New York State Safe Schools Task Force Recommendations: Status Update

Presentation to the Board of Regents

June 12, 2017

Agenda

- NYS Safe Schools Task Force Actions
- Today's Highlights on the Task Force Recommendations
  - School Climate Surveys
  - School Climate Index
  - Social Emotional Learning
  - Restorative Practices
  - Trauma-Informed Approaches
- How Does Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Align?
- What's Next?

New York State
Safe Schools Task Force

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*

- *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."

Safe Schools Task Force Workgroups

- School Culture & Student Engagement

- Data Use & Reporting

- Building Security & Infrastructure

Safe Schools Task Force Timeline

January 2013	Board of Regents re-established the NYS Safe Schools Task Force
May 2013	Kick-off Meeting
November 2013	Full Task Force Meeting with Workgroups Established
January – April 2014	Workgroups met to Develop and Refine Preliminary Recommendations
February 20, 2014	Student Forum Held to Hear the Students' Perspectives on Promoting Safe and Healthy Schools
June 2014	Full Task Force Met to Refine and Prioritize Recommendations
September 2014	NYS Safe Schools Task Force Recommendations Presented to the Board of Regents
October 2014 – present	Department staff work on Implementing Recommendations

http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/meetings/SSTFUpdateOct2015.pdf

Highlights from the October 2015 Board meeting

- Investment in and Expansion of Support Staff in Schools – Amended School Counseling Regulations (Recommendation #1)

- Development of a Statewide School Climate Index (Recommendation #2; and referenced in several other recommendations)

- Revise New York State Statute 807 to reduce the Number of Fire Drills and require Lockdown Drills and other Emergency Drills (Recommendation #10)

- Disseminate Positive Behavioral Supports and Intervention Strategies (Recommendation #7)

- District-level School Safety Plans and Building-level Emergency Response Plans (Recommendations #22, 28, 32)

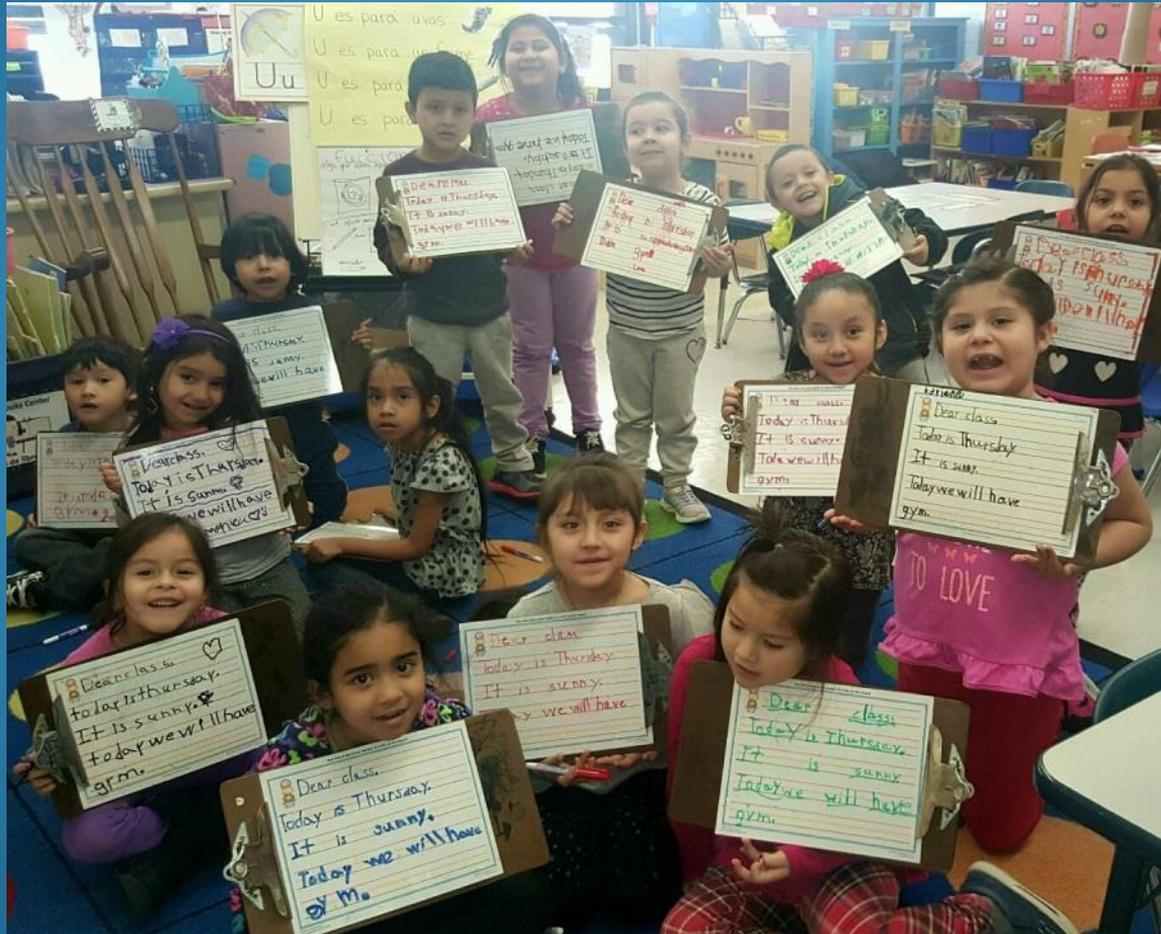# Two Themes Evident Throughout the NYS Safe Schools Task Force Recommendations

