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NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL CLIMATE INDEX



AGENDA

1. New York State Safe Schools Task Force Recommendations
2. NYSED's Outreach Efforts to Measure School Climate
3. School Climate vs. School Culture
4. What is a School Climate Index?
5. California School Climate Index
6. Proposed New York State School Climate Index
 - School Climate Surveys
 - School Violence Index
 - Chronic Absenteeism
7. Next Steps

NYS SAFE SCHOOLS TASK FORCE ACTIONS

Date	Activity
January 2013	Board of Regents re-established the Task Force
May 8, 2013	Kick off Meeting
November 14, 2013	Established three Workgroups and developed Preliminary Recommendations (School Climate/Student Engagement; Data Use/Reporting; Building Infrastructure/Security)
Jan - April 2014	Workgroups met to refine Preliminary Recommendations
Feb 20, 2014	SED hosted a Student Forum to get student's perspective on promoting safe and healthy schools
April 15, 2014	Task Force members discussed school climate, data collection and reporting, and suspension policies with the National School Climate Center President
May 2014	Workgroup members finalized recommendations to present to the full Task Force
June 6, 2014	Full Task Force met to refine and prioritize recommendations
September 15, 2014	Task Force presented recommendations to Board of Regents

NYS SAFE SCHOOLS TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

September 2014 Board of Regents meeting Department staff presented 36 Task Force recommendations in priority order:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2014/September2014/914p12d6.pdf>

Recommendation #2:

- *The reporting process for Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) and Violent and Disruptive Incident Reporting (VADIR) should be combined and renamed into one system that is not punitive and is reflective of the **school climate** and can be used for prevention and intervention purposes.*
- *Also one that includes positive measures and incorporates most improved schools. The Department, in conjunction with the Task Force, should develop a new process and criteria for the Persistently Dangerous designation and a new set of definitions of incident categories for reporting using a **School Climate Index**.*
- *Provide options for the removal of PD designation for carry over PD schools to utilize their 2014-15 and 2015-16 VADIR /incident data based on their SVI or **School Climate Index** rating.*

NYS SAFE SCHOOLS TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation # 3:

- *Establish social–emotional development and learning (SEDL) as a key component of meeting Common Core State Standards and revisit the SEDL guidelines and move forward with developing standards and measures on an evidence-based framework for implementation.*

▪ Recommendation # 4:

- *Assess and evaluate non-academic supports and a **positive school climate** as key to student achievement that will result in college, career and citizen readiness in all forms of communication from Department leadership. Provide resources for professional development, technical assistance and individual student supports to the field and school community including parents and afterschool programs.*

NYS SAFE SCHOOLS TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation #5:

- *Examine all current federal and state data reporting requirements to develop a single comprehensive model data reporting system that incorporates already required reporting that includes but is not limited to, data regarding school suspension and arrest, positive interventions, **school climate indicators**, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, etc.*

- Recommendation # 7:

- *Support implementation of theoretically grounded and evidence-based multi-tiered frameworks such as **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** that are designed to enhance the learning environment for all students who have greater social, emotional and behavioral needs and **improve overall school climate**, safety and support for students to improve academic achievement.*

OUTREACH EFFORTS TO MEASURE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- National Summit on School Discipline and School Climate—October 2014 (USDOE/USDOJ with former Chief Judge Judith Kaye)
- National School Climate Center
- California Department of Education
- American Institute of Research (AIR)
- New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children with University of Rochester Researchers
- School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS)
- New York City DOE Office of Public Safety
- Ballston Spa Central School District
- Northeast Regional Information Center (NERIC)
- NYS Center for School Safety (Measurement, Inc.)
- Internally, we have worked closely with other P-12 Offices - Information and Report Services, Accountability, Information Technology; Teacher and Leader Effectiveness; and Special Education throughout this process.

SCHOOL CLIMATE VS. SCHOOL CULTURE

An organization's CLIMATE represents the organization's attitude. It is much easier to change an organization's attitude (climate) than it is to change its personality (culture).

An organization's CULTURE determines its CLIMATE. Groups develop a common CULTURE. An organization's CULTURE dictates its collective personality.

(Gruenert, Steve; School Culture, School Climate: They are not the same thing.)

WHAT IS A SCHOOL CLIMATE INDEX?

A School Climate Index (SCI) is a **tool** that allows school buildings and districts to:

- 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.

AN EXAMPLE OF A STATEWIDE SCHOOL CLIMATE INDEX

California's SCI is calculated by computing the weighted average of the three domains

1. Supports and Engagement through School Climate Surveys for students, teachers and parents (45%)
2. Violence, Victimization, and Substance Use through student surveys (45%)
3. Truancy through attendance data (10%)

PROPOSED NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL CLIMATE INDEX

Similar to other states across the nation, the Department is proposing for discussion that a School Climate Index be considered using a phased-in approach over several years that focuses on three distinct measures.

1. *School Climate Surveys* -implement evidenced-based, valid and reliable surveys to:

- Students
- Parents/Guardians
- School Personnel

2. *VADIR/DASA* categories be revised and included in the SCI

Current School Violence Index would be revised and refined, and the categories currently collected for DASA incidents would be combined into one measurement with VADIR data.

3. *Chronic Absenteeism* - attendance data is currently being collected and, therefore, could be reported as a chronic absenteeism rate.

- Use a percent or number of days missed to define chronic absenteeism
- Focus on individual chronically absent students and develop intervention strategies
- Collect and disseminate disaggregated data on chronic absenteeism
- Incorporate into attendance policies measures of chronic absence and prevention and intervention strategies

CURRENT SCHOOL VIOLENCE INDEX

Violence and Disruptive Incident Reporting (VADIR)

- Schools currently report annually to the Department the number of violent incidents that occur based on twenty categories
- The Department calculates the annual School Violence Index (SVI) based on the number of weighted incidents divided by student enrollment
- If a school has an SVI higher than 1.5 for two years in a row, that school is considered “persistently dangerous”
- The Task Force recommended refining the twenty reportable incidents to a fewer number

Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)

- Seeks to provide students with an environment free of discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying
- Each school must report annually to the Department the number of incidents that fall under DASA’s umbrella (i.e., race, ethnicity, gender, sex, religion)
- The Task Force recommended streamlining these parallel reporting structures

NEXT STEPS

Department staff will incorporate changes suggested by the Board and present a final recommendation for a statewide School Climate Index at an upcoming meeting.