

# B13 – Climate Matters & Georgia's State-wide Plan to Impact Climate Through the PBIS Framework

*Leader Presenter: Tamika LaSalle, University of Connecticut*

*Exemplars: Zelphine Smith-Dixon, Ed.D.*

Key Words: Behavior, Equity, and Systems Alignment



What is *your* role in establishing a positive school climate?

# The School Climate and Discipline Guidance Package

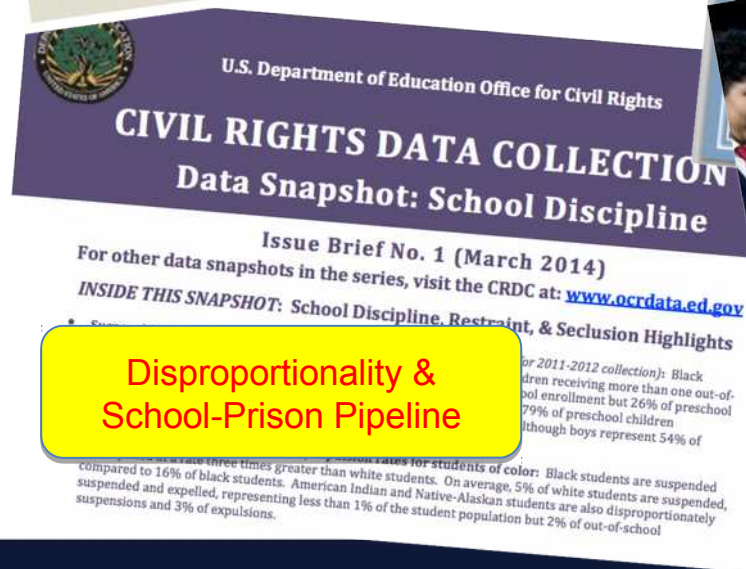
January 25, 2014



## School Climate & Discipline



## School Violence & Mental Health



## Disproportionality & School-Prison Pipeline

## Every Student Succeeds Act

# THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

The school system also develops and implements a continuous school improvement process to promote quality learning for all students. This process includes procedures and strategies to address quality learning, equity, and accountability. In all school systems, the continuous school improvement process includes the following activities at least once every five years:

- Review and update of mission and vision statements.
- Collect and analyze data about student performance, demographics, learning climate, and former high school students.
- Select improvement goals. At least one goal is directed toward improving student academic achievement.
- Develop and implement an improvement plan which includes procedures, strategies, actions to achieve goals, and an aligned professional development plan.
- Evaluate progress toward improvement goals.

## ESSA Law

By Evie Blad

January 5, 2016

A portion of the  
incorporate non  
could help pro  
beyond traditi  
educators and

The newest version of the Elementary  
Act, signed into law last month, requires states  
such indicator—like measures of student enga  
advanced coursework—in tracking schools' s

If states select the right indicators and the  
the changes could provide schools...

## Essential Components of Safe and Supportive School Climates

A school's environment—and the degree to which students feel connected, accepted, and respected—heavily influences students' academic achievement, mental health, and overall school success. Research reveals several essential components of school climate, which foster flexibility for schools and districts to align the unique needs of individual communities with explicit efforts to improve school climate. School psychologists have specific skills and expertise to help develop, implement, and evaluate school and district efforts to create safe and supportive learning environments that include the following elements:


INN

# ESSA: SCHOOL CLIMATE AS A INDICATOR

Conditions for  
learning?  
Conditions for  
teaching?

- Engaging students *only* academically (time on task, work completion) and behaviorally (attendance) is not enough
- Must also consider students' level of personal investment in learning (*I can, I want to*) and degree of belonging and social connectedness (*I belong, peer and teacher support, I feel safe*)
- ESSA highlights school and classroom climate
  - Academic achievement within a positive school climate is essential for school success

# ESSA: SCHOOL CLIMATE AS AN INDICATOR



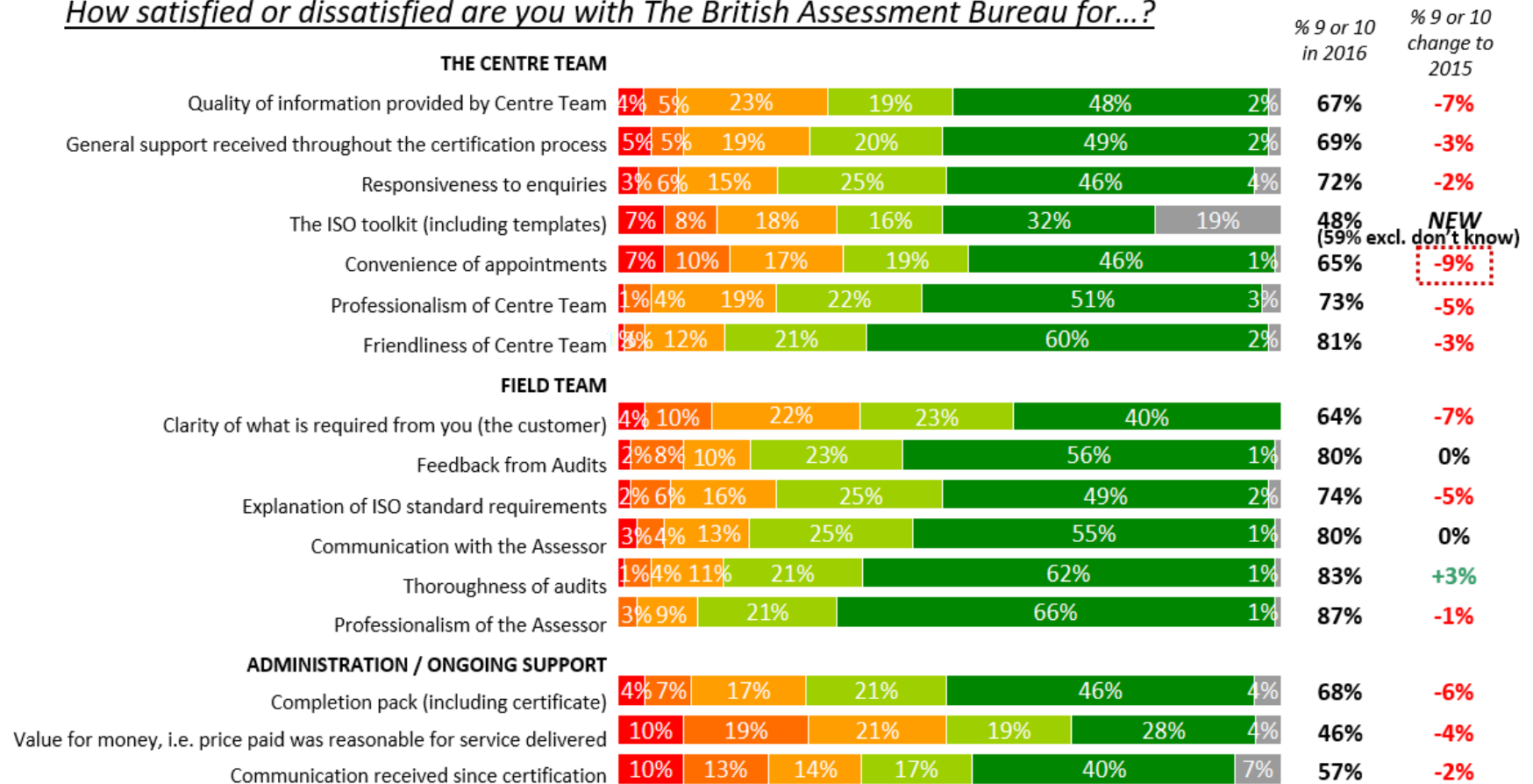
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- ESSA highlights school and classroom climate
  - Academic achievement within a positive school climate is essential for school success