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.*

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"

Dessel, A. (2010). Prejudice in schools: Promotion of an inclusive culture and climate. *Education and Urban Society, 42*(4), 407-429.

Why Measure School Climate?

Why Measure School Climate?

- Research suggests that:

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

  - if we want achievement gains, we need to begin by improving the climate.

Shindler, J., Jones, A., Williams, A.D., Taylor, C., Cardenia, H. (2016). The school climate-student achievement connection: If we want achievement gains, we need to begin by improving the climate. *Journal of School Administration Research and Development 1*(1), 9-16.

New York State's School Climate Index Testing Pilot

What Is A School Climate Index

A School Climate Index (SCI) is a **TOOL** that allows schools and districts to:

- effectively assess and analyze school climate
- identify schools most in need of programmatic interventions aimed at improving school climate

An SCI creates and provides a state-normed, school-level description of multiple research-based factors that are known to influence learning and success in schools.

Consultation with
National and State Experts

- California, Georgia, Rhode Island Departments of Education

- U.S. Department of Education

- National School Climate Center

- American Institute of Research (AIR)

- New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children

- University of Rochester Researchers on Promoting Positive School Climate

- School Safety Improvement Team: New York State Police, Division of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Governor's Office, NYS Education Department

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**: Revised VADIR/DASA categories

3. **Chronic Absenteeism** – Calculate percentage of students who miss 10% or more of instructional days.

US Department of Education (USDE) Resources

School Climate **IMPROVEMENT**

INTEGRATING DIFFERENT DATA SOURCES

What Administrative Data Can Tell You About School Climate

- **Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs)** and **disciplinary actions** are data on the frequency or patterns of students sent to the school office for disciplinary reasons and are classified as minor or major. Disciplinary actions can include suspensions, expulsions, and police involvement.
  - *This type of data may help schools better understand topic area data in the Engagement and Environment domains.*

- **Attendance and/or truancy data** track the rates of absenteeism and truancy, as well as days in school for students.
  - *This type of data may help schools better understand topic area data in the Engagement domain.*

- **Incident data** are data classified by incident of problem behaviors (e.g., drug and alcohol use, violence, property damage, and disorderly conduct).
  - *This type of data may help schools better understand topic area data in the Safety domain.*

New York State's School Climate Index (SCI) Sample Calculation

1. STUDENT SURVEYS   200 Points
2. SCHOOL STAFF SURVEYS   100 Points
3. SCHOOL VIOLENCE INDEX   100 Points
4. CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM   100 Points
                          TOTAL   **500 Points**

School Climate Index
Testing Pilot in New York State
SY 2016-17

- ***NYS School Climate Index Testing Pilot Districts:*** *Buffalo Public Schools, Niskayuna Central School District, Rochester City School District, Schenectady City School District, Skaneateles Central School District, West Genesee Central School District*

- ***There are more than 100 Schools in the Pilot***

  Some school districts are administering the surveys using the USDE platform; others are working with a vendor to implement the USDE school climate surveys; others are working with Regional Information Centers to see what assistance RICs can offer districts

Promoting a Safe & Supportive School Climate

Measuring school climate is a crucial step in improving school climate.

