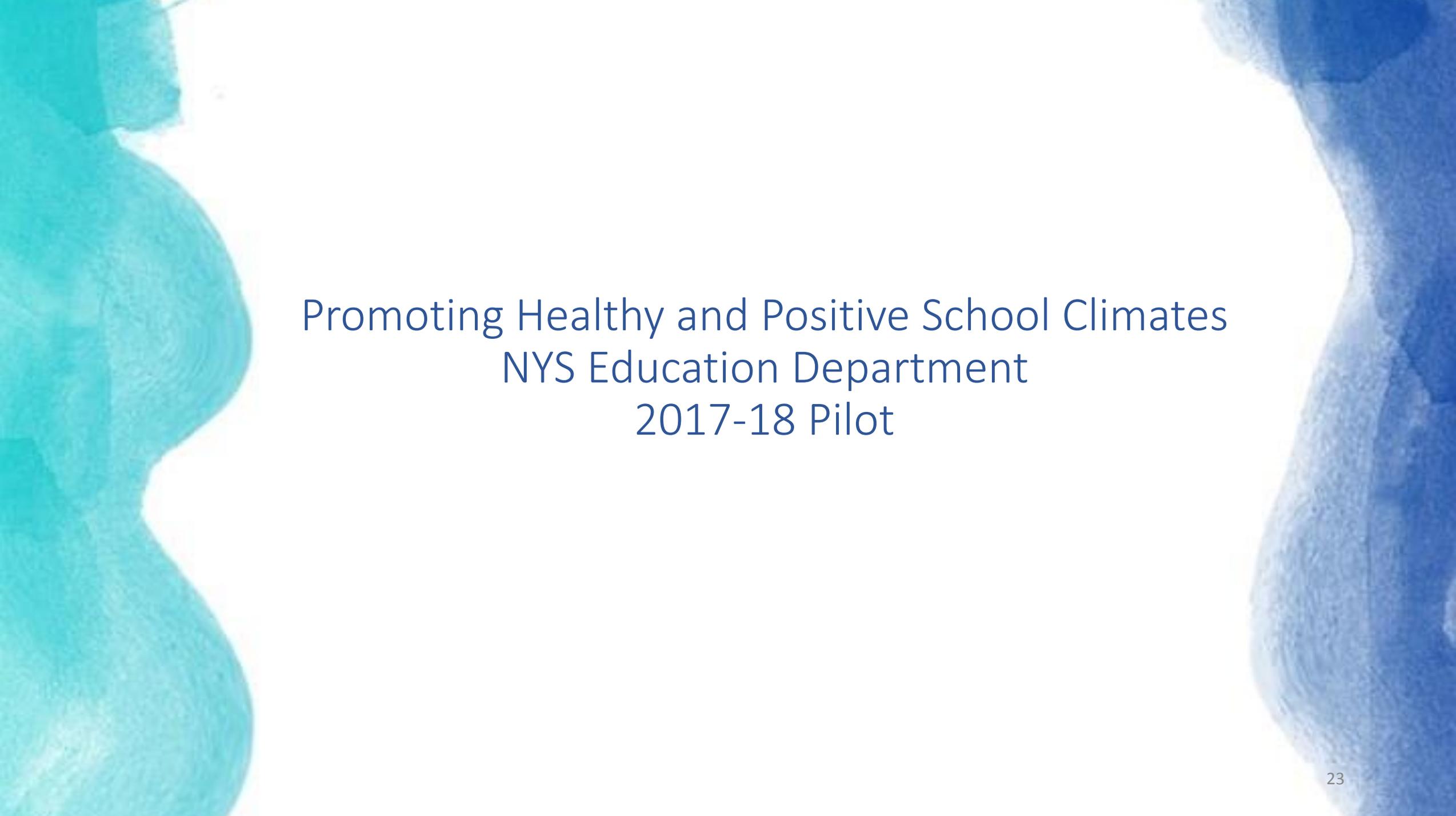
The USDE surveys summarize student survey results by subdomain and student gender, race/ethnicity, and grade.

Student Survey Results from a Buffalo Middle School

All Subdomains



Schools may compare the results of the USDE surveys across all subdomains, for all students, or for student subgroups.



Promoting Healthy and Positive School Climates
NYS Education Department
2017-18 Pilot

2017-18 Pilot: Expectations

- **Pilot Districts should:**

- Develop a school climate mission statement and choose a **School Climate Framework**
- **Establish a Community Engagement Team** that is focused on school climate improvement
- Administer the US Department of Education climate surveys to students, staff (instructional and non-instructional), and parents in **Spring 2018**
- After the close of the survey window, generate reports that summarize the survey response data, review and **analyze the survey data (and other pertinent data** such as chronic absenteeism data, school discipline or violent incident data, etc.) with the Community Engagement Team
- **Create and implement an action plan and framework** with the Community Engagement Team to address areas of need

The purpose of the school climate index is to give school administrators **a tool** to use to better understand how students, staff and parents feel about your school and how to improve the school climate so students are ready to learn and succeed.

2017-18 Pilot: District Need-to-Know

- The U.S. Department of Education climate survey package includes a platform for administering the surveys and summarize results.
- The district will need technical staff or may need technical assistance from their Regional Information Center (RIC) to support district and school personnel with survey implementation and administration
- District leadership will need to communicate with parents, students, and staff about the initiative (staff meetings, letter home to parents, school climate open house, etc).