# SATISFACTION GUARANTEED?

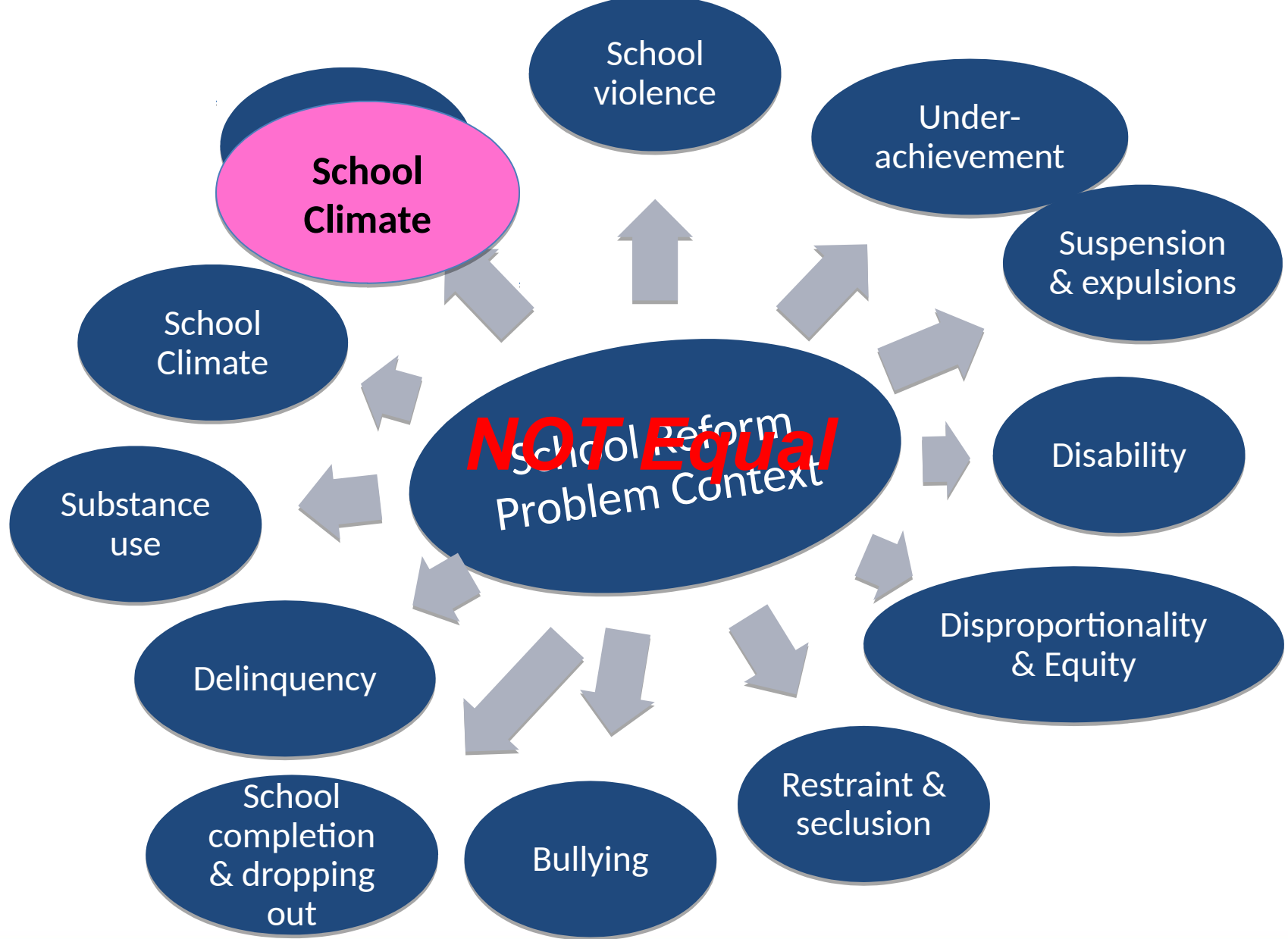
*How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with The British Assessment Bureau for...?*



■ 1 - 6 
 ■ 7 
 ■ 8 
 ■ 9 
 ■ 10 = Totally satisfied 
 ■ Don't know

Note: Net scores may not add up to the sum of individual scores due to rounding

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## SCHOOL CLIMATE

- What characteristics of a school create a positive school climate?
- What characteristics of a school create a negative school climate?

# Research



- “Multilevel analyses and hierarchical linear modeling revealed that student-level variables accounted for the majority of variation in perceptions of school climate (La Salle, Zabek, & Meyers, 2016)
- “It has been found that student perceptions of school climate are positively correlated with academic achievement (Brookover et al., 1978), and negatively correlated with risky behaviors (White, La Salle, Ashby, & Meyers, 2014)”
- “students who experienced more frequent rates of victimization reported lower feelings of school connectedness. This relationship was moderated by gender and age, with male and middle school students reporting a stronger relationship between the two variables. Results indicated that moderation existed among multiracial and Native American students, but the same patterns were not significant among other participating groups (La Salle, Parris, & Moring, 2015.”
- Students with disabilities report lower perceptions of school climate, higher rates of peer victimization, and higher rates of mental health problems (La Salle, George, McCoach, & Evanovich, 2018)

