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Appendix A
The School Climate Implementation Process:
Stages and Tasks/Challenges

Stage One: Preparation and Planning
• Forming a representative SC improvement leadership team and establishing ground rules collaboratively
• Building support and fostering "Buy In" for the school climate improvement process
• Establishing a "no fault" framework and promoting a culture of trust
• Ensuring your team has adequate resources to support the process
• Celebrating successes and building on past efforts
• Reflecting on Stage One work

Stage Two: Evaluation
• Systematically evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses with any number of school climate as well as other potential measurement tools
• Developing plans to share evaluation findings with the school community
• Reflecting on our Stage Two work

Stage Three: Understanding the findings, Engagement & Action Planning
• Understanding the evaluation findings
• Digging into the findings to understand areas of consensus and discrepancy in order to promote learning and engagement
• Prioritizing Goals
• Researching best practices and evidence-based instructional and systemic programs and efforts
• Developing an action plan
• Reflecting on Stage Three work

Stage Four: Implementing the Action Plan
• Coordinating evidence-based pedagogic and systemic efforts designed to (a) promote students' social, emotional and civic as well as intellectual competencies; and (b) improve the school climate by working toward a safe, caring, participatory and responsive school community
• The instructional and/or school-wide efforts are instituted with fidelity, monitored and there is an ongoing attempt to learn from successes and challenges
• The adults who teach and learn with students work to further their own social, emotional and civic as well as intellectual learning
• Reflecting on Stage Four work

Stage Five: Reevaluation and Development of the Next Phase
• Reevaluating the school's strengths and challenges:
• Discovering what has changed and how
• Discovering what has most helped and hindered further the school climate improvement process:
• Revising plans to improve the school climate
• Reflecting on Stage Five work

Appendix B
How this resource was developed

 On September 17, 2009 the New England Equity Assistance Center and New England College hosted a "thinkers meeting" at Brown University to offer feedback on an evolving set of National School Climate Standards. Attendees included teachers, administrators, professors, consultants and officials from state and city departments of education from New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. One of many important recommendations that emerged from this meeting was that we needed to develop a document akin to what you are now reading. We are indebted to Elizabeth Brach who initially suggested this idea, which other members of the group strongly supported.

Vallie Geier, Marcy Borten and Jonathan Cohen completed a first draft of *Helpful strategies and measurement options: Actualizing the National School Climate Standards*. We are grateful to……Dr. Philip M. Brown, Director of the Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers

National School Climate Standards

School Climate Standard #1
The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a positive school climate.

Indicators and sub-indicators:

1.1 School policies and practices support school, family, youth and community members working together to establish a learning community.

> 1.1.1 School, family, community and youth members agree to work on strategies to be implemented for ongoing school climate improvement.
>
> 1.1.2 Policies and practices are regularly assessed to ensure continual refinement that enhances the quality of a learning community.
>
> 1.1.3 School, family, and youth members collaboratively develop, publicize, and model codes of conduct that support positive and sustained school climate.

1.2 Schools gather accurate and reliable data about school climate from students, school personnel and parents/guardians for continuous improvement and share it with the school community.

> 1.2.1 Educational leaders regularly assess policies and practices to determine the effectiveness of school, family and community members working together to support student learning, teaching, and positive youth development.

1.2.2 Schools use multiple scientifically sound methods of collecting data, such as surveys, observational methods and behavior reports, that recognize the range of factors that shape school climate, (e.g. social norms, school connectedness, sense of safety, discipline, learning/teaching, leadership, absence rates and mobility).

1.2.3 School, family, community and youth leaders establish procedures for using school climate findings (including disaggregated data) to establish instructional and/or school wide improvement goals and implementation strategies that will enhance student learning and positive youth development.

1.2.4 A school climate report is provided that communicates effectively with all school community members and families.

1.3 Capacity building is developed over time to enable all staff to meet school climate standards.

1.3.1 Capacity building includes developing infrastructure, classroom and school-wide interventions, and developing policy and systemic changes that promote positive school climate

School Climate Standard #2
The school community sets policies specifically promoting (a) the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge and dispositions and (b) a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.

Indicators and sub-indicators:

2.1 Policies and mission and vision statements that promote social, emotional, ethical and civic, as well as intellectual, skills and dispositions are developed and institutionalized.

2.1.1 Policies promote curriculum content and standards for social, emotional, ethical and civic learning and are fully integrated into the classroom and school in ways that align with 21st Century learning and with students' prevailing cultures and languages.

2.1.2. Policies for instructional and assessment processes and standards are personalized in ways that model and promote mutual respect, caring and a psychological sense of community.

2.1.3 Accountability measures and data are used that directly demonstrate the impact of efforts to promote social, emotional, ethical and civic learning.

2.2 Policies and mission and vision statements are developed and institutionalized that promote a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.

2.2.1 Policies promote addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging

disconnected students through an intervention framework that generates a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports as delineated in Standard 3.

2.2.2 Policies ensure continuing development and sustainability of a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports.

2.2.3 Accountability measures and data are used that directly demonstrate the impact of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging students who have become disengaged.

