

In December 2011, the West Virginia Board of Education enacted *Expected Behaviors in Safe and Supportive Schools*. In carrying out this policy, school districts and schools should establish a process to gain school-wide input and commitment to school climate/culture improvements from students, staff, parents and community. Although it is up to schools to decide how to gain the input, the West Virginia Department of Education is offering the use of the *West Virginia School Climate Surveys* at no cost to districts or schools. As part of the data-driven planning process, schools may conduct three interrelated surveys: 1) for *Students*; 2) for *School Staff*; and 3) for *Parents*. These surveys provide critical information about the learning and teaching environment, the health and well-being of students, and supports for parents, school staff, and students that foster learning and school success aligned with the West Virginia Standards for High Quality Schools. The survey also may provide principals with data that can be used in setting their evaluation goals.

A major focus of *The Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, released by the U.S. Department of Education in 2010, is to ensure that schools receive the support needed to invest in models that "keep students safe, supported, and healthy both in and out of school..." In partnership with the WV Department of Health and Human Services and through support from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the WV school climate surveys provide data that can help schools define strategies best suited to the needs of their students—at school and in their communities. The blueprint further states that "States and districts also will collect other key information about teaching and learning conditions, including information on school climate such as student, teacher and school leader attendance; disciplinary incidents; or student, parent, or school staff surveys about their school experience." The WV school climate surveys enable schools to position themselves to collect this kind of data. Below is additional information about the surveys.

#### **The West Virginia School Climate Survey for Students**

- Is an online survey requiring a school computer lab with a reliable internet connection.
- Is in two versions: a middle/high school version for 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students; and an elementary grade version for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- Requires approximately 20 minutes to complete.
- Uses a passive informed consent process whereby parents grant permission for their child(ren) to participate. Active consent may also be used.
- Is voluntary, students may choose to not participate or to answer any question they do not want to answer.
- Is anonymous and confidential. Students will not be asked to provide names or any other identifying information.

#### **The West Virginia School Climate Survey for School Staff**

- Is an online survey. Staff may complete it with any computer with a reliable internet connection.
- Should be administered to all school staff, including teachers, administrators, and all support staff.
- Is scheduled for the same time period as the student survey.
- Requires approximately 20 minutes to complete.
- Is voluntary, staff may choose to not participate or not answer any question they do not want to answer. However, full participation by all staff is encouraged.
- Is anonymous and confidential. Staff will not be asked to provide names or any other identifying information.

#### **The West Virginia School Climate Survey for Parents**

- Is an online survey. Parents may complete it with any computer with a reliable internet connection.
- Should be made available to all parents/caregivers of students in a school.
- Is scheduled for the same time period as the student survey.
- Requires approximately 20 minutes to complete.
- Is voluntary, parents may choose to not participate or not answer any question they do not want to answer. However, full participation by all parents is encouraged.
- Is anonymous and confidential. Parents will not be asked to provide names or any other identifying information.