# DEFINING SCHOOL CLIMATE



## The Albatross

*The Unicorn*  
THE PHOENIX

Victimization

Perry, 1908

Moos 1974

Achievement  
studies

Anderson, 1982

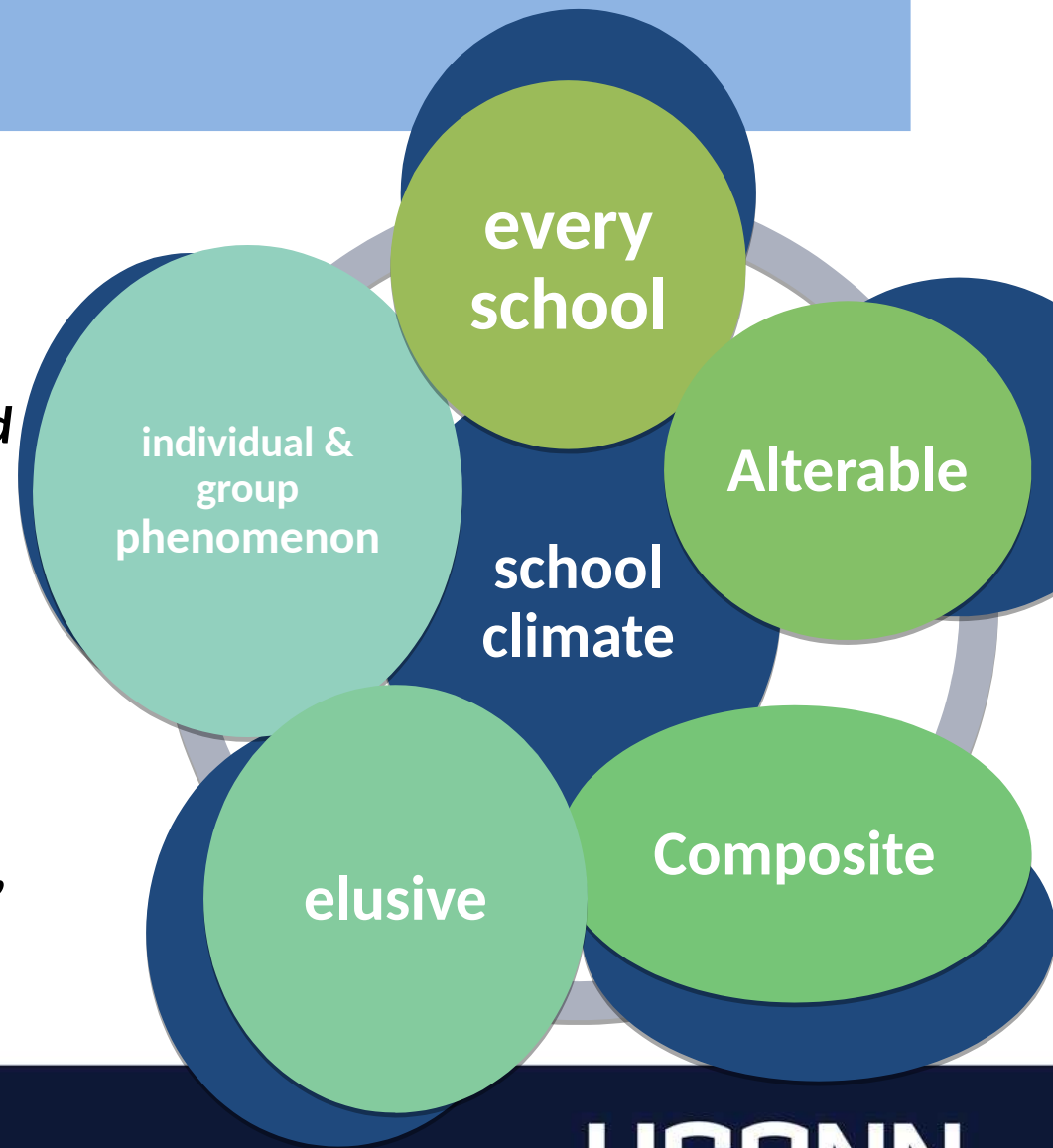
PBIS

youth-risk  
research

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# Defining School Climate (contd.)

*“School Climate is based on patterns of students, parents, and school personnel’s experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures”  
(National School Climate Centers, 2007).*



Or, more simply put...

School climate is the  
“feeling” of the school.

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***Common  
Language &  
Behaviors***