To promote and measure school climate, schools and school districts take the following steps:

a)   Pick a framework i.e., Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS), Social Emotional Learning (SEL);

b)   Establish a Community Engagement Team;

c)   Administer the USDE school climate surveys to students, parents and school personnel;

d)   Produce reports and analyze survey data and other pertinent data (chronic absenteeism data, school violence index) with the Community Engagement Team; and

e)   Create an action plan with the Community Engagement Team to address areas of need.

School Climate reflects how members of the school community experience the school – including interpersonal relationships, teacher and other staff practices and organizational structures and policies.

US Department of Education (USDE) Resources

Exit

School Climate
IMPROVEMENT

ENGAGING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Menu

▸ 1. Module 1 Introduction
▾ 2. Introduction to School Climate
   2.1. What is School Climate?
   2.2. What We Know to Be True
   2.3. How Do Schools Build a Pos...
   2.4. Goals for Strengthening Sc...
   2.5. Reflection 1
   2.6. Reflection 2
   2.7. Measuring School Climate
   2.8. Surveys Specific to School C...
   2.9. Surveys and School Climate...
   2.10. Data from the ED School ...
   2.11. School-Based Administrati...
   2.12. What Other Data Can Tell ...
   2.13. What Can School Climate ...
   2.14. Reflection 3
   2.15. What Is Your School Doing
   2.16. Reflection 4
▸ 3. Engaging School Leadership

What Is Your School Doing to Promote a Positive School Climate?

Schools often implement one or more approaches that are universal for all, targeted for some and/or intensive for few. Here are some of the most commonly implemented interventions that support a positive school climate. Select each to learn more.

Character Education

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Positive Youth Development (PYD)

Restorative Practices

School-Based Mental Health Services

School Development Program (SDP)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Trauma-Informed Approach

Search...

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SCI Part I. School Climate Surveys
US Department of Education (USDE)

- In spring 2016, USDE released a package of school climate surveys that are FREE for schools, districts and states to use.

- The package includes evidenced-based, valid and reliable surveys for:

  - middle and high school students (grades 5 and up),

  - instructional staff,

  - non-instructional staff, and

  - parents/guardians.

- Includes platform for hosting the surveys and reporting tools to analyze the results after the surveys are administered.

