School Climate Control
Does it Matter?
Key Messages

- Student achievement and behavior are impacted by school climate.
- School climate can be influenced and improved.
School climate is the social atmosphere or learning environment in which kids experience learning. Including:

- Relationships
- Personal growth or goal orientation
- System maintenance and system change.
Or, more simply put...

School climate is the “feeling” of the school.
Dimensions of School Climate

Physical dimension

- Appearance
- Size of the school and the ratio of students to teachers in the classroom
- Order and organization of classrooms
- Resources available
- Safety and comfort
Social Dimension

- Quality of relationships
- Equitable and fair treatment of students
- Degree of competition and social comparison
- Degree to which students, teachers, and staff contribute to decision-making at the school
Academic Dimension

- Quality of instruction
- Teacher expectations for student achievement
- Monitoring student progress and promptly reporting results to students and parents
What influences School Climate?

- How much and how well students and staff communicate
- How students and teachers feel about their school’s environment or personality
- Environmental factors (i.e. building, materials, etc.)
- Academic performance
- The size of the school
- How safe and respected everyone feels
How can we (you and I) work to improve School Climate?

- Increase parent, family and community involvement
- Implement character education or establish school values
- Provide violence prevention and conflict resolution curricula and peer mediation
- Take bullying seriously and work to prevent it
- Ensure all students and staff are treated fairly and equitably.
- Take measures to ensure safety
- Personalize the school experience
With regard to family involvement, Research indicates that schools with positive school climates do the following:

- Encourage families to participate and develop **relationships** with the faculty and staff and with other families.
- Contribute to the **personal growth** of families in the areas of child development, parenting skills and their own self-esteem.
- Encourage families to be **involved** in decision making on issues affecting their children’s education.
Discussion:
How can we can improve the climate together?
Discussion Question 1 -- Relationships

How can we work together to enrich relationships in any or all of the following areas?

1. Involvement
2. Within the classroom
3. Teacher support
Discussion Question 2 – Personal growth and goal orientation

How can we work together to increase personal growth and/or goal orientation in the following areas?

1. Create development opportunities
2. Establish expectations
3. Identify, express and clarify goals
4. Provide opportunities for all members of the environment to participate
Discussion Question 3 – System maintenance and system change

How can we work together to support classroom norms in the following areas?

1. Orderliness
2. Clarity of rules
3. Enforcement of rules
What is your role in establishing a positive school climate?