***POSITIVE SCHOOL-WIDE CLIMATE FOR ALL***  
***Students, Family, School, Community***

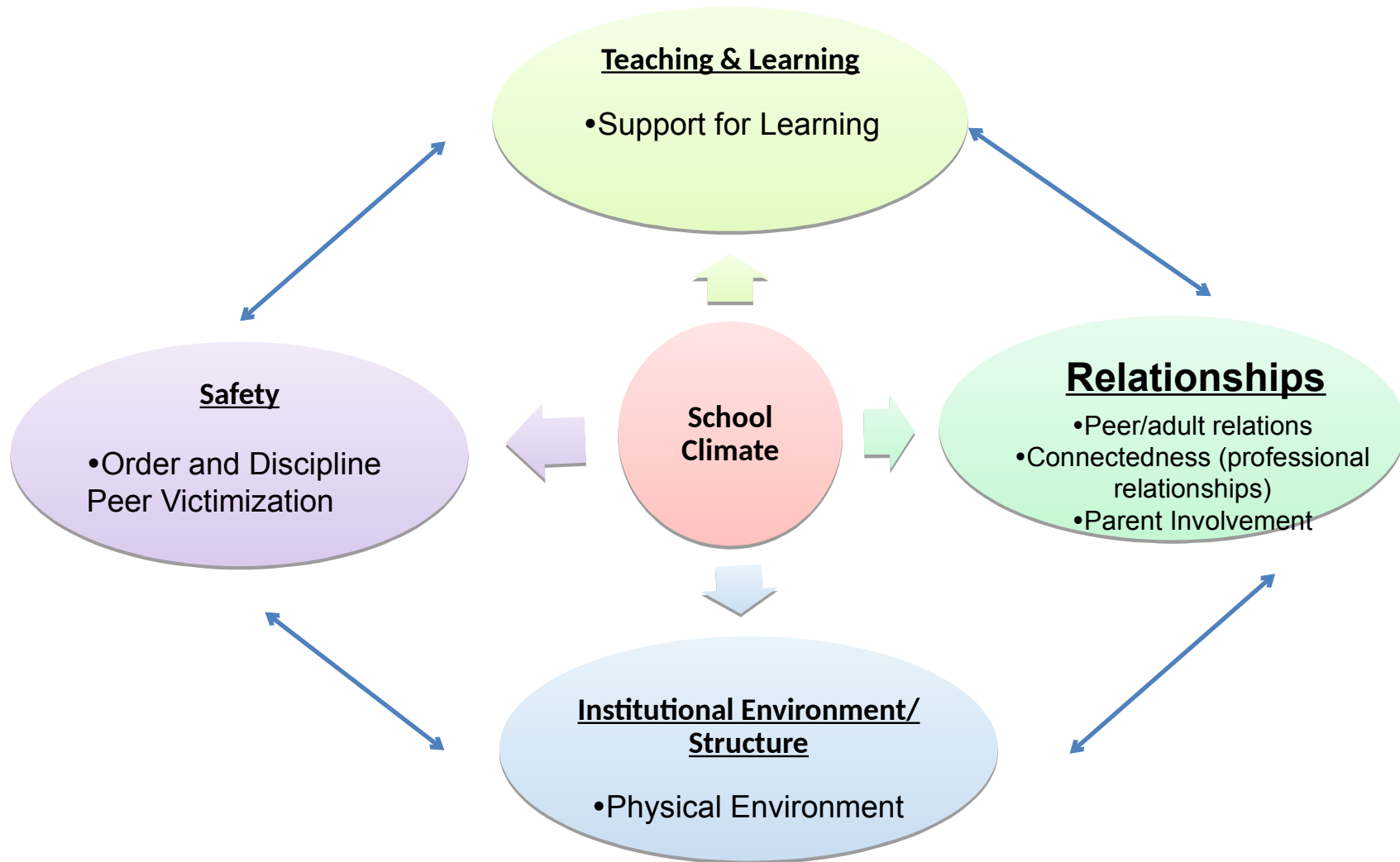
***Common  
Experience***

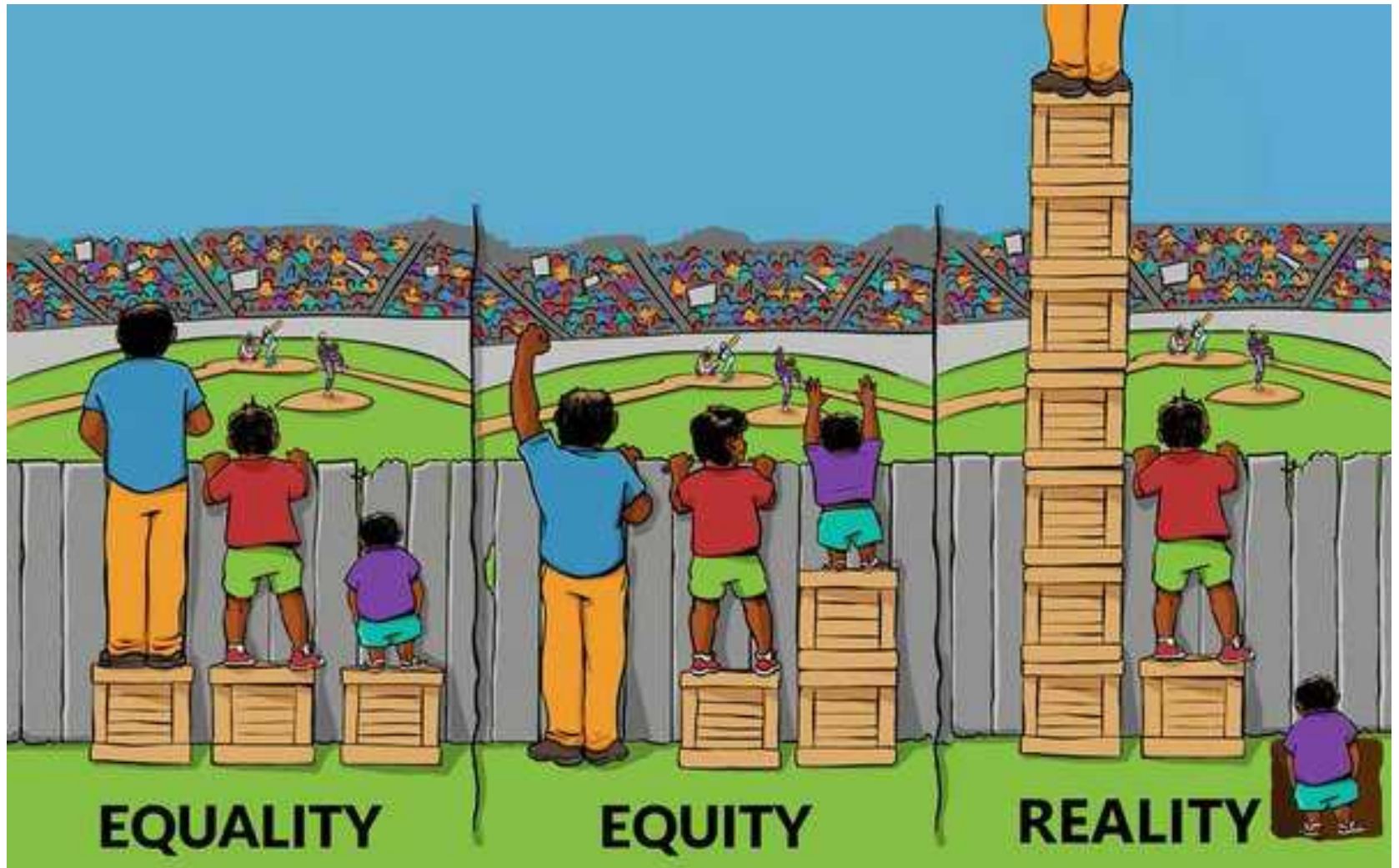
***Common  
Vision/Values***

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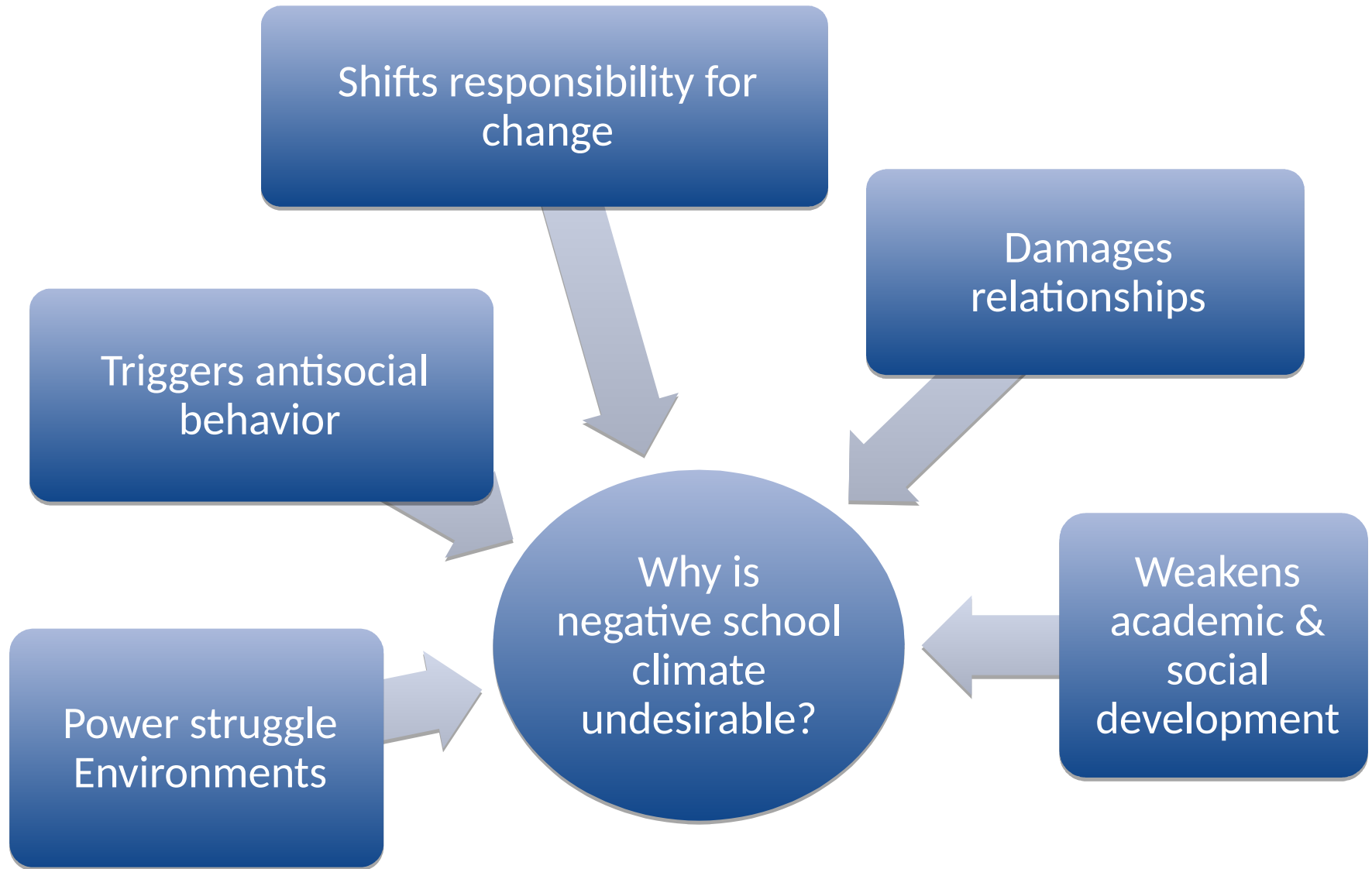


# DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE











# School Climate Survey

New Survey Suite Now Available in PBIS Assessment

## Georgia Elementary School Climate Survey

Note or directions here.

Georgia Elementary School Climate Survey	
Demographic Information	
Gender	<input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Male
Ethnicity	<input type="radio"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="radio"/> Not Hispanic or Latino
Race	<input type="radio"/> White <input type="radio"/> Black or African American <input type="radio"/> Asian <input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native <input type="radio"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
Grade	<input type="radio"/> 4 <sup>th</sup> <input type="radio"/> 5 <sup>th</sup>
1. I like school.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never
2. I feel like I do well in school.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never
3. My school wants me to do well.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never
4. My school has clear rules for behavior.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never
5. I feel safe at school.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never
6. Teachers treat me with respect.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never