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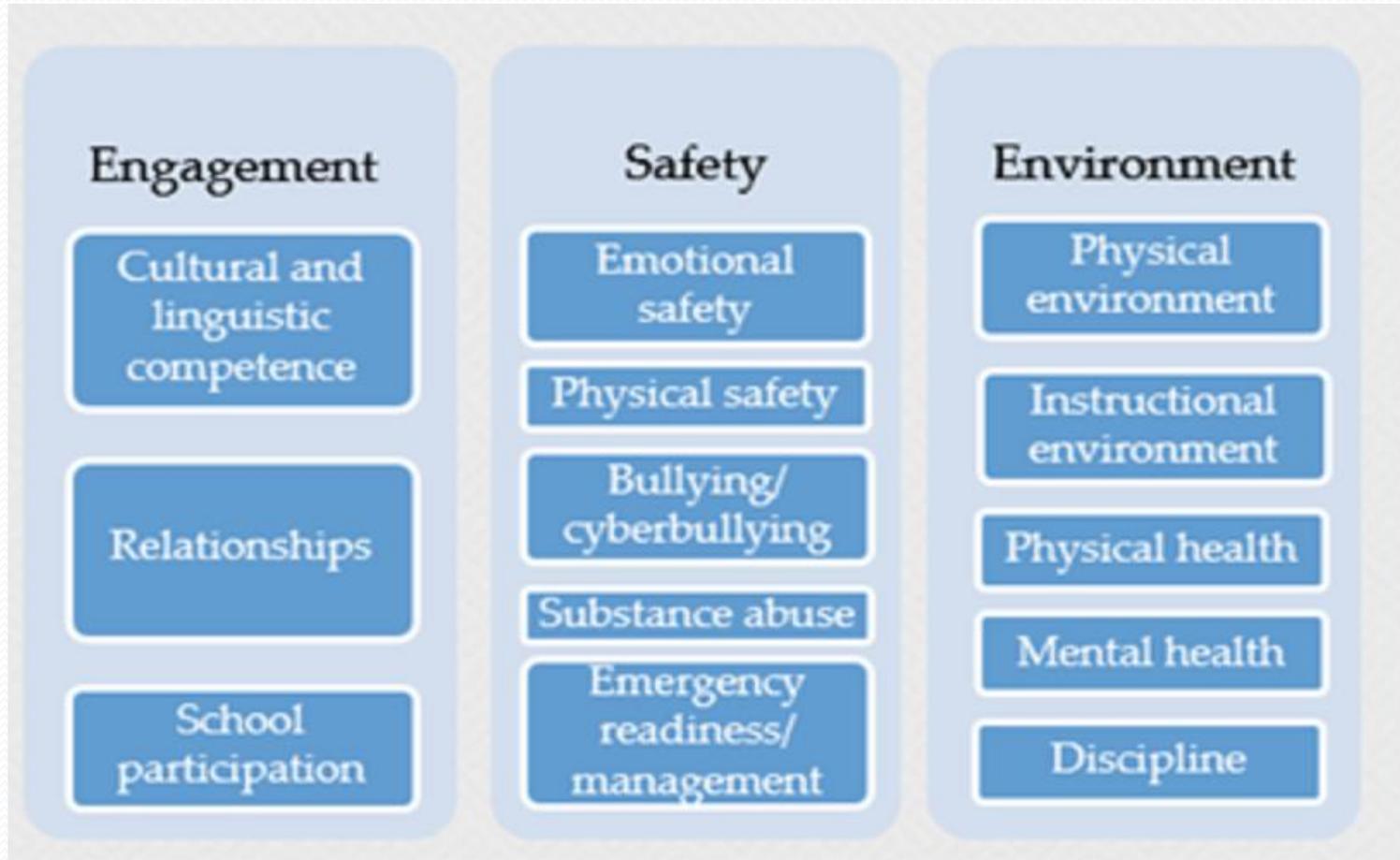
US Department of Education (USDE) Sample Questions Student School Climate Survey

