



# SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SEL MEASUREMENT USING THE FREE NJ SCI SURVEY AND PLATFORM



## SEL4NJ SEL DAY SUMMIT 2024

*Sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Educational Services, in collaboration with the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; funded by IDEA, Part B*

# PRESENTERS

**Pat Wright**

*Former Executive Director, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association*

*Senior Consultant, The Foundation for Educational Administration, Inc.*

*Author, Sustainable School Improvement: Fueling the Journey with Collective Efficacy and Systems Thinking*



**Alicia Raia-Hawrylak, Ph.D.**

*Co-Project Manager, The School Climate Transformation Project*

*Rutgers University, Graduate School for Applied and Professional Psychology*

*Leadership Team Member, SEL4NJ*



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**THINK ABOUT HOW YOUR  
SCHOOL/DISTRICT IDENTIFIES  
SEL AND SCHOOL CLIMATE  
NEEDS AND STRENGTHS  
AROUND THE BUILDING.**



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



To understand the role of school leaders, particularly school safety/school climate team members, in using data to improve school climate for all members of the community



To discuss options for using data to assess conditions for learning and SEL needs and strengths



To learn how the NJ SCI Survey measures Supports for Student SEL across various groups



To preview how the NJ SCI Platform supports systemic, research-based implementation of SEL approaches within the school climate change process

**School climate is the character and quality of school life** that is based on the interconnected experiences and perceptions of students, staff, and parents/family members and encompasses multiple dimensions (i.e., safety, relationships, academics)



**Positive climate is associated with:**

- Academic achievement
- Improved attendance/graduation
- Bullying and violence reduction
- Physical, psychological, social and emotional well-being
- Positive intergroup relations
- Inclusion practices
- Staff retention, self-efficacy, commitment
- Improved relationships and communication with families



New Jersey School Climate Improvement

## SURVEY

### NJ SCI Survey Domains

#### Student Sense of Belonging *(Students only)*

Students' perceptions that they are valued for who they are and feel connected to the school community

#### Leadership Support *(Staff only)*

Perceptions of practices by administrators and other leaders that promote positive relationships, cohesion, and trust at work

#### Organizational Resources and Supports *(Staff only)*

Perceptions of school- and district-level structures (e.g., policy, procedures, time) and supports (e.g., resources and professional development) that promote growth, collaboration, productivity, and successful performance at work

#### Collegial Support *(Staff only)*

Perceptions of professional relationships that promote trust, respect, and support among colleagues for facilitating workplace satisfaction

#### Family Support and Engagement *(Staff & Parents/Caregivers)*

Perceptions of support and engagement of parents/caregivers, as well as the perceived quality of relationships between staff and parents/caregivers

### All Respondent Groups *(Students Grades 3-5; Students Grades 6-12; Staff; and Parents/Caregivers)*

#### Academic Culture and Classroom Practices

Perceptions of school-wide academic expectations, student motivation, equity and access, and students' experiences in classrooms as indicated by the proportion of teachers who engage in practices to foster engagement

#### Supportive Staff-Student Relationships

Perceptions of quality relationships between staff and students which feature inclusion, respect, care, and support; and perceptions regarding adults' support and respect for students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds

#### Supports for Student Social and Emotional Learning

Perceptions of school-wide and instructional practices that promote the development of students' social and emotional skills, as well as availability of resources and supports to help parents/caregivers talk to their children about emotions

#### Behavioral Expectations

Perceptions of school-wide behavioral expectations as being clearly established and reinforced; perceived by members of the community as fair, culturally responsive, and inclusive of diverse perspectives

#### Negative Student Interpersonal Behaviors

Perceptions of the occurrence of various types of negative interpersonal behaviors among students and perceived victimization based on students' identities and backgrounds

#### Prosocial Student Interpersonal Behaviors

Perceptions of the occurrence of prosocial and inclusive behaviors, including empathy, perspective-taking, helpful behaviors, and conflict resolution, as well as getting along well with students from diverse backgrounds and inclusion of students with disabilities

#### Student Voice and Involvement

Perceptions of conditions in school that support student voice, including listening to and valuing students' ideas and opinions, student leadership opportunities, and student interest and involvement in school activities and events

#### Sense of Physical Safety

Perceptions of physical safety and the organizational procedures across school contexts and conditions that support a sense of safety and preparedness among the school community

Note: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-focused items are integrated within domains given their importance across all aspects of school life.



# HANDOUTS



<http://tinyurl.com/sel4njclimate>

School climate  
will not fix itself.



THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL CLIMATE TEAM



# THE ANTI-BULLYING BILL OF RIGHTS

**“Develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the on-going, systemic process and practices in the school and to address school climate issues such as harassment, intimidation, or bullying.”**