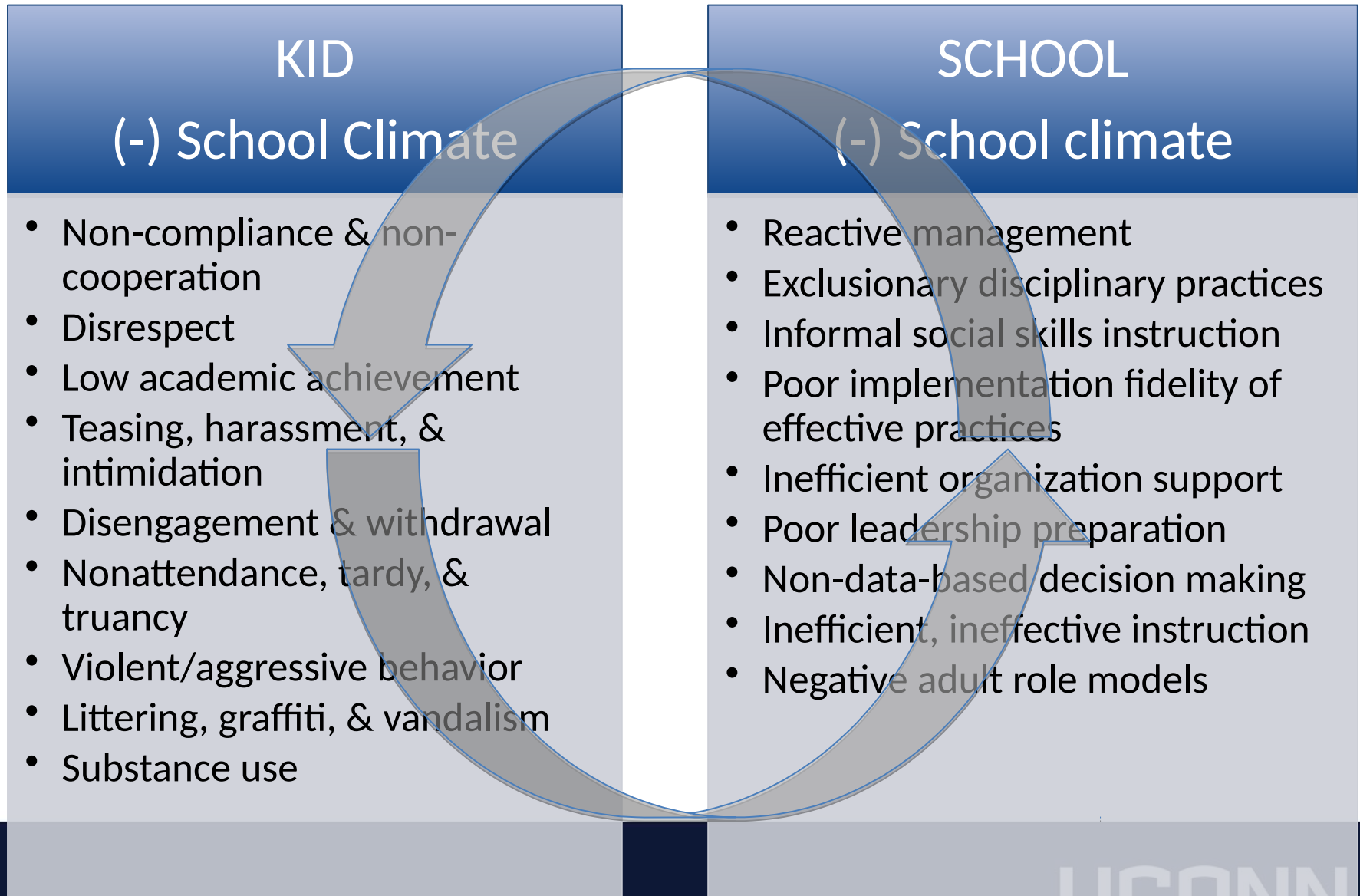
The GSHS 2.0 was created by the Georgia Department of Education in Collaboration with Tamika La Salle, Ph.D., The University of Connecticut, and Joel Meyers, Ph.D., The Center for School Safety, School Climate, and Classroom Management at Georgia State University.

# School Climate Measures

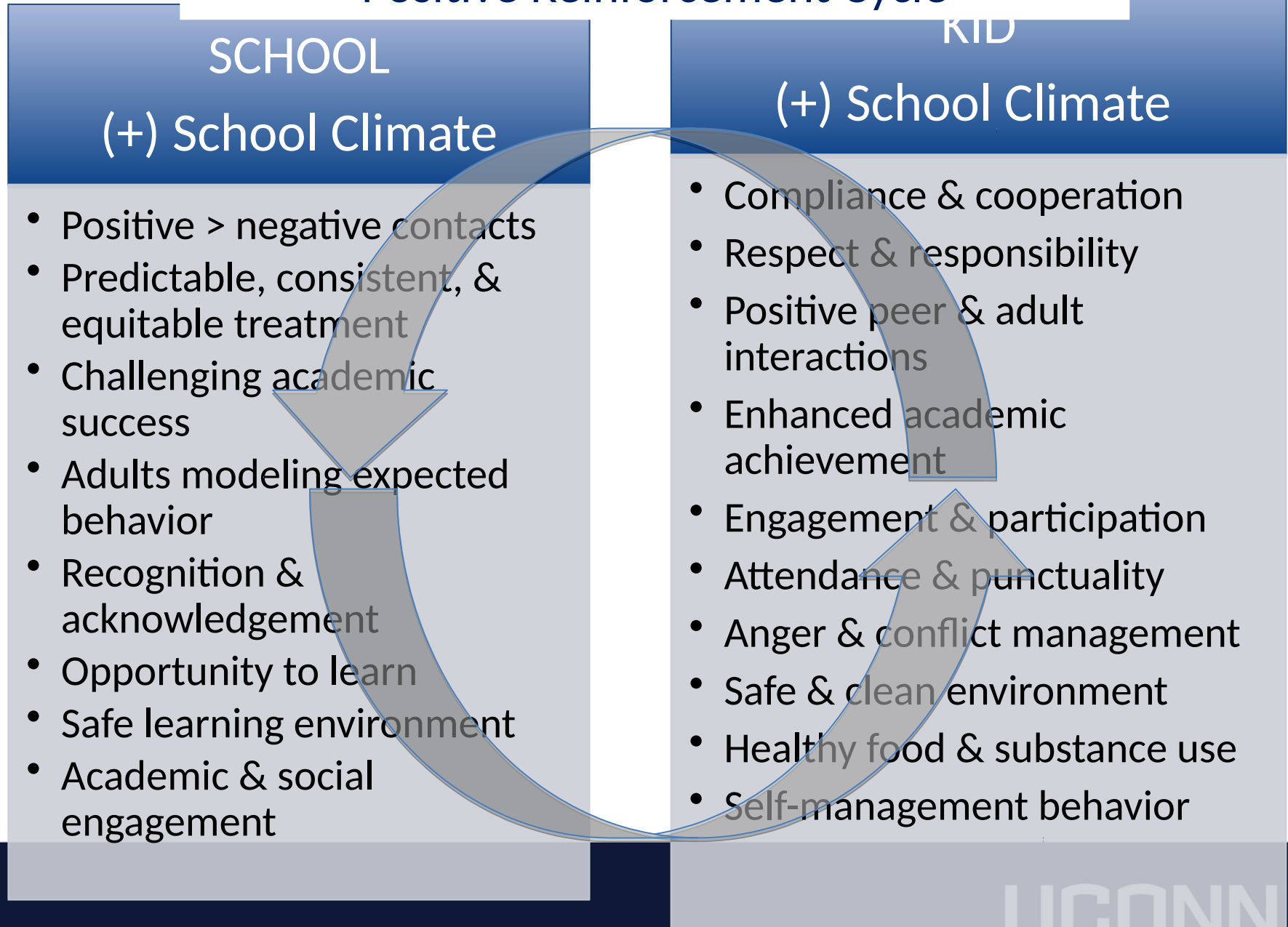
<b>Survey Name</b>	Georgia Elementary School Climate Survey	Georgia Brief School Climate Inventory (GaBSCI)	Georgia School Personnel Survey (GSPS)	Georgia Parent School Climate Survey
<b>Target Group</b>	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-12	Teachers, Administrators	Parents
<b>Number of Items</b>	11	9	29	21



# Coercive Cycle



# Positive Reinforcement Cycle



# SCHOOL CLIMATE MEASUREMENT

- How do you measure it?
  - School Climate Surveys
- Who should we ask?
  - Students
  - School Personnel (teachers, support staff, administrators)
  - Parents/Family

# Presentation Purpose



Share Georgia's state-wide plan to  
impact school climate

Where are we in our implementation?



# Presentation Norms



Relevant



Relatable

Rigorous





# Parking Lot Drama





Park like  
this again  
= you get  
keyed  
Dumb ass

What do your "parking lot behaviors" say about you?

More importantly, what do the "tabled conversations" that get shifted to the parking lot say about you?

