Indicator Explanation

DOMAIN	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Culture	Solicit and act upon stakeholder input	4B.3 The School Improvement Team annually convenes meetings of school personnel and families to discuss results of the annual climate survey, progress on current actions, and any additional actions needed based on survey analysis.

A school's culture shift requires improvements in school climate as perceived by all stakeholders within the school community. Leadership teams must identify and administer an annual climate survey to gauge the perspectives of staff, students, and parents, and these data must be shared with all stakeholder groups within the school community. An annual meeting or meetings provides an opportunity to share this information. Teams should consider the needs of different stakeholders as they plan presentations, and seek and incorporate their input in identifying goals and priorities moving forward.

Successfully turning around schools requires members of the school community to be intensely focused on student learning, work together to shift the school's culture to incorporate higher academic expectations for all students, and make significant and concerted efforts to fulfill these expectations (The Center on School Turnaround, 2017; 2018; Herman et al., 2008; Louis et al., 2010). The entire school must embrace these high expectations, which in turn contribute to creating a positive school climate that embraces improvement and academic success (The Center on School Turnaround, 2017; 2018). School climate reform is increasingly being viewed as a worthwhile and valuable data-driven school improvement strategy that promotes safer and more supportive schools (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013), and policy-makers are devoting increased attention to the role of school climate in student learning and achievement (Weissbourd, Bouffard, & Jones, 2013). In fact, ESSA now requires states to measure non-academic factors such as school climate as part of how they gauge school success (DeWitt, 2016). The school community must gather stakeholder input to assess perceptions about the school's climate and the turnaround initiative in order to evaluate the improvement process and make changes as necessary (The Center on School Turnaround, 2017; Redding, Murphy, & Sheley, 2011). The Leadership, or Collaborative Success team must administer a school climate survey annually to all stakeholders and share results with the school community, including discussions of concrete actions the school is taking to address the survey's results. An annual meeting(s) provides an opportunity to share and discuss these results with all school personnel and families, and gather their input regarding climate findings and planned improvement initiatives.

The Importance of School Climate
Thapa et al. (2013) cite the National School Climate Council's description of positive school climate:
> A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributive, and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe. People are engaged and respected. Students, families and educators work together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision. Educators model and nurture an attitude that emphasizes the benefits

of, and satisfaction from, learning. Each person contributes to the operations of the school as well as the care of the physical environment. (p. 358)

Research shows that school climate is important to address within school improvement (Marzano, 2003; Tschannen-Moran, Parish, & Dipaola, 2006), and "positive school and classroom climates mitigate the negative effect of poor SES background on academic achievement" (Berkowitz, Moore, Astor, & Benbenishty, 2016, p. 453). Sustained positive climate is associated with effective youth risk prevention and health promotion efforts, youth development and social and emotional learning (Devaney & Berg, 2016), positive academic achievement (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006) student behavior (Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014), increased graduation rates, and better rates of teacher retention (Thapa et al., 2013). School climate also contributes to teacher outcomes such as burnout, cynicism, and retention (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009; Grayson & Alvarez, 2008). Leadership within the school community is paramount for creating a positive school climate that can enhance the likelihood of substantial school improvement (Bryk, 2010), and assessing school climate regularly is a key task for leadership teams1 (Redding et al., 2011).

Developing an Action Plan to Address School Climate Survey Results, and Sharing Results with the School Community
According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE),
> By assessing the perceptions of school climate, educators and education agencies can identify key issues in need of reform. Once needs are identified, data from school climate assessments can be used to set goals and priorities and choose programmatic interventions. Data also can identify areas where students, staff, and parents view climate in similar or dissimilar ways. (NCSSLE, n.d.)

Climate survey data should be used in conjunction with other indicators such as discipline incidence reports to get a comprehensive picture of the school's climate and determine appropriate interventions, and school leaders should conduct focus groups or interviews to follow up on areas of concern identified by the survey (e.g., bullying, discipline data, etc.) (NCSSLE, 2016). Once climate data are collected, school leaders must plan and implement climate improvement initiatives based on results of survey data.

Leadership teams should develop a communications plan that indicates how climate survey data and school climate efforts will be shared with members of the school community as well as how stakeholder input will be obtained about the efforts (NCSSLE, 2016). Sharing results of the annual climate survey with school personnel and families is a necessary first step of the communications plan. Results can be shared in the form of a summary of findings that is disseminated to stakeholders in a user-friendly format as described below (NCSSLE, 2017):
> Toward the end of your data collection process, prepare a document that summarizes your school climate findings across data sources. The summary should provide an overview of the various topic areas of school climate that [were] assessed, school-level scores on measured topic areas, and district-level data if available….the summary report can document change in school climate within the school, if available…Reports should be easy to interpret and accessible to a wide audience of school, community, and family stakeholders, be actionable, and make data results meaningful (e.g., by providing data comparisons). (p. 101)

An annual meeting of school personnel and families provides an opportunity for the Leadership Team to share this report with stakeholders and discuss its findings. Members of the school community should have the opportunity to "dig into" the data and help to identify key priorities moving forward; involving stakeholder groups can leverage support across audiences, facilitate their understanding of the data, and provide further feedback on how to share the information (NCSSLE, 2017). Effective strategies for sharing climate survey data also include:
- Plan meetings with stakeholders that balance enough structure for them to review results with enough flexibility to consider their input.
- Allow sufficient time and supports for participants to review the materials before decisions are made.
- Allow sufficient time for participants to understand the relationship between multiple data sources.

- Set goals for improving data points; use specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound (SMART) goals,
- Present data to stakeholders using graphs or other visual products. Consider the needs of different audiences when preparing data summaries.
- Allow members of your school community to review the data reports and determine key takeaways from the data (e.g., what the school is doing well and what the school needs to do to improve).
- Provide opportunities for participants to help plan dissemination priorities. (NCSSLE, 2017, pp. 126–127)

1 See: https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/school-climate-measurement for examples of climate surveys that have been reliably tested and established validity, along with a free platform to help schools collect, analyze and report school climate data.

2 For an online module on sharing school climate data with stakeholders see: http://airhsdlearning.airws.org/schoolclimate5/story_html5.html?lms=1

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