**WHAT'S YOUR WHY?**

# SCHOOL CLIMATE TEAM

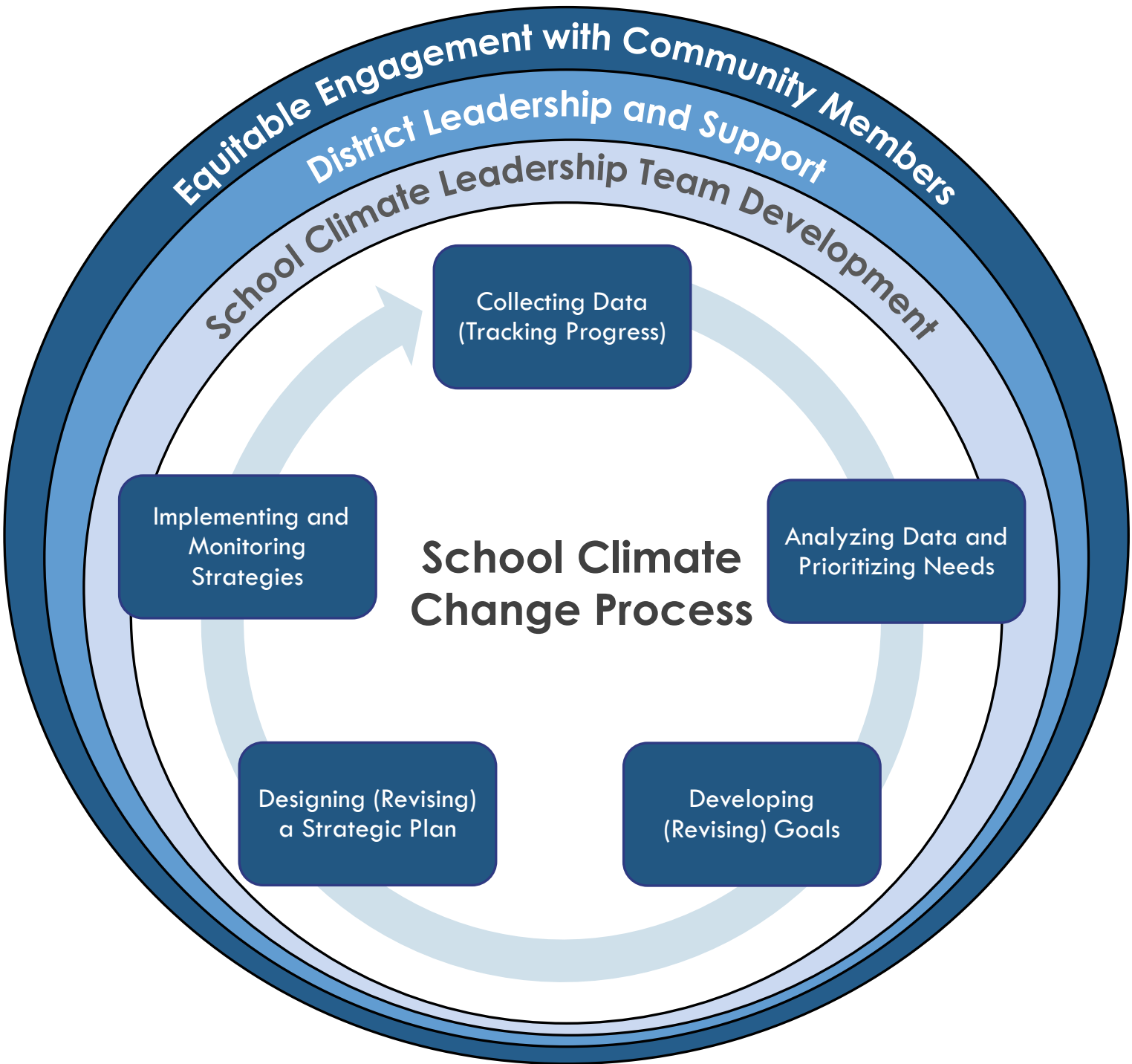
- Be representative of all stakeholders, including students
- Share leadership for school climate
- Operate as a Professional Learning Community (PLC) using climate data
- Focus on creation and sustainability of a positive climate
- Work collaboratively with other SCTs and the district anti-bullying coordinator to build a district-wide approach to climate improvement

# COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS DRIVE IMPROVEMENT



**“All problems exist in the absence of a good conversation.”**

**Handout 2**



# NJ SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT (NJ SCI) SURVEY

- NJ SCI Survey replaced the New Jersey School Climate Survey (NJSCS) in 2023 following pilot and validation study
- Available at no cost to public K-12 districts in New Jersey
- Surveys designed for:
  - Students Grades 3-5
  - Students Grades 6-12
  - Staff (all)
  - Parents/Caregivers
- Currently available for students and families in 32 languages in addition to English

# NJ SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT (NJ SCI) PLATFORM

- Surveys are administered through the NJ SCI Platform, which supports school and district climate leadership teams in implementing the school climate change process
- The Platform provides:
  - resources to support team development (e.g., calendar and writing tools)
  - interactive data reports with insights and ability to compare data within and across schools in a district
  - data analysis features for exploring school climate strengths and needs
  - tools for goal setting and the development of strategic plans (e.g., research-based strategy recommendations, graphs to monitor progress over time)

# SUPPORTS FOR STUDENT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING DOMAIN AND NJ SCI PLATFORM PREVIEW



# FOR MORE INFORMATION



NJ School Climate Improvement Platform  
<https://njschoolclimate.org/>

- Gather information on the NJ SCI Survey & Platform. learn about the School Climate Change Process (SCCP), and review the preview of the NJ SCI Strategy Resource
- Access the Frequently Asked Questions
- Submit an interest form
- Email SCTP to ask a general question at [njscisupport@rutgers.edu](mailto:njscisupport@rutgers.edu)



Contact Pat Wright at [pwright@njpsa.org](mailto:pwright@njpsa.org)

Additional Resource:  
NJDOE Social and Emotional Learning Webpage  
<https://nj.gov/education/safety/wellness/selearning/>

- Access NJDOE SEL Competencies and Sub-Competencies Handout
- Access NJDOE SEL Modules 1-6 for Educators
- View the *Resources Tab* with more Information
  - Lesson Plans & Activities
  - Information and Research
  - Information for Families

