



Developing and Promoting Positive Learning Climates

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Project Overview

How can we develop and promote positive learning climates to increase student learning? Creating a positive learning climate shows positive effects on both teachers and students. The school climate is one of the most impactful factors in student achievement, as well as student engagement, attendance rate, and more. Through the administration of climate surveys to all stakeholders, school leaders can identify areas of need in their schools and create a plan of action to address the chosen concerns.

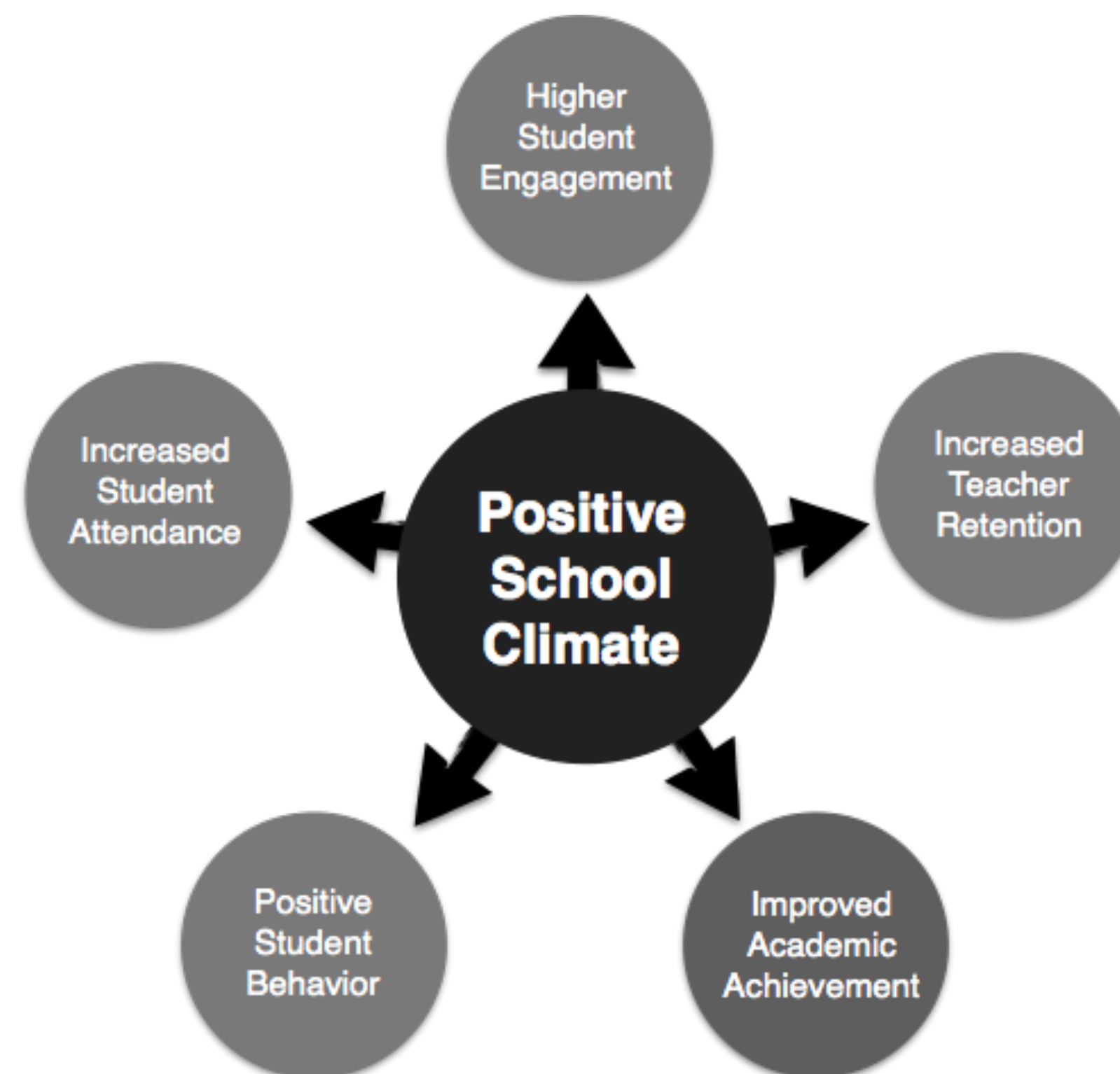
Action Plan

1. Leadership team establishes a common understanding about the definition of school climate among staff.
2. Leadership team identifies areas of improvement by assessing the existing school climate using a comprehensive needs assessment that captures data on student and staff behaviors, experiences, and perceptions. All stakeholders are assessed.
3. School community identifies goals for a positive school climate using the assessment results. School discipline should be addressed, and they should complement the school's academic goals.
4. Leadership team prioritizes the use of evidence-based strategies to increase the identified areas of need.
5. Leadership team and instructional coach train staff on the evidence-based strategies that are being implemented.
6. Leadership team collects data on focus areas to measure the effectiveness of the evidence-based strategies on school climate and makes adjustments when needed.