A PICTURE IS  
WORTH A  
THOUSAND  
WORDS!



*Instagram*

If citizens used one picture to describe the general state of school climate, what would that picture look like?  
What would the caption message to others?



# Presentation Norms



Relevant

**What do I  
hope to  
learn?**

## K-12 Student Discipline Dashboard

Click ( ? ) for help.

Select School Year

2017

Select School District

Select District

Select School

Select School

Select Subgroup

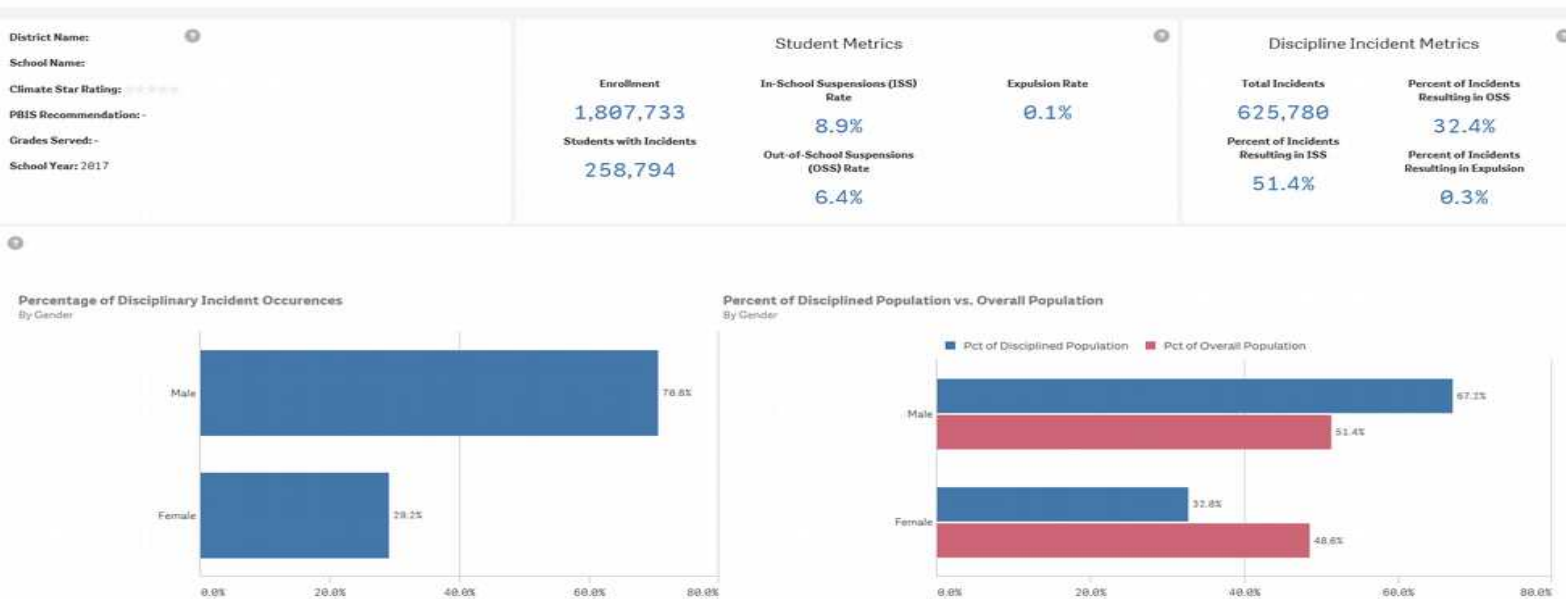
Gender

Clear Selections

Data Source : GALAWARDS

Download Data

2017



## K-12 Student Discipline Dashboard

Click ( ? ) for help.

Select School Year

2016

Select School District

Select District

Select School

Select School

Select Subgroup

Gender

Clear Selections

Data Source : GALAWARDS

Download Data

2016



# State-wide Plan to Improve School Climate

How can we  
improve the  
climate from  
Georgia's  
parking lot to  
Georgia's  
classrooms?







## Georgia's graduation rate rises to all-time high

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Meghan Frick, GaDOE Communications Office, 404-463-4246, [mfrick@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mfrick@doe.k12.ga.us)

**School & district results:** [Excel](#) | [PDF](#)

**September 19, 2018** – Georgia's high school graduation rate increased again in 2018, rising to 81.6 percent from 80.6 percent in 2017.

This is an all-time high for Georgia's graduation rate since the state began using the adjusted cohort calculation now required by federal law. Seventy-four Georgia school districts recorded 2018 graduation rates at or above 90 percent.

"Georgia's graduation rate continues to rise because our public-school students have access to more opportunities than ever before," State School Superintendent Richard Woods said. "From Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education to dual enrollment to the fine arts, there is an unprecedented emphasis on supporting the whole child and making sure every single student understands the relevance of what they're learning. I'm confident we'll continue to see these gains as long as we're still expanding opportunities that keep students invested in their education."

Georgia calculates a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate as required by federal law. This rate is the *number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma* divided by the *number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class*. From the beginning of ninth grade, students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort that is subsequently "adjusted" by adding any students who transfer into the cohort during the next three years, and subtracting any students who transfer out.

While all states use the same calculation, each state sets its own requirements for students to earn a regular high school diploma. Georgia has some of the highest requirements in the nation for students to graduate with a regular diploma.