Note: The results are intended to be a tool for schools and districts. NYSED has no immediate plan to use the climate survey data as an accountability measure or for identification of persistently dangerous schools.

Suggestions on How to Start

- Establish a District / School Vision
- Assemble Survey Planning Team
- Decide upon desired platform to administer the Climate Survey
 - Understand available choices through discussions with NYSED and your Regional Information Center (if desired)
- Establish Community Engagement Team
- Identify Communication Sources and Methods
- Identify necessary resources

District Planning and Decision Making

Survey Planning Team

- The Survey Planning team determines how best to administer the survey in the district, given the resources of the district and schools, and the characteristics of the students, staff and parents being surveyed. This team also determines the need and cost for outside resources.
- An example of the Survey Planning Team would be:
 - District and School Leadership
 - District Survey Administrator (or Administrative Team)
 - School Survey Coordinator(s)

District Planning and Decision Making

Survey Planning Team

- District and School Leadership
 - Establishes the vision
 - Communicates with staff, students and parents about the initiative
 - Decision making (timeline, process, etc.)
 - Allocates necessary resources
- District Survey Administrator (or Administrative Team)
 - Coordinates technical aspects of deploying survey application and implementation of survey (may include obtaining/installing additional servers needed to host the survey, working with RIC staff, etc.)
 - Coordinates the generation and distribution of usernames to respondents or school survey coordinators
 - Monitors participation throughout survey administration window and follows up with building survey administrators regarding low participation
 - Monitors response rates during survey implementation
 - Generates survey results after the close of the survey
- School Survey Coordinator(s)
 - Answer questions from proctors and respondents
 - Distributes usernames
 - Recruits and trains survey proctors

District Planning and Decision Making

Administration/Implementation

- Determine dates survey will be administered
- Identify policy and procedures for gathering parental consent
- Determine when and how student surveys will be administered (i.e. class period, physical location, laptops/tablets/computer room/paper)
- Plan staff accessibility to computers during school hours
- Plan for parent access to computers at the school
- Identify and assess the strength and weaknesses of various ongoing contact methods to parents (through emails, websites, postal mailings, other)
- Once obtained, determine how will usernames be communicated and distributed (via email or paper distribution)

District Planning and Decision Making

- Communication/Training
 - Develop a Communication Plan to determine how and when this information will be messaged to staff, parents and students
 - Implement Communication Plan (discuss at staff meetings, send letters home, parents night, PTA meetings, emails, etc.)
 - Develop and distribute training guidance for proctors and those who will administer of survey
 - Develop/distribute guidance for parents (why are we doing this, how will you share the results with parents?)
 - Determine turn-key training resources and methods
 - Provide feedback to NYSED/reach out with questions (schoolclimate@nysed.gov)

District Planning and Decision Making

Technical Support

- Determine hosting platform, necessary hardware and software resources, and responsible staff
- Identify any necessary Firewall/Security changes
- Determine additional servers and equipment necessary and associated cost
- Identify “outside” resources necessary to host application
- Identify devices that will be used to take the survey for students, staff, parents (laptops, computer room, tablets, other) and necessary quantity of devices in the school
- Prepare the environment for servers and other communication devices
- Deploy and test application prior to survey start date
- Determine technical support staff necessary before and during the survey window

Survey Outcomes

Survey Results

District Survey Administrator or Administrative Team

After survey window closes, the District Survey Administrator generates results and meets with School/District Leadership to discuss the survey outcome.

- Reporting
 - Understand the reports provided with the application and how to capture the survey results from the database
 - Determine the necessary staff resources, cost, and timeframe to produce reports
- Communication
 - Communicate results to School/District Leadership
 - School/District Leadership communicates results to **Community Engagement Team**
 - Analyze the survey data (and other pertinent data such as chronic absenteeism data, suspension and dropout data, violent incident data, etc.) with the **Community Engagement Team**
 - **Create and implement an action plan and framework** with the Community Engagement Team to address areas of need (Social Emotional Learning, Trauma Informed Practices, Restorative Practices, PBIS etc.)

What are the Expected Outcomes?

- Increased awareness of areas of need in school or district
- Increased dialogue between students, staff, parents about school culture and climate
- Data to inform policy and improvement
- Ultimately, better engaged and happier students, staff and parents – resulting in improved student outcomes

Next Steps

What's Next?

- Districts/Schools participating in the pilot should review the materials from USDE, discuss internally and ask SED questions
- Districts/Schools may opt to contact their Regional Information Center (RIC) for assistance with Survey Implementation
- Please submit contact info for your district/charter survey coordinator to NYSED via an email to schoolclimate@nysed.gov
- Future webinar/meeting schedule:
 - Technical Implementation for Survey Administrators: **January 18, 2018 @11:00 am**
 - Survey Administration for Survey Coordinators: **January 25, 2018 @ 11:00 am**
 - Interpreting Survey Results and other data: **TBD** (late spring)



Questions?

Resources

- NYSED Climate Survey email – SchoolClimate@nysed.gov
- Michele Shahan – michele.shahan@nysed.gov
- NYS Center for School Safety/Promoting School Climate Page: <http://www.nyscfss.org/promoting-school-climate-pilot-2017>
- USDOE Climate Survey website: <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/edscls/index.asp>
- [Presentation to the Board of Regents](#) in November 2017 about school climate surveys and school climate improvement

