

Supporting Your Team to Create A Climate of Respect and Understanding

Safe and Supportive Learning Environments
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Sarah Caverly, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher



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Agenda

- Introductions
- Definition of Safe and Supportive Learning Environments
- Strategies for supporting staff in creating Safe and Supportive Learning Environments
- School Climate
- Resources

Introductions

- Select a penny from the jar.
- Share a memory that occurred during the year on the penny.



What is a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment?

Safe Learning Environment

- Emotional Safety
- Physical Safety

Supportive Learning Environment

- Responsive to students' needs
- Respect is inherent quality
- High value on relationships
- Cultural Competence
- Intertwined with social and emotional learning (SEL)



Benefits of a Safe & Supportive Learning Environment

- Increase in sense of belonging
- Increase in student engagement in school and academic activities
- Increased academic achievement
- Reduction in bullying, harassment, and violence

Strategies for Creating a Safe & Supportive Learning Environment within your Teams

Tell us about your team...

Group Reflection

What were the common features
across your teams?

What were the differences?

Finding Common Ground

- Focus on similarities vs. differences
- Making social connections
 - Shared birthday months
 - Shared activity interests
- Establish shared goals
 - Personal
 - Professional



Creating a Positive Climate—it takes a Team

- Enhancing your current relationships with each team member
- Connecting with team members
- Supporting relationships and collaboration across team members
- You are the best model

Recognizing & Respecting Diversity



Stepping Stones for Building Awareness

- **Mindfulness**

- Increasing mindfulness of teachers
- Non-judgmental moment by moment awareness
- CARES Program (Greenberg & Jennings)
- Encourages greater awareness



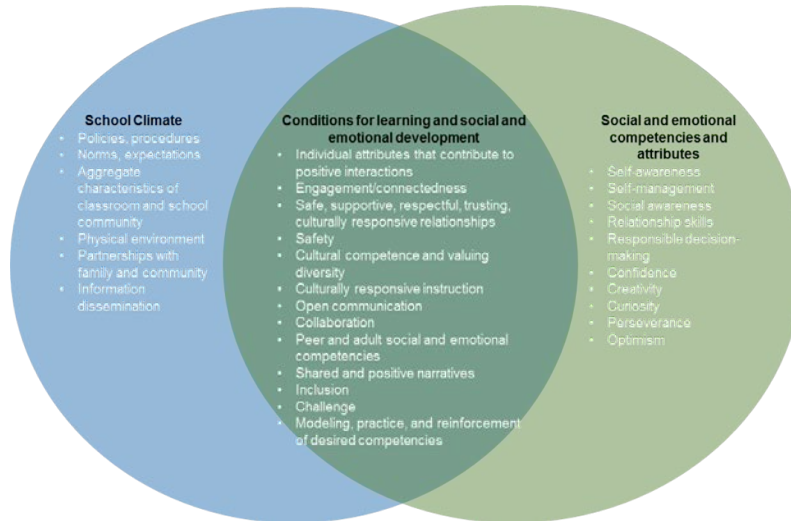
Additional Steps



- **Vulnerability**
 - Creating a Safe Space
 - Imperfection is all right
 - Leader = teacher and learner
 - Acknowledging the struggle
- **Active Listening**
 - Suspending judgement
 - Respecting the silence
 - Practicing empathy

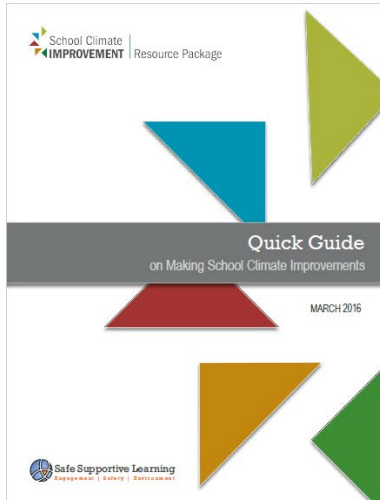
School Climate

Overlap Amongst Constructs



What intersections do you see within your teams and their practice?

School Climate



School Climate Self Assessment



School Climate Improvement
Self-Assessment and Action Planner

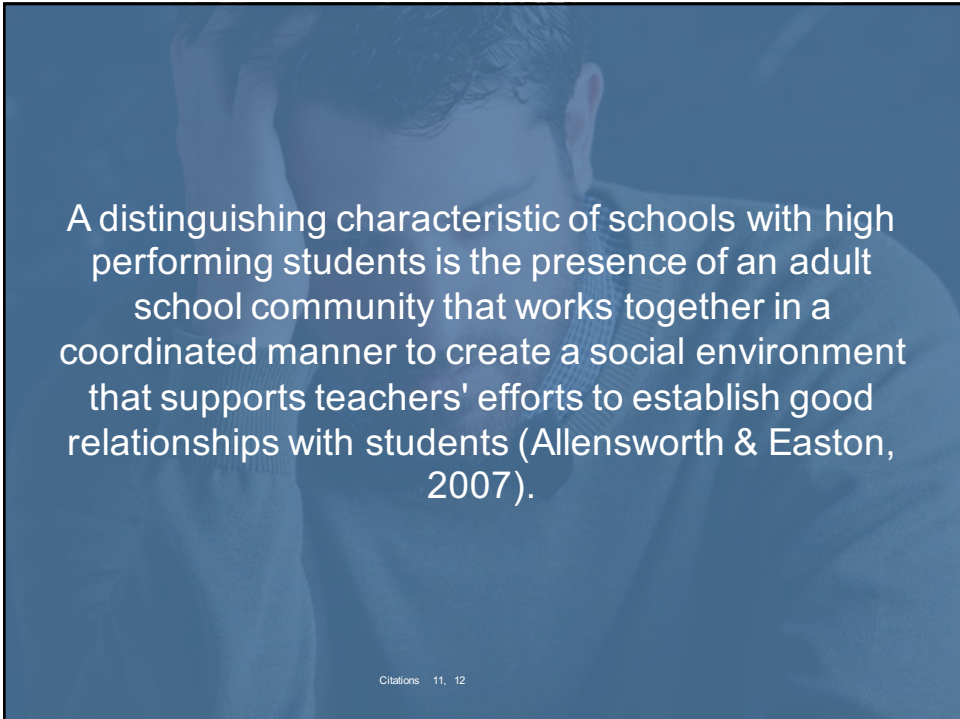
What are your plans for improving school climate?

Measuring School Climate

- **Common Constructs**
 - Students
 - Staff
 - Parents
- **Multiple measures available**
 - Federal (U.S. Department of Education School Climate Survey)
 - States (Arkansas, Arizona, California, Delaware, Maryland)
 - Districts
- **Some specific to elementary**



It is also easier to focus attention on positive teacher-student relationships in schools where the administrators believe that trust and positive relationships are important for improving students' performance (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010).



A distinguishing characteristic of schools with high performing students is the presence of an adult school community that works together in a coordinated manner to create a social environment that supports teachers' efforts to establish good relationships with students (Allensworth & Easton, 2007).

Citations 11, 12

Sarah Caverly
512-391-6509
scaverly@air.org

4700 Mueller Boulevard
Austin, TX 78723-3081
General Information: 512-476-6861 | 800-476-6861
TTY: 512-391-6578
www.air.org