9. Adults working 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

US Department of Education (USDE)
Sample School Climate Item Frequency Report

▾ Engagement

● Cultural and Linguistic Competence

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

To show the graphical display for a single survey item within a topical area, click on the *Expand* icon for the survey item.
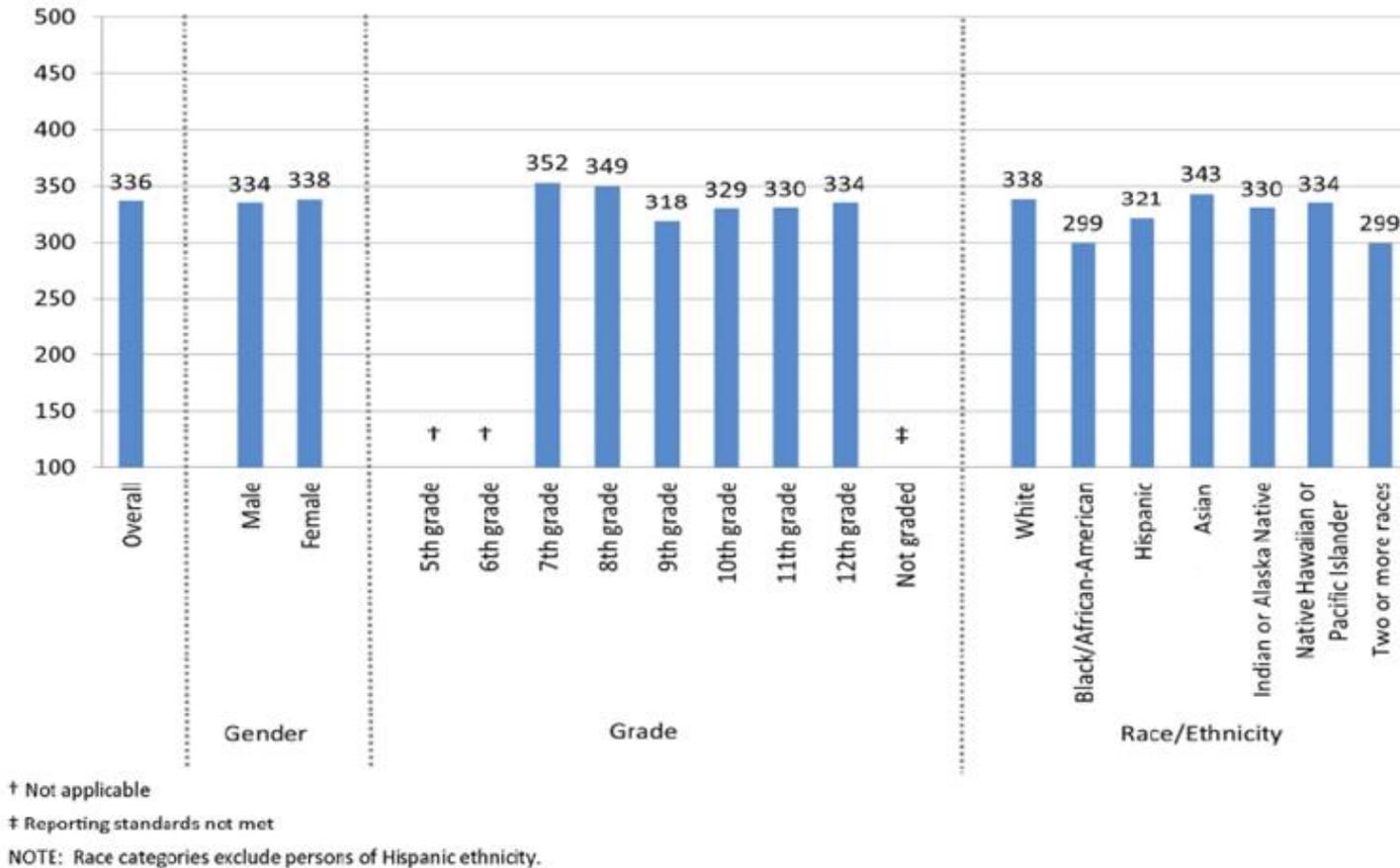
▾ Engagement

● Cultural and Linguistic Competence

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

Note that the data shown above are not NYS data, the data displayed above are sample data distributed by USDE for illustration purposes.

Figure 3. Engagement scale scores, overall and by gender, grade, and race/ethnicity: Spring 2015

† Not applicable

‡ Reporting standards not met

NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

Note that the data shown above are not NYS data, the data displayed above are sample data distributed by USDE for illustration purposes, this sample "school" did not have grades 5, 6 or ungraded.

SCI Part 2: School Violence Index

School Violence Index (SVI):

- The SVI is used to identify Persistently Dangerous schools each year, and

- The SVI is a ratio of violent incidents to school enrollment and is determined by the number of incidents and the seriousness and type of incidents.

SCI Part 3: Chronic Absenteeism

- A student is Chronically Absent when they are absent from school for **10%** or more of instructional days

- Students are at risk of becoming chronically absent if they have missed between 5 and 9% of instructional days

- Included in draft ESSA plan as indicator of school quality and student success

Chronic Absenteeism Summary Verification Report

District Name: ██████████
School Location: █████████████
School Year: 30-JUN-16
Data Refresh Date: Mar 5, 2016

Subgroup Name a	Attendance Days to Date b	Students Enrolled for at Least One Day During the School Year c	Number and Percentage of Students Who Were Absent						Average Number of Days Absent to Date	
			0 - 4% of Enrolled School Days Number d	0-4% of Enrolled School Days Percent e= (d/c) * 100	5-9% of Enrolled School Days (At-Risk of becoming Chronically Absent) Number f	5-9% of Enrolled School Days (At-Risk of becoming Chronically Absent) Percent g = (f/c) * 100	10% or More of Enrolled School Days (Chronically Absent) Number h	10% or More of Enrolled School Days (Chronically Absent) Percent i = (h/c) * 100	All Students j	Chronically Absent Students Only k
All Students	110	2,060	1,028	50 %	576	28 %	456	22 %	6.56	17.46
Female	0	1,012	504	50 %	279	28 %	229	23 %	6.70	17.74
Male	0	1,048	524	50 %	297	28 %	227	22 %	6.42	17.19
American Indian/Alaska	0	5	3	60 %	1	20 %	1	20 %	4.40	12

Column b includes the cumulative number of instructional school days to date for this school year (the total number of school days that students were expected to attend school).