Resources

- ✓ School climate survey for all stakeholders
- ✓ Evidence-based prevention strategies (e.g., tiered supports) to promote positive student behavior
- ✓ Regular training and professional development for all staff
- ✓ Community connections: local mental health professionals, child welfare, law enforcement, etc.

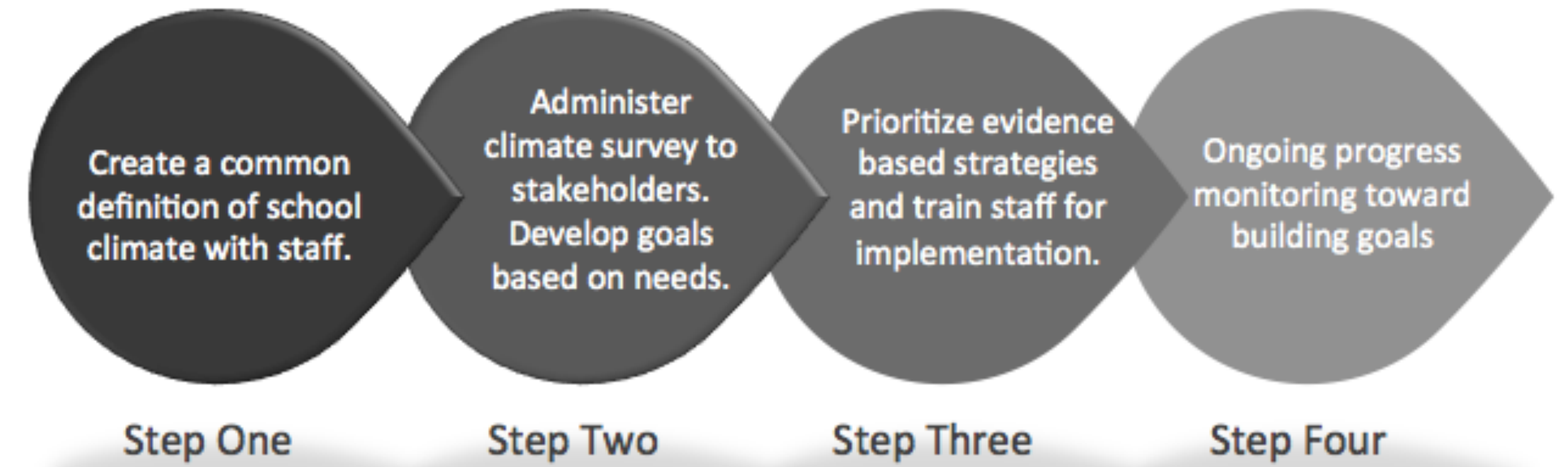
Benefits of a Positive Learning Climate



NDE: Standards

- 4) Culture for Learning : The principal creates a school culture that enhances the academic, social, physical, and emotional development of all students.
- 7) Developing Relationships: The principal promotes and supports productive relationships with students, staff, families, and the community.

Time Line



Literature Review

The National School Climate Center defines school climate as "...the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society" (Kopischke Smith, Connolly, & Pryseski, 2014). One of the key findings across studies is that principals have the strongest influence on school climate out of any of the factors (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). A positive school climate has tremendous effects on students and staff. It can lead to higher student engagement, increased teacher retention, improved academic achievement, positive student behavior, increased student attendance, and higher graduation rates, among others (US Department of Education, 2014).

There is no one single strategy that will work to create a positive learning climate within your building. An initial key step in changing your school climate is to assess the school climate through a perception survey (The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2009). With the information from the surveys, your team will identify areas of improvement, create goals, and choose your strategies and assessments. The data collected will further guide you in your decisions and next steps.

References

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U.S. Department of Education, *Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline*, Washington, D.C., 2014.