



**NIM**  
**CCS**  
New Mexico  
Coalition for  
Charter Schools

# Measuring the Climate of Your Charter: How Does Your Staff Really Feel?

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**Champion Charter School Excellence**

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# We plan to explore four questions:

- What is school climate?
- Why is school climate important?
- How do you measure school climate?
- How do you go about changing school climate?

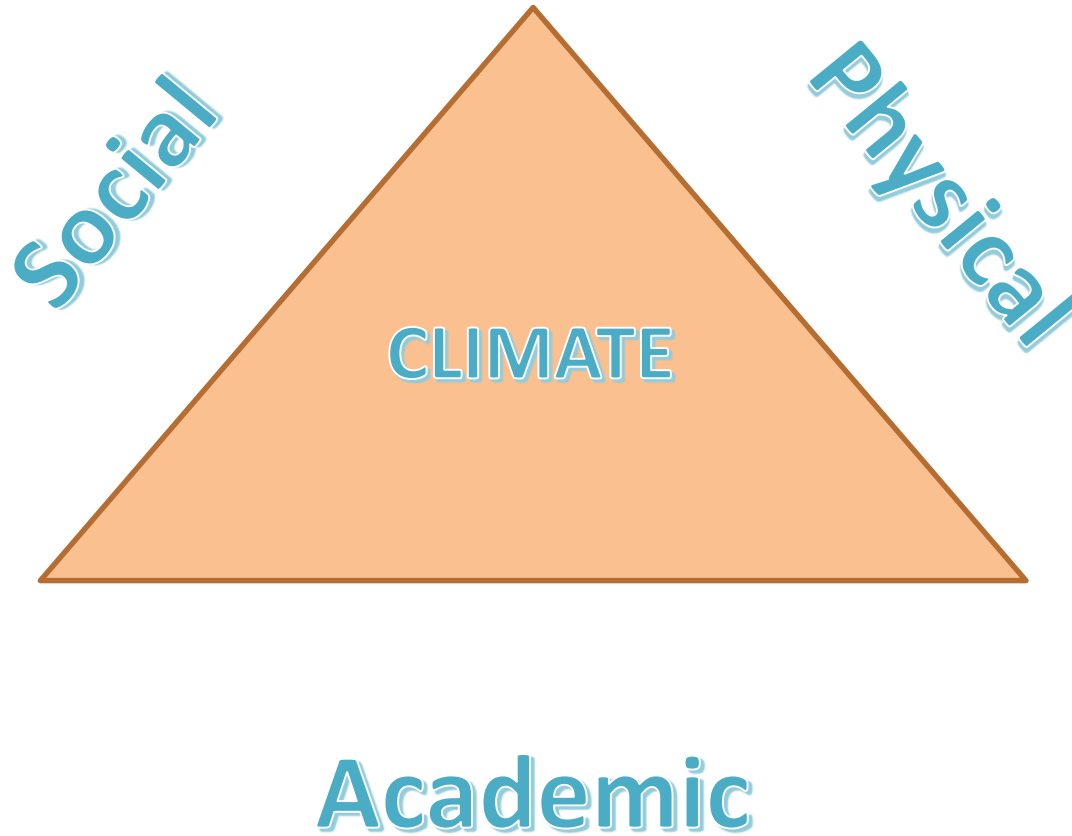


# What's "School Climate" anyway?

"School climate is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures." AERA



# Dimensions of School Climate



# Physical dimensions include

- Appearance of the school building, classrooms, and campus
- School size and student-teacher ratios in the classroom
- Order and organization of classrooms in the school
- Availability of resources
- Safety and comfort



# Social dimensions include:

- Quality of interpersonal relationships between and among students and staff
- Equitable and fair treatment of students by staff
- Degree of competition and social comparison between students
- Degree to which students and staff contribute to decision-making in the school



# Academic dimensions include

- Quality of instruction
- Teacher expectations for student achievement
- Monitoring student progress and reporting results to students and parents



# Why is climate important?

Research shows:

- Student perceptions of climate affect academic motivation
- Student perceptions of climate influence student behavioral and emotional problems
- Student perceptions of a more positive climate are particularly beneficial for students at risk for negative outcomes





# How do you measure school climate?

- A variety methods are possible including focus groups, interviews, Town-Hall discussions, and participatory action research.
- Probably the most common and most effective way is through well-designed anonymous surveys.



# Measuring Climate-The LAPS Experience

- Used an adaptation of the Halpin-Croft Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) for instructional (school) staff.
- Used an adaptation of Survey Monkey's Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) validated questions for operational staff.
- Measured each school site and the operational division independently to obtain results for each administrative unit.



# How do you change school climate?

- School climate is subject to change.
- Application of school improvement models to specific climate issues.
- Application of total quality management models to specific climate issues.
- Continue to assess specific climate issues on a regular basis.
- Celebrate successes and analyze areas where improvement continues to be needed.



# Consciously Changing Climate: The LAPS Experience

- Thoughtful analysis of data from survey responses on a school by school basis.
- Targeted issues on a school by school basis for improvement.
- Plans to revisit school climate issues through survey on a regular basis.



# Contact Information

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