Column c is the cumulative number of students who were enrolled in this school to date for at least one day during the school year.

Columns d to i include the count and percentage of students absent less than 5%, 5-9%, and 10% or more of enrolled school days based on: the number of instructional days that have occurred to date for this school year, the number of days that each student has been enrolled, and the number of days that each student has been absent.

SIRS-361 Summary

Mar 10, 2016

- 1 of 4 -

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Note that the data shown above are based on sample data that do not represent any school and are for illustration purposes only.

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Every Student Present Public Service Campaign to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

Every Student Present Public Service Campaign to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

❖ **Social Emotional Learning**
❖ **Restorative Practices**
❖ **Trauma-Informed Approaches**

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Students learn skills including:

- self-management,

- increasing self-awareness,

- building positive relationships,

- making responsible decisions,

- increasing social awareness

- SEL has had a significant impact on **reducing** at-risk behaviors including substance use, emotional distress, anxiety, social withdrawal, and mental health problems

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- NYSED's successful proposal helps guide this work - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

- NYSED works with representatives from nine other states.

- CASEL helps states establish Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as a key component of meeting the State learning standards i.e., developing benchmarks, a rubric for schools to self-assess their level of implementation and integration with academics.

- The Workgroup is currently working with 10 school districts in New York State to develop sample templates to integrate SEL into academic content areas.

- This work addresses the Safe Schools Task Force's recommendation to update the Social Emotional Development and Learning Guidelines.

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices –

- A framework for a **broad range** of restorative justice approaches that proactively build a school community based on cooperation, mutual understanding, trust and respect.

- Emphasizes **repairing the harm**.

Restorative Approaches To Discipline

Summary:

- Focuses on relationships
- Gives voice to the person harmed and the person who caused the harm
- Engages collaborative problem-solving
- Dialogue-based decision-making process
- An agreed upon plan leads to actions aimed at repairing the harm done.

http://nycourts.gov/ip/justiceforchildren/RestorativePracticesConference_PresentationsandResources.shtml

Trauma-Informed Approaches

- One out of four children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior.

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma impact a student's ability to learn.

- It is critical to develop capacity and create trauma-sensitive schools that help children feel safe so they can learn.

- To be successful, schools need resources to provide professional development to school staff in Trauma-Informed practices.

Trauma-Informed Approaches

- Changes in staff approaches when a behavioral incident occurs. Instead of asking who is to blame and how those engaged in the misbehavior will be punished, staff treat behaviors as teachable moments.

- Students are asked four key questions:
  - What happened?
  - Who was harmed or affected by the behavior?
  - What needs to be done to make things right?
  - How can people behave differently in the future?

School Climate / Culture

Indicators in ESSA Regarding School Quality and Student Success

NYS *DRAFT* ESSA Plan
Indicators Related to Task Force Recommendations

Tier I **State Reported** **Used for ESSA Accountability**	• **Chronic Absenteeism**
Tier II **State Reported** **Used for Diagnosis and Improvement**	• School Safety (violent incident counts or safety surveys) • Student Suspension Rates
Tier III **State Supported – Used by the School to Support Improvement**	• School Climate Surveys • Measures of Parent and Community Involvement

What Happens Next?

1. Implement a full-scale Pilot of the School Climate Index in the 2017-18 school year.

2. Conduct a panel presentation to the Board in the Fall of 2017 that includes:
   - ❖ school superintendents and school personnel who participated in the 2016-17 testing pilot of the School Climate Index to share lessons learned,
   - ❖ experts in the areas of Restorative and Trauma-Informed Practices to share strategies on how to engage students and foster positive school cultures.

3. Explore ways to add capacity to the Office of Student Support Services to develop resources, guidance and training materials for schools and districts implementing School Climate surveys and the School Climate Index.

4. Continue to implement the recommendations of the New York State Safe Schools Task Force.