IMPROVING SCHOOL CLIMATE:
RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES TO GET THE JOB DONE

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Student-Student Relationships

Strategy highlight: Student-student relationship building activities

- Provide opportunities for peer-assisted learning
  - Peer mentoring, buddy systems
  - Consider who you group together
  - Consider grouping students of different races/ethnicities
- Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities & sports
- Play games that promote fun & social interactions
- Identify & showcase students' skills & talents, to help students get to know each other

"The resources provided are great and can be used to help students who have the most difficulty in student-student relationships."

Teacher-Student Relationships

Strategy highlight: Classroom management strategies for promotion of positive teacher-student relationships

- Use strategic praise/rewards for prosocial behavior
- Model prosocial behavior
- Establish clear expectations, routines, & procedures
- Set fair rules & consequences
- Closely monitor student behavior
- Collaborate with families

DE-PBS Project resource available to learn about & practice the effective use of praise/rewards. Includes specific script & action examples.

"With the knowledge gained from this training, I hope to be able to guide staff in effective strategies to empower themselves and help manage their classrooms more effectively."
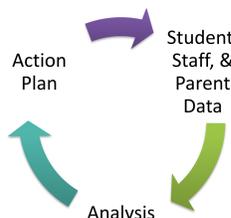
The Importance of School Climate

School climate is related to a wide range of outcomes for both students and staff.

Academic Achievement · Resilience · Emotional Well-Being · Increased Attendance · Greater Social-Emotional Competency · Fewer Behavioral Referrals · School Climate

Schools need valid measures of climate as well research-based strategies for improvement.

Delaware School Climate Survey

School Climate Scale

- Teacher-Student Relationships
- Student-Student Relationships
- Clarity of Expectations
- Fairness of Rules
- School Safety
- Student Engagement Schoolwide
- Bullying Schoolwide
- Teacher-Home Communications
- Staff Relations

Survey populations include:
- Students: grades 3-12
- Teachers & staff
- Parents: PK-12

Action Plan → Student, Staff, & Parent Data → Analysis

- The School Climate Scale is one of 5 scales on the Delaware School Surveys.
- Surveys are free to the public, although scoring services are currently available only to Delaware schools.
- Schools receive detailed data reports, interpretation worksheets & action plan templates to assist schools in interpreting & using their data.
- Subscales are aligned with goals commonly targeted in the School-Wide Positive Behavior & Intervention Supports (SWPBIS) & the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches to school discipline & prevention.

Strategies to Improve School Climate

A focus of Delaware's *School Climate Transformation Grant: School Climate and Student Success Project* is to develop modules that provide research-based strategies to schools that can lead to improvements in school climate & behavioral outcomes.

Available Online:
- Module research guide
- Module video presentations with narration
- Links to resources

Potential Uses:
- In-house PD
- Materials available for use as a whole staff, in PLCs, in leadership teams, or individually

School Climate Modules Structure

Module Components: Defining Focus Area · Area Importance · Contributing Factors · Research-based Strategies · Resources & Tools

Student Engagement

Strategy highlight: Implement a variety of instructional methods

- Use methods & activities that require active participation of students
- Offer challenging & authentic tasks
- Offer students choices in activities – what to do, & how to do it
- Make learning activities fun by incorporating game-like features
- Emphasize the relevance of academic material & activities to the individual lives of students
- Use an interest survey (DE-PBS resource) to get to know students & relate academic material to their interests & preferences

"I believe the daily report card, positive notes, & frequent positive praise are strategies that would be helpful in increasing engagement in my students who are disengaged."

Bullying Victimization

Strategy highlight: Establish a common understanding of bullying and anti-bullying expectations

- Set a clear definition & understanding of bullying
- Define cyberbullying & the responsibility of the school in such cases
- Have teachers & staff reflect upon their own attitudes towards bullying
- Encourage teachers, staff, students, & parents to recognize what acts do & do not constitute bullying
- Emphasize consequences of bullying for those who bully, the victim, & the impact on school climate

DE-PBS Project resource available to create an action plan. Includes prompts for staff to think about the aspects of bullying prevention & intervention at their school.

"I plan to concentrate on building rapport with students early in the year and be attuned to the needs of every student."