2.3 Policies promote use and monitoring of natural and informal opportunities (e.g. recreational and extracurricular aspects of classroom and school life, formulation of codes of conduct and fair enforcement of rules, mentoring, and informal interactions among and with students) to ensure they support the helpful norms of learning and teaching that foster mutual respect and caring, safety and well-being, civil, pro-social, responsible behavior, and a psychological sense of community.

2.4 Policies ensure the operational and capacity building mechanisms (including staff development) related to this standard are fully integrated into a school's infrastructure and are effectively implemented and sustained.

School Climate Standard #3
The school community's practices are identified, supported and prioritized to (a) enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities; (b) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (c) develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.

Indicators and sub-indicators:

3.1 Specific practices are designed to *enhance engagement* of every student classroom-based social, emotional, ethical and civic learning and in school-wide activities.

3.1.1 Instructional practices focus on cognitive and behavioral as well as social, emotional, ethical and civic engagement learning and engagement.

3.1.2 Practices facilitate students' desire and ability to share their perceptions readily (e.g. to enter into dialogues with the adults at school), emphasize real life interests and needs, stress real options and choices and a meaningful role in decision making, provide enrichment opportunities, provide a continuum of guidance and support and minimize coercive interactions.

3.1.3 Based on research on intrinsic motivation, practices are designed to maximize feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness to others and to minimize threats to such feelings. In this respect, practices are designed to minimize psychological reactance by not *overemphazing* social control strategies and not *over relying* on extrinsic motivation to promote positive social, emotional, ethical and civic behavior and learning.

3.2 Teachers and school administrators design specific classroom and schoolwide practices are designed to *address barriers to learning and teaching* and *reengage those who have become disengaged.*

> 3.2.1 Practices include a full continuum of integrated systems of intervention designed to:
> - Promote healthy development and prevent problems;
> - Respond as early after problem onset as is feasible;
> - Provide for those whose serious, pervasive, and chronic problems require more intensive assistance and accommodation.
>
> 3.2.2 Classroom and school-wide interventions are designed to:
> - Enhance regular classroom strategies to enable learning (e.g., improving instruction and classroom management practices for maximum engagement and re-engagement of all students and to pursue response to intervention practices for those with mild to moderate learning and behavioral problems)
> - Support transitions (e.g. assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions);
> - Increase home and school connections;
> - Respond to, and where feasible, prevent crises;
> - Increase community involvement and support (e.g. outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers and community resources that fill priority gaps in the system of supports);
> - Facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed;
> - Provide multiple opportunities for students to have leadership roles that enhance their commitment to school and to the development of themselves and others.
>
> 3.2.3 Classroom and schoolwide practices for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging those who have become disengaged are developed into *a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports* that weaves together school and community resources.

3.3 School leaders develop and sustaining a comprehensive system of learning supports by ensuring an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms.

> 3.3.1 The school has an administrative leader who is responsible for the development, institutionalization, and sustainability of high quality practices related to this second standard. (Practices are identified, supported and prioritized that (a) enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and schoolwide activities; (b) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (c) develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.) These responsibilities are delineated in a job description.

3.3.2 Sufficient staff are assigned to developing and sustaining such high quality practices.

3.3.3 Leadership and staff are provided continuous professional development in order to develop and sustain practices related to this third standard.

3.3.4 An effective school-family-community operational infrastructure is in place for weaving school and community resources together and for ongoing planning, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive system for learning supports.

3.3.5 The operational and capacity building mechanisms related to this second standard are fully integrated with the school's mechanisms for improving instruction, management, and overall governance.

School Climate Standard #4
The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, and physically.

Indicators and sub-indicators:

4.1 School leaders promote comprehensive and evidence-based instructional and school wide improvement efforts designed to support students, school personnel and community members feeling welcomed, supported and safe in school: socially, emotionally and physically.

4.2 Students, their families, school staff, and community stakeholders are regularly surveyed about and asked to indicate what the school should do to further enhance a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment.

4.3 School leaders monitor and evaluate the interventions designed to support people feeling welcomed, supported and safe and use that data to improve relevant policies, practices, facilities, staff competencies, and accountability

School Climate Standard #5
The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.

Indicators and sub-indicators:

5.1 Students and staff model culturally responsive behavior. This reflects continuous learning that builds knowledge, awareness, skills, and the capacity to identify, understand, and respect the unique beliefs, values, customs, languages, and traditions of all members of the school community[4].

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[4] This definition of culture competence has been adapted from the State of Ohio's Governors Cabinet Council.

5.1.1 Curriculum and instructional practices promote curiosity, inquiry into and celebration of diverse beliefs, customs, languages, and traditions of all members of the school community.

5.1.2 Students have ongoing opportunities to provide service to others in meaningful and engaging ways in their school as well as in the larger community.

5.2 Relationships among and between staff and students are mutually respectful, supportive, and civil.

5.2.1 Every student is connected to a caring and responsible adult in the school.

5.2.2 Social norms in school support responsible and positive peer relationships.

5.2.3. Discipline procedures are aligned with the goal of supporting students in their learning, respectful of all individuals, and enhanced with authentic student-driven opportunities for restitution when appropriate.

5.3 Students and staff are actively engaged in and celebrate milestones and accomplishments as they work to achieve meaningful school and community life and improvement efforts.

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