

# **Positive School Climates**

Supporting Success and Wellness for Students and Educators

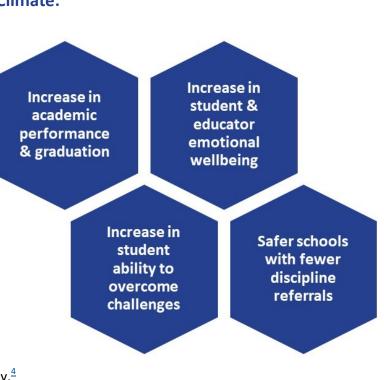
### **Benefits of Developing a Positive School Climate:**

**Increase in student academic performance** & graduation: Research shows a positive school climate improves a student's ability to learn.<sup>1</sup> Schools with positive school climates observe increases in student math and reading scores and higher graduation rates.<sup>1</sup>

#### Increase in student & educator emotional

**wellbeing:** School connectedness and feelings of safety and belonging at school are two of the most influential factors associated with student emotional wellbeing.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, positive relationships with other educators and a supportive work environment protects against educator stress and burnout.<sup>3</sup>

**Increase in student ability to overcome challenges:** Students who feel supported and cared about in school report fewer behavioral health concerns, such as feelings of hopelessness, especially during times of challenge or adversity.<sup>4</sup>



**Safer schools with fewer discipline referrals:** According to the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, creating a safe and connected school climate is the best way to prevent acts of violence from occurring in school.<sup>5</sup> A positive school climate is protective against bullying and other undesirable student behaviors resulting in fewer discipline referrals and better classroom management.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Components of a Positive School Climate:**

Safety

school-related

from violence.

bullying,

controlled

activities where

students are safe

harassment, and

substance use.

Schools and

## Engagement

 Strong relationships between students, teachers, families and schools and strong connections between schools and the broader community.

## Environment

 Appropriate facilities, wellmanaged classrooms, available schoolbased health supports, and clear, fair disciplinary policy.

#### Measuring and Monitoring School Climate:

Measuring school climate provides school administrators and staff with a better picture of the school experience of students, families, and school staff. Information gathered through a school climate survey can help identify needs and inform strategies towards creating or maintaining a positive school climate. The U.S. Department of Education offers a <u>free school cli-</u> <u>mate survey</u> that can be administered to students, parents and caregivers, and school staff.

Please visit the <u>National Center on Safe and</u> <u>Supportive Learning Environments</u> to learn more about the benefits and strategies for developing a positive school climate.

The Office of Public Instruction has many resources to assist schools in creating a positive school climate. <u>Please visit our website</u> for more information or reach out to Michele Henson, School Safety Program Manager (michele.henson@mt.gov).