### Georgia Graduation Rates – 2012 to 2018

2018 – 81.6 percent

2017 – 80.6 percent

2016 – 79.4 percent

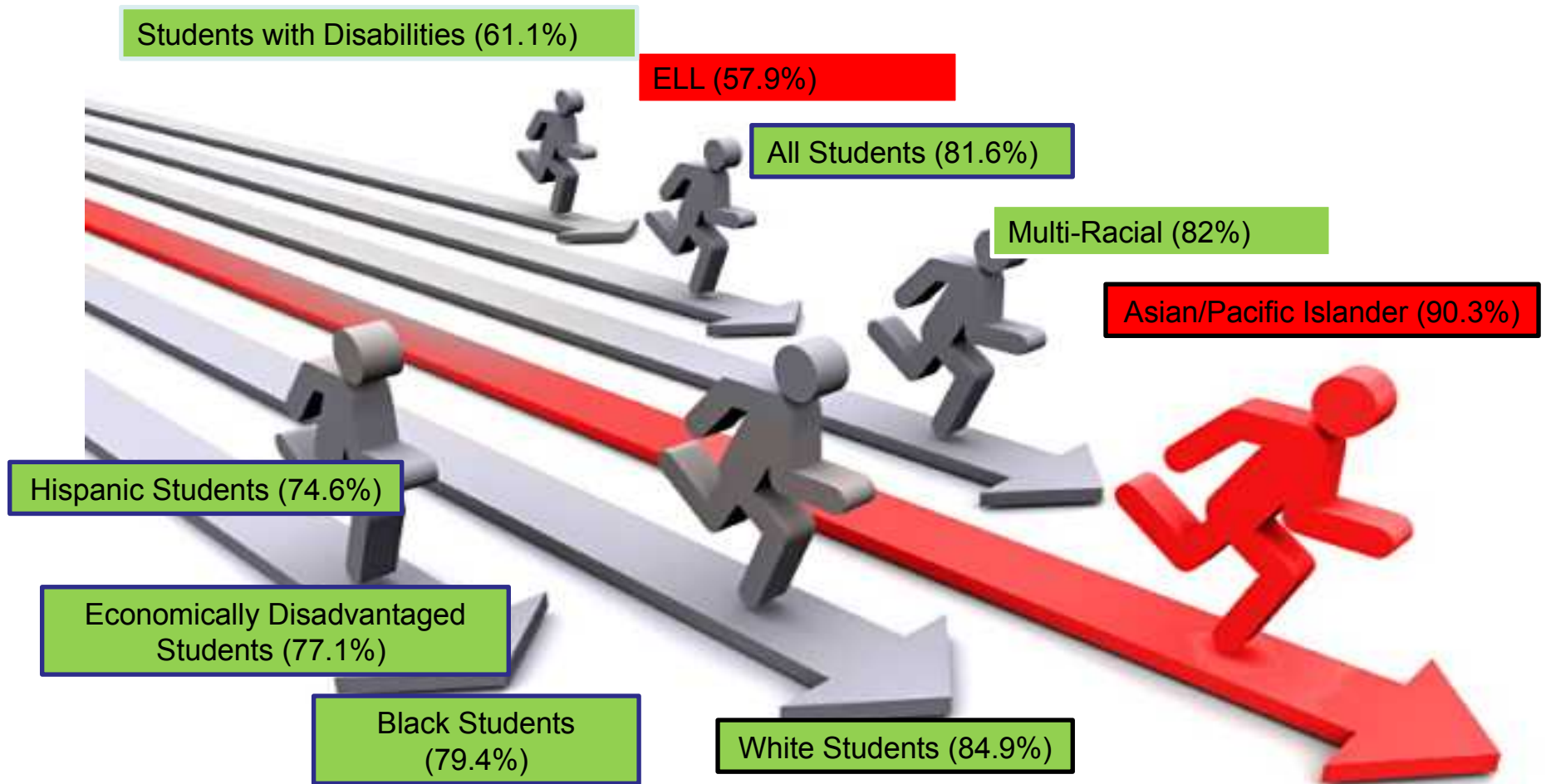
2015 – 79.0 percent

2014 – 72.6 percent

2013 – 71.8 percent

2012 – 69.7 percent





FY2018 Graduation Data  
Hats off to the race for student success!

# State Systemic Improvement Plan Barriers to Student Success

How can we  
increase  
school  
completion for  
students with  
disabilities?

Access to the General Curriculum for All Students

**Access to Positive School Climate for All Students**

Access to Specially Designed Instruction for Students with  
Disabilities







LOGIN

COMMON AGENDA DATA RESOURCES STAY INFORMED

## RELEVANT DATA POINTS

 PRETERM BIRTH	 SCHOOL CLIMATE	 ATTENDANCE	 LOW BIRTHWEIGHT
 MATERNAL EDUCATION	 K-3 OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS	 PERCENT OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES ENROLLED IN QUALITY RATED CHILD CARE	 CHILD CARE CLIMATE
 CHILD CARE TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	 CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY	 THIRD-GRADE MILESTONES ELA PROFICIENT AND ABOVE	 DIRECTLY CERTIFIED

How can we  
increase  
reading  
proficiency  
by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade?





### ***Why Should Georgia Assist Schools Choosing to Implement PBIS?***

As first appeared in *Education Week* (2013) Georgia's high school graduation rate is near the bottom of the nation. Nearly one-third of Georgia's students fail to finish high school in four years. Currently, Georgia's graduation rate is 67.4%, the third lowest in the nation, followed only by Nevada and New Mexico. When comparing graduation rates, Georgia also ranks near the bottom nationally for students with disabilities (30%), economically disadvantaged students (59%), black students (60%), students with limited English proficiency (32%) and white students (72%) (Education Week, 2013).

In 2010, roughly 8% of Georgia's students were suspended at least once (Walz, 2011). In 2010, Georgia students lost more than 1.8 million days of instruction due to suspension. The Georgia Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, in cooperation with the Atlanta office of a Big Four Accounting Firm, reviewed and assessed student discipline data collected by school districts and compiled by GaDOE for seven years (school years 2003-04 through 2009-10). The key findings include the following:

- In School Year 2009-10, 8.1% of students in Georgia's K-12 public school system received at least one out-of-school suspension (OSS) disciplinary action. This reflects an overall reduction from the 9.3 to 9.5% rates experienced in the first five years of the period under review.

# Before



» LAND USE PLANNING

» TRANSPORTATION

» URBAN DESIGN

» ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

» HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

» ENVIRONMENTAL & HEALTH PLANNING

» GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

» PLANNING.GATECH.EDU

Georgia Tech

School of City & Regional Planning

College of Design

TEADERS

OPERATION HOPE

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Georgia leads in addressing school climate

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After

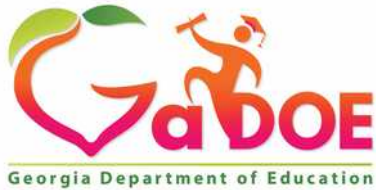


# Response to Intervention

- Also known as Georgia Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions (2008; 2011)
- Included four essential components: screening, progress monitoring, tiered instruction, and data-based decision making
- Four Tiers: Standards based classroom learning, Needs base learning, SST driven learning, Specially designed learning
- Designed to align multiple state and local programs



# Georgia's Peaches Partnered with Florida's Oranges!



Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"



Florida Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support Project  
A Multi-Tiered System of Supports

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## PBIS Staff Directory

### Project Directors



Donald Kincaid, EdD, BCBA-D  
Co-Director, Professor & Co-Division Director (FCIC at USF)

Email Bio



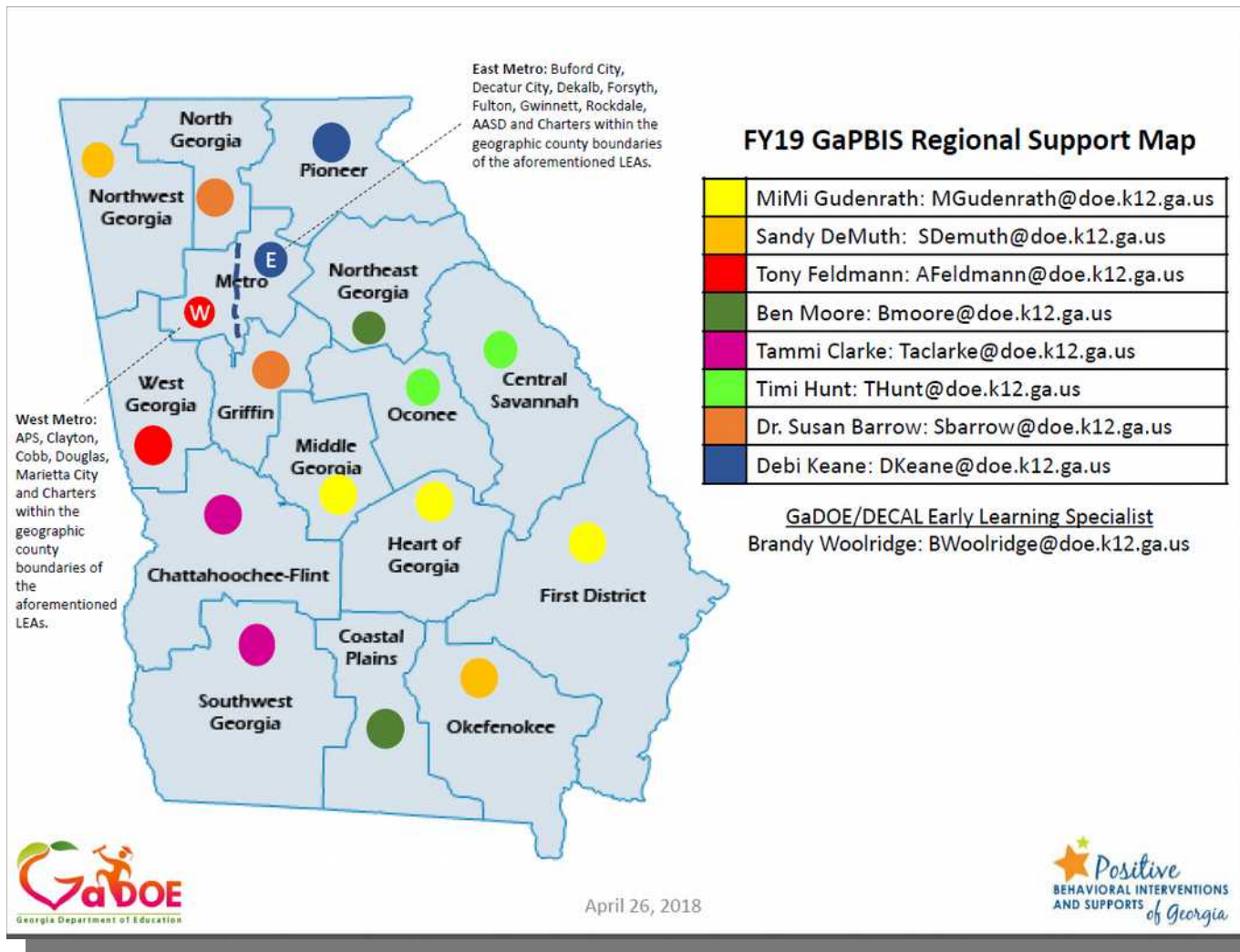
Heather Peshak-George, PhD  
Co-Director & Associate Professor

