Fostering a Climate for Safety and Achievement:
Why school climate matters
Why a positive, developmentally support school climate is an essential component of a comprehensive approach to reducing violence and victimization, and improving academic performance, health, and well-being.

Evidence from California schools.
A Comprehensive Approach to Safety

• Addresses the social and emotional as well as physical aspects of safety.

• Recognizes safety and achievement are intertwined.
  ▪ Disengagement a risk factor for misbehavior
  ▪ Share many common risk and protective factors

• Reframes prevention within broader context of school climate, which can either enhance or reduce a sense of safety and the likelihood of learning engagement.
A Climate For Safety

• Addresses underlying risk and protective factors.

• Provides high level of student support — developmental, social, emotional, and behavioral as well as academic.

• Fosters a sense of community and connectedness, and

• Engenders self-discipline, prosocial behavior, and learning engagement.
Key Characteristics (1)

- Focused on meeting the basic developmental needs of youth that motivates all positive human behavior.

- Safety
- Autonomy, Power
- Belonging, Love, Respect
- Competence, Mastery
- Meaning
Key Characteristics (2)

- Positive *relationships* among and between students and staff: caring, trusting, respectful.

- Shared norms and high *expectations* achievement and for positive (nonviolent) behavior that clearly communicated and fairly applied.

- Opportunities for meaningful *participation and decision-making*. 
Key Characteristics (3)

• Foster **social-emotional or personal competencies** linked to prosocial behavior, self-discipline, resilience, and positive academic outcomes.
  
  ▪ Understand and regulate emotions
  ▪ Set positive **goals**
  ▪ Feel and show **empathy** for others (social awareness)
  ▪ Establish positive **relationships** and avoid conflict,
    - Communicate, collaborate, cooperate
  ▪ Make responsible, healthy **decisions** & problem solving,
Developmentally Supportive Schools Model

**Developmental Supports**
- Caring Relationships
- High Expectations
- Meaningful Participation

**Youth Needs**
- Safety
- Love
- Belonging
- Respect
- Mastery
- Challenge
- Power
- Meaning

**School Connectedness**

**Positive Student Outcomes**
- Academic
- Social
- Emotional
- Behavioral
- Health

**Safe Schools**

Citation 1
First Step: Needs Assessment
Healthy Kids School Climate Index

School Climate Index (SCI)
Single score ranging from 100 to 500 with an average of 300

CHKS Core Supports and Engagement
- High Expectations and Caring Relationships
- Opportunities for Meaningful Participation
- Perceived School Safety
- School Connectedness

CHKS Core Violence, Victimization, and Substance Use
- Violence Perpetration
- Violence Victimization
- Harassment and Bullying
- Substance Use at School
Assess needs of students, staff, and parents using California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys (CHKS)

Use data to guide decision making and action planning, implementing of the Developmental School Model and a multi-tiered system of comprehensive supports.
Statewide Progress 2011-2013

School Climate Index Scores - All S3 Schools (2011 to 2013)

School Climate Index (SCI)

- 2011: 254
- 2012: 266
- 2013: 287

School Climate Subscale Results

Overall Supports and Engagement

- 2011: 256
- 2012: 257
- 2013: 263

Overall Low Violence, Victimization, & Substance Use

- 2011: 263
- 2012: 284
- 2013: 321

Low Truancy Incidents

- 2011: 267
- 2012: 265
- 2013: 264

Scale Score Range: 100 to 500
Overall Low Violence, Victimization, & Substance Use - All S3 Schools (2011 to 2013)

Low physical violence perpetration
- 2011: 260
- 2012: 283
- 2013: 319

Low physical/emotional violence victimization
- 2011: 291
- 2012: 311
- 2013: 351

Low harassment and bullying
- 2011: 264
- 2012: 283
- 2013: 319

Low physical violence perpetration
- 2011: 249
- 2012: 274
- 2013: 307

Scale Score

Statewide Progress: Safety
Comparison S3 Grantee vs. Nongrantees: SCI and School Safety Subdomains, 2010 vs. 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Climate Index</th>
<th>Low Violence/Victim</th>
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School Climate Linked to Beating Academic Odds

- Chronically underperforming
- Performing as expected
- Beating the odds

SCI = 262
SCI = 300
SCI = 338
Probability of Academic Success

Probability of Beating the Odds

School Climate Index (SCI)
Conclusion

- School climate is an overarching framework — belief system — that integrates school policies and practices for learning, safety, prevention, and health and fosters positive outcomes in all four areas.
  - Deters violence/victimization; fosters learning engagement.
- Failure to foster these conditions undermines the effectiveness of safety efforts.
- Punitive, exclusionary, compliance-oriented discipline linked to negative, counterproductive effects on climate and connectedness.
- Assessment is the first step.