Email Bio

# Implementation of the National PBIS Framework

- Implemented PBIS in greater than 1200 schools
- Impacted greater than 675,000 students





# National Rigor but Georgia Grown and Strong

Additional state funding to support  
regional climate specialists in each  
Regional Education Service Agency  
(RESA)





Youth Mental Health First Aid Training  
with the Project AWARE Grant provided  
training for 4,376 adults and supports for  
25,168 students



# PBIS Early Learning Classroom Modules

## Building Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

Professional Development Module for PBIS Early Learning  
Social Emotional Classroom Practices

### Georgia RESAs



Designed for  
Pre-K through Grade 3  
Educators

# Other Climate Supports

Check and  
Connect

Multi-tiered  
System of  
Supports

Georgia's  
Student  
Health  
Survey 2.0

Georgia Department of  
Behavioral Health and  
Developmental  
Disabilities APEX  
Program

Sources  
of  
Strength

In 2014, Georgia  
use of School  
Climate Ratings

Functional  
Behavioral  
Assessments  
and Behavior  
Intervention  
Plans Training





# Georgia's System of Continuous Improvement



# Where are you in the implementation process?

## Exploration & Adoption

- We think we know what we need so we are planning to move forward (evidence-based)

## Installation

- Let's make sure we're ready to implement (capacity infrastructure)

## Initial Implementation

- Let's give it a try & evaluate (demonstration)

## Full Implementation

- That worked, let's do it for real and implement all tiers across all schools (investment)
- Let's make it our way of doing business & sustain implementation (institutionalized use)

By Guest Columnist **CAITLIN DAUGHERTY KOKENES**, *project manager at the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education*

Recent events such as the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February and similar occurrences across the country have brought to light the importance of school safety and student mental health.



*Caitlin Daugherty Kokenes*

As students, parents, administrators, and others search for ways to ensure that schools are safe places, some may be surprised to know that Georgia is a leader among states when it comes to making a concentrated effort to address and improve school climate – a term used to refer to the quality of student and staff life at schools, including the level of school safety. Relatedly, there are a host of efforts currently underway to provide for and address student mental health support. In addressing school climate, Georgia has pulled ahead of many states as a leader.

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students, parents, and school personnel's experience of that school life – according to the National School Climate Center. In 2014, Georgia became the first state in the country to include school climate as an early indicator in the accountability system for all schools.

School climate is included as a part of school accountability through the School Climate Star Rating. This rating is a tool used to determine if a school is on the right path to improving school climate. The ratings are a “star system” of one to five stars given based on several components including responses to the student, teacher, and parent annual perception survey; student discipline rates; safe and substance-free learning environment assurance, which is based on school discipline data and student survey responses related to factors like drugs, alcohol, bullying, and dangerous incidents; and attendance data for students and school staff.





# Where are we in the implementation process?



**APT PLANNING SHEET**

Teacher's Name Zelphine Smith Social Security No. [REDACTED]

School Lewis Greenview Room Number Bridge Date of observation 03-19-96

Observer's Name Geneva Williams Observation time begins 12:35 ends 1:05

Grade Level 2nd Subject Reading

Please write in complete sentences so that PD 4i can be rated using this information.

Objectives for the lesson (What the students will learn)	Instructional procedures and materials for each objective (What will be done to achieve the objectives and the equipment or materials to be used) Briefly describe or attach any handouts. Underline or list materials needed.	Assessment of each objective (How student progress will be measured)
The students will be able to identify the (4) stages of growth for the caterpillar and the polliwog.	<p>① The teacher will review vocabulary necessary to understand the story. "The Caterpillar and the Polliwog" by Jack Kent</p> <p>② The students will arrange flashcards of the polliwog and the caterpillar, in the order of growth changes.</p> <p>③ The teacher will assign each student a character from the story. The teacher will dramatize the story to the class, involving the assigned characters.</p> <p>④ Each student will discuss his character's role in the story.</p> <p>⑤ The teacher will stimulate the students' interest by singing a song and using visual aids.</p> <p>⑥ The class will discuss the theme of change.</p>	<p>The teacher will assess the objective at a later date.</p> <p>The students will be given flashcards. The students will have to arrange the flashcards in order of growth for the caterpillar and the polliwog. The students will have to identify each stage of growth. The teacher will observe and assess these actions.</p>

Remember when all we had to do was **unpack** a standard!



**While there is a critical relationship between teaching and learning, simply unpacking a standard may not be enough!**







Life is  
what happens to you  
while you're busy  
making other plans.

Allen Saunders

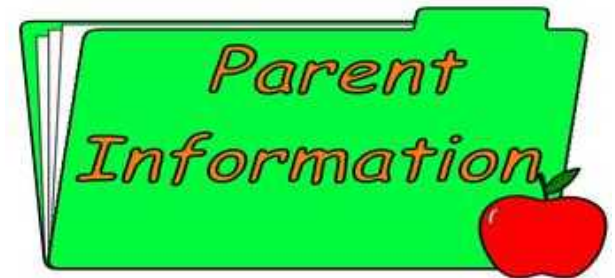




# Will parent experiences impact the quality of student and staff life at school?

The Truth is...it does!

**When you *unpack*  
the *backpack*, you  
will begin to realize  
the *impact*...**



# Will student experiences impact the quality of student and staff life at school?

The Truth is...it does!

**When you **unpack** the **backpack**, you will begin to realize the **impact**...**



# Will teacher experiences impact the quality of student and staff life at school?

The Truth is...it does!

**When you **unpack** the **backpack**, you will begin to realize the **impact**...**



# Will schoolwide experiences impact the quality of student and staff life at school?

The Truth is...it does!

**When you **unpack**  
the **backpack**, you  
will begin to realize  
the **impact**...**



**If Every Student Succeeds...this  
can't be an act!**

**If Every Student Succeeds, then  
All Students  
Must Matter!**

**Zelphine Smith-Dixon**



**If All Students  
matter, then we must give  
each student the tools  
necessary to run the race!**

**Zelphine Smith-Dixon**



**If School Climate matters,  
then we must create an  
equitable access to a positive  
school climate for all students,  
all schools, all districts, and  
all Georgians!**

**Zelphine Smith-Dixon**





# Presentation Norms

**What did I  
learn?**



**Relatable**

# Presentation Norms

**What will I  
do with  
what I  
learned?**

## Rigor



# School Climate In Review

- School climate is an essential component of school success (ESSA/SCTG)
- Student (parent and teacher) perceptions matter
- School Climate is malleable and should be part of school improvement plans
- PBIS, when implemented with fidelity, is a viable way to address school climate

# Thank You & Questions?

[tamika.la\\_salle@uconn.edu](mailto:tamika.la_salle@uconn.edu)

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